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CONTACT: Katie Fontana  
212.242.9353 x160  
kfontana@laforce-stevens.com

### **Etiquette At Work In The Information Age**

*Advice from Dale Carnegie Training on Using New Technology in the Workplace*

**New York, NY** (April 6, 2006) – With new technologies popping up at light speed, workers play a guessing game regarding what electronic devices are acceptable in the office. While these technologies can be used to increase productivity, they may also create misunderstandings between co-workers or lead people to distraction.

“New technologies always promise to make your life easier, but often, they can also introduce new complications,” says Peter Handal, chairman, president and CEO of Dale Carnegie Training. “Computers and wireless devices only make you more efficient if you are in fact using them for working purposes and not as toys. Remember why they are at your office in the first place, and then remember why you are.”

Peter’s suggestions for appropriate use of these communication tools/electronic devices include:

**iPods:** The culture of your office dictates your work iPod etiquette. A creative or individualistic environment might welcome those white earbuds. Even if your office sanctions iPod use, first consider your specific position and goals. Are you new and trying to form good working relationships? The iPod may isolate you and discourage interaction with others.

**Email:** Your inbox fills with email at the speed of thought, encouraging people to pick up the pace of their own communication – and, unfortunately, increase careless communication. Don’t get caught in the trap that befalls your fast-clicking co-workers. Take the extra time to draft even a simple note, and you will be seen as a well-spoken and organized communicator.

**Personal Instant Messaging/Emails:** Using your company internet for personal correspondence is common and, often, tolerated, but only if it doesn’t negatively impact productivity or involve inappropriate content. Be clear about your company’s policies about instant messaging or emailing at work. If your office has no official policy, be judicious with the time spent on personal activities while in the office.

**Handheld Devices:** These pervasive gadgets are a constant distraction to the hords of today's ever-reachable workers, and they are causing normally polite people to commit egregious breaches of decorum. PDA people take note: It's not acceptable to be stealing glances or typing away at one's handheld device while at a business lunch or a face-to-face meeting. If you are expecting an important message, keep your device on vibrate. Your productivity level will suffer less than your reputation would if the device rang aloud at an inopportune moment.

**Cell Phones:** People are generally less offended by some breaches in cell phone courtesy, mainly because everyone has been the offender at some point. Individual office culture varies widely on this issue. However, if your office doesn't have an official cell phone policy, observe the actions of your co-workers to gauge what is appropriate. Keep your phone on vibrate, so your ring does not disturb others. And, if you must take the call, consider relocating to a private place on your floor where talking is less obtrusive.

### **About Dale Carnegie Training**

Dale Carnegie Training ([www.dalecarnegie.com](http://www.dalecarnegie.com)) is a global management training company with experts in corporate management, workplace issues and leadership trends. The company provides leadership, sales and management training in over 400 of the Fortune 500 companies, training over 7 million adults worldwide.

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