

The Key Class to Success

The Go-To-Guide for Job Search Success and
Fitting into the 21st Century Workplace

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INTRODUCTION

Business associates often tell me that life appears to have become a rude cross of TV reality shows and cell phone abusers. They relate how people talk louder, swear more and break all the rules of public civility.

My response is simple. No one has ever taught them!

Over the past several years, I've been mentoring young people and coaching at-risk teens through the Teen Court in Santa Barbara, California. In the process, I launched The Key Class, a course on social manners to help these students secure jobs and gain college entrance. Initially, I was amazed at how many of my students didn't know how to shake hands properly, dress correctly for an interview, eat a meal with appropriate table manners, write a thank you note or even look others in the eye when having a conversation with them.

Here's an extreme example that was a shocking realization for me. I had just begun to mentor a young, at-risk teen. Our first time having a meal together was a real eye-opener. He order chili and began to eat it with his hands! I was still walking on egg shells, so to speak, and had to be very careful how I behaved with him. So, I said, "I know that this is our first time out together having a meal, but this just won't work for me. I would like to help you with a few things that I think you need to learn, so please go into the restroom and wash your hands."

While he went, I supplied his side of the table with a napkin as well as the proper utensils. When he came back to the table, I told him to unfold the napkin and put it in his lap. Then I showed him how to hold his spoon correctly and eat his food. He really was very grateful by the time we finished the meal. He admitted to me that he had no idea how to behave when dining in public. I was just grateful not to have to watch him eat with his hands any longer, but this incident drove home that our young people aren't always being taught the social manners critical to their long-term success!

This book, a companion to The Key Class, is a guide to illustrate how to create a great first impression and why it's important. It includes how to research a potential employer or college recruiter; how to handle greetings and introductions; how to have a good handshake; how to be aware of your body language; how to make small talk; how to listen; how to follow-up an interview; what to wear during an interview; how to use proper table manners; how to handle cell phones, E-mail, social media, and more.

CHAPTER 1

WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?

Most of the student warily enter the room—guys in baggy pants two or three sizes too big for them, shirts haphazardly hanging over their waistbands; girls with provocative clothing displaying their multiple tattoos and piercings. They all slouch down into their chairs; those with hats pull them down over their eyes. They doodle on the folders they've received. Their collective attitude pours out of them. "Man, I'm here because I have to be. Who is this old, white guy talkin' to me?"

Robert sits in the very back row, his chair leaning against the wall. He closes his eyes and falls asleep just as I begin talking about body language. Ah, the perfect entrée! I call on him and ask him what he thinks about body language. The question rouses him, and he says he didn't hear the question. "Robert, we're talking about body language and how we show if we are interested or bored. I promise I'm not picking on you. But, please, express to me how you'd feel if we switched places and you were teaching the class and I was sitting in the back row sleeping through it."

His chair falls forward, and he sits up. "I'd be insulted; pissed off. Maybe even feel like yelling at you."

I quietly ask, "How do you think I feel?"

Everyone laughs along with Robert, and the entire class sits up straight with him. Now, I've got their attention.

I go on to explain that etiquette is a code of proper behavior that helps them:

- Make a good first impression;
- Impress college admissions officers;
- Be successful in a job interview;
- Earn respect, recognition & compliments; and
- Turn self-consciousness into self-confidence.

And I tell them they've got about 20 seconds to make that good first impression. They sit up even straighter at this point.

These students are between the ages of 13-19. Most have never held a job. They don't know where to begin to get better grades or secure a job. I start with what needs to be done before an interview. The first topic is communications technology. They are shaking their heads and shrugging their shoulders at this one.

CHAPTER 2

WHAT NEEDS TO HAPPEN BEFORE AN INTERVIEW?

Communications Technology

Cell Phones

I ask, “What does your voice mail message say about you? If I call one of you and get, “This is James, dude. Wad up? Give me a call.” What kind of impression have you given me? Your message should reflect a *professional tone* with a concise message. Do you want your potential boss to be greeted with “wad up”? So, just until you get a job (so your friends don’t think you’re a dork), change it.

I suggest instead something like, “Hi, this is James, I’m sorry I can’t take your call right now, but if you’ll leave me your name and telephone number I will get back to you as soon as possible. Thanks for calling.”

In addition, I propose checking their ring tones to be sure they are standard. Once they begin interviewing, I tell them to always place phones to silent or vibrate.

It’s important to realize that the people they are with should always take precedent over phone calls or text messages. I take the time to go over some business phone etiquette with them:

- Let your voicemail take your calls while meeting with people.
- Return all phone calls within 24 hours.
- Do not make or receive calls during a business meeting.
- If you are expecting an important call that cannot be postponed, alert people in your meeting prior to its start of the situation.
- If and when you receive the call, step away from the meeting and keep the call brief.
- Always be courteous to people within hearing distance and use discretion when discussing private matters. Keep your voice low.
- When receiving a call in a restaurant, always step outside or to a place of privacy.
- Do not use your cell phone for talking or texting while driving unless you have a blue tooth device.
- Never text while in motion.
- Text messaging, while in a meeting, should be in case of extreme circumstances and not to be done during a meeting unless an emergency arises.
- Never text message during religious services, funerals, weddings, court proceedings or while sitting at a dining table.
- If you receive a text message of an urgent matter, remove yourself from your surroundings before answering.

