

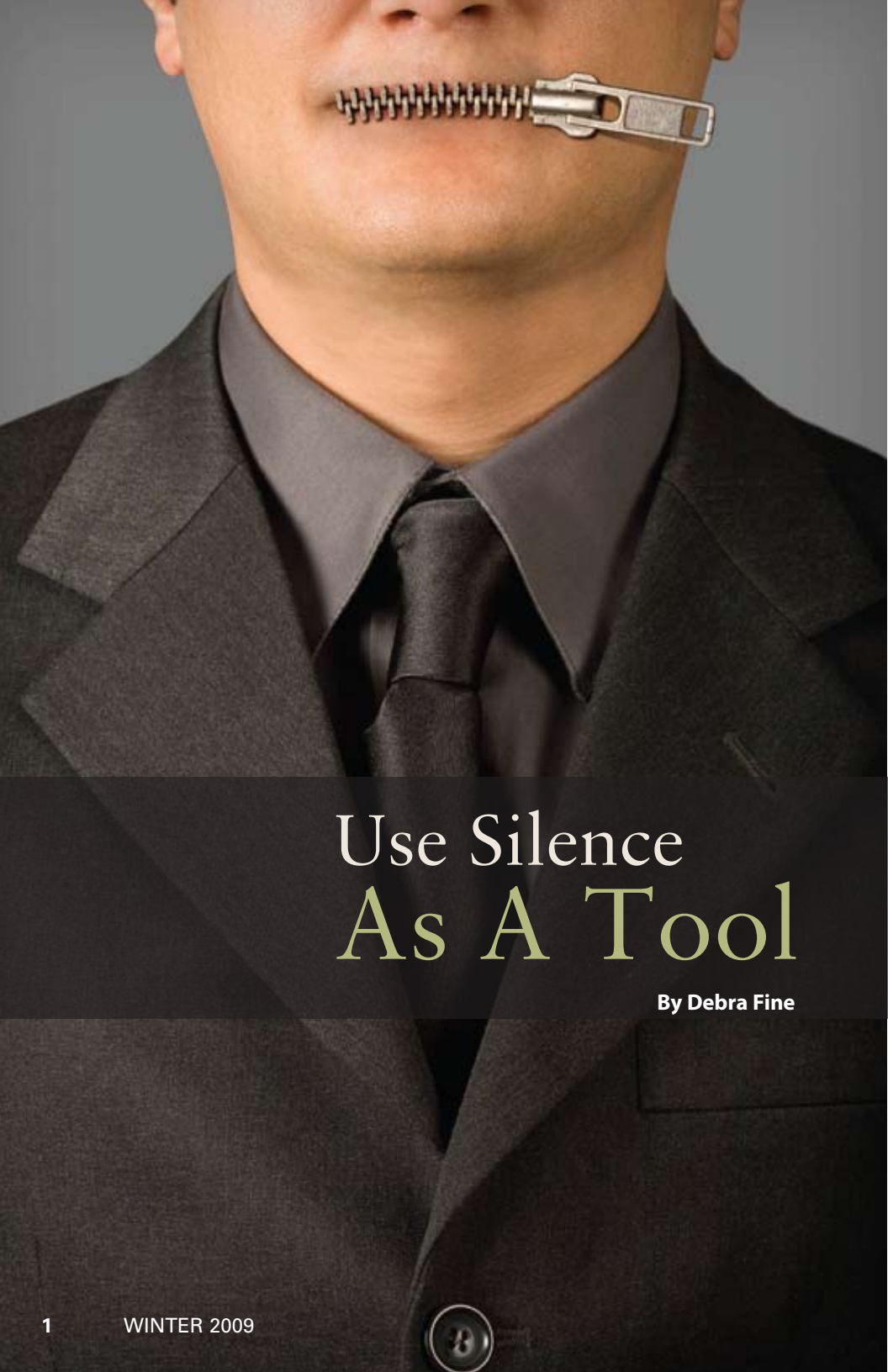
# RTF **reVisions**

Solutions, ideas and notes for life away from the office [www.iaap-rtf.org](http://www.iaap-rtf.org) Winter 2009



## A Happier **New You**

**Use Silence As A Tool**  
**Dining Room Etiquette**



# Use Silence As A Tool

By Debra Fine

**A** speaker is introduced and walks out to the podium. The applause ends, but she doesn't speak—not yet. She stands quietly, making eye contact with various members of the audience. Everyone's attention is fixed on her as they anticipate her first words. This is the power of silence.

