Choosing Civility

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Objectives

- Define civility
- Discuss forms of civility
- Demonstrate effective communication skills in civility
- Discuss the need for civility in the workplace
Wherever there is a human being, there is an opportunity for a kindness.

Lucius Annaeus Seneca

When we lessen the burden of living for those around us we are doing well; when we add to the misery of the world we are not.

P.M. Forni
What Does Civility Mean to You?
Forms of Civility

- Saying Please and Thank You
- Lowering your voice when interfering with others tranquility
- Acknowledging a newcomer to the conversation
- Listening to understand and help
- Respecting those different from us
- Acknowledging our mistakes
- Disagreeing with poise
Being civil imposes restrictions on our everyday behavior, but civility is crucial to the achievement of a well-balanced and happy life.
Just Because I'm Rude to You, Doesn't Mean You Can Be Rude Back
Rudeness is the weak man’s imitation of strength.

Eric Hoffer
Stop and Think Before Acting

Ask Yourself

– Do I really want to do this?
– Is anybody going to be hurt by this?
– Will I like having done this?

Restraint is an infusion of thinking and thoughtfulness into everything we do.

Restraint is the art of feeling good later
• Civility is an art and has rules
• Improves with practice
• Make rules part of our lives
Rules to Considerate Conduct
Based on P.M. Forni’s book, Choosing Civility
Pay Attention

- I am not just talking with a colleague but with this colleague.
- I am not just reminiscing with a high school friend but with this friend.

“Like a car trying to join the traffic flow in bumper to bumper traffic” – Pay Attention
Acknowledge Others

- Acknowledge others’ existence
  - Their importance to you
  - Their feelings
  - The things they do for you
- Remembering someone’s name
- Paying a thoughtful compliment
- Holding a door open to let someone through
- Thanking
- Saying Hello
Think the Best

Thinking the best gives me JOY:

• I appreciate exceptional intelligence
• I can be charmed by beauty
• I am intrigued by charisma

But I will be moved by goodness.
Listen

• Listen, Listen, Listen
• Go behind the words
• Tell me more
• Plan your listening
• Show that you are listening
• Be a cooperative listener
Be Inclusive

Reevaluate your dislikes. Spend a few minutes with someone you find uninteresting. Do not ignore anyone when speaking with more than one person.
Speak Kindly

Speaking with consideration is the root of civil behavior.

Smile! Turn your body and face toward the person you are talking with.

Always think before speaking.
Don’t Speak Ill

When we speak of others in a derogatory manner we hurt them.

Disparaging remarks can be taken as an authorization to unleash abuse.

It is cowardly to attack those who are not present.

Our disparaging words can cause retaliation.
Accept and Give Praise

- Pay sincere compliments.
- Don’t refrain from paying a compliment.
- Don’t confuse complimenting with patronizing.
- Don’t hastily reciprocate a compliment.
- Word your compliments carefully.
- Say thank you to a compliment.
Respect the Word No

Respect even the unsaid word “No”.
Respect Others’ Opinions

You have yours, I have mine.
(who is really right?)
Be Agreeable

Have the ability to consider that you may be wrong.

Have the ability to admit that you don’t know.
Keep It Down
Rediscover Silence

Respect places of worship... libraries, restaurants, and theaters.
Respect Other People’s Time

Punctuality is nonnegotiable

Always give others the amount of time they can rightfully expect from you.
Respect Other People’s Space

Leave enough room between you and the person so they will not feel intimidated.

Pay attention to others’ reactions to the way you manage space in conversation.

Respect others’ territory.
Apologize Earnestly

Say it and mean it!

Watch your wording.
Avoid Personal Questions

- Do you believe in God?
- For whom did you vote?
- How much did you pay for that?
- How much do you make?
- How old are you?

Ask permission –

“May I ask a personal question?”
Think Twice Before Asking for Favors

A request for a favor is quite often an imposition and we are beholden to those who grant it.

Your friend may feel uncomfortable granting the favor and may feel equally uncomfortable turning you down.
Refrain from Idle Complaints

Continuous or recurring complaining is an unwarranted spreading of misery.

Assigning blame rather than finding solutions.

Complaints about our service are good.
Accept and Give Constructive Criticism

- Criticism is serious business and an awesome responsibility
- Make sure your intent is to help with a problem and not to humiliate, manipulate, or exact revenge
- Identify an issue, do not attack the person
- Suggest a solution
- Remain calm, kind and empathetic
- End on a positive note
Accept and Give Constructive Criticism

When we reject criticism that comes our way we forgo a precious source of knowledge and wisdom. Look to improve always. Be as open-minded as possible.
Don’t Shift Responsibility and Blame

Accept blame gracefully.

Do not act rude or boorish even if someone has been rude to you.
It’s that simple.
Reference


Griffin Valle, Paco and Chester, Pam. Choosing Civility Presentation. VA Crew Program, VISN 2.


http://krieger.jhu.edu/civility/background.html.

http://www.extension.iastate.edu/mt/civility.


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Q & A

Civility is not a sign of weakness.