At this point, I use a personal example. When I go to meetings, my cell phone stays in the car. If I think I might need it to provide contact information during the meeting, it stays in my pocket on vibrate or turned off. I don't let anything disturb me UNLESS I'm in production. Then I keep it on vibrate and ask others to please forgive me. "I'm in production and have to be available. Please understand."

I certainly understand when others are in that position. But, when they're not, I'm so put off when those with whom I'm meeting start taking calls or messages during my time with them. Taking phone calls or texting with others tell those you are with that *they aren't as important to you as the person on the phone.*

How did this mindset come about for me? When my granddaughters were 13 and 14 years old, they used to visit my wife and me for two weeks every summer. At that time, I was extremely busy with work and always had to be on the phone. I tried to be with them a lot, but I was *always* on my cell phone. During one visit, they drew a picture of my wife and me on the front of a thank you card they made for us. The picture showed my wife taking a tray of cookies out of the oven. I was standing next to her with a cell phone in my ear. The note was really sweet, and they never mentioned it, but when I saw that it hit me. I had been sending the wrong message to those kids!

From that summer forward when I was with my grandchildren, my cell phone was off. I'd go out of the room and check messages away from them every several hours, but they never saw me with my phone stuck to my ear again. This was very powerful for me.

I share this story with students because I want them to understand the impression my grandchildren had of me. Sometimes we aren't aware of the negative impressions we create for others. I reiterate when you are trying to spend quality time with friends, associates or during business meetings, remember what a friend of mine told me. "Just because your phone rings doesn't mean you have to answer it." When you are in a meeting or having dinner with someone, if you start texting, those who are physically present with you will feel that you don't care what they have to say. Be aware of the unspoken messages you send to people.

E-Mail

An E-mail address can send the wrong message as well. Compare hotbody@hotmail.com to TomKnoley@TK.com. Which will impress a potential employer more?

We discuss E-mail etiquette while we're on the subject. Most of the students are surprised that etiquette has anything to do with E-mails! I enlighten them that in business E-mail etiquette is essential:

- Subject line is to inform the purpose of the E-mail. Keep it brief and relevant to content.
- Content should be on the formal side while always using a salutation, such as: Dear Mr. King,
- Always use a surname rather than a first name until advised a first-name basis is acceptable. This may be advised purely by a return signature.

- All E-mails should start with a salutation!
- Don't shout! Using all UPPER CASE LETTERS is considered CYBER SHOUTING!
- Remember no E-mail is private!
- Private matters should be discussed in person or by phone.
- Always employ the 24-hour rule when sending an emotion-packed message. Cool down and be sure to reread your message before sending.
- Always proofread all messages before sending.
- Use a signature line containing your first and last name, company and contact information at the end of every E-mail. This is helpful to the recipient to contact you in other ways if necessary.

Social Networks

We move on to their Facebook pages, and there's a collective groan. I ask them what's on their Facebook, MySpace or Twitter pages. "Do you want your potential boss to know about your personal and social life? Should your perspective new employers see personal photos of you and your friends? "

I tell them to check the content of their pages before beginning a job search and clean them up...take off anything you don't want your grandmother to read! That means photos and statements undesirable to potential employers. I caution that they should be careful of religious beliefs and political opinions being voiced, as well as music and hobbies. I tell them to stay conservative in content. Employers do go to Facebook, Twitter and other social networks to see what you are like when you're not at work. Are you a wild party animal? Are you showing off your tattoos and piercings?

One girl had a photo of herself with a group of friends in bathing suits in a dog pile on the beach, all holding up Coronas. No matter that they were close friends and that it was totally innocent, I told her to clean it up.

"But, it's on Facebook! It's private!" She's indignant.

I explain once something is on the Internet, forget it. It's not private. Look at Senator Weiner and Twitter. Or Michael Phelps, the Olympic champion, smoking dope at a party via YouTube. Both of their reputations were damaged beyond repair because of this. Everyone has to conduct themselves carefully, especially when they are trying to create a good impression.

Applications

We then begin to focus on planning to pick up an application for a job opening. I caution them to take care with how they look when they do so. No baggy pants and sloppy shirts or provocative clothing. Be neat and clean. Ask for the manager and request an application. Then ask for a time the next day to return the application and talk to the manager. I tell students to think of it like a game we're going to play called "Box Them In."

“Box Them In” is where nine calves are put in an arena with a box that has one entrance. Three cowboys must get the calves into the box. Once a cowboy gets the first calf in the box, he guards the entrance for the other two to steer the calves into it. The two remaining cowboys compete to see who gets the most calves in the box. So it is with getting an appointment the next day, and we practice getting an appointment with the employer. It’s simply asking for an appointment to return in person to drop off the application and discuss the job. Ask for a specific time...pen the manager down...put him in the box. Shake hands and thank the manager, repeating the appointment time for tomorrow.

Using Activities as Hiring Benefits

I show them an example of an application, and we go through how to fill them out. I tell them, “Above all else, never tell a lie on an application. If caught, the employer will never believe anything you say again.”

Most are concerned because they don’t have experience. So, we have a discussion about their activities. One boy has served food at the Mission. I say, “That makes you personable. You like to help people, and you know how to serve, be welcoming and smile. You’re with a troop of people, so you’re a team player.”

I begin to ask them what each has done, and then everyone contributes the attributes that go along with individual activities. One boy admits all he’s ever done is play football. Everyone joins in. “This means you are assertive, strong, and move forward positively.”