By taking advantage of these moments of quiet, the speaker has conveyed strength and confidence. She has commanded the room. But presentations are only one area where you can use silence to your advantage. It can be an equally effective tool in all sorts of conversations.

The problem is that most of us feel awkward when a conversation appears to drop into the abyss. How do you react when this happens? Do you try to fill the quiet with whatever comes to mind? If the silence follows something you've said, do you feel like you did something wrong?

It can be useful to find out exactly how you feel when you're faced with silence. Ask someone to remain quiet with you for about 20 seconds. Does it seem like an eternity? Is it difficult to resist the urge to jump in and say something to fill the gap? If so, breathe!

It can be helpful to rehearse dealing with silences, especially if you find that your mind wanders and causes you to lose focus. Practice until you're comfortable with silences for 40 seconds. For most people, this feels like a very long time, but since most lulls in a conversation are shorter than 40 seconds, this will train you to be ready for anything. If you're prepared for it, silence can be your friend rather than an enemy.

## The First Meeting

Silences frequently happen immediately after you've been introduced to someone. Perhaps you have to walk down the hall from the reception area together before entering a meeting. While there's nothing wrong with the quiet that can naturally occur in these moments, you have a golden opportunity to begin building your relationship with this person. Small talk is a great way to establish a rapport. Use the silence to make a comment about the building, the neighborhood, or something interesting (but not controversial) that you read in the newspaper. Be sure to include a question that requires more than a "yes" or "no" response.

An easy way to break the silence is to add something personal to a general comment you made before. For example, if you commented on the interesting architecture of the building, you might mention that you once thought about becoming an architect before you decided to become an accountant. If the other party doesn't comment on this information, you can ask a question: "What sparked your interest in actuarial science?"

## The Art Of The Quiet Negotiation

You've seen the films with actors like Al Pacino or Robert DeNiro. The most intimidating man in the room is the one who can stay silent the longest while everyone else starts to squirm. While you shouldn't initiate a silence contest unless you have the confidence to pull it off, you need to be prepared when someone else instigates this kind of power play.

A silence contest generally begins when you ask the other person a question, and you're met with dead air. Such a contest is

*Continued on page 13*

# Letter From The Chairman



The end of last year brought a few surprises to residents at Vista Grande. Our retirement community received a bit of attention with a visit by U.S. Senator-elect Tom Udall who held an open forum speaking on senior issues. Rio Rancho N.M. Mayor Tom Swisstack also took time to speak to residents. Before his visit he requested residents place their written questions in a box and addressed them during his visit. In addition, some of the residents were used as extras when Dennis Hopper directed an episode of the TV show "Crash" at Vista Grande. Watch for the show on Star TV this

month.

On Dec. 5, the Board of Trustees met with the management and residents of Vista Grande for a town hall style meeting. Like anyone, the residents are not happy when faced with rent increases, however to ensure our place in the sun remains viable and operational, it was necessary. Utility costs continue to climb as well as the cost to maintain units and the overall property.

On news from The Trust— we were wrong to not include a category for chapters with fourteen and under in the new awards program. We corrected that. All chapters with fourteen or less members will be in the race to see who comes out on top with the largest monetary contribution to The Trust and receive their award and recognition at the 2009 Education Forum and Annual Meeting.

We're also asking for your help with a survey of our members. We want to know how The Trust relates to you and what direction you think we should take so we are relevant to all our members. If you haven't received it yet, be watching for it, and please take a moment to fill it out.

As we welcome 2009, take a moment to read this issue of *reVisions*. It has some tips on starting the New Year off right and help in deciding what is right for your parents when choosing elder care.

Also look for two articles from the speakers at this spring's Professional Education Conference in Nashville. Debra Fine gives pointers on small talk and the proper use of silence. Roz Usheroff helps you be on your best behavior at dinner, whether you're on a date, with your in-laws or eating with a client.

I hope your 2009 is filled with all things good.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kathy Hampton". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Kathy Hampton CPS/CAP



## Vista Grande

### A Place in the Sun... for you!

Vista Grande is the Retirement Trust Foundation's most longstanding project. Our "place in the sun" was envisioned in 1947 by Della Herring, who contributed the first dollar to fund it.

