



Professionalism

Thea Reigler

June 2025




**NATIONAL
HERITAGE
ACADEMIES**





Content for Today's Discussion

- Introductions
 - What is professionalism?
 - The external areas of professionalism
 - The internal areas of professionalism
 - Business etiquette
 - Questions, discussions and next steps
- 



Introductions


- Introduce yourself!
- Share what area you are interning in and why you chose it.
- Share one question about professionalism you are curious about.
- Share one thing about yourself that you enjoy doing in your spare time.





What is Professionalism: Quick Quiz

Question:	TRUE	FALSE
How I respond (both in writing and verbally) to various situations is part of professionalism.		
What I say in chat rooms, text messages or social media matters to how others perceive me.		
How I dress is considered a component of professionalism.		
The way I communicate can be construed as a part of professionalism.		
Knowing business etiquette can be considered a part of professionalism.		





External Areas of Professionalism


- **Professional Dress**

- Know the policy of the organization you are working for.
- If unsure, dress more conservatively.
- Don't project causes or positions that could be construed as offensive or divisive.
- Ask your leader about hot buttons or areas not clearly identified – like hoodies or ball caps.
- Even in social situations like picnics, ball games, etc., treat them as an extension of the work environment.






External Areas of Professionalism

- **Communication / Email, Written & Social Media**
 - Be responsive.
 - Make sure your communications are concise and helpful. Let them know if you are pursuing an answer and need more time to manage expectations.
 - Even if someone writes to you in frustration and causes you frustration, acknowledge their concern and stay positive.
 - Always use good grammar and punctuation.
 - Never vent your frustration about your work experiences in chat rooms like slack or on social media.
 - Never use profanity, even in jest or written or verbal communication.
- 



External Areas of Professionalism

- **Meetings and Cell Phones**

- Come prepared and on-time for meetings.
 - Stay present and off your cell phone (unless it's work related).
 - If the meeting is virtual, always remain on camera and dress as you would if you were in the office.
 - Actively participate if invited or you have something you would like to contribute.
 - Feel comfortable asking questions to better understand the context of the conversation and ways in which it may impact your role.
- 



External Areas of Professionalism

- **Professional Lunch, Happy Hours, Networking, etc. ...**
 - External networking events like the Chamber, Econ Club, etc.. are excellent opportunities to build your connections. Ask your leader for ways to expand your networks.
 - If there are other areas of the organization you are interested in, ask for opportunities to learn more.
 - If attending a happy hour or social (non-work) gathering, always stay positive and remember to keep information confidential that should remain so.






External Areas of Professionalism

Professional scenario:

- You have been invited to attend a happy hour with your new intern friends. One of the interns who you really like and have gotten to know has expressed frustration about the work - that it is not meaningful, and they do not like their boss or mentor.
- They have begun sharing some of their frustration on social media and have showed up late for work and have been leaving work early on occasion.
- They have been confiding more and more with you and are asking for more of your time to vent their frustration.

How do you think you would handle this situation?






Internal Areas of Professionalism

- **Emotional Intelligence:** How your overall emotions can influence both your personal and professional perception by others.
 - Self-awareness
 - Self-management
 - Social awareness
 - Relationship Management






Internal Areas of Professionalism

- **Emotional Intelligence: Self-Awareness**
 - Know your triggers.
 - Big examples:
 - Religion and Politics
 - Small Examples:
 - Someone who just generally annoys you or anything that can trigger a response which initiates a counter-productive behavior (cell phone).
- 




Internal Areas of Professionalism

- **Emotional Intelligence: Self-Management**
 - Your first response is not always the best. Discuss your thoughts with someone else to get their opinion or take 24 hours to sleep on it before responding.
 - Buy yourself time - ask clarifying questions or defer the interaction until you are more prepared to respond in the way you would wish to.
 - Find ways to control your responses.
- 




Internal Areas of Professionalism

- **Emotional Intelligence: Social Awareness**
 - What cues are you projecting – distracted, standoffish, abrupt.
 - What influences are encouraging your behavior – personal or work situations.
 - Identify them and share them if comfortable.
- 



Internal Areas of Professionalism

- **Emotional Intelligence: Relationship Management**
 - Be open and curious, ask a lot of questions.
 - If you encounter a conflict, lean into it. Seek to understand and learn from another's perspective.
 - Be willing to admit if you've made a mistake to say, "I'm sorry".
 - Promote strong relationships beyond your intern period.
 - Be a "connector" for yourself and others.
- 



Internal Areas of Professionalism

Emotional Intelligence: Scenario for discussion

- During a recent lunch with several new intern friends, you get into a heated debate on whether Trump or Biden is/was better as President.
- Your conversation evolved into policies and actions that you believe are detrimental to the American public.
- You and one other participant were primary participators in this conversation, but others observed, and you both leave the lunch very frustrated and not sure how to proceed.

What would you do?






Business Etiquette

- **Professional lunches and/or dinners:**
 - The person who initiates the invitation sets the agenda, orders first and pays for the meal, unless you are invited to order.
 - Guests should wait until everyone has been served before eating, unless those waiting have asked you to begin.
 - If there are multiple utensils, work outside in.
 - Tricks to identify whose bread and drink 😊





Next Steps

- The power of a “thank you”.
 - Staying connected to those you have built relationships with.
 - Promote connections with others through sharing of social media.
 - **Your gift:** Emotional Intelligence 2.0
 - Continued connection with me at any time for any reason!
😊
- 

The image features a dark blue background with several curved lines in white, light blue, and green. These lines are scattered across the frame, some overlapping each other, creating a dynamic and abstract composition. The lines are of varying thickness and curvature, adding a sense of movement and depth to the design.

Thank you!