

TIPS OF THE TRADE

# Business etiquette in the McDonald's age

**Special to Sentinel-Voice**  
Etiquette. The word may bring to mind images of the Victorian Era and unnatural rules of behavior. But today basic etiquette is an important part of presenting a positive image to your boss or to your clients or customers.

The skills required to project a relaxed and competent image are now receiving attention from all types of organizations, which expect employees at a variety of levels to be able to successfully present themselves and the company's interests.

"Many people that make it to the top understand these rules, and they expect others to know them too. Most of the people I work with are upwardly mobile and good at their jobs but might lack the social skills to take that next step," explains Jane Wilger, President of Wilger Image Development, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Wilger provides common sense guidelines for situations businesspeople frequently experience, whether they are engineers, salespeople, administrators or executives. In her seminars, Wilger discusses all aspects of business meals, how to dress for success, body language, introductions, and even cell phone manners. A few of her favorite tips follow below:

**Introductions**

While introductions may appear simple, these are the few moments in which critical first impressions are made on all sides.

"Always stand up when being introduced to someone,"

says Wilger. "If you're sitting across a large table it may not be possible to reach across and shake hands, but you can at least stand."

The name of the person of highest rank, or the person of honor, should be spoken first; all others are being presented to that person. For example, "President Clinton, I'd like you to meet Jane Smith."

"The person of highest rank," says Wilger, "is first the client, or any person who is outside of your organization, unless they are a member of your family. Second, it is the person with a higher position, so that a manager would be introduced to a vice president."

**Handshakes**

"Whether you're a man or a woman, jobs can still be won or lost on the basis of a firm handshake," says Wilger. Men and women should shake hands with each other the same way as woman to woman or man to man. Offer your hand turned at a 90 degree angle to the floor and don't hold just the fingers or try to crush the other person's hand with an iron grip.

During a cocktail hour, hold your drink in the left hand. Do this both to keep your right hand free, and so it is not cold and wet from holding a glass.

Some men may wait for a woman to offer her hand to be shaken, rather than automatically extending their hand to her. Wilger advises women to "get your hand out there right away so there is no confusion." She offers the same advice to anyone who might have a disability in their right hand or arm. "Bob Dole puts his left hand out there to shake

right away, and people just learn to shake left hands with him."

**Dining**

"Your napkin should go into your lap within the first ten seconds of sitting down," says Wilger. And once in your lap, the napkin should never again be placed on the table until everyone leaves at the end of the meal. If you need to stand or leave the table during the meal, the napkin should be left on your chair.

Wilger says she is often asked what to do if something is stuck in your teeth. "The rule is that it should come out the same way it went in." If it went in by hand, such as grape stones, olive pits or bits of nut shell, it goes out by hand. If it went on a spoon, such as something in a soup, it should come out by spoon. An exception to this rule are small clean things such as fish bones, which likely went in on a fork, but can be removed by hand.

Wilger also notes it is best to be as discreet as possible. Trying too hard to cover up what you're doing by hiding behind your napkin actually draws more attention to the process than if you try to quietly remove the problem food.

**Paying the Bill**

If you think there might be a scuffle about who will pay the bill, or if you simply want it handled in a swift and subtle way, Wilger suggests the following. "Arrive at the restaurant a few minutes early, tell them you are entertaining a client and ask them to run your credit card through. Then the bill will come straight to you and all you have to do at the

end of the meal is figure the tip and sign your name."

**Small Talk**

"The purpose of small talk is to find something in common and create a bond," says Wilger. "The best way to do

this is to ask people questions. Trying to be witty is less important than being observant and asking good questions."

Wilger does not feel politics and religion need to be avoided as topics, as long as no

blanket attacks are made, and especially if you know the person you're talking with has similar interests. However, "never, ever bring up sex in any context," said Wilger.

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## Herman

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Democrat on the Committee and to Senate Minority Leader Thomas Daschle of South Dakota.

