

Course: **Etiquette in Public Life**

Field of Study: Internal Security

Form of classes and number of hours: lecture 15 h

Number of ECTS credits: 1

Learning outcomes:

Student:

- knows the basic principles of *savoir vivre* and their normative and cultural premises,
- understands the axiological and pragmatic conditions of a tactful way of being in social interactions,
- analyses the action in terms of the etiquette rules,
- distinguishes and interprets communication and cultural codes and their social, economic and political context,
- is able to practically apply the basic etiquette rules in public life,
- is able to practically apply the basic business etiquette rules,
- can modify his actions in accordance with the rules of etiquette.

Evaluation methods of learning outcomes:

discussion and preparation of a short essay

Subject matter of the classes:

1. Ethical and cultural determinants of human behaviour. *Savoir-vivre* philosophy.
2. Precedence – the give way rule.
3. Meetings at a dinner table – standing business parties.
4. Communication in business – how to dress in public situations, i.e. what is dress code? Part 1.
5. Communication in business – how to dress in public situations, i.e. what is dress code? Part 2.
6. Communication in business – how to dress in public situations, i.e. what is dress code? Part 3.
7. Etiquette in interpersonal communication.
8. Good manners at work – self-presentation, public speeches and organisation of meetings.

Bibliography

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Baldrige, L. (2003). *New Manners for New Times: A Complete Guide to Etiquette*. New York: Scribner.

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Websites

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<https://armyandnavyacademy.org/blog/good-manners-matter-in-preparing-for-success-in-life/>

Characteristics of lecture content

Lecture 1

Ethical and cultural determinants of human behaviour. *Savoir-vivre* philosophy

1. Etiquette – introductory issues.
2. Axiological and ethical dimension of etiquette.
3. Socrates as the founder of European ethical thinking.
4. Plato – the relational aspect of the human world.
5. Concept of culture.
6. Fundamental principles which a cultured person should base his behaviour on.
7. Etiquette – genesis and basic terminology.

Lecture 2

Precedence – the give way rule

1. Precedence – introductory issues: explanation of the term, short history of the issue.
2. Precedence in private and professional life – examples.
3. Hospitality principle: guest-host relationship.
4. Taking a seat at a table – basic principles.
5. Precedence in a car:
 - (a) chauffeur-driven car;
 - (b) owner-driven car.
6. Precedence in a lift.
7. Entering premises – office, lecture hall, room, shop, etc.
8. Moving around – on the stairs and on the pavement.
9. Speaking and giving the floor during various meetings.
10. Placing signatures in official correspondence.
11. Welcoming guests to an official ceremony.

Lecture 3

Meetings at a dinner table – standing business parties

1. Adoption of the 'glass of wine' type – examples and the most common mistakes.
2. Aperitif acceptance – two meanings of the term 'aperitif', examples and the most common mistakes.
3. Cocktail party type.
4. Do you know where the term 'buffet' came from?
5. Raising toasts.
6. Basic principles for using the buffet table.
7. Why does organisation of standing parties become more and more popular? The three most important reasons.
8. A bit of psychology – are we willing to take part in business meetings with strangers?

9. Who can we approach? – that is, entering the room, approaching guests and joining the conversation.
10. How long do we stay in one group?
11. How do we say goodbye?
12. Topics that should not be discussed at parties.
13. How to courteously start a conversation when we don't know anyone?
14. Summary – 10 basic principles.

Lecture 4

Communication in business – how to dress in public situations, i.e. what is dress code? Part 1.

1. Short introduction to the topic. Explanation of the proverbs: 'clothes do not make the man', 'you cannot judge a book by its cover' and 'fine feathers make fine birds'?
2. What is the difference between attire and normal clothing?
3. Influence of external appearance on people's perception.
4. Dress code at school – examples.
5. How can we define dress code?
6. Why are employers introducing dress code?
7. Dress code in surveys.
8. Polish law and the issue of dress code.
9. Health and safety regulations regarding protective and work clothing.
10. Elegance in dress.

Lecture 5

Communication in business – how to dress in public situations, i.e. what is dress code? Part 2.

1. Short history of classic men's fashion.
2. Tailcoat and tuxedo – that is, fancy dress for special occasions.
3. Process of casualisation of clothes.
4. Why did men stop wearing hats?
5. The basics of a modern businessman's wardrobe:
 - a) classic suit – styles, colours and proportions;
 - b) trousers;
 - c) classic jacket;
 - d) shirt;
 - e) tie;
 - f) bow tie;
 - g) foulard;
 - h) small bow tie;
 - i) plastron (ascot tie);
6. Accessories for the jacket – what is the buttonhole and breast pocket?
7. Leather shoes.
8. How to choose perfect socks?
9. Accessories.