Another girl volunteers she’s been a Teacher’s Assistant. We come up with the following attributes for her:

- Communication Skills
- Public Speaking
- Teamwork
- Leadership

Another student volunteered as an office clerk, so we came up with:

- Data Input
- Case Management
- Phone Skills
- Typing
- Teamwork
- Public Communication

We come up with an example for anyone who has done any kind of volunteer work. We

List:

- Clerical Skills
- How to work under pressure
- How to meet deadlines
- Phone communications
- Ad campaigns
- Serving people

- Teamwork

Once we're finished brainstorming, everyone has ideas of the strengths and experience to list on individual applications.

Research

After securing the application and the return appointment, the next task is to research three new facts to bring up in the interview. This works equally well for job or college entrance interviews or meeting with a school counselor.

I instruct them to go to the organization's Web site and pick up facts like, "McDonald's sold its 350 billionth burger in Moscow last week" or "McDonald's was voted the number one place to work in Mexico this month."

Look up the company's mission statement and find key words to use in the interview. I tell them that a mission statement defines, in a paragraph or so, any entity's reason for existence. It embodies its philosophies, goals, ambitions and mores. In the interview, make mention of the facts you have found in your research throughout the conversation. In the case of McDonald's, it's a *happy place*. So emphasize that you are a happy person and that you love to serve other people! Use what's on the company's Web site and give it back to them.

Here's a corporate example about Apple I share with them:

Mission Statement: Apple computer is committed to protecting the environment, health and safety of our employees, customers and the global communities where we operate. We recognize that by integrating sound environmental, health and safety management practices into all aspects of our business, we can offer technologically innovative products and services while conserving and enhancing resources for future generations. Apple strives for continuous improvement in our environmental, health and safety management systems and in the environmental quality of our products, processes and services.

Some Key Facts:

- First Apple Computer invented on April 1, 1976.
- Steven Jobs became chairman of Apple Corp. in March of 1981.
- In Fiscal Year 2007 (October 1, 2006 - September 30, 2007), Apple sold approximately 4,887,000 Macintosh computers.
- 15 million I pads were sold in Fiscal Year 2010.

If you are in junior high going to high school, research that new school. For instance, know that "Once a Don, Always a Don" is Santa Barbara High School's motto. Learn other facts. For example, "There are 680 students in this year's freshman class, so I will be a member of a large graduating class!"

This will make you a stand out in the counselor's mind for the rest of the time you are there. And, never be afraid to ask others for advice. People love to help. If you ask for help, it's very difficult for people to resist.

We go through a scenario where we practice working these facts into a mock interview situation. Now, they're getting the hang of it.

CHAPTER 3

HOW TO CREATE A GREAT FIRST IMPRESSION AT AN INTERVIEW

At this point, the students are interested but starting to get antsy. They need even more interaction. I tell them to never be late for an interview. “Prepare ahead of time the night before. Set out what you’ll wear and don’t schedule other activities that will interfere with being on time.”

Then I tell them about why people shake hands. “The handshake came from Egypt, before Christ. It originated as a gesture of peace; indicating that the hand held no weapon. One man would extend his right hand to show he held no weapon and came in peace. The other would do the same and then would shake hands firmly with constant eye contact. Why? How would you like it if you met me and I didn’t look at you?” I demonstrate this with one of the students. They all crack up.

I let them know that today the hand shake has become a standard greeting gesture. Except it isn’t a high-five or a gang bang shake that does the trick.

How to Shake the Hand that Will Feed You

First, I demonstrate with my assistant, a former student. Always stand to meet or greet someone who is standing. Put your lead foot forward. Extend the right hand and grasp the other person’s hand firmly. No wimpy, fish handshakes. Make sure the skin between forefinger and thumb meets the other person’s. If you’re seated in a crowded area, then there is an exception, so smile and make eye contact instead.

Meet and Greet



I illustrate how to meet and greet, again with my assistant. When meeting someone, shake his or her hand and introduce yourself. Example: “Hello, Mr. Garcia, I’m John Daly.”

“It’s a pleasure to meet you, Mr. Daly. I’m Joe Garcia.”

(This is my chance to get on a first-name basis.) I say, “Please call me John, Mr. Garcia.”

(That’s his cue to say it is all right to use his first name. If he doesn’t say so, continue to call him Mr. Garcia.)

I remind them, “Be sure to shake hands firmly with constant eye contact.”

Everyone gets into the action, practicing with each other. At first, they’re awkward. Soon, they’ve got it down pat.

How to Sit—Body Language!

We now practice how to sit. Sit upright. Never slouch. Keep your hands away from your face. Always face the person with whom you are speaking or listening. At this point, if students aren’t sitting up, I call on them! Luis is a perfect example. He still tends to slouch in his chair and when he stands up. I ask, “Would you mind explaining to me...help me understand why this is such a turnoff? Because that’s what your body is telling me.”

He says it isn’t a turnoff and is just how he sits.

I give him an example. “If you want a good grade in a class, but your body says you aren’t interested, even if you are, the teacher thinks you don’t like the class.”

Let’s compare this to how you behave when you want to impress a girl. You puff up; make yourself taller; look her in the eyes rather than shuffling up to her or not looking at her. Tell me the difference.”

Luis gets it. “Yeah, man, I mean Mr. Daly.”

I admit it’s the same with me, and the students tease me about it. I go on to drive the point home. “What about when a couple of rivals meet together. Say they’re on football teams from different schools. They lower their voices, puff up, make themselves bigger...they become a different persona.”

Most admit to me they never even thought of it that way. Everyone is sitting up straighter now!



Interview Time

I stress again:

- Be *alert* and *attentive*.
- Remember, your body language is another way to communicate your message:
“I'm really interested in this job and want to hear what you're saying.”

