



Career Chat: Holiday Etiquette

Presented by the Career Center

Invites and Arriving

- **Invitations:** These are extended to the people the host wants to invite, and no one else. Look for “_____ and guest” or your guest’s name to see if plus-ones are allowed.
- **Arriving:** The earliest you should arrive is anywhere from 5-15 minutes beforehand... that is, unless you’d like to help set up. Don’t show up empty-handed unless instructed to; bring a dessert, wine, etc.

Staying Present & Professional

- **Cellphones:** Keep yours stowed. Enjoy the people around you and be in the moment. If you feel you need to respond to every incoming message, you'll lose more in the eyes of the person who's in front of you than you'll gain from the unseen recipients of your phone efficiency.
- **Free hand:** Always keep your right hand free; carry plates or cups in your left hand and park your other items.
- **Alcohol:** Limit alcohol consumption, even if it's an open bar. Ways to limit yourself include:
 - Imposing a personal cutoff amount
 - Alternating alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages
 - Ordering a drink you don't care for so you'll nurse it instead of drinking it quickly

Making & Exiting Conversations

- Don't gossip or talk about work.
- Mingle; don't talk only with people you work with regularly.
 - Easy way to meet people: In a food/beverage line, talk to people in front of and behind you
- Talk to the "Big Cheese."
 - Thank him/her (only 1 in 40 people do this)
 - If asked about your position at work, don't just list your location; discuss a responsibility or two and tell him/her something you love about your job
 - Keep the exchange to 2-3 minutes and talk about more than food
- To exit a conversation, say something similar to this:
 - "I'm going to go for another drink/to the buffet...I'm sure you have other people to talk to. I promised myself I'd circulate."

Leaving the Party

- There's really nothing to be gained by staying until you're one of the last, so don't feel obligated to stay too long.
- On the flip side, don't be the first to leave if you can help it. If you must be first to leave, have a very good reason as to why.
- Don't forget to politely say your goodbyes to your colleagues, especially the host.

Handling an 'OOPS' Moment

What do you do if...

- You're running late to the party?
- You break/spill something?
- Your friend has had a bit too much and is starting to head into #OfficeFail territory?

Handling an 'OOPS' Moment

Ways to save yourself:

- **Running Late:** Call a friend or co-worker to let them know and ask them to inform the host as well. You could also call or text the host, but don't expect a reply, as they're probably busy getting the party ready. Also, apologize once you get there and offer a brief reason, if possible and appropriate.

Handling an 'OOPS' Moment

Ways to save yourself:

- **Spill/Break:** Notify the host of your “oops” and offer to clean up the mess. If your host insists on cleaning it instead, allow it; there may be a specific cleaning treatment needed, and you don't want to do any more harm. If you break something, privately apologize to the host(s) and let them know you intend to pay for the damage. If they won't accept, and depending on how big of an oops it is, you might consider an alternate offering (e.g., a gift card, homemade cookies) along with a handwritten note to indicate your regret.

Handling an 'OOPS' Moment

Ways to save yourself:

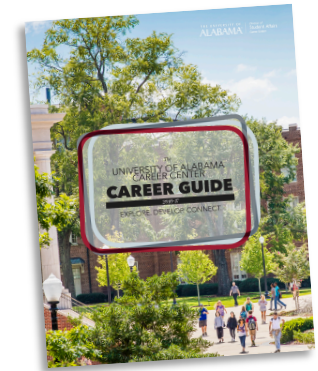
- **#OfficeFail Friend:** Try to pull your friend aside and suggest he or she lay off the drinks/excessive talking/etc. If possible, try to save your friend while remaining at the party, but if the friend is too far gone, you may want to suggest (or insist) on leaving. Remember to ensure your friend's safety by not letting him or her drive while under the influence of alcohol.

Other Networking Resources

Consult our website or Career Guide for more info on making connections.

<https://career.sa.ua.edu/connect/networking/>

<https://career.sa.ua.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2016CareerGuide.pdf>



- Networking _____ p. 16
- Online Networking _____ p. 17
- Professional Etiquette _____ p. 52
- Dining Etiquette _____ p. 54-55
- Business Reception Etiquette _____ p. 56



Thank you!

Questions: Tiffany Goodin
tgoodin@sa.ua.edu | (205) 348-5833