Lecture 6

Communication in business – how to dress in public situations, i.e. what is dress code? Part 3

1. Brief history of the classic women's business attire.
2. Woman's wardrobe – formal attire:
 - a) elements of a women's business attire that are not allowed at work;
 - b) colours: red and pink in business;
3. The correct elements of a woman's business attire:
 - a) additional elements that should be included in women's business attire;
4. Business and informal attire.
5. Skirt or trousers?
6. Business shirt.
7. Does dress code also apply during hot summer?
8. Company scarf.
9. How should I dress for an interview?

Lecture 7

Etiquette in interpersonal communication

1. Introduction. Cultural and social function of language.
 - a) The most common mistakes in intonation.
 - b) Proper Listening.
2. Non-verbal communication.
 - a) How can we define non-verbal communication?
 - b) What is non-verbal behaviour?
 - c) Faux pas, i.e. blunders in non-verbal communication.
 - d) Disclosure Rules.
 - e) Smile.
 - f) Emblems.
3. Telephone calls.
 - a) Principles for conducting a telephone conversation.
 - b) SMS and business situations
 - c) Voicemail (answering machine).
4. Correspondence and netiquette.
 - a) Basic principles of Internet correspondence

Lecture 8

Good manners at work – self-presentation, public speeches and organisation of meetings

1. Self-presentation.

- a) Introducing yourself.
 - b) What are the most common mistakes made during self-presentation?
 - c) Business cards.
 - d) Handshake.
2. Optimal distance from the interlocutor.
 3. Correct eye contact.
 4. Public appearances.
 - a) Basic mistakes.
 - b) Difficult situations.
 - c) How to deal with stage fright?
 - d) Basic features of a good speaker.
 5. Business meetings.
 - a) Types of meetings.
 - b) Preparation for the meeting – the most important tips.

Lecture 1

Ethical and cultural determinants of human behaviour. Savoir-vivre philosophy

1. Etiquette – introductory issues

Read the following questions, think about the answer:

What is an etiquette? What is it about?

How do I understand the meaning of this word?

Is it an ambiguous term?

In colloquial language, an etiquette, among others, is sometimes referred to as:

- a set of norms of behaviour in interpersonal relations;
- the right way to communicate;
- compliance with generally accepted standards;
- good manners;
- ability to adapt to the environment;
- politeness, good manners;
- courteousness, manners.

Please note that etiquette implies relationality – people, as social creatures, enter into constant relationships and contacts with each other. Therefore, the basic assumption of etiquette is that these mutual relations should be based on specific norms, generally accepted principles, based on mutual respect and not violating the dignity of another human being.

After reading any textbook – etiquette guide, can we say that we are already cultured people?

Do we automatically become cultured people when we put ourselves in the hands of contemporary image creators, public speaking specialists and stylists?

We can answer 'YES' or 'NO' to the above questions.

The vast majority of people, however, answer 'NO', intuitively perceiving a certain insufficiency of the actions taken, a certain deficiency related to fundamental issues, on which over the centuries the principles of conduct and behaviour of a courteous person have been established.

Please consider the justification for the answer 'NO' to the above questions.

1. No, because knowledge is not the same as application (skill). A courteous person not only knows how to act, but also acts according to the norms.
2. No, because good education (1) gives the ability to flexibly adapt norms to the situation, (2) instills values into people. Very often, 'interpersonal relationship training' is aimed at making a good impression and manipulating others. The goal of the courteous person is not to impress or overpower, but to show respect.

2. Axiological and ethical dimension of etiquette

When educating ourselves on the principles of etiquette, we should pay attention to the sphere of values present in the life of every person. The branch of philosophy dealing with values is axiology. Axiology (Greek *axios* – worthy, valuable + Greek *logos* – word, science) – literally 'science about worthy, valuable things', otherwise – science about values.

Thus, axiology determines everything that is worthy, valuable, desirable for a given individual, what is the purpose of his actions, it defines the needs and attitudes realised in individual and social life.

To better understand the issues of values in human life, let's go back to the beginnings of European culture, to Ancient Greece – known as the cradle of European civilization. It was then that ethics was born, which then – through the civilization of Ancient Rome and Christian culture, entered the European consciousness for good, becoming the basis of human thinking and behaviour towards: another person, family, society, determined authority, administrative structures, etc., thus strengthening mutual interactions and interpersonal relations.

In Ancient Greece, an intellectual analysis of the problem of values in human life began.

Etymologically, the term 'ethics' comes from the Greek word 'ethos'.