Eye Contact

Making eye contact can be difficult for some people. If you have trouble, try focusing on their face from their eyes to their mouth.

Listen and Repeat

Listen to what people are saying and repeat it back in your own words. (This makes people think you are smart!)

Tell the interviewer what you can do for the company based upon your research for the firm.

Ask Questions

Most people like to hear themselves talk (especially about themselves!) So always ask WHY and HOW questions. Make sure the answer is not just YES or NO.

Speak Clearly

Make your point. Be polite. Speak clearly by opening your mouth. Make them want to talk to you. Girls sometimes tend to cover their faces when speaking with others, more so than guys. In one such instance, Mary keeps putting her hands on her face, and I keep having to ask her to repeat herself. So, I put my hands on my face and muddle my words.

She stops me. “I can't understand what you are saying!” The rest of the class laughs.

“Yes, I know,” I tell her. This is what you've been doing. And, I'm embarrassed to ask you to repeat the same thing over and over again. People won't want to speak with you if you make them feel uncomfortable.”

She stops that habit and goes on to speak clearly as we practice.

Listen

When listening, always make eye contact and smile. Don't look around. Look them in the eyes!

Making Small Talk

When making small talk with a potential employer, never say “I don't know.” Make up an answer if you have to. Never respond with a simple “Yes” or “No.” While practicing in class, I ask James, “What do you like about your school the most?”

He stumbles with, “I don't know.”

I coach him to come up with something like, “I really like the science program.” Or “We have a great football team.”

This back-fires on me with Sam. I bring him up to the front of the class to practice small talk with me. As we practice, I say, “What’s your favorite kind of food?”

Sam smiles and says, “I like soup.”

“What kind do you like?”

“Oh, tortilla soup.” Sam keeps looking at me straight in the eyes.

I think I have something here. “You sound like a good cook. Do you want to do that?”

“Yeah, I make soup a lot.”

“How do you do it?” I’m curious now. I want to know how he makes it from scratch.

“I make it fast.” He smiles again.

“How do you do it fast?” Now I’m really curious.

“In the microwave.” He chuckles, and I burst out laughing. The rest of the class becomes hysterical and is totally relaxed at this point.

From that moment, Sam and I are totally bonded.

Very often when kids try to have interactive conversations, they get befuddled and feel like they are being cross-examined. I tell them to turn the question back and get the other person to talk. Something like, “I like the soccer program. What was your favorite class in high school?”

When It’s Over, What’s Next?

- Always write a *thank you* note to the person who took the time to interview you.
- Include a sentence that describes how you will meet their expectations. What is your potential boss looking for in you?
- “Parrot” what you heard about the job in your words and ask participating questions; *When shall I contact you?*
- A thank you note is always better than anything else because it is not done as often and will therefore stand out to the potential employer.
- I ask students to write me a thank you letter to me as a way of practice. Here’s an example of an excellent one I receive back and share with the class:

Dear Mr. Daly:

I am writing this letter to let you know how helpful your class was. I attended your class on September 7, 2011. I went in not thinking I would learn much, but after only the first class I have already learned so many different things that will help me get further in this world. Thank you for the help you gave and the help you will continue to give.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Doe

Sample Thank You Note for Interview

123 Main Street || Central City, CA 91234 || 213-629-1234 ||

JohnDoe@GMAIL.COM

Date

Salutation Name

Title

Company

Address 1

Address 2

Dear (Salutation Name):

It was a pleasure (speaking with you/meeting with you) on (DATE). I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for taking the time to meet with me, as well as to express my appreciation for the information you offered. I am still very interested in (POSITION NAME) position, and I am convinced, now more than ever, that it is the right job for me. I feel my background and qualifications have prepared me well for just the sort of challenges and responsibilities we discussed.

(Choose one of the two paragraphs below, depending on whether or not you have, or have not yet, interviewed with the person.)

(I am eager to meet with you again to discuss my background and qualifications at greater length and how I can be of value to (POSITION OR COMPANY NAME). Please feel free to contact me at the above number so we can continue the discussion we began over the telephone.)

OR

(Again, thank you for considering my qualifications. I enjoyed our talk, and am available at any time to provide you with the additional information you may need. I look forward to hearing your decision.)

Sincerely,

John Doe

Thank You Note Via E-Mail

Write an E-mail as a last resort. Why? People can't see your face and often interpret your E-mail message intent incorrectly.

Waiting to Hear

Don't let this happen to you:



Phone Manners Matter

- Be professional.
 - Speak into the phone.
 - Avoid background noise.
 - Stay focused on the call.
 - Be prepared to take notes.
 - Practice before you call.
- Another practice session ensues.

CHAPTER 4

What to Wear to an Interview

(STILL WORKING ON THAT FIRST GREAT IMPRESSION)

For the next class, we go to The Gap at the Paseo Nuevo Mall in Santa Barbara. Most of the guys show up in baggy pants or shorts and shirts. I tell them this style makes them look very young. My point is that they should impress upon potential employers that they have some knowledge behind them. Dressing well tells an employer “I’m a good risk to hire.” Wearing a style epitomized by gang members doesn’t give the impression of someone they’d like to hire!

As usual, I discover that most of the boys don’t know their waist sizes because they buy pants two to four sizes larger than they are. I tease them, and they think it’s funny. I have each of them take a pair of pants and button the waist and wrap it around their necks. The ends should just touch and will equal each guy’s waist size.