### Amenities at Vista Grande

Many of the amenities at Vista Grande find their home in the Community Building. The Mildred Barr Library has books and videos, as well as a comfortable area for reading by the fireplace. The Lillian C. Martino Arts & Crafts Room holds quilting sessions and has an active Project Happiness group that knits blankets and baby items for charities. The Community Building also houses an exercise room where we have a monthly class on using all the equipment. A beautiful gazebo is a picturesque setting for outdoor gatherings.

### Vista Grande Convenience

Vista Grande has all the features you would expect from any premier retirement community, including: a coin-operated laundry, private resident mailboxes, monthly resident potluck dinners, organized craft activity sessions, convenient free parking, a fully-equipped kitchen for resident use on special occasions, and a chapter of IAAP just for Vista Grande residents!

For additional information or a residency application, call or write today:

**Manager, Vista Grande**  
**Retirement Center**  
**4101 Meadowlark Lane SE**  
**Rio Rancho, NM 87124**  
**505-892-9300**

# THE Trust

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# A New Year And A Happier New You

By Brian Worley



# M

ost of us would like to be happy and possibly, that is why we make so many resolutions, such as those to lose weight, stop

smoking and make more money. We hold belief that any one of them will make us happier. But will they?

Or is there more realistic ways to make the New Year better? Surprisingly, it is possible to approach the question of happiness scientifically. It even has a name. Hedonics, the Study of Happiness. And now amid all the psychology of self-help books, key points are emerging that may actually make a difference.

Here are the top ten:

1) **Count Your Blessings:** It may sound glib, but we really should be more grateful for what we often take for granted. Take a few minutes a day to think about all the things we should be grateful for, starting with our health and that of our family and friends.

2) **Simplify Your Life:** Harvard University psychologist Tal Ben-Shahar points out that many of us feel unhappy because our lives are so cluttered that we have no time to get on top of our commitments. If you want to be happier, turn off your mobile and resist the need to check your e-mails every hour. Take time out to do very little; go for a walk, enjoy your children.

3) **Avoid Greed:** Avoiding materialism is a sure path to greater happiness says the experts. It's surprising how many people spend every waking hour fretting about what they don't have,

rather than enjoying the stuff that they do.

4) **Exercise:** Not only will you avoid temptation but the fresh air and exercise will make you happier, because the thing that an increasing number of scientists agree on, is that we are far too physically idle. On the face of it, running a marathon is utter madness, yet thousands do so, both for the sense of achievement and the rush of mood-enhancing endorphins it releases.

5) **Take Pleasure In Simple Tasks:** When you become frustrated with whatever you are trying to accomplish, counterbalance that with completing a simpler task. In his book *The Happiness Hypothesis* Virginian University psychologist Dr. Jonathan Haidt points out the huge sense of satisfaction nearly everyone gets from performing what may be a simple task extremely well.

6) **Set Realistic Goals:** Setting realistic goals and achieving them is far better than either having no goals, due to fear of failure or shooting for the moon. This applies to our personal lives as much as our careers.

7) **Admit Mistakes:** Admitting you can be wrong is, Haidt argues, a bizarrely cathartic exercise. We are far too obsessed with not losing face or status. Admitting failure and error will not only make you happier it will also raise you in the esteem of others.

8) **Avoid Commuting:** We didn't need a psychologist to tell us that! Surveys consistently show that the length of time people spend getting to and from their workplace every day correlates strongly and negatively with their state of happiness. If you want a happier 2009 move closer to your work, get a new job or work from home.

9) **Tradition:** Haidt admits many

of the more positive values— “hard work, family, tradition, dress customs, even religious observance”— seem to make many people happier than the anything goes morality. People like freedom but they also like structure.

**10) Stop Trying:** Don't try too hard for happiness in the end. Probably the best advice about happiness is not to look for it

too hard. Like love, it will turn up when you least expect it. If you stop looking for happiness you never know, it may just come looking for you.

Brian Worley takes pleasure in the simple side of life. He finds happiness writing a variety of articles including home repair and science articles.

# Make A Plan For The New Year

By Kim Knight

Need a plan for the new year? You can create the first draft of the following plan in thirty minutes.

1. Focus on your goals. Answer the following questions: If I were sitting here next year at this time and feeling really satisfied with my life what would be different? What kinds of new relationships would I have? What would I have achieved? What's the accomplishment I would have reached?

2. Determine all the resources you will need. Who do you have to include and get on board in your dream to achieve your goals? Identify one person or one other form of resource for each goal.