More letters are needed now, not only to those leaders, but to all the members of the Labor and Human Resources Committee — Republican Senators Dan Coats, Judd Gregg, Bill Frist, Mike DeWine, Mike Enzi, Tim Hutchinson and Democrats Christopher Dodd, Tom Harkin, Barbara Mikulski, Jeff Bingaman, Paul Wellston, Patty Murray and Jack Reed. Each can be written to at the U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C., 20510.

The Herman nomination ran into trouble when information was erroneously reported that she had a role in the ever-broadening campaign finance scandal involving the Clinton White House and the Democratic National Committee; a scandal which, to a lesser extent, also involves the Republican National Committee. The Hatch Act forbids government appointees, such as Herman, from engaging in purely political activities on government time.

The fact is that Herman did not organize the infamous May 13 coffee meeting with the President, bank executives and banking officials. In fact, when she learned — the morning of the event — that DNC officials were scheduled to attend, she chose not to attend to avoid any possible improper participation.

A letter from White House Staff Secretary Todd Stern to Committee Chairman Jeffords states. "What these documents confirm is that the only list of attendees that Herman saw, prior to the event, mentioned neither DNC officials nor Mr. Ludwig."

"She has been a successful businesswoman and a leader in efforts to bring minorities into the economic mainstream," President Clinton said of her. "And for the past four years as Director of the White House Office of Public

Liaison, she has been my eyes and ears, working to connect the American people, business and labor, individuals and communities with their government."

Ms. Herman offers "an extraordinary wealth of experience in the labor field and a deep commitment to improving the well-being of working people," wrote National Urban League President Hugh Price.

She uniquely understands the aspirations and needs of working women based on her previous position as Director of the Women's Bureau at the Department of Labor... We believe that she would bring a welcome combination of compassion, intelligence, mediation skills and integrity to this pivotal position in the federal government," Price said.

While the White House promises to stand by this deserving appointee — similar promises were made to Justice Department nominee Lani Guinier and to Surgeon General nominee Dr. Henry Foster when their appointments first received unflattering media attention.

Pressure must be maintained on both ends of Washington's famous Pennsylvania Avenue — at the White House and at the Capitol. Herman is a superb choice as Secretary of Labor.

When the Senate reconvenes Feb. 25, after the President's Day Holiday recess, its leadership should be met with a mountain of letters, faxes, and phone messages indicating that its first order of business must be scheduling a hearing on her confirmation to that post.

Herman, age 29, became the youngest woman to head the Labor Department's Women's Bureau, under President Jimmy Carter in 1977; she served as Deputy Chair of the DNC under then-Chairman Ron Brown; she served as Democratic Convention manager for the Jackson for President Campaign in 1988 and she served as co-director of the Clinton Presidential Transition Team in 1992.

## Amos

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and I guessed that he had seen the comet when it appeared the last time in 1910. I started to imagine all that the man must have lived through in-between sightings," he said.

"Of course, I borrowed from my own experience in creating the character," Amos said.

"He shares something in common with every elderly person I have known. In this way, he is a patriarchal every man as much as he is distinctly individual. During the play, he relives all that has changed in his life and his world: His marriages, the births and deaths of his children, political upheaval — all the joys and sadness of one man's history."

John Amos, a native of New Jersey, made his theatrical debut in the Los Angeles production of "Norman Is That You?" and was nominated by the Los Angeles Drama Critics for "Best Actor." Amos has appeared in such theatrical

productions as the acclaimed New York Shakespeare Festival's "Twelfth Night" and Broadway's "Tough to Get Help."

Amos has recently starred in Norman Lear's "704 Hauser Street," a new TV series for CBS. He is the artistic director of the John Harms Center for the Arts in Englewood, New Jersey.

Performances of "Halley's Comet" are dedicated to Alex Haley, a close friend of Amos. Haley, who passed away recently, is best known for his

Pulitzer Prize-winning book, "Roots," that provided a powerful human view of slavery. "Roots" took Haley twelve years to write and was serialized into a twelve-hour long TV version in 1977. "Roots" won Haley other honors including a resolution of tribute passed by the United States Senate on March 14, 1977.

The play begins at 8 p.m., Feb. 28 and Mar. 1 at the West Las Vegas Library Theater, 947 W. Lake Mead Blvd. For information call 229-4800.

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