



Meeting Etiquette Tips and Suggestions

You've already contacted your instructor and now you've scheduled a time to meet with them. Or, you're planning to meet with a non-faculty staff member, i.e. an advisor, counselor, etc. How do you act? What do you say? We know that meeting with an instructor or staff member can be a bit intimidating. But no worries, your STAR coaches are here to help. Here are a few tips that will help your meeting run smoothly. You'll probably leave a good impression, too!

Before the Meeting

- **Make sure you make an appointment.** Try to avoid rushing up to the instructor after class, unless they specify that they'll be available immediately after class. If you're meeting with a non-faculty staff member, contact them by phone or email to inquire about making an appointment.
- **Determine your purpose for the meeting.** Be clear about why you want to meet with them. Do you want to discuss a recent test? Do you need help with an upcoming essay? Maybe you're interested in asking them to serve as a reference for a job or would like them to write a letter of recommendation.

Side note: if you are planning to meet with your instructor to discuss a low grade received on an exam/assignment, we suggest that you wait 24-hours before contacting them. This will allow you to "cool off" and avoid saying something that you may later regret.

- **Prepare for the meeting!** Gather all the materials you'll need to bring to the meeting, i.e. pen and paper, assignments, textbook, etc.
- **Locate the instructor/staff member's office beforehand or head to the meeting early if you are unsure where their office is located.** This will help you to avoid being late.
- **If you need to cancel or reschedule the meeting, contact them ASAP!** Only miss or cancel the meeting if there is an emergency.

Office Etiquette

- **Show up on time!** Time is valuable. By not showing up on time, you are suggesting that meeting with them is not a priority.
- **Bring what you need to the appointment.** If you would like to go over a test or assignment, bring it to the appointment. Bring your textbook if necessary. Bring a paper and pen to write down notes.
- **Always knock before you enter their office!** Even if the door is open.
- **If your instructor or staff member is working on something when you enter, wait until they're finished** before speaking.

Judi McIntyre. Shepherd University. "Academic Etiquette."

http://www.shepherd.edu/ctl/firstyearexperience/academic_etiquette.docx

Mark J. Felsheim, Ph.D. Milwaukee Area Technical College. "How to Communicate and Problem Solve with Your Instructor."

https://www.matc.edu/advisory_committee/upload/How-to-Communicate-with-your-instructor.pdf

Brent E. Sasley. University of Texas at Arlington. "DOs and DON'Ts of Interacting with Your Professor."

<http://brentsasley.blogspot.com/2013/09/dos-and-donts-of-interacting-with-your.html>



Office Etiquette cont'd...

- **Introduce yourself when you arrive!** Tell them your name. Don't assume that they know your name. Instructors and staff members interact with dozens of students weekly.
- **State the purpose for your meeting and be specific about what you need from them!** For example, don't say "I don't get how to do problem #5." Explain exactly what about the problem you don't understand. Tell them what you've tried.
- **Take notes during the meeting!** It's unlikely that you'll remember everything that was discussed. Write down the instructor/staff member's suggestions so you can reference it later.
- **Ask questions for clarification.**
- **Maintain a professional tone.** Never raise your voice or speak out of anger. Don't speak over them or cut them off while they are speaking.
- **Be cooperative.** Offer your own input and work with them to reach a solution. Don't assume that they HAVE to solve the problem for you.
- **Accept responsibility!** If you missed an assignment, own up to it. **Never lie about it.**
- **Never use your phone during your meeting!** Place your ringer on silent before you enter their office.
- At the end of your meeting, **thank them for their time!**

After the Meeting

- **Reflect on the meeting.** Ask yourself if you've gotten the information that you needed.
- **Remember the instructor/staff member's office hours** should you need to utilize them again in the future.
- **Utilize what you learned during the meeting.** The meeting will have been pointless if you don't use the suggestions/advice given to you. For example, if your instructor offers specific information for completing an assignment, implement the information to ensure that you complete the assignment correctly.

If you need help preparing for a meeting with your instructor or you have additional questions, feel free to call to speak with a STAR coach at 704-330-6754 or email star.success@cpcc.edu. Check out the rest of our tip sheets on our website <http://www.cpcc.edu/star>.

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