3. What have you already done that was a step forward in the right direction? Identify steps you have taken in the past year for each goal and then expand on this. Be consistent and persistent with strategies that are working to stop yourself from starting down a path you want to take but then get distracted. Evaluate all your little or big successes in the past year and then establish your fresh starting point.

4. What would a big turning point be for you? Think of your accomplishments,

victories and your successes one year from now and imagine that you had a “big break” that was pivotal to your success. What would that “big break” be? Usually it would be someone you met, some new perspective you entertained or speaking to an expert in the task you want to move forward in. Once you can identify those tools and strategies or certain someone, you have a new starting point from where to move ahead in reaching specific goals and plans.

5. Lastly, don't be discouraged when things do not turn out exactly as you planned them. Be flexible and be consistent in your efforts. If something does not work, try something new. Think outside the box, ask for help and support, and don't let go of your dream for the sake of a minor or major setback. However, if something is not working time and time again, take time out to re-assess the situation and see what you can do differently that will produce different results.

*Freelance writer Kim Knight is planning on a great 2009. She writes lifestyle articles for a variety of web and print publications.*

# Book Reviews

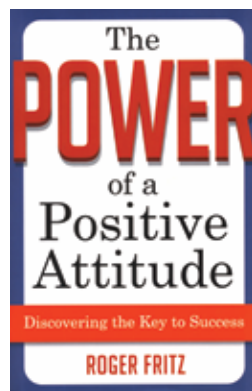


**Helping: How to Offer, Give and Receive Help by Edgar H. Schein (Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.)**

Helping is a fundamental human relationship. There are many different words for help: assisting, aiding, advising, caregiving, coaching, guiding, mentoring, supporting, teaching and many others. The diversity in terminology alone illustrates the nature of the differing type of help.

The moment of asking for and offering help is a delicate and complex one, fraught with inequalities and ambiguities. Schein helps readers navigate that moment so we avoid potential pitfalls, mitigate power imbalances and establish a solid foundation of trust.

