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# Breaking the ice

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## Getting past someone's brusqueness requires tact and understanding

Introducing yourself to a prospective colleague, customer or supplier at a gathering should be a simple enough task: Make eye contact, say "I don't believe we've met" as you approach, put your hand out, say your name and "How do you do?" It may seem formal, but it shows respect, a key in creating a good first impression, says corporate etiquette expert Adeodata Czink, founder of consultancy Business of Manners.

But sometimes it takes more than that to break the ice if the target is seemingly brusque or downright rude. If someone replies with a curt "fine," smile and let it go, Czink advises. It may not be a case of rudeness so give him the benefit of the doubt. "One should never let the other person know that they were wrong," Czink says. "No child likes that; no adult likes that. It is worse etiquette to correct someone's manners than to do wrong in the first place."

But if someone is being rude, Czink says it's not necessary to grin and bear it. "Three times they offend me and then I call it quits."

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