

Richard Gee

From: Neen James [neen@neenjames.com]
Sent: Saturday, 14 June 2008 12:56 a.m.
To: richard@geewiz.co.nz
Subject: Neen James Productivity Ezine

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neenjames



G'Day!

That's Aussie speak for Hello!

Update from the USA!

Well summer is nearly here in the USA! The kids are counting down the final days of school, we can hear people mowing their lawns each afternoon, the winter clothes have been packed away and the summer clothes are now being worn by everyone. I love the summer in the US! I saw my first lightening bug this weekend (a true sign summer is on the way), the ground hogs are popping their heads out, the baby robins are chirping in the nests in my back yard and the baby deer are wandering around our yards. This time of year means being outdoors, enjoying healthy foods, sharing times with friends and sometimes leaving the office early.

For my Australasian readers, it is getting chillier and you are starting to rug up. Whether you are enjoying the cool or the warm weather, determine this month to be more productive using your communication tools. This month we feature strategies to be more productive with your cell phone, blackberry, crackberry... raspberry – whatever your tool of choice!

Productive Cell Phone Etiquette

You may remember a time before there were cell phones...a time when communications within organizations was more controlled and within business hours. Cell phones have created an 'open all hours' mentality for business (and pleasure). People now assume they can reach you at all hours and we have become dependent on the flexibility they give us.

There once was a time we had to schedule, plan, co-ordinate and know our way to a meeting or luncheon. Cell phones have now become a major distractor as we use them for phone conversations, receiving email and texting. I often see people in meetings not paying attention (checking their blackberry), couples at dinner (looking under the table at their phones for text and email) and parents supposedly playing with their kids or watching them play sport (while checking their messages). It is time to master phone etiquette, be fully present in conversations and stand out in the crowd.



Neen was emcee for the Women's Resource Center Annual Fundraising Luncheon -- what a great event!

Recommended Products



It isn't too late to buy this great gift idea for your friends and colleagues. To order, visit www.neenjames.com

Just ask. When my cell phone rings the first question I ask my caller is “how can I help you today?” This simple, but polite question ensures they get right to the point, avoids chit chat, and ensures we are not spending too much time on the phone. If the caller is in for a long chat I suggest another time we can connect. Try this simple question and see if you spend less (not more) time on your cell phone.

Be present. If you are on the phone with a caller, give them your undivided attention. Too often we proudly ‘multi-task’ and don’t fully tune into conversations. This wastes time, kills productivity and causes us to miss important facts, ask for information to be restated and we can also miss ‘reading between the lines’ in conversations. Be fully present in your cell phone conversations.

Your voicemail. Create an informative voicemail message that provides callers with information about you and when you will get back to them. You might simply include your name, business name, contact details and/or website. Where possible try to record the message yourself so your callers hear your voice when they phone, instead of an automated voice message.

Size matters. Be considerate when leaving voicemails. This is not a time to tell a long and detailed story. It is the perfect opportunity to provide the facts about why you called, what you need and when they can get back to you.

Clear out. Daily check your voicemail messages and ensure you clear out all messages and return them within 24 hours wherever possible.

Reply quickly. Because of its immediacy, people expect fast replies to their voicemails. A response within 24-hours is probably as long as most people would consider appropriate. If you are unable to answer within 24 hours ensure your outgoing message tells callers when you will get back to them.

Watch your tone. Business communications used to all share a fairly dull, formal tone of voice however voicemail is more informal and conversational. It does allow for a more casual and personal approach. Ensure you always use a greeting (‘Hi’, ‘Hello’, ‘Good morning’ and ‘Good afternoon’ are probably more common) and a sign off (‘looking forward to hearing from you’ or ‘ have a great day’).

Don’t answer. There are times when a cell phone should be switched to silent mode or completely turned off including the movies, meetings, meals in public places, church, temple and funerals. It is also inappropriate to answer in the bathroom (not to mention unhygienic!). Voicemail is a great resource for these times when you are unable to answer your phone.

Ask permission. When you are phoning someone on their cell phone inquire if this is a good time to talk. This simple question will allow them to respond and ensure you have a productive conversation. If it is not convenient to chat they can then suggest an alternative time.

Open hours. Common etiquette used to state you should never call someone before 9.00 am and after 9.00 pm. While business may open earlier than 9.00 am, this is a good standard to adhere to. Unless your know your colleague or client is an early riser it is best to wait until 9.00 am to call and to avoid ever calling clients after 9.00 pm at night.

Out of office. Just like an email ‘Out of Office’, if you are going to be unable to respond to voicemails within your usual timeframe, this might be because you are away or you need some quiet time, advise callers when they can expect to hear from you. Remember cells phones are a fabulous tool if used productively and with sensitivity for those around you.

Recommended Events

National Speakers Association - International Conference

Interested in boosting your speaking career? If you do any speaking in your business, professional presentations, training or marketing presentations – this is for you. Check out the National Speakers Association conference in NYC on 2-5th August - it is an event not to be missed. The speakers and networking are awesome -

www.nsaspeaker.org

Recommended Providers

If you are on the East Coast, I can highly recommend the services of Kristel Closets. You may recall we did a feature on how to create a productive wardrobe in August 2007 (if you would like a copy of that e-zine email Maria at maria@neenjames.com or check out our website www.neenjames.com). I am convinced if we all invested time in clearing out our wardrobe we would be more productive each morning. Instead of standing in front of a jam-packed wardrobe saying in despair "I have nothing to wear" – employ the services of a professional to help sort your wardrobe and also help you shop for missing pieces to complete your outfits. I can highly recommend the team at Kristel Closets and their monthly e-zine is brilliant too – you can sign up at: <http://www.kristelclosets.com>

Recommended Productivity Products

Neen highly recommends Coakley's Tote bags. She owes five! This is the only bag she uses when she travels. Neen is pleased to let you know that Coakley has partnered with HSN to provide an incredible offer. Tote and Clutch normally \$575 HSN Special: \$399 Save over \$175! [Click to Shop Now!](#)

Productivity Tip from Neen's Virtual Assistant, Maria Novey



In staying current with today's technology and improving your productivity, you can text your staff for answers/information and receive a response quickly. Neen many times will text me if she needs a quick response. Texting is a wonderful tool and although it may take time to learn the "language", you will find yourself being more productive. (P.S., if you need help with the acronyms, ask any teenager!)

Neen says, Hoo Roo!

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