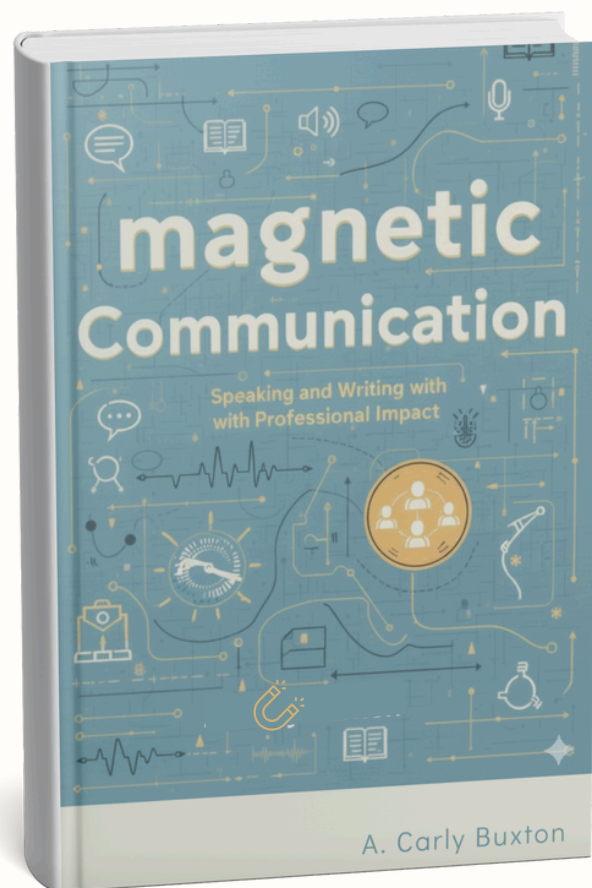


|   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| <p><b>Etiquette Squares</b><br/><b>From the Carly Buxton School of Workplace Manners and Charm</b></p> <p><b>Your challenge:</b> Throughout this semester, complete every single box on this 23-square challenge sheet. When you're done, Dr. Buxton at carly.buxton@richmond.edu if you'd like a digital copy of your certificate of completion :)</p>     | <p><b>Introduce someone to someone else.</b></p> <p>HOW? Address the senior person and present the junior person. Example: "President Hallock, this is my sister Isabelle."</p>   | <p><b>Interrupt without interrupting.</b></p> <p>Can't get a word in? Raise a finger or otherwise indicate that you have something to say.</p>  | <p><b>Check an email for typographical and grammatical errors.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Insure</b> a car. <b>Ensure</b> that a hotel has wifi.</li> <li>• <b>Allie and I</b> will send you the document. Send it to <b>Allie and me</b>.</li> <li>• She's talking to a group of <b>TAs</b>. This is my <b>TAs</b> backpack.</li> </ul> | <p><b>Ask for feedback.</b></p> <p>Identify what you consider your chief weakness in the workplace. In a 1x1 with a mentor, TA, professor, RA, or someone you respect, mention it and ask if they have some insight about how to improve on this--or on any other points they think could be areas of growth for you.</p> |
| <p><b>Dedicate an entire day to eliminating "like" from your vocabulary.</b></p> <p>Choose a day. Circle it on the calendar. For this entire day, gently pinch yourself each time you say "like" as a filler word.</p>  | <p><b>Exemplify social grace with door holding.</b></p> <p>Hold the door open for a superior someone behind you (not just the toss-back, but the kind where you actually stand back and go in after!).</p>  | <p><b>Eat with someone else at least once a week.</b></p> <p>Here's a circle for every week of the semester. Fill in a check mark when you've had a meal with someone else (with conversation) at some point during that week.</p> <p>○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○</p>  | <p><b>Contribute to a team meeting.</b></p> <p>Stay off your phone and computer during this meeting (and, ideally, every meeting). Contribute meaningfully to the conversation. If you have no concrete idea to add, ask a question to demonstrate your engagement.</p>   | <p><b>Get introduced to someone new.</b></p> <p>Stand up. Offer a firm handshake. Make eye contact. "It's nice to meet you + (insert positive observation or comment)."</p>   |
| <p><b>Forward an email properly.</b></p> <p>When forwarding an email, provide a brief summary--and your ASK--at the top of the email so that the recipient doesn't have to sift through tons of context to understand why you've sent this her way.</p>   | <p><b>Devices are our vices when our company suffices.</b></p> <p>For one full day, keep your phone in your pocket or bag whenever you are in the presence of other people. Notice how many times others fail to do the same. How is this shameful behavior hindering their listening skills and their relationship building?</p> | <p><b>Send a meeting request.</b></p> <p>Specify a meeting location. Give it a clear title. Give a clear purpose to the meeting.<br/>Example: Fall Internship opportunity<br/>Location: Meet at the gazebo<br/>"Hi, Ms. Clay. I'd like to discuss the possibility of a Fall Internship with your company over a walk around the lake. Could you spare half an hour this Tuesday?"</p> | <p><b>Invite someone senior to coffee.</b></p> <p>Conversation formula when you are together:<br/>smooth conversation start = compliment + questions you actually care about + actually listen. "I really enjoyed the talk you gave last week, and I'd like to know more about you. Could you tell me a bit about how you got started in vertical farming?"