

# Southern Living

NOVEMBER 2007

The heart of Southern life

## What's Etiquette? Just Ask Joy

*Joy Weaver polishes the manners of Texans—from middle schoolers to corporate execs.*

She just finished teaching etiquette to eighth graders and emerged looking calm, perfectly coiffed, and ready for her next assignment at a Dallas *Fortune 500* company. For a woman who can handle 120 teenagers, telling an executive he's using the wrong fork is a piece of cake.

"I don't make up the rules; I just teach them," says etiquette expert Joy Weaver. That's important, she says, because a major business decision may turn on the wrong choice of cutlery or an intrusive cell phone call.

To polish their manners, companies, schools, and other groups around Texas just ask Joy, founder of Plano based Protocol Enterprises, Inc. They also buy her book, *Just Ask Joy* (Brown Books, \$14.99). It offers tips toward correct social and business behavior, including how to remember BMW.

### She Learned the Lessons Too

"That's 'bread, meal, water,'" she says, pointing to three lunch components. "If you're at a crowded round table, you may think, 'If this is my napkin, is that my water?' So I always say, 'Remember BMW. The bread is on the left, the meal is in the middle, and the water is on the right.'"

Joy learned such lessons herself while working at a corporate real estate firm. The president asked her to oversee the company's mentorship program, in which employees taught youngsters after school.

Joy decided to teach manners but quickly learned she was barely a page ahead of the kids in any etiquette book. "I had no idea what I didn't know," she says, still amazed.

### Blame It on the Sixties

The knowledge of good manners, she believes, began to disappear a few decades ago. "In the 1950s a lot of people were still taught etiquette because we ate at home, and we did a lot of socializing," she recalls. "But then the sixties came—peace, love, rock and roll, I think there was a break



Joy Weaver (right) appears regularly on WFAA's *Good Morning, Texas* with cohost Amy Vanderoef.

- "People are like diamonds; we all have value" but it's not until we're polished that our true worth is recognized."

Joy Weaver



Gary Cogill, cohost of WFAA's *Good Morning Texas*, and Joy prepare for her interview. "I don't make up the rules; I just teach them," she remarks.



there. People of my generation were not taught manners, so we had no idea how to train our children."

So after the etiquette classes with the kids, she enrolled in The Protocol School of Washington for "eight days in boot camp." Joy also earned certification from the Letitia Baldrige Business Etiquette Program.

### Shining People Like Diamonds

As an international protocol consultant, Joy founded her company in 1999 and began her work as "a polishing cloth." Among her clients are rank-and-file employees who are promoted to the front office. Suddenly, they're working with the public, rough edges and all.

"People are like diamonds; we all have value, but it's not until we're polished that our true worth is recognized," she remarks. "I say, 'Look the customer in the eye. Give them a firm handshake. Treat others by the golden rule.' "

That rule rings true with cell phones. "I can say that's the biggest faux pas," she says of inappropriate phone usage such as "cell yell" -talking loudly as if the other party were Alexander Graham Bell himself.

"You should say to a lunch partner: 'I'm expecting a call. My cell phone is going to be muted. When it rings I'm going to step out and take this call,'" she continues.

### Manners and the PDA

Many in the Metroplex pick up her tips over morning coffee. She appears regularly on WFAA's *Good Morning Texas*, where she may discuss topics from funeral eti-

quette to pregnancy propriety. (Don't ask an expectant mother if you can feel her tummy.)

Joy still bones up on social skills, finding that changing technology requires new rules. It's bad meeting manners, she says, to peck away on a PDA while a speaker has the floor. What's next? Etiquette is ever changing with each new technology advance.

Gary D. Ford

Pick up tips and contact Joy at [www.justaskjoy.com](http://www.justaskjoy.com).

### Five Etiquette Answers From Joy

1. Should a man always open doors and pull out chairs for a woman? On a date, yes. At work, no.
2. Where does your napkin belong when you are finished eating? Always to the left of your plate.
3. Should you apply lipstick at the dining table? No, go to a private area.
4. Should you stand when you are introduced to a man? Yes. Always stand when being introduced to anyone.
5. In which hand should you hold your drink? The left hand; leave the right for socializing.

