Chapter 4: Professional Etiquette: Essential Guidelines

Repeated Questions:

None identified.

Other Important Questions:

1. Internet, Telephonic and Mobile Etiquette:

- **Q.** Define internet etiquette. Give two short examples. **(WINTER 2025, 3 Marks)**

Answer:
Internet etiquette (netiquette) refers to the accepted rules of polite, respectful, and responsible behaviour while communicating and interacting online.

Two Examples:

- Avoid typing in ALL CAPS in emails or chat—it is perceived as shouting and unprofessional.
- Do not share someone's personal information or private messages without their consent.

- **Q.** Explain the importance of etiquette while attending telephonic/online meetings. **(WINTER 2025, 4 Marks)**

Answer:

- **Creates Professional Impression:** Proper greetings, clear speech, and timely joining show respect and professionalism, building trust with clients and colleagues.
- **Prevents Miscommunication:** Muting when not speaking, avoiding background noise, and speaking clearly reduce distractions and ensure messages are understood correctly.
- **Ensures Efficiency:** Keeping calls concise, staying on agenda, and not interrupting save time and improve meeting productivity.
- **Maintains Team Discipline:** Turning on video when required, using the raise-hand feature, and avoiding multitasking reflect respect for participants and organisational norms.
- **Protects Confidentiality:** Avoiding public sharing of meeting links and not recording without consent safeguard sensitive professional information.

- **Q.** Design a short 'Mobile Etiquette Code' for students in classroom/online learning. **(WINTER 2025, 7 Marks OR)**

Answer:

MOBILE ETIQUETTE CODE FOR STUDENTS

- Keep phones on silent or vibrate mode during classroom sessions and online classes; avoid ringtones and notification sounds.
- Do not use mobile phones for non-academic activities such as social media, gaming, or chatting during lectures.
- Seek permission before taking photos, recording lectures, or screenshots of online sessions or classroom material.
- Join online classes on time with a proper display name, and keep the microphone muted unless speaking.
- Avoid multitasking—do not attend calls, browse unrelated content, or leave the online meeting repeatedly without informing the teacher.
- Use respectful language in chats and emails to teachers and classmates; avoid slang, all caps, and emojis in formal academic communication.
- Keep the camera on when required, dress appropriately, and ensure a quiet, well-lit background for online learning.

- Do not share class links, recordings, or teacher's contact details with outsiders without permission.

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2. Morals, Etiquette and Professional Reputation (Theory):

- **Q.** Critically evaluate how lack of etiquette can affect professional reputation. **(WINTER 2025, 7 Marks)**

Answer:

- **Damages Credibility:** Poor etiquette—such as interrupting others, arriving late, or using informal language—makes a professional appear unreliable and immature.
- **Weakens Client Trust:** Ignoring email etiquette, missing deadlines, or taking calls during meetings signals disrespect, causing clients to lose confidence in the professional and the organisation.
- **Creates Negative Workplace Image:** Rudeness, loud phone use, or inappropriate dress code can label an employee as unprofessional, affecting promotions and team relationships.
- **Harms Digital Reputation:** Posting offensive content, using all caps, or sharing confidential information online can permanently damage professional image on social media and professional networks.
- **Causes Cross-Cultural Offence:** Lack of awareness of foreign business etiquette—such as improper greetings or gift-giving—can offend international counterparts and lose business opportunities.
- **Reduces Networking Opportunities:** Poor handshake, lack of eye contact, or inappropriate conversation at conferences discourages mentors and employers from building professional relationships.
- **Affects Organisational Branding:** Employees represent the company; their bad etiquette reflects poorly on the employer's brand, leading to customer complaints and reputational loss.
- **Limits Career Growth:** Repeated etiquette failures can result in warnings, missed promotions, or termination, as employers value professionalism alongside technical skills.

- **Q.** Differentiate between morals and etiquette. **(WINTER 2025, 3 Marks OR)**

Answer:

Basis	Morals	Etiquette
Meaning	Principles of right and wrong conduct based on personal or societal values.	Accepted rules of polite behaviour in social or professional settings.
Scope	Deeper and universal; concerned with ethics and conscience.	Situational and cultural; concerned with manners and appearance.
Consequence	Violation causes guilt and moral condemnation.	Violation causes embarrassment, disapproval, or social awkwardness.
Example	Not lying or cheating is a moral principle.	Saying "please" and "thank you" is etiquette.