I caution them to tuck in their shirts. “Why” they question. I explain that tucking it in makes them look more put together. I show them how a man should tuck in his shirt so that it stays in and looks tidy.

“Drop your pants, pull your shirt down and flat across your belly and butt. Before you pull up your pants, put your hands in the pockets and make them flat. Then pull up the pants. If wearing boxers, go inside the pant and pull the boxers down. If you tuck your shirt in after the pants are buttoned, your shirt won’t stay in and look neat.”

I tell the guys not to wear two or three tee-shirts under their regular shirt as they sometimes do.

I’ve learned from the girls that they think overdressing makes them look important. They want to use lots of jewelry and fill all their pierced ear holes. I explain, “Less is more.” I advise them to put out all their clothes the night before to make sure this is how they want to look.

“Make sure everything is neat and pressed.”

Once that’s done, and they are dressed, I tell them to remove one piece of jewelry. “You’ll come off more conservative rather than flashy if you do.”

Some of them complain. “But, I’m an artist and want people to see my personality.” I smile and say, “Save it until you’ve got the job. You want to make other people comfortable when speaking to you.”

One boy asks, “I still don’t see why we have to dress up.” I tell them my story about Delta Airlines.

“I was going to make a very large presentation to Delta Airlines that I hoped would win me long-term business with the company. I wore a suit and tie, because I knew they did so. I did it to make them feel comfortable. As I got into my presentation, I began waving my hands and

describing the event, and they all were smiling. I stopped and asked if I could take off my coat. They said “yes” and took off theirs as well. I went on to tell them how during the event a large jet would appear and blow people away...my enthusiasm increased and drew them into my story...taking them away with me. I got the job and spent the next decade producing events for them. But, I initially made them comfortable with me by dressing as they did so that I could later let my personality win them over.”

I also explain that over- as well as under-dressing sends strong messages. Being under-dressed says you are not interested in the interview. Over-dressing is a better option than under-dressing for the interview process. However, I encourage them to practice the K.I.S.S. method – Keep It Simple, Silly!

I tell everyone to cover their tattoos and piercings if they can. Never wear anything religious, such as a cross or Jewish star. I explain that it’s too emotionally charged in these times. I suggest that if they must wear them to hide them under their clothing. I also advise to remove all the jewelry from their piercings.

One girl cries out, “I can’t take them off; they’re still healing!”

I tell her to wait to interview until she can.

So then we begin to talk about what to wear. I tell them, first and foremost, make sure you have:

- Neat appearance
- Clean hands and finger nails
- Brushed teeth
- Combed hair
- Fresh smell
- Nice clothing
- Shined shoes

Next I tell them, dress to impress. Dressing to impress isn’t about how expensive the clothing is but how you put it all together. It’s about showing how *well put together you are*.

Tips I provide them:

- If you find yourself in a hard financial situation, buy accessories that will make old outfits look new. Accessories: Ties, Belts, Vests, Bracelets, Earrings, and Scarves.
- I repeat - go for a conservative look, not a flashy one.
- Be comfortable but present the BEST you that you possibly can.

What Not to Wear

We discuss what not to wear. **For guys, I advise don’t wear:**

- Shirts with inappropriate messages
- Clothing that is too tight

- Cutoff jeans or pants
- Shorts
- Clothing that is too baggy
- Flip-flops

For girls, I warn not to wear:

- See-through or low-cut blouses or dresses or strapless dresses
- Heels that are too hard to walk in
- Clothing that is too tight
- Shoes that make a slapping noise when walking on wood floors
- Flip-flops
- Cologne or perfume
- Displayed tattoos and piercings

I tell everyone to wear:

- Deodorant
- A conservative hair style – no unnatural colors

How Do I Make an Outfit?

Isaiah Ornelas, Assistant Brand Manager at The Gap, takes the students through all the choices of selecting an outfit for an interview. Ornelas, his manager Dawn Banales and The Gap at Paseo Nuevo Mall have been supporting this program for more than a year. Ornelas says this is a great community outreach program for The Gap. “I’ve been in these students’ shoes without the guidance that John provides,” Ornelas says. “I enjoy being a part of it.” His enthusiasm shows as he goes through the different clothing options.



For Guys:



A Button-Down shirt is a must-have in a male's wardrobe. It goes well with the tailored straight pant or a dark straight jean. But, for a professional look the key is to tuck in the shirt.



A crewneck tee under a shirt can be a substitute for a tie. It adds additional color to the outfit without the trouble of tying a tie. But, make sure the crewneck tee is a basic color like white, black or grey. Too much color is distracting.



The tailored straight pant is another essential to a male's wardrobe. You can pair it with the button-down shirt or a nice V-neck sweater.



The V-neck sweater is a great add-on to a professional outfit. You can either pair it with a button-down shirt or a basic crewneck tee.



Again jeans are tricky when matching tops to wear to an interview. The key is to look for dark jeans without any distress or holes. Make sure they are straight...not too baggy and not too skinny...just perfect.



Once you have the perfect professional outfit, add a clean-cut jacket to complete your interview outfit. Keep it simple and basic.

For Girls:



A classic white button-down is a great basic. It goes well with any pant and jeans.



Pairing the classic white button-down gives an outfit a new touch and provides you with two outfits if you have a second interview.



The perfect trouser is a must have and works great for any interview. You can pair it with the classic white button-down (always tuck it in for a professional look) by itself or add the cardigan for another classic look.



A basic blazer is another great essential to have in your professional wardrobe. You can pair it with the perfect trouser or long & lean jeans for a causal business look.



