

How can I eat, drink and close a business deal over lunch?

Business lunches can become no more than a social event unless you have a clear focus on what you want to achieve. Here are six tips how to consider.

1. **Outline you objectives.** Know what you want to achieve during the lunch. Be prepared with a list of key points you want to cover in your discussion
2. **Set boundaries** around the length of time of the lunch appointment. A 90-minute lunch will give you sufficient time to eat, drink and close that deal.
3. **Curb small talk.** Take care of the small talk at the beginning of the lunch. While small talk is an important, be sure to limit the amount of time spent so as not to short change yourself when you get down to business.
4. **Take notes.** Let your client know that you will take notes to avoid missing important facts. This reduces unnecessary follow-up contact for information that was already provided.
5. **Order wisely.** Choose a meal that allows you to take notes easily without worrying about spilling sauces or leaving greasy fingerprints on your notebook.
6. **Remember food etiquette.** Avoid asking questions as the other person is putting food into his or her mouth. Pace your questions and your client's responses to ensure everyone is able to enjoy their meal without feeling rushed or having to speak with a full-mouth.

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