**The Power Of A Positive Attitude by Roger Fritz (Amacom Books)**

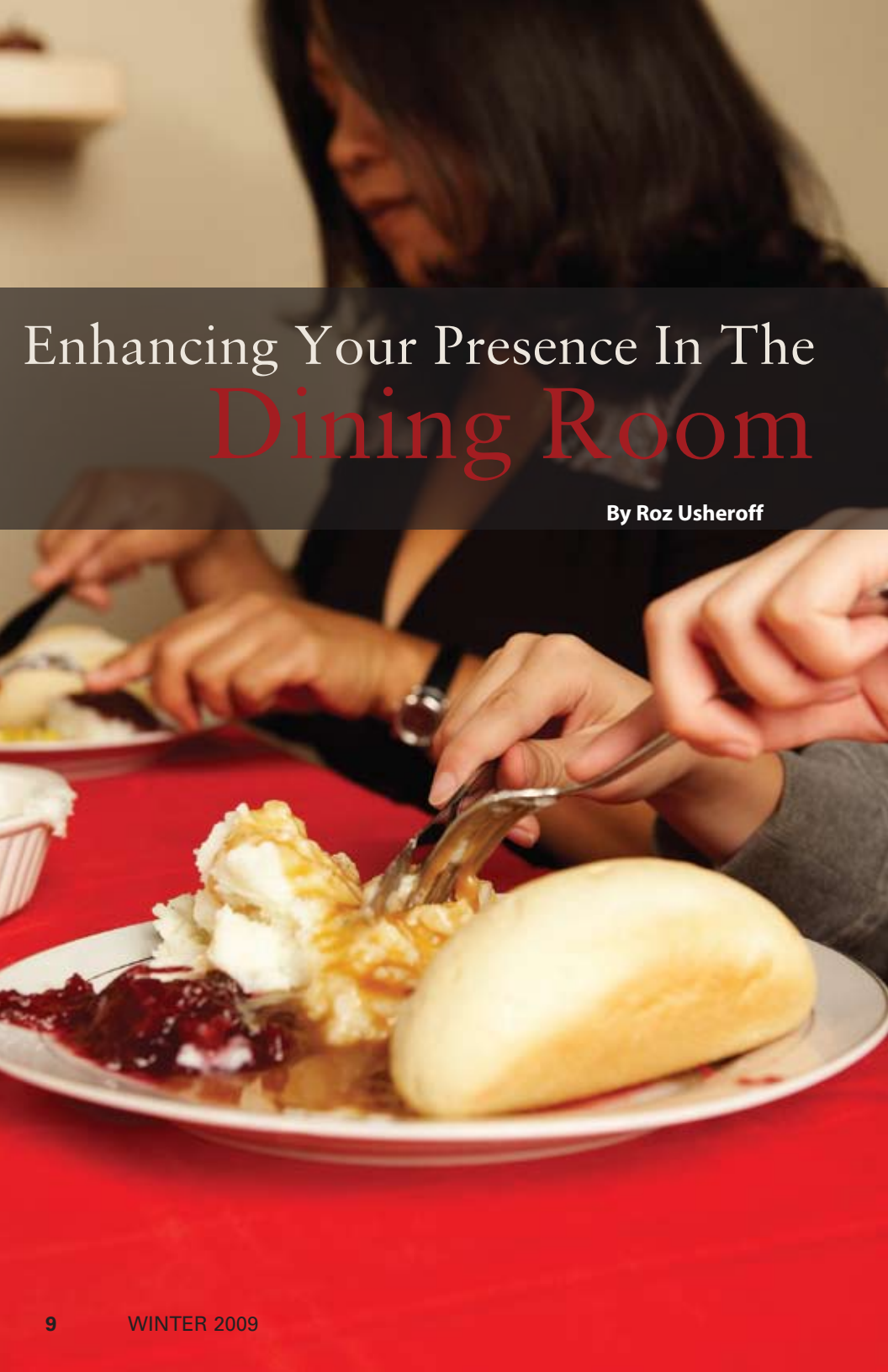


It's well-documented: people who are optimistic and hopeful tend to live longer and lead happier more productive lives. Learning to use the power of positive thinking, adopting positive attitudes and overcoming obstacles is one of the main keys to success. In addition, a recent study conducted by the University of Texas showed that people who have an upbeat view of life tend to stay healthier and stronger into their later years. Author Roger Fritz shows readers how to develop a deeper understanding of the effects of their attitude and how it influences not only their lives but the lives of others.



**Let It Go, Just Let It Go by Kent A. Rader (Brown Books)**

This stress reduction book outlines the cause and effect relationship of stress, guiding readers to discover that stress is an internal reaction to outside stimulus. It offers practical advice for redirecting thoughts toward the stimulus rather than focusing on changing circumstances over which they may have little, if any, control. Once the reader acknowledges that stress is internally generated, he or she can begin eliminating it by learning practical methods of dealing with emotional responses to situations that trigger stressful feelings. Finally, the book delves into the nature of creative problem-solving skills and how participants can easily learn to tap into these at any time.



# Enhancing Your Presence In The Dining Room

By Roz Usheroff

**G**ood manners and proper dining protocol can make or break a promising business or personal relationship. Proper etiquette can enhance your credibility and make you stand out.

Many people fail to recognize a business meal for the wonderful opportunity you have been given to distinguish yourself. It's about your standing out from the crowd; it's about being accessible and connected to others; it's about making others feel important and valued. To take it one step further, it's about demonstrating good manners. And good manners show respect for others and an awareness of social convention. I look at it as the frame around an oil painting—it just completes the total picture.

I once attended a business lunch hosted by a well-known technology CEO. Sitting at our table was a member of his sales management team, a gregarious gentleman with a reputation for being easy-going and highly effective in his sales role. No sooner had we sat down at the table when he began to show cracks in his dining façade. He tucked his tie into his shirt during the soup course and, when the entrée arrived he attacked it like a hunter, holding knife and fork in his fists as if he were about to field dress an animal. This embarrassing display of poor table manners did not go unnoticed, and I could hear the sound of his career advancement trickling away when the CEO remarked: “Well, it is hunting season after all.”

But etiquette is not simply a case of putting lipstick on the deer-hunter. It's a set of guidelines for everyday living and for behaving appropriately in the company of others. Table etiquette helps you to define your level of professionalism. Here are a few helpful tips to help make your business dining experience a remarkable experience—as well as a few pitfalls you can avoid so you don't take a complete pratfall:

### Pre-Meal Etiquette

- Arrive on time.
- Call ahead if you know you will be late.
- Wait 15 minutes before calling to check on the arrival status of your dinner partners.
- Greet your host(s). If you need to introduce people, address the senior or most prestigious person first: “Mister Smith, I'd like you to meet my friend, Sarah Smith. Sarah, Roger Smith is the CEO of WorldCOM International and is our host today.”

