

# 5 Rules to Boost Your Business Etiquette Today!

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## Business Etiquette

Last week's blog about the etiquette of referrals sparked an entirely new set of questions and comments about overall etiquette in business. Clearly, we are all facing this issue, so here's my five cents:

1. **Remember that E-mail is Often The Worst Communication Medium** - If you are trying to convey a difficult concept, approach a confrontational topic, or begin a critical conversation, email is NOT the answer. As we know, but often forget, the nuances of language, expression, tone, inflection, eye contact and body language are all lost in a flat, one dimensional e-mail. Irony and humor are also difficult. So, if in doubt, pick up the phone or better yet, schedule a meeting.
2. **Have the Courage to Say No!** - I am appalled that I have created proposals for prospects and on occasion, they have been met with absolute silence: no return phone call, e-mail, or contact whatsoever. Since every single company here requested the proposal, I believe every professional should have the courage to turn down the work. Whether you tell me why is up to you, but leaving a vendor hanging is inexcusable. (Trust me, I am tempted to forward this blog to a few nameless souls!).
3. **Pepper Your Language With Positives** - I recently just finished a first draft of an article for a client, and not one positive word or phrase was uttered. Instead, the conversation started with "there are 5 errors in your copywriting." Of course! I was given nothing to work from and created this copy out of clean air! Just a little, "Liz, great first effort as I know I forgot to forward you my resume or bullet points" would have been great. Just as with raising your children, giving positive feedback is as important as giving negative feedback.
4. **Return Phone Calls or Emails** - Can you believe that I really have to write that statement? I have two clients that recently auditioned for a reality TV show; did they receive any feedback? No? Were their specific questions answered? No! Did they ever get a return phone call? NO! I recently just took the time to return a phone call from a local IT provider to let him know that I am not a good target. Getting me off his list allows him to focus on more viable prospects.
5. **Try a Little Honesty** - I am besieged with LinkedIn requests for recommendations, but my rule is that I will not write one until I have actually worked with the person or in the case of a fellow speaker, have heard them speak. I answer them truthfully that I would be delighted to write one *after* we have worked together. By the same token, if a colleague has written a draft of a document and asked for

my feedback, I owe them the truth. Yes, I will pepper it with positives, but I would be doing a huge disservice if I didn't get in a little honesty too. As I say, "sometimes, you do have to tell the parents their baby is ugly!"

I'm sure all of you have your business pet peeves. [Fire away](#) and let me know!

Until next week....Liz

### Meet Liz Goodgold



Branding speaker and expert Liz Goodgold has over 25 years of experience working for clients such as Quaker Oats, Times Mirror, and Arco Oil as well as with small business owners and start-up. Her specialized, one-on-one branding and coaching programs spark new ideas that deliver sure-fire results. To find out how Liz can help you, contact her at [liz@redfirebranding.com](mailto:liz@redfirebranding.com)

Liz is also the author of [\*RED FIRE BRANDING: Create a Hot Personal Brand and Have Customers for Life\*](#) and [\*DUH! Marketing.\*](#)