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3. Business Etiquette and Code of Conduct:

- **Q.** State four guidelines for business etiquette during foreign visits. **(WINTER 2025, 4 Marks OR)**

Answer:

- **Research Local Customs:** Learn the host country's greeting style, business card exchange method, dress code, and punctuality norms before the visit.
- **Respect Hierarchy and Titles:** Address counterparts by their correct title and surname unless invited to use first names; follow local seating and introduction order.
- **Observe Gift and Dining Etiquette:** Understand local gift-giving rules and dining manners; avoid gifts that may be culturally inappropriate.
- **Avoid Sensitive Topics:** Do not discuss politics, religion, or personal matters unless the host initiates; keep conversation professional and respectful.

- **Q.** State four key points to remember while receiving a foreign counterpart in your office (bullet points). **(SUMMER 2026, 4 Marks)**

Answer:

- **Prepare a Warm Reception:** Arrange a clean meeting room, refreshments, and a clear welcome schedule; receive the guest at the entrance with a proper greeting.
- **Respect Cultural Differences:** Use the guest's correct title, observe their greeting customs, and avoid culturally insensitive remarks or gestures.
- **Provide Clear Orientation:** Introduce key team members, explain office protocols, and share the agenda and necessary documents in advance.
- **Ensure Comfort and Professionalism:** Confirm transport, accommodation, and communication support; maintain punctuality and professional dress throughout the visit.

- **Q.** Design a short code of conduct guide (5-6 points) for interns joining a multinational company. **(SUMMER 2026, 7 Marks)**

Answer:

CODE OF CONDUCT GUIDE FOR INTERNS

- **Maintain Punctuality and Attendance:** Report to work on time, inform the supervisor in advance about leave, and follow the company's attendance policy.
- **Follow Professional Dress Code:** Dress appropriately for the office and client-facing situations as per company policy.
- **Protect Confidential Information:** Do not share company data, documents, or client details on personal devices or social media.
- **Communicate Respectfully:** Use formal email and meeting etiquette; avoid slang, interruptions, and unprofessional language with colleagues and clients.
- **Use Company Resources Responsibly:** Use office computers, internet, and equipment only for authorised work purposes.
- **Demonstrate Ethical Behaviour:** Avoid plagiarism, conflicts of interest, and dishonest reporting; report concerns to the supervisor or HR.
- **Respect Diversity and Inclusion:** Treat all colleagues equally regardless of gender, culture, religion, or background; avoid discriminatory remarks or harassment.

Chapter 5: People Skills for Professional Communication

Repeated Questions:

None identified.

Other Important Questions:

1. Stress and Time Management (Theory):

- **Q.** Define stress management. Why is it important for professionals? **(WINTER 2025, 3 Marks)**

Answer:
Stress management is the set of techniques and practices used to control and reduce unhealthy levels of stress by identifying stressors, adopting coping strategies, and maintaining physical and mental well-being.

Importance for professionals:

- **Improves Performance and Focus:** Reduces absenteeism, errors, and burnout, enabling consistent productivity.
- **Protects Health:** Prevents stress-related illnesses such as anxiety, hypertension, and fatigue.
- **Enhances Decision-Making:** Keeps professionals calm and rational during deadlines, conflicts, and high-pressure situations.
- **Maintains Workplace Relationships:** Reduces irritability and conflict, promoting teamwork and professionalism.

- **Q.** What is time management? Why is it important for professionals? **(SUMMER 2026, 3 Marks)**

Answer:
Time management is the process of planning, organising, and prioritising tasks to use available time efficiently and achieve goals within deadlines.

Importance for professionals:

- **Meets Deadlines:** Ensures timely completion of projects and reduces last-minute stress.
- **Increases Productivity:** Prioritising high-value tasks using tools like to-do lists and schedules improves output.
- **Reduces Stress:** Proper planning prevents overload and work-life imbalance.
- **Builds Professional Reputation:** Reliability and punctuality earn trust from employers and clients.

