

Working Together

NOVEMBER 2010



Crayons and Comics Create a Table for Your Little Turkeys

Having a kids' table at your Thanksgiving dinner is a win-win situation.

Mom and Dad can enjoy adult conversation without interruptions, and children can escape the tiring adult conversation in lieu of more kid-friendly activities.

Use these tips to make your kids' table the coolest:

- Use brightly colored paper or plastic plates, and give the kids supplies to decorate their own place cards. This will keep them busy while the food is being prepared, and the unbreakable dinnerware will mean one less thing to worry about.
- The Sunday comics make great table covers, as do informal, plain-colored tablecloths. Buy laundry markers so kids can write on the tablecloth during the meal. Use a new tablecloth each Thanksgiving, then each year bring out the previous years' cloths for a little reminiscing. (Don't forget to use padding to protect the table.)
- Take a tip from restaurants and set out paper placemats and crayons. Thanksgiving-themed coloring and activity books can be great time-fillers as the kids wait impatiently for the turkey thermometer to pop.

- Give the kids a big basket of old family photos or albums (the older the better) and have them try to identify aunts, uncles, cousins and grandparents. This is a great way to jumpstart conversations between the children and adults about special memories and funny family stories.

- Fill a basket at the table with things like Silly Putty, mini Play-Doh tubs, small craft store kits, a disposable camera, tiny Slinkies, etc. These will keep the kids occupied while they're waiting for the turkey, during football games or while the adults are napping after their huge meal.

By creating a kid-friendly table for the under-18 crowd at your Thanksgiving celebration, you'll give both children *and* their parents something to be thankful for.

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Mixing and Mingling

November ushers in the season for The Holiday Party—and event where you are expected to hold a drink, clutch a purse, shake hands, reach for food and be charming, conversational and engaging, all at the same time.

Piece of cake, if you're a natural-born socialite.

However, gracefully navigating the way around a holiday soiree can feel anything but natural to many partygoers. Here are some suggestions for how to mix and mingle with a touch of class.

What to Do with Your Hands

- Hold your beverage in your left hand. Wrap a napkin around the glass and wipe off your right hand after eating an hors d'oeuvre. As a side note, when you're served a cocktail in fine crystal, the thin plastic straw should only be used as a stirrer.
- Use your right hand for shaking and eating (preferably not at the same time). People will be greeted with a warm, dry handshake.
- If you're carrying one, sling your handbag over your left shoulder. Or, better yet, carry a small bag and hang it from your left arm or wrist.

What to Talk About

Awkward silences aren't common during small get-togethers with friends. But at company holiday parties, they're as regular as red sweaters. Here's how to break the ice:

- Discuss current events, but be careful with controversial topics like politics and religion. Come up with a mental list of safe conversation starters before you even get to the party.
- Ask, “How are you? How is your family doing?” Most people appreciate someone taking an interest in them.
- Start conversations about the food. There's nothing easier.

What to Eat

A lot of hors d'oeuvres are just waiting to squirt across the room or all over your new party clothes. Here's how to avoid a potentially messy situation.

- Think “bite-size.” If you can pop an item into your mouth all at once, you'll eliminate the risk of the filling oozing onto you or the carpet.
- Go with sturdy. Flimsy appetizers are sloppy. Look for bases made of toasted rounds or crostini.
- Don't get burned. Test the treat with your tongue before tossing it in your mouth.

It's All About Me

Admit it—you've Googled yourself before. Who hasn't? Anyone who's posted anything online is curious about exactly what shows up in an internet search.

With Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn, Twitter, Flickr and other lesser-known social media sites, it's not necessarily clear how your online personality comes across.

Now a new service is aiming to legitimize all your online vanities.

Called About.me, the San Francisco-based startup allows users to register for their own personal homepage, and then pulls content from around the internet to build a single online identity. So rather than having your profile scattered across a myriad of social networks, About.me meshes it all together into one all-inclusive web ID. In a nutshell, it creates a personal, dynamic profile page (think splash page) that points users to your content around the web.

Most significantly, About.me provides members with a personal analytics dashboard to monitor their influence online. Users can track their total activity

based on, say, tweets or Flickr uploads or Facebook status updates. This allows them to understand how many people see their profile, where they're coming from and what they do on their page.

Essentially, About.me is attempting to solve the age-old problem of “multiple e-identity disorder.” All your different identities will be represented on About.me, along with some helpful analytics to track where your influence stretches online.

Find out more or sign up at About.me.

Make Your *Point*

Microsoft's PowerPoint has become a staple in the corporate world for speakers and presenters. But like many things, it can be used for good as well as not so good.

While many professionals rely on PowerPoint to help them make an interesting presentation, not everyone uses it effectively. Make sure your PowerPoint slides enhance your presentation, not detract from it.

Don't give PowerPoint the spotlight.

The audience's full attention belongs to you, the speaker. Many people forget that PowerPoint is a tool designed to enhance their presentation, not *be* their presentation. No amount of razzle dazzle can overcome a weak presentation. If you don't do your job to engage the audience, PowerPoint can't save you. It only makes a bad presentation worse.

Make your presentation readable. If people have to squint during your presentation, you have lost your audience. In most situations you should use at least 30-point type, but it depends on the size

of the room, the size of the screen, etc. It's a good idea to test your slides and make certain they are readable from the back of the room before you have an audience.

Go with the flow. In other words, give your presentation a beginning, middle and an end. Make sure it flows smoothly. Sometimes speakers who rely on PowerPoint just read from their slides and their speech becomes a random, bulleted list. Allow your slides to be like road signs along the way of your presentation, pointing the audience in the direction you're headed. But don't let them determine your direction.

Most of the time less is more. Fancy slide transitions and fly-ins get old quickly. A basic dissolve from one slide to another is sufficient. Have all your bullets appear at once rather than one at a time. Avoid sound effects—they serve no purpose other than to annoy the audience and distract them from your presentation. And finally, cut down on the number of slides. People are only going to remember the major points.

Insights

Turducken is becoming a more popular choice for Thanksgiving dinners (it originated in Louisiana). A turducken is a de-boned turkey stuffed with a de-boned duck, which itself is stuffed with a small de-boned chicken. The cavity of the chicken is filled with a highly seasoned breadcrumb mixture.

We don't work with projects.
We work with *people*.

Top *Five* Thanksgiving Side Dishes

1. Mashed potatoes
2. Stuffing
3. Green beans
4. Sweet potatoes
5. Butternut squash

—according to BlogHer.com

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First Impressions

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Passing Glance

One of the current trends in paper manufacturing is to produce papers with a slightly blue shade because it makes the paper appear to be brighter. If the images in your print job are predominantly cool colors, this is great because the colors will reproduce with greater intensity. However, avoid blue-shaded papers when reproducing warmer images (like skin tones) because the bluish shade may cause undesirable gray-green undertones in these images.

Memorable Dates

November 2 Deviled Egg Day
November 12 Chicken Soup for the Soul Day
November 18 Great American Smokeout
November 25 Thanksgiving

We bring *real-life* experience to every project.



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