



Monday water cooler: Please pass the promotion, Chief executive dad, Better bosses

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By Jackie Farwell, The Associated Press

Please pass the promotion

Most of us know the importance of manners when we're on a date -- whine about the food or show up late and you'll spend the next Saturday night alone.

The same rules often apply to business, says Judith Bowman, author of "Don't Take the Last Donut: New Rules of Business Etiquette." Whether you're discussing growth charts over scrambled eggs or selling your research experience between bites of salmon, follow a few simple rules to maximize any mealtime opportunity.

Order food that is easy to eat. Nothing leaves a bad impression like gnawing on a rib bone or fumbling with a lobster claw.

If your food isn't prepared to your taste, eat it anyway or at least nibble around the part you don't like, Ms. Bowman said. A business meeting over a meal is about developing a relationship, not how your steak is cooked.

Don't order plain tap water if your company orders an alcoholic drink but you'd rather refrain. Try sparkling water or a beverage with a splash of juice.

Chief executive dad

You might think big shot CEOs have little time to spend with their kids, but many of them are making the effort to do just that.

According to a survey of chief executive officers at Fortune 1000 companies, 80 percent of CEO dads said they spend as much or more time with their kids than their father spent with them.

Nearly 70 percent said they would leave a late meeting to see their child in an event like a play or piano recital, and 59 percent knew the names of their kids' three best friends.

The survey revealed some room for improvement, however. Nearly three-quarters of CEO dads admitted to missing an important milestone in their child's life, and 62 percent regretted it. Less than half knew their kid's bedtime.

The nonscientific survey, conducted by Ericho Communications, was sent to all the Fortune 1000 CEOs and 11 percent were returned by CEOs identified as parents. Another 39 percent of the responses resulted from follow-up phone calls.

Better bosses

Think you could do your boss' job better than she can? You're not alone.

Nearly three-quarters of employees think they could outperform their boss if given the chance, and most of them would jump at the opportunity, according to a recently released survey. A full 65 percent of workers said they aspire to their boss' position.

At the same time, 42 percent rated their boss' performance as excellent or above average, and 66 percent said they trust their supervisor. It's a sign that while many employees respect their boss, they feel underutilized at work, said Bob Damon of the executive recruiting firm Korn/Ferry International, which conducted the nonscientific quiz.

The survey was based on a poll of executives registered with Korn/Ferry's online executive center. An average 750 respondents answered each question.

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