

Etiquette Tips for PTA Meetings

Mingle with others before the meeting starts

- * If the opportunity presents itself, go up to people and introduce yourself. Get to know the people who are coming to your meetings or you are attending meetings with. If everyone doesn't know one another in the meeting room, make introductions starting with the person highest in rank.
- * Wear your PTA name badge.
- * Stand when being introduced.

Be on time

- * Even better, be five minutes early so you can find your seat and get situated. You don't want to waste anyone else's time by not being punctual. Being ready on time shows respect for others time and avoids having to start out with an apology for being late.

Dress appropriately

- * Clothing can enhance a person's professional reputation or detract from his or her credibility. If you don't know what the dress code for a meeting is, find out and make sure your attire falls within the guidelines. It is always better to be a little over dressed and look professional than be underdressed.

Be prepared

- * Go over the agenda and read the minutes from previous meeting. Be prepared with all your assignments completed and action items done.
- * Be prepared to ask and answer questions and solve challenges.
- * Bring something to write on and with.

Have a strong agenda

- * If you're the person running the meeting, it's imperative that you stay on track. If you do digress, it's good to have a colleague who is prepared in advance to steer you back in the right direction.
- * Stay on time with time-certain items.

Be polite

- * Don't interrupt someone while they are speaking or asking a question.
- * Raise your hand to be recognized and give a clear message.
- * Avoid nervous habits; don't distract others by mindlessly tapping a pen or drumming your fingers on the table or foot on the floor.
- * Show respect by being professional, attentive, and engaged.
- * A positive attitude starts with positive body language – sit up, be engaged, look others in the eye, and SMILE.

Be concise

- * Say what you need to say in as few words as necessary.
- * Don't repeat yourself or give unnecessary information.
- * Don't save questions for the end – ask at the appropriate time.

Food in meetings

- * Know if it is appropriate.
- * Be quiet opening packages and think of the smell of the food and how it may affect others. Don't disturb your neighbors while eating.
- * Clean up after yourself.

Conference calls

- * Don't forget to mute your phone so others don't hear what is happening around you.

Phone etiquette

- * It is most polite to **put your phone on silent and leave it in your pocket while in a meeting.** (See *Be polite* section above – it's hard to be engaged when you're distracted by electronics.)
- * If you are expecting to receive a call that you must take during your meeting – before the meeting starts have a quick word with the leader to let them know you will be stepping out if you receive that call and will return as quickly as possible.
- * Keep your phone on silent.
- * Don't answer your phone while in the meeting. If you need to take a phone call, leave the room and go far enough outside the room that other attendees cannot hear your conversation in the meeting.
- * If texting during a meeting, do so in a way that does not disturb those around you.
- * **DON'T** play video games, check emails, browse the web, etc. It's just rude.
- * We live in a world of savvy technology. Be careful when sending messages and read what you are sending before you send it. Auto correct can change things and usually not for the better.

Leaving early

- * If you can't stay for the entire meeting, let whomever is in charge know what time you need to leave. Then, if items on the agenda need to be rearranged so you can participate, you have the opportunity to do so before the meeting starts.

Send Thanks

- * Thank all those who are visiting and those who are participating in the meeting.