The term *ethos* originally meant:

1. Custom, habit, tradition.
2. Permanent place of residence; an optimal living space, the best for every human being, in which a person can become himself, feels safe, can develop in a free and unrestricted way, can self-realise (*ethos* was understood as a household). Over time, the latter meaning was transformed, metamorphosed, and the term *ethos* took on the meaning of 'constant' behaviour, especially in reference to people. My relationship to another human being, my interpersonal relationship, is therefore based on values, on the axiology which is the basis of the culture in which I live.

3. Socrates as the founder of European ethical thinking

The ancient philosopher Socrates is assumed to be the founder of European ethical thinking. Socrates (469-399 BC) – Greek philosopher, Athenian, considered one of the main figures of ancient philosophy. Socrates dealt almost exclusively with the philosophy of morality and the philosophy of the human being.

One of the basic concepts of the human person in antiquity was the concept of virtue (arete). The ancient Greeks understood this concept in a specific way, different from ours – as e.g. physical prowess, bravery, fitness, or proficiency in performing professional activities – so it was a completely relative advantage (different for men and women, a mature man and a young man).

Socrates, for the first time in history, looked at the problem of virtue from a different point of view:

- 1/ he pointed out the advantages that are not relative, but common to all people (justice, courage, self-control),
- 2/ he created a new concept of virtue by distinguishing special moral virtues among the virtues of man.

According to Socrates, laws concerning moral virtue, although unwritten, are more permanent than written laws, they derive from the very nature of things, not from a human institution, and are therefore universal everywhere.

There is also a hierarchy of goods – at the top there are moral goods – which are the proper object of ethics (for which Socrates is called the creator of ethics) – one should sacrifice inferior goods (money, fame) and even one's own life for them.

The relational nature of man along with the norms or values (virtues) that should be implemented depending on the social functions performed were also analysed by other ancient philosophers (e.g. Sophists, Plato, Aristotle).

4. Plato – the relational aspect of the human world

The ancient philosopher Plato (427-347 B.C.E.) believed that man was composed of two separate, unconnected elements. One is the body, the other is the soul.

According to Plato, there are 3 elements in the human soul:

- 1/ appetitive (sensual and lustful, the sphere of instincts and needs); this part of the soul is also possessed by plants. Moderation is a virtue. This part of the soul dominates in people who focus their activity on gathering, for example, merchants, farmers;
- 2/ spirited (rash – the sphere of emotions), animals also have this part of the soul. Courage is virtue. This part of the soul is dominant in the conquering people – warriors, politicians;
- 3/ rational – the rational soul is what distinguishes man from animate nature. Wisdom is a virtue. This part of the soul dominates in philosophers who tend to understand the world, their driving force is not greed or the will to fame, but GENERAL GOOD.

The virtue that binds all parts of the soul is justice.

It is the theory of the four virtues, sometimes called cardinal:

- (1) moderation,
- (2) courage,
- (3) wisdom,
- (4) justice.

When each part of the soul realises the virtue assigned to it – the whole soul achieves a state of balance and harmony, and thus man, as a relational being, can fulfill his mission in society, respecting others and respecting generally accepted social principles, both culturally and legally conditioned.

Cultural definitions define values as, among others, desirable goods, beliefs, judgments, which constitute 'the criterion determining the behaviour of an individual within a group'.

5. The concept of culture

Read the following questions, think about the answer:

- How can we define the word culture?
- Do we know its etymology?
- How do we understand this term today?
- Do we understand the ambiguity of this word?

The term culture comes from the Latin word: *colere* – to cultivate (the land), nurture, improve, care.

Today, the term culture is usually defined as: human activity and works as a meaning of personal, rational and free being. Thus, only man is a being: (1) personal (he is a person), (2) rational (as the only being among all animate nature he has reason), (3) free (man has free will, which is governed by reason). The expression culture originally in ancient Rome meant farming (later the term *agricultura* came to be used to denote cultivation of the land);

Already in ancient times – from Cicero (106-43 BCE), who was an outstanding politician, Roman orator, promoter of Greek philosophy, the expression culture was understood as a manifestation of activities in the spiritual sphere (*animi cultura*), as the ennoblement of the human spirit. This understanding of the term culture was a continuation of what the ancient Greeks called *paideia* (comprehensive ‘cultivation’, rational upbringing of man in an individual and social aspect).

So how to understand the ambiguity of the term culture? On the one hand, it meant (1) farming, the hard, physical work of a farmer as toil and drudgery, and on the other hand (2) the ennoblement of the human spirit, science, and the inner improvement of the human individual. On the surface, these two approaches seem to contradict each other.