### Sitting Down

- Do not place any bags, purses, sunglasses, cell phones, or briefcases on the table. Cellphones and pagers off, please!
- When you are all seated, gently unfold your napkin and place it on your lap, folded in half with the fold towards your waist
- Hands and wrists on the table, not on your lap—it will diminish your posture. And no elbows on the table.
- Do not rearrange cutlery to accommodate yourself if you are left-handed.
- Wait for all parties to arrive before

beginning any part of the meal.

- Whether basic or formal place setting, use your utensils from the outside in. Dessert utensils may be above the place setting or served with dessert.

## Ordering

- When in doubt, follow the lead of the host. That includes the consumption of adult beverages. Generally, you will not want to order alcohol at lunch; dinner is okay, but again, mirror your host and do the same as he or she does. If they are familiar with the restaurant, you get bonus points if you ask them to recommend a wine.
- Don't order the most expensive item. Unless you are the host and want to signal to your guests that their dining pleasure is your pleasure. Translation: you are picking up the tab. Make sure you do.
- Order simply. Do not attempt to customize your plate with Entrée Item A, with the vegetables from Entrée B and the carbs from Entrée C. Waiters are busy, and it will be your order they forget.
- Avoid finger foods or foods that are difficult to eat. No sushi unless you are at a sushi restaurant. It's too much of a mouthful at once. The same with elongated pastas such as fettuccine, linguine or spaghetti. Remember the drip and slurp factor: You don't want to leave the table with your shirt or blouse looking like a Jackson Pollock painting.

## Eating Styles

Once upon a time, everyone ate with their hands. Then they began using a single

sharp knife to cut and skewer things. It took centuries for people to learn not to eat with the same knife they had used to kill their dinner (or each other, for that matter). The fork as we know it came much later, after the spoon and the 'spork,' a hybrid beast that resembled a spoon with dual tines. Of course, they wiped the knife and their fingers after they used them, either on their coat or on the dog under the table. Washing dishes came later. No wonder people rarely lived beyond their fourth decade.

Most of the North American rules of eating weren't shaped until the 17th century, by European society and by military etiquette. Two styles have evolved:

**Continental or European style:** cutting the food with the right hand and using the left hand to hold the food while cutting and when eating. Hold both utensils as you would a pen, cut small amounts and eat with the fork tines facing down.

**American style:** cutting the food with the right hand and holding the food with the left, then switching hands to eat with the right hand. Do not hold either utensil in your fist.

While both styles are acceptable, the European style is much more elegant and, when dining with Europeans, imparts an air of sophistication and respect for your guests or host. Eat slowly.

## Table Etiquette

If you leave the table, place the napkin on your seat. After you have finished eating, fold the napkin and place it to the left of your plate. If you leave while

eating, place your knife in the clock position of ten to four. Place your fork in the opposite direction over your knife, with the tines up. Together, they should resemble an “X”. The cutlery should extend beyond the edges of the plate but must never touch the table.

To show that you have finished eating, place your cutlery side by side on your plate in the clock position of ten to four. The knife blade is placed closest to the right side, however the blade faces left. The fork is placed closest to the left side and the tines rest down.

Business talk starts with small talk. Switch over to business until the food arrives. Never discuss business when your client is eating. Reconvene the business talk when coffee is served. Remember that lunches and dinners are great opportunities to build rapport and solidify your relationship. Breakfast, however, is usually quick and you can discuss business throughout.

And now, some nitty-gritty:

Shrimp can be dipped into the cocktail sauce using a cocktail fork. If the shrimp are large, place them onto the plate, cut with the fork before dipping them into the sauce. You have the option of using either a cocktail fork or salad fork for large shrimp.

**Salad.** In North America, salad is usually served before the entrée. If you are served large pieces or a whole wedge of lettuce, cut one bite at a time, using the knife provided. If the salad is served before or after the main course, use the smaller fork. If the salad is considered the main course, use the entrée fork.

**Rolls and bread.** When the rolls are

served in a basket, take one, and always pass the basket to your right. Place the roll on the bread plate which is located on the left side. Take a pat of butter and leave it on your bread plate. Never tear your roll in half or into many pieces. The rule is that you can tear two bite-size pieces at a time and butter one. And it’s never appropriate to cut a roll with a knife.