Pairing the blazer with a ruffle tee adds great texture to the outfit. Again you can match it with the perfect trouser or long & lean jeans.



Look for a jean with a more tailored look. The long & leans are great for an interview outfit. The slim fit and wide flare give it a more trouser look.



The tank dress is great to wear to an interview, but you must pair it with a cardigan. This dress is perfect because it is not too short. The key with length is to not have the dress shorter than two inches from the knee.

I interject and tell them to do the private school uniform test while deciding on a dress. “What’s that?” One of the girls’ questions.

I demonstrate. “Place your hands to your sides and make sure your skirt isn’t shorter than where your fingertips end.”

I then think Isaiah Ornelas and remind students, “Above all else, the key is to be clean, be neat and be fresh!”

CHAPTER 5

HOW TO DINE OUT AT A SEMI-FORMAL RESTAURANT

(STILL WORKING ON MAKING A GREAT IMPRESSION)

My students are often confused about the semi-formal dining setup. Why? Many of my Latino students are unclear about eating with a knife and fork because they use a tortilla as a knife and fork at home and eat their entire meal with it.

Once while we were dining out, a young man scooped up his rice and beans with a tortilla and asked me how to eat this American-style. I explained, “The way we do it in our house is take the fork or knife and spread the rice and bean onto the tortilla.”

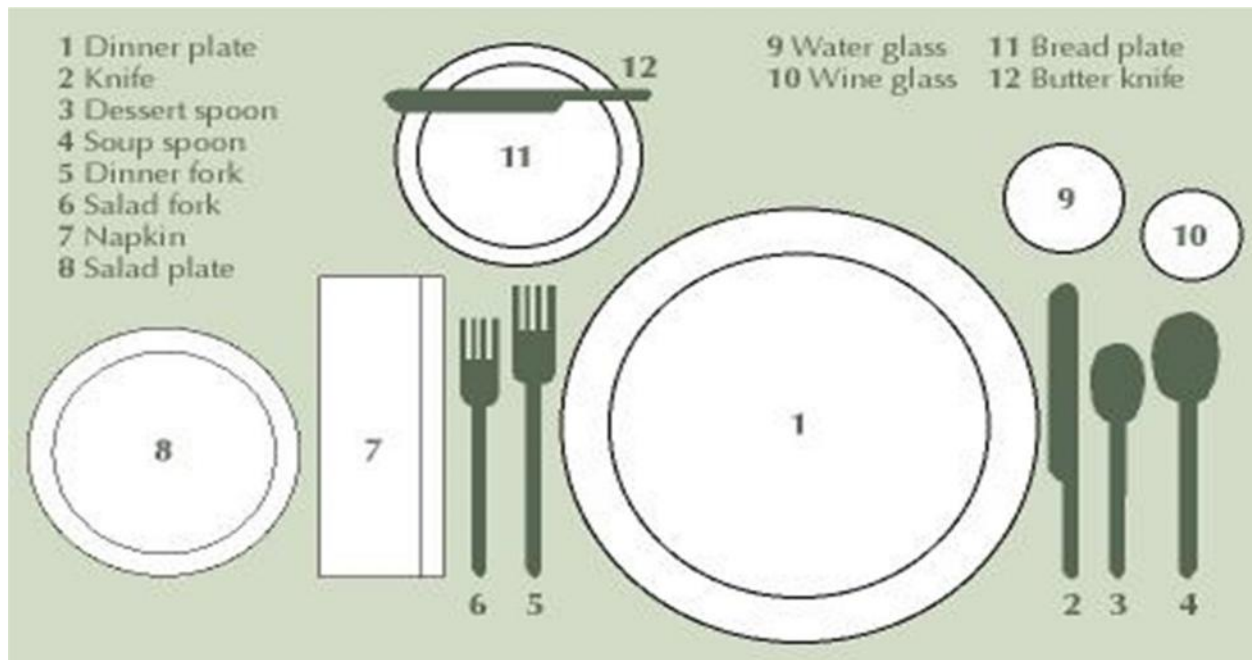
A girl sitting next to him volunteered that when she goes to her grandmother’s house, her grandmother doesn’t have forks. When she asked for a fork, her grandmother told her to use a tortilla!

It’s important at this point to explain to students that I’m teaching American etiquette and business etiquette and that we don’t necessarily have to follow these rules at home. I interject. “My favorite meal is pork chops, mashed potatoes and peas. When I’m at home, I cut a piece of pork, dip it in my mashed potatoes and then cover all that with the peas. I would never, ever do that in a business lunch or dinner.”

I explain that I just want them to know the rules and practice them in preparation for eating with a potential employer. Employers often take potential hires to lunch at a semi-formal restaurant to see how they behave socially during a meal. I explain that I’ve had five occasions in my career where I was just about to hire someone, took him/her to a restaurant and decided not to do so after observing them during a meal.

“If they were rude to the waiter or waitress or didn’t use good dining etiquette, I didn’t want to hire them. Rudeness shows me that they will treat associates or those reporting to them without respect. And, I wouldn’t want them to entertain my customers with less than impeccable table manners.”

How a Semi-Formal Table Is Set



In this class, we have set the table for the students to see where each piece of the place-setting is positioned. We go through this and explain the function of each one.

Getting Seated

Everyone then gets up out of their seats, and we practice how gentlemen always help the lady to his right to be seated and then any other lady at the table that doesn't have a gentleman near her. They practice pulling the chair out with both hands on the back of the chair for the ladies and then scooting it forward with an extra push at the end to help the ladies get positioned properly up to the table.