However, if we take a closer look at ancient civilizations, this contradiction will be eliminated by explanation. Ancient Greeks, like the Romans, if they used metaphors – they were most often associated with the environment, nature and agriculture. Ancient man was subject to the rhythm not only of the times of the day, but above all of the seasons, which – being closely related to agriculture, vegetation – determined the time of work and rest, the time of sowing, cultivation of crops and the time of abundant harvest, the time of major national holidays, joyful processions in honor of the goddess Demeter or god Dionysus.

Therefore – explaining the ambiguity of the ancient understanding of the term culture – just as a farmer would go out into a plowed field in spring, he would throw seeds from which plants would then germinate, pulling weeds and cultivating the land, taking care of the optimal conditions for the entire vegetation process, in order to finally harvest and enjoy the fruits of his work, just like a man in his life – he should ‘nurture his spirit’, throw a ‘seed’ on him – by learning new skills, expanding his knowledge, developing talents, acquiring competences. It is a difficult and arduous process, and – like the work of a farmer – it is a toil. However, if a person takes up this challenge – and as a consequence reaps an ‘abundant harvest’ – in mature life he will be perceived as a wise and competent person, other people will seek his good advice, he will be widely respected for his knowledge and skills.

From the very beginning, everything that is included in the concept of culture was the participation of the human being only – as the only personal, rational being. Since we are human, cultural behaviour is our ‘biological necessity’. ‘Culture is an expression of man. It is human confirmation. Man creates it – and creates himself through it’ (John Paul II) – only man creates culture and is responsible for its ‘quality’ – the way we create culture for ourselves, is the way our life will look like (we can become victims of the culture we have created for ourselves). Thus, our daily life choices, the axiology (world of values) that we will admit to our lives and our involvement in social life are not indifferent. And only we ourselves, as people using reason, take full responsibility for it, along with the consequences of our freedom.

6. Fundamental principles which a well-behaved person should base their behaviour on:

1. Honesty and integrity;
2. Precedence (give way rule);
3. Respect for other people;
4. Perfectionism;
5. Nobility and generosity;
6. Moderation;
7. Principle of adaptation.

1. *Honesty and integrity* – both ethical and cultural norms are also inseparable from the principles of etiquette. This kind of life without falsehoods, lies and pretenses, is a philosophy of a righteous life, it is also the ability to remain silent and take into account the circumstances in which subjectively understood ‘truth’ or ‘honesty’ can hurt another person.

Example: a young person living in a happy, safe family suddenly learns from a ‘kind’ person that he was adopted as an infant. In an instant, her safe world may fall into ruins, depression may appear, this information may lead to various types of misfortunes, it may break relations with her family, so the consequences may be multifaceted and serious. Speaking of honesty, in the sense of etiquette, we should always take into account the situation of the other person (‘what goes around comes around’).

2. *Precedence (give way rule)* – in business situations it is determined by the rank and status of a given person, in private situations – by age and gender (this is the basic difference between business etiquette, and social etiquette). The exception is when someone is our client – the client will always come first (regardless of his position in work or society).

3. *Respect* shown to other people – is the basis of all principles, respecting other people’s feelings, showing them good, support, help, respecting the dignity of another person, especially the weaker and dependent on us. No culture can exist and develop creatively without respect.

Contemporary culture is unfortunately sometimes referred to as ‘culture without respect’, sometimes ‘axiological chaos’. A progressive atrophy of respect can be observed in social life.

Example: ‘entertainment’ programmes in which the hosts make fun of people with incapacities or disabilities, public people’s failure to respect the feelings of people affected by misfortunes (death, natural disasters, wars), making fun of colleagues, etc.

4. *Perfectionism* – this is a term that many people fear (according to the principle that ‘nobody is perfect’), misinterpreting its meaning. If we undertake any activity – at the university, at work – performing official duties, or in family or social life, then we should do it the best we can, to the best of our abilities.

Example 1. We are implementing an educational project in a group of four. Everyone is assigned to the tasks according to their competences, and the end result and the subsequent bonus depend on the work of each group member. The first person will complete the task at 90%, explaining family problems, the second – 70% – health problems, the third – 80% – overwork and lack of appropriate competences. How much work will the fourth person – the most conscientious person – who cares about the final success and bonuses – have to put into the project? His 100% plus an additional 60% of the work not done by his colleagues. So the first 3 people acted unfairly by using the 4th person.

