

CONTACT
Style for Success

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Style & Substance Secrets newsletter.
The resource for business professionals to improve credibility, relationships and bottom line, through image, etiquette, dining and social skills advice.

New Public Seminars: February on Vancouver Island
- Savvy Networking
- Dining For Success
- Looking the Part
[Seminar info.](#)

Are your dining skills letting down your image? View a Free Demo
10 minute demo of [Dining for Success Online Training](#)

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About Style for Success
Business Image and Etiquette Consultants, Speakers, Trainers
Joanne Blake & Terry Pithers can help your organization and your people improve their personal image and social skills to build credibility and inspire stronger business relationships.

Specializing in business dress, demeanor & dining, we add enjoyable, unique, profitable content to your training, conferences, retreats and in-house seminars.

[View our business brochure \(pdf\)](#)



style & substance secrets
Etiquette and image advice, fashion and social trend critiques and tips.

The Feature

Change in America, the World and Ourselves
MY NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION

Terry and I just attended the first meeting of the year of our association of professional speakers, CAPS. The guest speaker asked everyone to reflect back and think of a single word to describe how we felt about the previous year in terms of our professional success.

Word of the year?
I was a bit conflicted because this past year while rewarding has also been unusually challenging and no single word could begin to define it. The year started off strong and then mid way through I was faced with a situation that ambushes many of us - aging parents and their health/mental health issues.

There were days when the burden and responsibility felt heavy and being "on" for presentations and focusing on business was hard or impossible. In our networking skills workshops I often quote Confucius who said, "dig your well before you thirst". Which refers to having a strong network, in place when you need it, not only in business, but in one's personal life as well.

Network of support
I could never have survived this crisis without support of family, loyal friends and acquaintances. I was amazed at the number of people who were able to offer empathy and advice because they too had similar situations or were going through them now.

This got me thinking about how we seldom know what's really going on in other people's lives. The clerk that doesn't acknowledge our presence may be parenting their parent. The grumpy colleague may be dealing with a sick child, the person that is acting aloof may be worried about a loss of job or home.

Make the connection
So the next time someone seems distracted or gives you poor service, give them the benefit of the doubt and practice your empathy skills. Taking a sincere interest in others, commiserating, sharing experiences, acknowledging them and what they're going through - helps. I know, because it helped me.

So back to the word I finally chose to sum up last year. I chose - empathy. Defined as being aware of, sensitive to and understanding another's situation and feelings. It goes a long way in making us feel validated and heard. It connects us all and demonstrates no matter which side of political, racial or social "fences" we are, ultimately we are more alike than different.

Obama says
As new President Obama says, change can and will come in 2009. We are not powerless. The little things we do as individuals will affect bigger change.

Things will not always be perfect, solutions will not always be perfect, we will not always be perfect. But the world will be a better place if we remember to connect and treat each other with respect and empathy. I'm going to try. Empathy will be my new watchword for 2009. **What about you?**

Joanne Blake

Terry's Note:
You didn't have to be American to be moved by the inauguration ceremony of US President Obama and his reaching out to Americans and the rest of the world for peace and empathy. In our [quotes section below](#) I have included the words to the poem **Praise song for the day** that Elizabeth Alexander read and wrote for the day. Click here [for more of her poems.](#)

Trend Watch

Q&A - Business Etiquette, Dress & Dining Advice
[Contact us](#) with your questions.

Dress Question:

Q: Nifty Device to Stop Blacksliding?

This fall I took a bad slip on ice. Luckily I only dislocated my wrist. I went online and found some antislip devices for my shoes. Now I use them all the time. You should try them and let your readers know about them.

- **Slipp Slidingaway**

A:

Aren't they great. This is the one fashion accessory that both Joanne and I are wearing these days.

We've been having some unseasonably warm weather in Edmonton this winter. Lots of snow with 8° Celsius days alternating with -8° Celsius days is making for some pretty icy sidewalks and trails. With this device we don't hesitate to go out for walking exercise in our beautiful North Saskatchewan River Valley.

It's a stretchy rubber with replaceable carbide steel spikes. Think low-profile shoe rubbers with an attitude. You say you use them all the time. We only wear them for going for walks. Click here [to see why Joanne won't let me wear them in the house](#) or when doing presentations.