I show them how to unfold the napkin and place it in their laps.

Getting Ready to Order

"To signal a wait person you are ready to order," I explain, "close your menu."

What to Order

I advise them to never order the most expensive item on the menu. Don't order something you've never eaten before. I tell them not to experiment on another person's dollar. It's rude to order something and not care for it and not eat it. Order easy to eat foods with no sauces, and never order finger food.

How to Order Food

"To order food," I instruct them, "look your server in the eye and say, 'May I please have...'"

I tell them that today we are going to order steak, and we discuss the differences between rare, medium-rare, medium, medium-well and well-done. Everyone practices ordering steak.

How to Properly Eat

We go through the different courses—soup, salad, entrée, and dessert. I show them how to eat soup and how to move the spoon away from them through the soup. I'm, of course, asked "Why?" My response is that this will prevent the drip from the spoon splashing on a shirt or blouse. "Once the spoon has been lifted away from you, it will drip into the bowl, not your clothes." A lot of ahas on that one. I make sure they know to wipe their mouths on a regular basis throughout the meal.

I show them how to cut meat in small bite-size pieces, one at a time, and place the knife on the edge of the plate before using the fork to put the piece in their mouths.

James asks, "Why can Europeans eat holding a knife and fork at the same time, but Americans can't?"

My response, "Why not a burrito with chop sticks? Different countries have different rules."

I tell them to slow down and listen and only talk when their mouths are empty. I'm asked what can be eaten with the fingers, and I explain it's permissible to eat French fries, asparagus and crisp bacon with the fingers.

Jose asks me what to do if he has to leave the table for a few minutes. I advise, "Just excuse yourself and put your napkin on you seat. And push your chair up to the table so it doesn't stick out and cause a barrier between tables."

I then explain that to signal the wait person you have finished, place your dinner fork and knife at 4:00 on your plate with the knife blade facing in.

When ready to leave the table, do not display a dirty napkin but face it clean-side up to the left of the plate position. Never on the plate.

Dining Out - The Final Exam

The final class is held at Jill's Place in Santa Barbara. We attend a semi-formal dinner. It's the final exam to let all the students dress as for an interview and prove that they can effectively display the social manners I've provided them. Jill Shalhoob, through her gracious support, has made this a cost-effective and valuable experience for my students.

As they all arrive, they're nervous, but there's lots of teasing about how super each of them looks. I'm the worst. They relax, even while I watch them like a hawk and test them throughout the meal. I'm proud of the progress they've made. I know that with their new knowledge, they'll approach securing jobs with a new confidence. And, I always offer myself as an on-going resource, which many of them utilize.

CHAPTER 6

IS THIS WORKING?

Case Study Successes

How do I know my students are successful after the class? According to Ed Cue, Teen Court Program Director, “Programs that are run through Teen Court see an impressive turnaround. Strategies like The Key Class are the backbone to a 92 percent completion rate and a recidivism rate of 12 percent. These kids are investing in themselves, and we’re setting them up for success.”

Teen Court’s “restorative justice” methods are more effective and less expensive than incarcerating minors, Cue said. According to the Santa Barbara County Probation Department, it costs \$20,000 to put a minor in juvenile hall for three months, but only \$500 to put a minor through Teen Court’s three-month program.

It’s “a whole lot better than tailing, mailing, and jailing ‘em,” Cue said.

But the proof runs deeper. Here are some specific examples.

- I was shopping at Gelsons one afternoon. As I was loading my car with groceries, a former student runs toward me and after catching his breath says, “I’m working here because of all the instructions you gave me, Mr. Daly.”
- Numerous students have called me for help with specific applications and to help them practice with mock interviews...and then called me afterwards to let me know they got the jobs.
- I get calls out of the blue on Christmas Day from students thanking me for all that I’ve taught them. Several told me that once they started treating their teachers with respect, they have a more positive relationship with them and their schools. And their grades are improving!
- My greatest success story is Jose Lozano, 17, who attended The Key Class in May after being referred to the program for petty theft. He liked it so much that he asked if he could take it again. I made him my assistant. Ed Cue, in a recent interview explained that Jose was totally on the fence, and Teen Court and the support he’s had all around has allowed him to see a better future. In addition to a job at McDonalds for the past four months, Jose now also works alongside me at my special event design and production company, John Daly Inc. He is carrying a lot of heavy units so that he can graduate soon because McDonalds have offered him a management position once he does. I am very proud of him.

CONCLUSION

If we're lucky, life often allows us to help others succeed. That's the essence of The Key Class. By facilitating these experiences for students, I am showing them what is possible, that there is another way of life, and helping them to understand they have the power to create better opportunities within themselves.

It is my desire to expand The Key Class into a state-wide program, and I am working with local government agencies to begin to realize this goal. This won't just be a program for at-risk teens but for high school, college and business school graduates and ESL students who also need this information to secure the right jobs and a brighter future. Currently, with the help of Partners in Education, The Key Class has expanded into numerous high schools in Santa Barbara County, with the goal to expand to all of them during 2013.

I am fortunate to have secured a prestigious and diverse board of directors for The Key Club. They are: Shelly Schwab, former president of MCA, Inc.; Brent Baldwin, Esq., a certified Court-Appointed Special Advocate for Santa Barbara County's juvenile dependency system; Robert Jacquemin, former corporate executive for DreamWorks SKG; Christine Schwab, a fashion, beauty and lifestyle expert and television personality; and Eduardo F. Cue, director of Delinquency Prevention Programs with the Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse.



