

*Etiquette Express*  
*BRET Office of Career Development*

**Networking at Receptions, Conferences, and Other Events**

- **Set a goal** about what you hope to accomplish at this event (how many people you want to talk to, introducing yourself to a specific person, making a new informational interview contact).
- **Prepare!** Research the attendees of most interest to you, prepare questions, and think about points of connectivity.
- **Eat first**, so you do not have to shuffle a beverage and food glass during introductions.
- **Nametags:** write your full name and wear on your right side/opposite to your heart and never below your belt.
- **Enter the conversation** by committing to networking, slowly joining the group, approaching someone who is standing alone, or bringing a friend.
- **Handshakes** should be of medium firmness as well as include eye contact and smiling.
- **Introductions** should include stating the full name clearly, keeping the information basic, and offering points of connectivity.
- **Conversations** with new networking contacts should include your elevator pitch, why you want to talk to them, and next steps/contact info. Your conversation should be authentic, not too personal or positive, and could ask their opinion.
- Conversations should last only 5-10 minutes and **should not monopolize** the contact.
- **You do have something to offer!** You are young and provide spark, energy, and new talent. Don't be intimidated into not talking to someone because you don't feel that you have anything to offer.
- **Exit gracefully** by saying you do not want to monopolize their time, thanking them for speaking with you, an apology in order to leave, or a compliment.

*Other resources for networking*

["10 Different Ways to Shake One's Hand"](#) on Biospace

["4 Hacks for Your Next Networking Event"](#) on the Daily Muse

["10 Networking Conversation Starters You'll Actually Use"](#) on the Daily Muse

["Non-Awkward Ways to Start and End Networking Conversations"](#) on the

Daily Muse

["9 Tips For Becoming A Successful Networker"](#) on Careerealism

["10 Ways to Get Outside Our Comfort Zone When Attending a Networking Event,"](#) by Bob McIntosh for Biospace

["Networking for Introverts: 3 Tips for Success,"](#) by Karl Stark and Bill Stewart, for Inc.

## Wine Basics

### *Wine at a Reception*

- **Left hand used for wine glass**, with the right hand used for hand-shaking.
- **Use the stem** for white wine and champagne.
- **One glass should last at least 20 minutes**, and do not exceed two glasses.
- Do not make sound effects when drinking.

### *Wine Temperature*

- **Red wine** is served at room temperature.
- **White, rose, and dessert wines** should be served between 50-55 degrees.
- **Champagne** can be served at 45 degrees.

### *Wine in a Home/Residence*

- **Pour wine** for your guests first.
- **Red wine** is served in larger glass and filled 1/3 of the way.
- **White wine** is filled halfway.
- **Sparkling wine** is served in a flute – which helps the bubbles last longer – and is filled three-quarters of the way full.
- **Twist** the bottle when finishing a pour.

### *Other Wine Lessons*

- When **making toasts**, make eye contact with each person you are clinking glasses with, don't cross over other's arms, and clink everyone's glass.
- Look into the glass when **sipping**.
- Water is on the left of the wine at the **dinner table**.

### *Other resources for wine basics*

[“Wine Do's & Don't: A guide to avoiding missteps, faux pas, and embarrassing situations”](#) by Janet Fletcher, San Francisco Chronicle

[“An Easy Explanation of Wine Types”](#) by Jack Busch, Primer Magazine

[“How to Serve Wine”](#) by Jack Busch, Primer Magazine

[“Wine etiquette,”](#) an illustrated version, by Joanna Goddard, Cup of Jo

## Dining Etiquette

- Do not place your **elbows** on the table.
- **Napkins** stay in your lap throughout the meal.
- **Ask the host** for a recommendation if unsure about what to order.
- **Wait** for everyone to be served before eating.
- Never place utensils back on table after use.
- **Pass** food to the right.
- **Always use utensils**, even for “finger food.”
- Eat **small bites**.
- **Finish chewing** before answering a question mid-bite.
- Never push your plate away when the meal is complete.

### *Other resources for general dining etiquette*

[“Using Proper Etiquette”](#) by Florida State University

[“Dining and Business Etiquette”](#) by University of Tennessee

[“10 Tips for Success at Job Fairs”](#) by Norine Dagliano for Careerealism

### **Thank You Notes and Follow-Up Protocol**

- **Send the note soon.** If you cannot get it written soon, write it anyway.
- Use **professional paper**.
- **Hand-write a practice thank you note** before writing the final version.
- A thank you note is a **writing sample**.
- **LinkedIn** is a good way to stay connected to a contact.
- **4-6 months** is a good time frame to stay on a contact’s radar if they cannot help you right away.
- **An occasion or an event** is a good way to keep in contact with a connection.

*Other resources for thank you notes and follow-up protocol*

[“Guidelines for Writing Professional E-Mail”](#) from the NIH Office of  
Intramural Training and Education

[“Mastering the Art \(and Science\) of Thank You Letters”](#) by Laura Labovich,  
Careerealism

[“6 Tips for Following Up After a Job Interview”](#) on Careerealism

[“4 Things a Well-Written Thank-You Note Can Accomplish”](#) by Arnie Fertig,

US News Money

[“Career Checklist for Your LinkedIn Profile”](#) on Biospace