Goal: To make the most of your opportunity to make a good impression and hopefully close a deal while enjoying a meal.

Agenda:

- Benefits of doing business over meals.
- Be prepared for a business meal where deals, decisions and information is exchanged
- Know what food to eat
- Keep your professionalism while interacting at what seems like a "social" event
- How to hold a conversation during the meal
- Be on your best etiquette behavior

Let's get started – a few things to think about:

1. "Begin with the End in Mind"
    a. What is the purpose of the meeting?
    b. Who are you meeting with?
    c. How many people are attending the meeting? Who are they?
    d. What type of restaurant are you eating in? (This lets you know the noise level, size of tables, etc.)
    e. Do your research
    f. Come prepared
        i. Pen
        ii. Paper
        iii. Business cards
        iv. Calendar

2. Be on Your Best Etiquette Behavior
    a. No alcohol
    b. Order "neat" food (no spaghetti, food you pick up with your fingers/hands, soup, unshelled seafood, anything with sauce.) If you can, review the menu prior to arriving at the restaurant and decide in advance what you will order. You will appear decisive. If you have a restricted diet, you will also be prepared to handle that. Be prepared to alter your selection based on what the other person orders.
    c. Chew with your mouth closed. Don't talk with food in your mouth.
    d. Don't ask a question of the other person when you see the person put food in their mouth. The best time to have the crucial discussion is after ordering the food. Having a discussion after the meal is finished is not advised as you will not get the person's full attention once their stomach is full.

Notes

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e. Know basic etiquette:

i. Place the napkin on your lap once seated. Put your napkin on your chair if you must excuse yourself from the table.
ii. Food on the left, beverages on the right
iii. Start on the outside and work in
iv. Butter and bread go on the bread plate. Break bread into small pieces.
v. Pass salt and pepper together
vi. Don't start eating until the other person does
vii. Be prepared to pay, offer. If you pay, pay by credit card. Don't count out bills in front of the person.
viii. Turn off your cell phone. Do not put it on the table.
ix. Be polite and courteous to the wait staff.

3. The Deal:

a. Listen more than you talk
b. Answer questions in a clear and concise manner
c. Ask the questions you have prepared in advance
d. Take notes

4. At the End:

a. Thank the person for the meal
b. Acknowledge being in touch
c. Walk out together

5. Afterwards

a. Send a handwritten thank you note
b. Review your notes for action items

6. Networking Reception Etiquette:
   a. Avoid hanging out at the food or beverage table. You can eat later. Take advantage of the opportunity to meet as many people as possible. One contact can change your whole life.
   b. Leave your right hand free to shake hands…free of grease, food residue

7. Action Steps:

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Notes

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