Mind your manners at the ‘etiquette dinner’

No matter how high the GPA or impressive the résumé, a job candidate who arrives late, eats noisily, slops ketchup on a $30 steak or rests his or her weary elbows on the table will not make a good impression – and probably won’t be hired.

That’s why Sacramento State’s Academic Advising and Career Center is hosting the upcoming “etiquette dinner” for more than 100 Sacramento State students. The social/educational sit-down event is designed to prepare them for job interviews – and, eventually, meal meetings with bosses, colleagues and clients – that will test their manners.

“A Taste of Etiquette” will be from 5 to 8 p.m. Tuesday, April 15, in the University Union Ballroom.

“Social and dining etiquette plays a key role in today’s business world,” says Shayla Walker, a Sacramento State career counselor and academic adviser. “Many organizations, large and small, conduct final-round interviews in a professional dining setting. And the way you present yourself can make or break the deal. A little confidence can go a long way, and proper etiquette will set you apart from the competition.”

On the menu for the etiquette dinner is a fruit-and-cheese appetizer, spiced pecan and grape salad, and chicken stuffed with arugula, cheese and herbs and served with savory Israeli couscous, glazed baby carrots and green beans. Dessert is an amaretto peach cobbler.

As the students dine, professional etiquette expert Gina Snyder will advise them on everything from which fork or spoon to use when, to the appropriate small talk for a business situation. She’ll also offer tips on successful networking.

“I often get feedback from employers that many candidates have the skills and qualifications necessary for a job but that ‘fit’ also is important,” says Cein Mathisen, employer relations liaison with Sac State’s Career Center. “Recruiters must determine if the candidate will fit into the organization’s culture.

“Interviews and meetings that take place over a meal give recruiters an opportunity to learn more about candidates’ values, personality and long-term goals. In
addition, inviting a candidate to a meal can help a recruiter see how the candidate behaves and presents him or herself in a social setting.”


For media assistance, contact Sacramento State’s Office of Public Affairs at (916) 278-6156. – Dixie Reid

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