If you find that smooth soled dress shoes are slippery for you in the office, the same company offers some very unobtrusive non-slip patches that you can put on either men's or women's dress shoes. We haven't tried these yet but they even advertise that they're great for dancing and extend the life of your soles. Click here [to see this product.](#)

- **Terry**

Quotable Quotes:
The Moving Poem from President Obama's Inauguration

Praise song for the day. - by Elizabeth Alexander

Each day we go about our business, walking past each other, catching each others' eyes or not, about to speak or speaking.

All about us is noise. All about us is noise and bramble, thorn and din, each one of our ancestors on our tongues.

Someone is stitching up a hem, damming a hole in a uniform, patching a tire, repairing the things in need of repair.

Someone is trying to make music somewhere, with a pair of wooden spoons, on an oil drum, with cello, boom box, harmonica, voice.

A woman and her son wait for the bus. A farmer considers the changing sky. A teacher says, "Take out your pencils. Begin."

We encounter each other in words, **words spiny or smooth**, whispered or declaimed; words to consider, reconsider.

We cross dirt roads and highways that mark the will of someone and then others who said, "I need to see what's on the other side; I know there's something better down the road."

We need to find a place where we are safe. We walk into that which we cannot yet see.

Say it plain, that many have died for this day. Sing the names of the dead who brought us here, who laid the train tracks, raised the bridges, picked the cotton and the lettuce, built brick by brick the glittering edifices they would then keep clean and work inside of.

Praise song for struggle; praise song for the day. Praise song for every hand-lettered sign. The figuring it out at kitchen tables.

Some live by "Love thy neighbor as thy self." Others by "first do no harm" or "take no more than you need".

What if the mightiest word is love. Love beyond marital, filial, national. Love that casts a widening pool of light. Love with no need to preempt grievance.

In today's sharp sparkle, this winter air, anything can be made, any sentence begun.

On the brink, on the brim, on the cusp - praise song for walking forward in that light

- **Elizabeth Alexander**

WHAT'S NEW WITH US:
Dining For Success Program Used by Major U.S. Bank. Here's what they have to say:

"Using the Dining for Success video in our professional development class helps our participants learn how to make our customers feel comfortable in a business dining situation. The students enjoy the situational humor while gaining confidence in their own dining skills."

Julianna Graham, Senior Vice President, US Financial Services Company

To view a Free Demo of our Dining for Success Online Training. [Click here to log in for a 10 minute free demo](#)

Just enter user id - [diningssample](#) and password - [sampleit](#)

Individual online sales are available at [www.styleforsuccess.com](#)
For volume discounts or intranet use for organizations [contact us](#)

Terry and Joanne together are co-facilitating February Public Seminars in Victoria/Sidney and other locations on Vancouver Island.

100% of recent attendees said they would recommend these sessions to others.

Staging You - Presenting and Expressing Yourself with Confidence and Style

Date: Wed. Feb. 25th, 2009
3 workshops in one day

- Savvy Networking - The Art of Mixing & Mingling
- Dining For Success - Making a Positive Impression When Business Dining (includes lunch)
- Looking the Part: Creating Your Positive Personal Brand (For men and women)

Location: Glen Meadows Golf and Country Club in Sidney
Cost: \$250 per session or \$600 for the full day.

Early Bird - Register for the full day before January 25th and save a further \$100!

Click here to [register for any or all of the day's sessions.](#)

Click here for [pdf brochure of the public seminars](#)

All About You - Presenting and Expressing Yourself with Confidence and Style

3 workshops in one day (as above)
Date: Tentatively Sat. Feb. 28th, 2009
Location: in the Parksville/Nanaimo area

For more info on our Public Seminars [contact us](#)

Joanne will be in a new book!

Executive Image Power
Created by Caterina Rando, MA, MCC

Executive Image Power is the key ingredient to building confidence, making a great impression and getting what you want every time. More savvy and sophistication are yours with the insider insights of top corporate image experts. With Executive Image Power you can be your best everyday.

Coming in April, 2009

Looking for **entertaining and empowering presentations with a difference for your next conference or retreat?** Business dress, etiquette, networking, dining and meeting skills. [Check out our website](#) and give us a call.

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