About your presenter:

Cathleen Hanson is Co-Director of The International School of Protocol, a company providing the highest caliber of protocol and etiquette training for businesses, adults, educators, and children. She has provided training for business executives, corporations, politicians, groups and schools, and has appeared on radio and television talk and news programs. Cathleen Hanson served as a university professor of communication, an editor, and is an award winning speaker and writer whose syndicated columns appear in over 30 publications nationwide.


The website www.schoolofprotocol.com will give you additional information about programs offered by The International School of Protocol.
Conversation

Initiating a conversation with someone you don’t know well can often seem daunting, but knowing how to “break the ice” can ultimately lead to an extremely rewarding interpersonal experience for both of you and the people around you.

Opening entrance lines

• Excuse me. I hope you don’t mind my joining you, but I don’t know anyone here. Shake hands and introduce yourself.
• Fade in. Stand next to people and join conversation.
• Compliment. “I couldn’t help overhearing the laughter in this corner!”
• Hi. Ask the person how he/she is connected to the event/host, etc.
• Comment on the music. “This music reminds me of…..”
• Comment on the food. “That looks delicious…..”
• Comment on the environment, the room, the space.
• The weather. You can always talk about the weather!

Once engaged in conversation

• Remember conversation is a two way street so talk as well as listen and listen as well as talk. Do not interrupt.
• Be interesting. Be prepared to talk about a variety of subjects. That means, talking about just yourself will most likely not be interesting.
• Be armed with topics to talk about so if there is a lull in the conversation you can fill it.
• Try to find something you have in common with the other person. E.g. where you live, work, hobbies. If you know something about the other person, such as a trip recently taken or a new home, incorporate that information.
• Be an active listener. Nod your head, ask questions, make eye contact, make comments while the other person is speaking.
• The person to whom you are speaking should be the most important person in the room at that moment. Give him or her your undivided attention.
• Be sure to include everyone in the group when speaking and not just one person.
• Make eye contact throughout the conversation. It is appropriate to have eye contact most of the time you are speaking.
• Avoid talking about politics, religion, or anything that might be negative such as health or gossip. Inappropriate humor should always be avoided.
• Know how to interpret body language and be able to recognize when the person to whom you are speaking is ready to move on.

How to exit gracefully

• Slowly exit.
• Switch.
• Bring someone in.
• Refresh your drink.
THE MEAL

Before
Walk around the table and introduce yourself to anyone you have not met ∗ Enter the chair on the right ∗ Ladies’ purses under the chair ∗ No coats on back of chairs ∗ Wait for host to sit ∗ Gentleman helps lady to his right (and left if more ladies than men) into chair ∗ Toast guest of honor ∗ Person being toasted does not drink ∗ Unfold napkin on lap after host does ∗ Liquids on right ∗ Solids (such as bread and butter) on left ∗ Do not eat until host starts

During
Start with utensil farthest from plate ∗ Leave bread and butter plate above forks ∗ Break off small bite size piece of bread before buttering and eating ∗ Serve left ∗ Remove right ∗ Spoon soup away from you ∗ Tip bowl away from you, if necessary, to finish soup ∗ Leave soup spoon on plate beneath soup bowl when resting or finished ∗ Leave soup spoon in soup plate when resting or finished ∗ Pace yourself with other diners so you are not the last nor the first finished ∗ For American Style keep free hand in lap ∗ For Continental Style rest wrists on table ∗ Leave utensils on either side of the plate when resting between bites ∗ Do not allow handles or any part of utensil to touch table once used ∗ Do not pick teeth at table ∗ Remove olive pits, crab shells, etc. with your fingers ∗ Remove messy foods such as gristle by moving food from mouth back to fork and leaving on plate ∗ Do not comb hair, apply lipstick or blow nose at table ∗ Leave napkin on chair and tuck chair in if you leave table during meal. ∗ Men should rise when a woman enters or leaves the table ∗ Hold red wine by bowl of glass ∗ Hold white wine by stem of glass ∗ Do not blow on food that is hot ∗ Taste food before salting ∗ Pass salt and pepper together ∗ Blot rather than wipe mouth ∗ Twirl rather than cut pasta

After
Leave utensils with the handles at the 4 o’clock position on the plate when finished ∗ Leave napkin on table when finished after host does ∗ Wait for host to signal end of meal before standing ∗ Exit on right side of chair ∗ Push chair in
Dining Etiquette

Cutting American and Continental Style

Eating American Style or Continental Style using only a fork or spoon

Eating Continental Style: your fork remains in left hand and your knife remains in your right hand

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HANDLING THE UTENSILS

resting position for utensils

finished position for utensils