

Smart Phone and Telephone Etiquette Tip Sheet

- **Recorded Messages:** The phone number you print on your resume and provide to networking contacts must have a professional voicemail **at all times** identifying you. Use your full name, do not record any music in the background. Callers should not be greeted with an automatically-generated response; a prospective employer or networking contact won't even know whether to leave a message without confirmation of your identity.
- **Answering the Phone:** Remember, "this is he" or "this is she," not "him" or "her."
- **Identify Yourself:** Whether calling an employer, family friend, faculty or classmate networking contact, when someone picks up, identify yourself with your **first and last name**, and state the reason for your call. Not "Hi! This is Bob!" But "Hello, this is Bob Roberts, Duke Law School 2L. It was great speaking to you about ___ on Wednesday. I am calling to follow up..."
- **Leave a Voicemail, Don't Redial:** Calling repeatedly and not leaving a message is considered very poor business etiquette. Lawyers are often in their offices and not able to pick up the phone—but caller ID allows them to see that you are calling—the firm name, and often your name as well, will appear on their telephone screen. Phones now are computerized and can identify every single call received on the screen; the calls and the time of the calls will show up on the ID list (and look stalkerish).
- **Turn off your phone.** When in an interview or Professional Meeting, give it your full attention. Turn off your smart phone; not even vibrate.
- **"Professional Meeting"** is considered any meeting with a prospective employer, an informational meeting with **any networking resource** (alumnus or alumna, college contact, former employer, family friend, faculty, administrator). A meeting with a **Duke Law classmate** who is providing information about prior employment or assisting you in your professional development is also Professional Meeting. Your classmates may be your clients, colleagues, prospective employers or opposing counsel one day; they will always be your Duke Law School circle of professional contacts.
- **Do not check your phone** at any time during a visit to an employer or during a Professional Meeting. (It is considered inappropriate professional etiquette to take your smart phone to meetings at many law firms and other legal employers, so this will help you establish the habit of leaving your smart phone locked in your desk, or keeping it in your suit jacket.)
- **Do not take notes on your smart phone during a Professional Meeting.** Always have a pen and pad of paper with you for Professional Meetings. (Do not take notes or refer to notes at any time during an interview.) Again, this is good practice for your job: You'll need to take detailed, legible notes for new assignments on paper. Taking notes with a smart phone at a meeting can look like you are checking messages, sending texts—not working.
- **Do not step out to take a call** at any time during a Professional Meeting unless you have a dire personal emergency.