

# Office Etiquette: Mind Your Manners

When I founded my creative communications agency in 2001, three of my five core values were as follows:

- Regard clients, vendors, affiliates and business partners as deserving of an equal level of respect;
- Value all people as individuals – with individual goals, desires and lives;
- Inspire someone else every day.

Am I naïve to believe these core values should remain intact and unchanged?

Does my company, established on a foundation of creative thinking and professional courtesy, possess values that are still relevant in the today's hyperactive electronic age?



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Of course, like many of us, I was taught The Golden Rule as a child: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

And when it comes down it, professional courtesy is just as simple as using the Golden Rule—at work.

**Do unto your co-workers as you would have them do unto you.**

So I now find myself on a mission: to restore professional courtesy to today's somewhat thank-you-repressed workplace. Through the launch of **RediscoverCourtesy.org**, my hope is to shed a positive light on the benefits of professional courtesy relating to business relationships, written and verbal communication, profitability, proactive thinking, ethics, loyalty, and business operations.

But when I'm asked to actually define professional courtesy, I've come to realize that scores of divergent issues fall under the umbrella where professional courtesy reigns. Chief among these are character, morals, and ethics. There's also the way we communicate with each other and our collective use of both proactive- and critical-

thinking skills to enhance that communication. Of course, in a world ruled by time management, professional courtesy is demonstrated in the efficient use of our time as reflected in the increased productivity of those who rely on us.

More than "please" and "thank you," professional courtesy is seen in the way we teach, learn, listen, and respond.

When it comes down to it, **RediscoverCourtesy.org** could just as easily be called RediscoverCommunication.org—or even RediscoverCreativity.org.

Speaking as a person who makes his living being "creative," I have a healthy respect for the fact that creativity only thrives in a positive and well-mannered environment. Anything less chokes the creative process and paralyzes the creative thinker.

But more than that, positive interactions and courtesy are mandatory for a successful business model—negativity only serves to dampen spirits, restrict the free flow of information, and prohibit potential star performers from becoming stars.

Just a hunch but don't you think our world would be just a tad different without the likes of **Walt Disney** [**DIS** 43.12 ▲ 0.19 (+0.44%) 📈], **Steve Jobs** [**AAPL** 632.845 ▲ 8.535 (+1.37%) 📈], and even **Mark Zuckerberg**?

True, our economy is based on the concept of fair competition which, by its very nature, is never going to bring out the best in everyone. I can't fix everything—and I'm far from perfect myself—but if I can make a few people think before they strike, then I've done my job.

*Humorist, Editorial Writer, Speaker, and Entrepreneur Randall Kenneth Jones is the creator of professional-courtesy initiative, **RediscoverCourtesy.org**, and the "confessional development" chronicle, **AttackBunnies.com**. His creative communications agency, **MindZoo**, is headquartered in Naples, FL.*

Comments? Send them to [executivecareers@cnbc.com](mailto:executivecareers@cnbc.com)

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By: Randall Kenneth Jones

Founder, RediscoverCourtesy.org