

CONFERENCE ROOM ETIQUETTE: 7 Tips For Meetings Without Resistance



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Conference rooms and huddle spaces provide shared areas that are meant to be used as collaboration hubs between coworkers, clients and sometimes as private spaces for employees and employers. They perform some important functions in offices, especially with open plan spaces. As with any shared space, there are certain unwritten rules that apply to keep everyone happy.

Book Your Time

It may seem okay to just pop into an unoccupied meeting space for a few minutes without booking it, but check around if you can. Ideas happen on the fly and sometimes you have to seize the moment to share your thoughts with team members. But what is your plan when someone else actually takes the time to book that room only to be confronted with an occupied space which you didn't reserve? Keep coworkers in the loop by taking a moment to reserve the room before taking over the space. Adding open collaborative touchdown spaces near your workstations can serve impromptu meetings very well and won't have to be booked. This can consist of a colorful grouping of chairs or even a standing height storage island and can be used based on the understanding that it does not need to be reserved and is specifically put there for those on-the-fly interactions.

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Be proactive in planning your meeting. As soon as you know your need, book the space. You don't want to be having to ask others to rearrange their time to accommodate your meeting.

Don't Double Book

This is usually unintentional, but double check to make sure it isn't a mistake you're making. If you are booking a conference room and there are several in the office, remember to deselect the ones you aren't actually using! If you forget, suddenly nobody is able to book a conference room because you accidentally reserved rooms you aren't even using. Be considerate and do a quick double take after you reserve a space.



Book Early, Cancel Early

Be proactive in planning your meeting. As soon as you know you're going to need a meeting room—book it! The longer you wait the more difficult it will be for you to get the room you want, and you don't want to be put in a situation where you need to ask coworkers to move their meetings. In addition, if a meeting gets cancelled make sure you cancel your room reservation immediately. This will ensure that others will have time to reserve it for themselves.

Clean Up Behind Yourself

It's simple—if you make a mess, clean it up. If you came in with a coffee cup, take it with you. If you rip up shreds of your notebook paper as a habit, throw it in the garbage. If your large meeting was catered, clear out all of the mess. You can even go the extra mile by wiping down finger prints from the conference table or dusting off the computer monitor before you leave the room.

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Respect your allotted time, even if it means cutting down on your content. Evacuate the space when your meeting time has ended.

Leave Promptly

When booking your conference room, respect you're allotted time for the meeting. Whether you successfully hit all the talking points needed or not, evacuate the space when your time slot has ended. Taking up your coworkers' time by running your meeting into theirs is usually not appreciated.

Accommodate The Needs of Others

You won't need a conference room built to seat 10 if you only have two people in the meeting. If you book a large conference room for a small number of people and a co-worker asks you to switch rooms, be accommodating. Issues arise all the time, and your coworkers may ask to use your conference room in an emergency situation. Be understanding and extend the same courtesy to them you would expect in that situation.



Keep the Door Closed

The people working in close proximity to your meeting don't need to hear your entire conversation. Keeping the door closed when your meeting is in session is best. On a similar note, those interrupting a meeting for any reason should knock before entering. A closed door should be taken as a sign that you need to ask permission before entering.

Whether you're having a private meeting with your manager or a 20 person training session, following these simple guidelines will keep everyone happy, productive and assured of the same consideration when using your office's meeting rooms.

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