

The Perfect Business Handshake

You never get a second chance to make a first impression!

Importance:

It's true that you never get a second chance to make a first impression. The business handshake is a key part of that first impression, especially in an interview setting. Done correctly, the business handshake communicates confidence, sincerity and professionalism. Practice these business handshake tips to make a positive first impression.

Tips:

- With your head level and hands at your side, walk up to the person with confidence. Keep your hands out of your pockets and move anything you're carrying to your left side, freeing your right hand for the handshake.
- Face the person squarely (face to face) to convey a message of honesty and openness. Standing at an angle can send the opposite message.
- The correct business handshake is done with the right hand. This is the socially acknowledged way to complete the business handshake in the United States. The only acceptable reason to use your left hand is if you have no right hand or it's in a cast or sling. In that case, it's acceptable and understood. Otherwise, using your left hand may give the impression that you lack social skills.
- As you approach the other person, make eye contact, without staring.
- Give a brief, friendly smile but don't overdo it.
- Extend your arm in front of you with your thumb facing up towards the sky and your hand ready to receive the other person's. Hands should be web to web. (Slide your hand into the other person's until the webs make contact.)
- Wrap your fingers around theirs and lay your thumb down gently. Then link thumbs and hold the hand securely, giving two to three slightly firm shakes.
- During a handshake with a person who is more mature than you are, make sure you're not putting too much pressure on his or her hand. The proper business handshake should be painless to both persons involved. This also applies to the actual shaking movement of the handshake. Don't shake too vigorously or too tightly because you could cause injury.

The web of your hand

