

### The Business of Thanks



A thank-you should always be offered. The method of thanking can be a note, face-to-face, phone, or email.

First time meetings, especially at a lunch or dinner, usually call for a handwritten note, unless you know the person from an email culture. When in doubt, choose the note. A prompt, sincere, handwritten one is always appropriate and is greatly appreciated by the recipient. It's also good business. Be sure to check spelling and grammar. If your handwriting is illegible, a printed note on your business stationery is fine.

An emailed thank-you may be appropriate, depending on the circumstances, the person, and your relationship. Again, defer to the handwritten note if you're in doubt.

#### **When It's Okay to Send an E-mailed Thank-you Note**

- When you have lunch with an associate with whom you have a longtime business relationship and she picks up the tab, an emailed thanks is fine unless she's the kind who stands for tradition.
- When your host is someone with whom you exchange business correspondence via email two or three times a week, you can use email to express your thanks after a business lunch as you would in a handwritten note. If your host treated you to a business dinner, your better option would be to write and mail a thank-you note.
- When time is of the essence, use an emailed thank-you note as a prelude to a handwritten one. Send the email as quickly as possible and the note in one or two days.

### When a Handwritten Note is a Must

- When you've been entertaining at a business related occasion that crosses from business to social-dinner, an evening out with your spouse, a weekend house party at the home of an employer or other business associate, or as a guest of honor at an office party - send a handwritten note.
- When the occasion was purely social but was hosted by someone with whom you do business, address your note to your host and his or her spouse and send it to their home. Social thank-you notes are handwritten on either notepaper or personal stationary.
- When you receive a gift from a client, vendor, or associate, send a handwritten note if verbal thanks weren't given in person. Even if you did thank the giver in person, a follow-up note is always appreciated.

### Less Formal Thank-yous

- When you're one of many at an office party or a restaurant where you share a meal while doing business, a face-to-face, phones, or emailed thanks just after the event is sufficient. While it's never wrong to write a thank you note, you can repeat you thanks in your next business correspondence instead.
- As a lunch guest of a host with whom you speak often, you can either express you thanks again the next time you talk or you can send an email.
- If you've lunched with someone you see regularly and he paid, saying thanks is fine. You would, however, mention the lunch in your next business communication: "Thanks again, Alfredo, for the lunch [or "for joining me for lunch" if you paid]. We really accomplished a lot, and I'll have that proposal to you by next week."
- The more expensive the entertainment, the more the need for a handwritten note.

For more information on [Emily Post Business Etiquette Programs](#) contact Director of Sales and Relationships, Dawn Stanyon at Dawn@emilypost.com.