Example 2. Person X has appendicitis, goes to the hospital for the emergency room, needs surgery. How many % of their capabilities should the medical team work during the surgery? The obvious answer seems to be that 100% – for the surgery to be successful, the patient must survive and heal. If one of the staff worked at 90%, an infection could occur, a surgical tool could be sewn in the abdomen – inadvertently – which would have serious health consequences for the patient. In a word, someone did not work reliably, at 100% of their capabilities and not only destroyed the work of the entire team, but also exposed the patient to a serious risk of loss of life or health.

Perfectionism is not idealism, and perfection in every way – because there are no perfect people – is honest and reliable performance of one's duties – to the best of one's abilities. It is the willingness to learn and improve competences, it is finally sharing your experience with others.

5. *Nobility and generosity* – understood both in the spiritual and material dimensions; it is thinking about another person, the ability to share the possessions with others, but also the ability to enjoy other people's successes. It is generosity in material and spiritual dimensions – 'If you are more successful in life than others, build a longer table, not a higher fence.'

6. *Moderation* – is one of the most desirable values in everyday life and at the same time highly valued in business. Humility does not mean: belittling yourself, hiding your abilities, competences, talents, or neglecting your external image. Humility is opposed to ignorance, vanity, lack of courtesy, its opposite is pride – that is, self-exaltation, selfishness, caring only for one's own good at the expense of others, treating other people in an instrumental way, often also ignoring, humiliating and degrading others.

Humility should also be manifested in the external image – e.g. in clothes.

7. *Principle of adaptation* – 'regulates the differences in the use of etiquette in countries with a different culture' – when travelling to a foreign country, we should familiarise ourselves with the basic standards used in its territory. After crossing the border of a given country, we should adapt to the customs, traditions and norms used there. While being in a foreign country, we cannot negate or criticise the habits of the hosts, let alone impose our own. There are considerable cultural differences between countries and some rules seem downright inapplicable.

7. Etiquette – genesis and basic terminology

The term 'etiquette' is derived from the French word *étiquette*, meaning 'piece of paper'.

The present meaning of the word most probably comes from the times of Louis XIV (17th/18th century) – the places in the royal gardens that were not allowed to be trodden on by anyone were marked with labels; this term was also used to describe small cards on which the rank of guests was written down one by one, so that no meeting participant had any doubts to whom he should bow;

Gradually, the very concept of 'etiquette' expanded and changed its meaning, but to this day it concerns the norms of human behaviour – both in private and professional life.

Most of the terms that we use in our everyday life – denoting good manners or generally accepted rules of behaviour – come from French:

- *étiquette* – etiquette;
- *bon ton* – good tone, impeccable manner, proper behaviour;
- *savoir-vivre* – knowledge of life, good manners, knowledge of social customs and forms as well as the rules of courtesy;

- *faux-pas* – false step, indiscretion, awkwardness, blunder, failure to socialise, misconduct;
- elegance – this term comes from the Latin language, from 'elegantia': aesthetics, refinement, clarification, good taste, discretion; 'Elegance is therefore beauty, grace and nobility (the highest quality) in appearance and behaviour'.

Exemplary tasks

Exercise 1.

Imagine the following situation: guests come to the company where you work as an assistant to the president (representatives of another company which you do business with – a total of 2 people: the director and his assistant). In addition to the guests, the meeting will be attended by 3 more people (the president, you – as the president's assistant and an employee of the sales department). You are responsible for organising the meeting.

How will you – taking into account the principles of precedence – set all the participants in the meeting together at the round table?

Exercise 2.

Your boss delegated the task to you to organise a meeting on the occasion of the 5th anniversary of the company in which you work. The meeting will take the form of an official 'cocktail' party. In addition to your boss, you and eight other employees, the boss invited fifty guests to the party.

Try to answer the following questions:

1. What size of the venue would you have to rent?
2. What to pay attention to when agreeing on the menu with the catering company?
3. Will you need a list of all the people who have declared to attend the party? If YES – why?

Exercise 3.

Imagine you work as an assistant to the president in a company of several dozen employees. You receive the following official instruction:

1. Call the client and make an appointment at the airport (the client arrives with an assistant, you have to pick up the guests and take them to the office);
2. In the office, you are responsible for preparing the room where the talks (negotiations) with the client will take place – including seating all the people present at the meeting;
3. After the talks finger food will be served, obviously with the participation of the client and their assistant – in the form of a buffet (cocktail party) – you are responsible for the organisation of this party;
4. After the party, you must drive the guests to the hotel (or order a taxi and escort them to the car park);
5. On the second day, on behalf of the president, you send a thank you note for attending the meeting by e-mail, along with an attachment – minutes from the meeting and arrangements made.

Based on the tasks, prepare a short scenario of the visit.

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