**Passing the salt and pepper.** Pick them both up and place them on the table within reach of the person next to you. They are never passed hand-to-hand. Nor should anyone other than the original requester sprinkle their food when they have the shakers in their possession.

## Paying The Bill

You should prearrange how the bill is being paid. The host pays, or you offer to split the tab. Tip appropriately, 15% is the norm; 20% for exceptional service.

Remember first and foremost that eating is a pleasure. And dining etiquette is an art. Knowing both will ensure that you get invited to the table, both literally and metaphorically. And for that, you must think before you eat.

Roz Usheroff is one of the leading executive coaches, business etiquette experts and personal branding trainers in North America. Author of “Customize Your Career,” For further information visit [www.usheroff.com](http://www.usheroff.com). She will be speaking at IAAP’s Professional Education Conference March 9-11, 2009 at the Gaylord Opryland Resort in Nashville, Tenn. For more information visit [www.iaap-hq.org](http://www.iaap-hq.org).

not for the faint of heart, and if someone decides to sit quietly for several seconds in an effort to watch you squirm, you know you're dealing with someone who wants to control you. In this situation, you have two choices—break the silence or try to win the contest. While it may be tempting to try to beat the other person at the game, it may not always pay off to be the most intimidating person in the room. Don't allow your sense of competition to get in the way of your objective. Instead, use the period of silence to genuinely contemplate what you have discussed. Then, interject a comment such as, "After thinking about this further, I really believe it would be to our advantage to ..." This should end the power play and get the conversation back on track.

Another important tactic is to simply speak slowly. This can be difficult when you have a lot to lose, but it's very important to leave plenty of gaps between your sentences. This allows the other party to jump in and make a concession, giving you the advantage.

When you surrender to relevant pauses during a negotiation, you have the opportunity for productive listening. If you rush through the process, never allowing the quiet you need to assess the situation, you may miss important verbal and non-verbal cues that will give you the edge.

### Powerful Presentations— It's All In the Pauses

You can easily spot inexperienced public speakers. The adrenaline causes them to rush through the presentation, barely taking a breath. The audience struggles to keep up but eventually tunes the

speaker out entirely. Skilled speakers know how to use the blank spaces to create drama.

A few seconds of silence in a presentation can be effective for many reasons:

- When you want to emphasize something, stop to make your point. For example, you might offer a startling statistic such as, "85% of the homes in this area are too expensive for 75% of the population." A pause after this statement will allow your audience to ponder its importance and will make the statistic all the more dramatic.
- If you say something funny, give the audience time to laugh!
- When you're shifting gears in your presentation, a slight pause will alert your audience that you're beginning a new point. It gives them time to digest what you have said before you offer the next bit of information.

Whenever you find your nerves getting the better of you, find a moment when you can pause to make eye contact with the audience. Using silence effectively is an advanced communication skill. Practice keeping quiet during silences. Soon, you'll stop feeling awkward and will smile quietly to yourself, waiting with confidence.

Debra's newly released *The Fine Art of the Big Talk: How to Win Clients, Deliver Great Presentations, and Solve Conflicts at Work* (Hyperion) is the second in the "Fine Art" series following her best selling book *The Fine Art of Small Talk: How to Start a Conversation, Keep It Going, Build Networking Skills—and Leave a Positive Impression*. Find more information at [www.DebraFine.com](http://www.DebraFine.com). She will be speaking at IAAP's Professional Education Conference March 9-11, 2009 in Nashville, Tenn. For more information visit [www.iaap-hq.org](http://www.iaap-hq.org).

# News From The Trust

In November The Trust's Board of Trustees met in Albuquerque, N.M. for its quarterly board meeting. The trustees discussed the direction of the Trust and decided a survey to IAAP members will help to determine its future direction.

If you're already received the survey and filled it out, thank you. If you've yet to get it, please take a few minutes to give us your thoughts on the future of the Trust. We value your input.

Below is the new photo of The Trust taken at the fall board meeting.



2008-2009 RTF Board Members

2008-2009 RTF Committee Members

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Make checks payable to "Retirement Trust Foundation" and mail to the address below.

Contributions must be received in IAAP Headquarters by June 30 to be counted toward Trustees' Awards presented at the next IAAP Education Forum and Annual Meeting.

Divisions sending contributions for chapters should list each chapter and amount of contribution and attach to this form so those chapters may also participate in the awards.

All contributions to the Retirement Trust Foundation are tax deductible in the US.



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