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2. SWOT Analysis (Self-Assessment):

- **Q.** Perform a basic SWOT analysis of yourself as a communicator. **(WINTER 2025, 4 Marks)**

Answer:

Strengths	**Weaknesses**
Clear and structured speaking in familiar topics	Nervousness during public speaking or presentations
Good listening and note-taking ability	Tendency to use informal language in formal settings
Opportunities	**Threats**
Participating in seminars, debates, and group discussions to improve confidence	Interruptions or aggressive communication from others affecting clarity
Feedback from teachers and mentors for continuous improvement	Language barriers or cultural differences in multicultural teams

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- **Q.** Perform a basic SWOT analysis of yourself as an engineering student (short bullet points). **(SUMMER 2026, 4 Marks)**

Answer:

Strengths	**Weaknesses**
Strong interest in core technical subjects and problem-solving	Poor time management during exam preparation
Willingness to learn new software and tools	Hesitation in asking doubts or participating in class
Opportunities	**Threats**
Internships, workshops, and projects for practical exposure	Rapid technological changes requiring continuous upskilling
Guidance from faculty and peer study groups	Competition and high academic pressure affecting confidence

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3. Thinking Skills (Theory):

- **Q.** Differentiate between creative thinking and critical thinking. **(SUMMER 2026, 3 Marks)**

Answer:

Basis	Creative Thinking	Critical Thinking
Purpose	Generates new ideas, possibilities, and solutions.	Evaluates and analyses ideas logically to judge validity.
Approach	Divergent, imaginative, and open-ended.	Convergent, analytical, and evidence-based.
Outcome	Produces innovation, originality, and alternatives.	Produces reasoned judgments, decisions, and problem clarification.
Example	Designing a new app feature or alternate energy model.	Checking whether a proposed design meets safety and cost criteria.

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4. Ethics and Boundaries at Work:

- **Q.** Evaluate the ethical dimensions of refusing to work overtime under pressure. **(WINTER 2025, 7 Marks)**

Answer:

- **Right to Fair Working Conditions:** Refusing excessive overtime upholds the ethical principle of fair labour, protecting employees from exploitation and unsafe workload.
- **Professional Integrity and Honesty:** A professional must honestly assess whether they can deliver quality work; refusing overtime under pressure may prevent errors, burnout, and compromised output.
- **Contractual and Legal Obligations:** Ethical refusal depends on employment terms—if overtime is voluntary, refusal is justified; if contractually required during emergencies, the employee should negotiate rather than simply refuse.
- **Duty to Employer and Team:** Refusal must be balanced with responsibility to colleagues and clients; sudden refusal during a genuine emergency may harm team performance and trust.
- **Communication and Transparency:** Ethical conduct requires explaining reasons professionally, proposing alternatives, and giving reasonable notice instead of silent non-cooperation.
- **Health and Safety Considerations:** Overwork increases accident risk and mental stress; refusing unsafe overtime protects the employee and indirectly protects the organisation from liability.
- **Respect for Autonomy and Dignity:** Employees have a moral right to set boundaries and protect personal life; coercion to work overtime violates dignity and can create a toxic work culture.
- **Long-Term Organisational Ethics:** A culture that respects reasonable refusal reduces attrition and promotes sustainable productivity; unethical pressure damages trust and reputation.

- **Q.** Critically assess how respecting privacy and saying 'No' are essential to maintaining healthy boundaries in a team environment. **(SUMMER 2026, 7 Marks)**

Answer:

- **Builds Trust and Psychological Safety:** Respecting privacy—not prying into personal matters, health, or family issues—creates a safe team culture where members feel valued and secure.

- **Protects Confidential Information:** Team members must not share personal data, messages, or sensitive work information without consent; this prevents gossip, embarrassment, and legal risks.
- **Prevents Role Overload:** Saying 'No' to unreasonable requests protects an individual's workload, ensuring quality work and preventing burnout that can affect the whole team.
- **Encourages Honest Communication:** When team members can refuse politely and explain priorities, discussions become transparent rather than resentful or passive-aggressive.
- **Maintains Professional Respect:** Healthy boundaries prevent manipulation, emotional pressure, and exploitation; colleagues learn to respect each other's time, capacity, and autonomy.
- **Supports Ethical Decision-Making:** Saying 'No' to unethical or unsafe requests—such as falsifying data or skipping safety checks—protects professional integrity and organisational reputation.
- **Improves Team Efficiency:** Clear boundaries reduce confusion about responsibilities; members focus on agreed tasks instead of unplanned demands, improving coordination and accountability.
- **Sustains Long-Term Relationships:** Privacy and the ability to refuse without guilt preserve mutual respect, reduce conflict, and create a sustainable, healthy team environment.

