

Tips for Kiwanis Etiquette at Meetings

Prepared by the Education Committee

Etiquette is about good manners and respect. Does our behaviour affect our club, it's members and its image?

What are some of the issues commonly raised?

1. **Talking** – It is not kind to speak while others are speaking. It is usually perceived as: rude and disrespectful and distracting to others trying to listen. We want to impress guests and potential members and our own members.

What about talking during a speaker's presentation - Speakers are often nervous, maybe even afraid. They are excited and eager to share their topic with the audience. They have worked hard to prepare their presentation. Often it takes courage to speak in public. We should ask ourselves, if I was this speaker, how would I feel about the attention I was given during my presentation? Would I want to return again or perhaps even join this group? We need to respect their efforts regardless of the appeal to us personally. The speaker is our invited guest. We need to give them the same attention and respect as someone you invite into your home. We **don't** want the speaker to be thinking any of these thoughts - They are not interested in what I have to say. They don't care about my efforts, feelings or how hard this is for me to do. They believe that their conversation is more important than my presentation. We **don't** want our members thinking any of these thoughts – I can't hear because there are members talking. I'm not concerned about our image, even though we all look bad when this happens. My conversation is more important.

Remember, both whispering and talking in a normal voice is distracting. So is the use of your cell phone or tablet during presentations. It is a good idea to turn off or set your phone/tablet to "vibrate" so it will not distract the speaker or others. If you have to take a call, please leave the room before beginning your conversation. Make being quiet during presentations a goal in your club. Follow the "Golden Rule" – "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

Presidents – you can ring the bell to gain back control. "SSSSHHHHHH" works

well – verbally and finger to the lips (also the zipper signal across the mouth). Both work well as long as the members know what they mean. Put the Fine Master to work collecting a “large fine” from those that were talking.

Speakers can just stop talking until the members stop talking. This can be embarrassing for both the speaker and the audience members.

2. Other issues – Off coloured jokes and improper language are “no-no’s” at a Kiwanis meeting.

Your audience will be more engaged when you keep your stories short and to the point – “brevity is the soul of wit”.

Use the microphone if available. If you still cannot hear, move closer, it will help a great deal.

It is a good idea not to gossip or chastise anyone. It does not make a person feel better.

We are all volunteers – ask us to participate, don’t dictate to members regarding tasks, opinions, decisions etc.

Majority Rules – accept and support democratic club decisions. Enthusiastic discussion is always encouraged as long as you don’t have a personal agenda or are trying to alter the will of the club.

Leaving during a meeting – Some people have legitimate reasons for leaving – work, appointments etc. But if others are leaving “just because”, maybe we need to ask ourselves why? Time and effort is spent by various people to keep the club membership up to date and informed. Let’s all respect that.

Final Thoughts – Kiwanis Emotions - What we do and say can invoke

- frustration, embarrassment, resentment, disappointment, hurt, sadness, anger, fear OR excitement, pride, joy, enthusiasm, love, support, friendship, AWESOMENESS....Which do you prefer? We are KIWANIANS – let’s be different, let’s be better! Let’s be AWESOME!