

Introductions 101

You want to show your respect, but are not sure of the basic protocol of introduction? Well it is easy when you follow this simple advice: first present the lesser-"ranking" person to the more senior person. To determine rank or status, remember:

- an older person outranks a younger person
- senior or more important work members outrank junior or less important work members
- out-of-town guests outrank local guests of equal status
- persons representing a religious ministry outranks a lay person

In the presence of the persons to be introduced, you say the name of the senior person first. It is a good rule of thumb to use his or her formal name. This prevents an awkwardness of having the junior person only know the senior person's junior name. It also allows an opportunity for the senior person to break the ice by offering to use his or her given name or moniker.

When introducing people of equal status, it doesn't matter who is introduced to whom. But it does make it helpful for the introduction to include a little background on the person's relationship to you. Do avoid going into an elaborate history. It gives the new introducees a chance of pursuing the conversation themselves.