Chapter 6: Professional Ethics

Repeated Questions:

1. Engineering Ethics (Theory):

- **Q.** Define engineering ethics. / What do you understand by "engineering ethics"? **(WINTER 2025, 3 Marks OR; SUMMER 2026, 3 Marks OR)**

Answer:
Engineering ethics is the branch of professional ethics that deals with the moral principles, obligations, and standards of conduct expected of engineers in their professional practice.

- It guides engineers to prioritise public safety, health, and welfare above all other considerations.
- It covers honesty, competence, confidentiality, avoiding conflicts of interest, and environmental responsibility.
- It helps engineers resolve ethical dilemmas involving employers, clients, society, and the environment.

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2. Corporate Social Responsibility (Theory):

- **Q.** Explain Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) with one Indian company example. / What is Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)? Give two examples of how companies fulfill it. **(WINTER 2025, 4 Marks OR; SUMMER 2026, 4 Marks OR)**

Answer:
Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is the voluntary commitment of businesses to contribute to social, environmental, and economic development beyond profit-making and legal compliance.

Indian Company Example — Tata Group:

- Tata companies undertake community development, education, healthcare, and rural upliftment through Tata Trusts and company-led initiatives.
- **Example:** Tata Steel runs health centres, schools, and skill-development programmes in Jamshedpur and surrounding regions.

Two examples of how companies fulfill CSR:

- **Environmental Sustainability:** Reducing carbon emissions, recycling waste, installing solar power, and water conservation projects.
- **Social Welfare:** Funding education scholarships, organising health camps, supporting girl-child education, and contributing to disaster relief.

Other Important Questions:

1. Ethical Dilemmas (Case Based):

- **Q.** You are an engineer asked to conceal data about an unsafe product. Explain your ethical responsibilities. **(WINTER 2025, 7 Marks OR)**

Answer:

- **Prioritise Public Safety:** As an engineer, the paramount duty is to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public; concealing unsafe product data directly violates this fundamental ethical principle.
- **Refuse to Conceal Data:** I must not participate in hiding test results, defects, or risk information; doing so would be dishonest, illegal, and potentially harmful to users.

- **Report Through Proper Channels:** I should first raise the issue with my immediate supervisor or quality/legal department in writing, documenting the safety concern and the request to conceal it.
- **Escalate If Necessary:** If internal reporting fails, I must escalate to higher management, the ethics committee, or regulatory authorities such as consumer safety boards.
- **Maintain Confidentiality of Legitimate Information:** While refusing to conceal safety data, I must still protect genuine trade secrets and unrelated confidential information as per professional norms.
- **Document Everything:** Keep records of test data, communications, and decisions to protect myself and provide evidence if an investigation occurs.
- **Consider Whistleblowing as Last Resort:** If the product poses serious risk and all internal channels fail, responsible disclosure to authorities or the public may be ethically justified to prevent harm.
- **Accept Professional Consequences:** I must be prepared for employer pressure or retaliation; ethical integrity requires resisting coercion and upholding the code of conduct of the engineering profession.

- **Q.** You are an engineer in a company dumping waste illegally. Explain your ethical responsibilities and suggest how to resolve the situation. **(SUMMER 2026, 7 Marks OR)**

Answer:

- **Recognise the Ethical and Legal Violation:** Illegal waste dumping harms the environment, public health, and community rights; as an engineer, I have a duty to prevent it and not remain a silent participant.
- **Refuse Active Participation:** I must not sign, approve, or facilitate any document or operation related to illegal dumping; active involvement would make me ethically and legally complicit.
- **Report Internally First:** I should inform my supervisor, environment officer, or compliance department in writing, citing specific incidents and applicable environmental laws.
- **Document Evidence Carefully:** Maintain records of dates, locations, waste types, quantities, and instructions received; use photographs or logs where lawful and safe.
- **Escalate to Higher Authorities:** If internal action is ignored, report to the Pollution Control Board, environmental regulators, or legal department as appropriate.
- **Use Whistleblower Protections:** Explore company whistleblower policy or legal protections before external disclosure to reduce personal risk.
- **Propose Sustainable Alternatives:** Suggest proper waste treatment, recycling, authorised disposal vendors, and compliance training to resolve the root cause.
- **Act with Professional Integrity:** Uphold the engineering code of ethics—protect the environment, obey the law, and serve public interest—even under pressure, and be prepared to accept consequences for ethical conduct.

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