ABOUT JOHN DALY

John Daly is an international legend in the world of special events. Known as the “Guru of Special Events Design,” John is the founding owner and creative force behind one of the most successful event planning businesses in the world. Throughout his incredible career, he has studied the etiquette of a large variety of cultures, including Japan, France, Australia, South Africa, India and Korea to name just a few. All these countries and more have hosted John to teach his field of expertise, and thus he began his hobby of understanding different societies world-wide. Soon, this hobby only added to the success of his event planning business.

His clients have included a full 25 percent of the Top 50 Fortune 100 companies, such as Gillette, MasterCard, Land Rover, Rolls Royce, Credit Suisse, Citicorp and Goldman Sachs, and Hollywood entertainment companies such as KingWorld, CBS and Universal. He has worked for some of Hollywood’s most well-known entertainers, celebrities, and others associated with the entertainment industry including: Tom Cruise and Katie Holmes; David Beckham and his wife Victoria (Posh); Will and Jada Smith; Oprah Winfrey; Frank Sinatra; Bob Hope and Dean Martin. He has created events for past U.S. Presidents, the State Department and the Smithsonian Institute. He designed and implemented the altar décor for ceremonies at The Los Angeles Coliseum and Dodger Stadium for Pope John Paul II’s visit to the U.S. For many years he has been involved with World Cup Soccer, as well as The Olympics to plan events surrounding their international festivities.

Being an employer of many people throughout his illustrious career, John knows the importance of a positive interview process. His experiences interviewing, hiring and promoting his own staff, as well as working with top-level executives and celebrities, have taught him the importance of the proper skills necessary to succeed. He attributes his training and social skills as the key to his success.

For the past year, John has provided The Key Class to at-risk teens through the Teen Court in Santa Barbara County, California. It is his desire to expand The Key Class into a state-wide program, and he is working with local government agencies to begin to realize this goal. Working with Partners in Education, he is additionally piloting The Key Class to meet the needs of three high schools in Santa Barbara. His vision of a state-wide program will encompass classes not only for at-risk teens but for ESL students, high school, college and business school graduates, who also need this information to secure the right jobs and a brighter future.

WHAT OTHERS SAY ABOUT JOHN DALY AND THE KEY CLASS

Chuck McClain, *Supervisor Sheriff's Treatment Program, Santa Barbara Sheriff Department:*
"John Daly is one of those individuals that immediately grasps what is needed in any situation...The difference with John is, unlike a lot of people, he becomes involved. Not just a little, but completely involved! John's passion for "The Key Class" far surpasses normal "Work Ethic." He is completely involved with this Project, and his results have shown exceptional and exceedingly positive results. This is a Life Saving and Changing Program! When John first proposed his idea of The Key Class to me and my Program in the Santa Barbara County Jail, I was somewhat taken aback at the simplicity of this project, and to be honest, I thought this will not work in my environment and it is just too simple to work in any environment...It is really just common sense what he teaches... I was absolutely wrong!! John Daly does not teach...He gets Involved, and the Passion he shows allows his participants to Experience, Feel and Challenge themselves to try something new and in his Clients' eyes, something completely different from their normal routines in life. I would be a very rich man if I could figure out how to bottle John's attitude and passion...The World would then be full of Positive Motivated people that believed in themselves and the World at large. So many of our problems would be relieved and only because one man named John Daly took the time to fill us up with his willingness to show us how we can move in society with respect, self-assuredness and a passion to live life to the fullest." August 18, 2011.

Brent Baldwin, *Director of Operations & General Counsel, American Indian Health & Svcs:*
"John is doing great work through The Key Class and is making a positive, measurable impact in our community. I never want to miss an opportunity to work with him and his organization." August 23, 2011.

Carol McKibben, *Former Publisher/Director, Special Events magazine and The Special Event:*
"I have used John Daly's teaching services MANY times to teach thousands of conference participants. John is a powerful, magnetic teacher whose vast expertise is conveyed in such a creative and entertaining manner that no one can resist listening to and watching him. No matter the subject, I would highly recommend John Daly if you want students or participants to walk away thoroughly educated and entertained simultaneously. On a scale of 1 to 10, John Daly breaks and exceeds the measure. August 23, 2011.

Juliana Lee, *Fighting Back Mentor Program Coordinator, Council on Alcoholism & Drug Abuse:*
John is a tremendous asset to the community. He created and continues to coordinate the Key Class, a highly valuable educational opportunity for the youth in the Santa Barbara community. Youth who have participated in the Key Class leave empowered, ready to face the scary world of employment and interviews and any other meetings that help set the path for their future. He is an engaging educator and enables youth to learn by doing, rather than just by listening to him talk about what they should do.

The best part about working with John is his enthusiasm and passion to motivate and encourage the people around him. He is a constant source of energy and devotion to the greater good." September 20, 2011.

Isaiah Ornelas, *Former Assistant Brand Manager, The Gap-Paseo Nuevo, Currently with Macy's-Paseo Nuevo, Santa Barbara:*

The Key Class is a great thing. It covers stuff that seems to be lost now. Years ago my parents put me in Cotillion to learn what John teaches, but so many adults appear to not have social manners today. John is a fantastic resource. It is so great to see how committed he is to the kids. Amazing resource!" September 21, 2011.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Want more information about The Key Class or John Daly? Visit: www.thekeyclass.com or E-mail john@jdalyinc.com.