</p>   | <p><b>On a random workday, assess your respectfulness in public places.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Am I chewing gum loudly?</li> <li>• Is my music too loud?</li> <li>• Do I let people work, or do I keep interrupting them?</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>Meet someone new at a campus or social event.</b></p> <p>Attend a gathering. Challenge yourself to approach a person you do not know very well. Make conversation for at least 5 minutes. (See square "do your part to stamp out small talk" below for conversation fodder).</p>  | <p><b>Respond with poise to an email or text that frustrated you.</b></p> <p>Wait 20 minutes. Still mad? Talk your perspective through with a colleague whose opinion you respect. Then respond to the email with clarity, firmness, and kindness.</p>  | <p><b>Make a mistake. And then apologize.</b></p> <p>Failing is a good thing, because it means that you are learning. So, when you drop the ball on something this semester, own up to it. Tell the truth. Talk about how you've learned from the experience.</p>   | <p><b>Accept a compliment.</b></p> <p>When someone compliments you, say "Thank you" or "That's very kind of you." Capture the compliment in your brain like it's a butterfly in your brain net. Ruminate on it later in the day. Take it to heart.</p>  | <p><b>Invite a colleague to be your sounding board on a point you are analyzing.</b></p> <p>"Sam, do you have a moment? "Sam, could I get your eyes on something?"<br/>"Sam, could you spare 5 minutes later today to look at my 1-pager?"</p>  |
| <p><b>Do your part to stamp out small talk.</b></p> <p>This is easy. When engaged in a social conversation, ask your colleague a question that you genuinely want answered. Then it's no longer small talk. Also: <i>maintain eye contact throughout the entire conversation.</i> That way, they'll believe that you actually care what they're saying.</p> | <p><b>Be a mentor.</b></p> <p>Either inside the office/classroom or outside of it, make it a point to help a peer or someone junior to you at some point throughout this semester.</p>  | <p><b>Write a handwritten thank-you note to someone.</b></p> <p>Start with the date. Write a salutation line by itself ("Dear Dr. Basnjojan,") Write a few sentences from the heart. End the letter with more than just your name. "Sincerely" or "yours truly"</p>   | <p><b>Practice fine dining etiquette.</b></p> <p>Wait for senior members to sit before you. Wait for your host to take a bite before you do. 6 or more people? You may begin eating. Rest position is fork 7-2; knife 11-5. Don't drink if the toast is to you. Napkin in lap throughout the meal. Leave atop table (left of plate) when departing.</p>           | <p><b>Key</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>YELLOW = Making connections</li> <li>GREEN = Spoken communication</li> <li>BLUE = Written communication</li> <li>PURPLE = General etiquette</li> </ul>   |

# Keep it Magnetic

This resource is free to use and share with attribution. It is drawn from the research and frameworks in *Magnetic Communication: Speaking and Writing with Professional Impact* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2026) by A. Carly Buxton, PhD.

[carlybuxton.com/magnetic](https://carlybuxton.com/magnetic)



## Found this helpful?

Don't stop here! Get the full guide to speaking and writing with professional impact.

Buy the book



## Grow the ideas.

Know someone who needs this? Buy a copy for friends or colleagues, or order a box for your team to spark much-needed conversations about communication in the AI age.

Bulk orders



## Inspire your team.

Bring Carly to your organization for "The Authenticity Gap" residency or a keynote on communicating in the workplace and beyond.

Workshops

