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BUSINESS (etiquette) in Germany



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Formal greetings face-to-face

- among friends/ colleagues, you can embrace four friend
- with business partners or, if you meet (foreign) people the first time, you should shake hands -> firm handshake!
- You have to look somebody in the eye, if you greet or pass somebody
- You can say: **hi, hello, bye if you know the business partner/** good morning/afternoon/evening, have a nice day, good bye, have a nice evening for formal occasions





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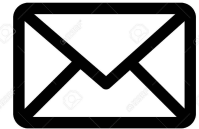
Formal emails/netiquette

1. Use a **Professional Email** Address.
2. Use a **Formal** salutation.
3. Lead With a **Clear Subject Line**.
4. Be Clear, Polite, and Succinct - not spelling mistakes!!
5. Sign Off with a Thank You/ Thank you in advance.
6. Boost Your Image with a Strong **Email Signature** revealing your function in the company
7. **Emails** Are Forever!!! Double-check what you write!
8. Patience Is a Virtue! don't get on people's nerves

→ **business emails are never informal!!!**



E-MAIL





Dresscode

Women:



- long, elegant pants or conservative-length skirts (no miniskirts, no evening dresses!)
- twinsets, cardigans, polo shirts, blouse
- a business dress/ costume
- Solid colors are preferable over bright patterns, not revealing too much skin!!
→ not too casual, but no “overdressing” either

→ **make sure you do not reveal tattoos, piercings**

→ **always depends on the job/ position/ line of business you are in!**

Men:



- long pants (not necessarily a suit)
- short/ long-sleeve shirt (button down), tie!!!
- elegant jumper/ polo shirt
- “leather” shoes in black/ brown, no trainers
→ a sporty look is ok, but still elegant/ classy



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Tips on how to behave at business dinners/lunch

- **wear business attire, no casual clothing!**
- be on time!!! → everybody is hungry :-)
- wait until all people have their meal, start eating when everybody has been served, say “Guten Appetit” → “Enjoy your meal”
- don't drink much alcohol!!!
- address business partners in an adequate way (no “DU” in German, no first names! → this depends on the language used!)
- don't play with your phone
- order something easy to eat :-)



→ always remember: this is business, not party, not free time!!



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Importance of business dinners/lunch

→ business dinners/ lunches: to get to know your partners better, establish a “positive” relationship with them

- don't talk about “touchy” subjects (gay rights, animal rights etc)
- don't talk about politics and religion
- no private conversation (it's different from company to company/ rank partners have in the company)
- no business negotiations!!
- talk about (your) business in general, past/ future of business relationship
- keep small talk general
- you may talk about sports, holidays, the weather :-)

→ don't talk too much, don't go on people's nerves, listen to others, don't try to shout to get attention, speak to everybody around you!!

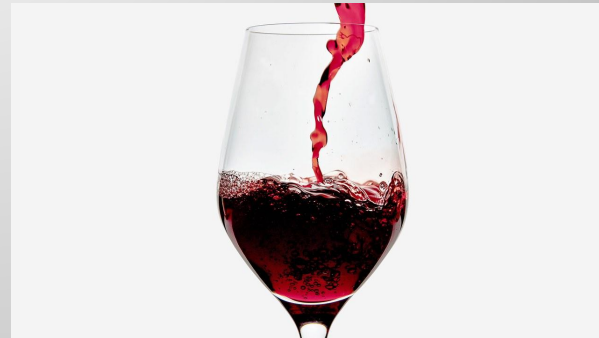




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Gifts among business partners

- **not expected among Germans!!!!**
- a bottle of (regional) wine
- give-aways of your company's products
- chocolate /pralinés/ chocolate candy is always good
- no personal items!



Body language

1. **EYE CONTACT** → don't stare!
2. **FACIAL EXPRESSION** → smile, open
3. **HANDSHAKE** → firm
4. **POSTURE** → straight
5. **GESTURES** → keep hands in a natural position,
don't "fiddle", show interest

→ try to appear as "natural" as possible

→ not to shy, not too loud but self-confident!

