

Media Relations

UNH Professor Advises What's Appropriate For Tipping During The Holiday Season

December 6, 2010

DURHAM, N.H. -- The holiday season has arrived and with it brings the many questions of tipping and the related stress. Do I need to tip? Who should I tip? How much should I tip? How to compensation people for providing quality service throughout the year can be challenging.

Nelson Barber, associate professor of hospitality management at the University of New Hampshire, has advice for the confused and the stressed out.

"Remember, that tipping has its origins in the concept of 'To Insure Prompt Service' and is not just about money. Thus, when you tip during the year for services provided it has a different meaning than for the holiday. During the holiday season, tipping is more a gesture of thanks to individuals who provide services on a regular basis to you and your family," Barber says.

Who should I tip?

Barber advises that when setting your tipping strategy, prioritize your most important service providers by considering those who have provided you services and the extent of interaction with them, particularly those who may not be that obvious, even if you may not have tipped them regularly.

"Do not make your tipping decision solely based upon 'an implied obligation.' At the top of your list should be those individuals that enhance your life considerably," he says.

Think about the valued housekeeper or the barber that squeezes you in or the individual that delivers your newspaper to the front door when it is raining or snowing saving you the walk down the driveway. "These are the people that should receive the top dollars rather than infrequently used service providers," Barber says.

It is also appropriate to consider the individuals financial needs, such that the holiday tip is apt to be appreciated and have a larger impact. Finally, always include a short note of appreciation as well. This will give the tip more of a personal touch and can add more to the meaning of the holiday gift.

How much should I tip?

When deciding how much to tip, Barber suggests considering these points. First, do not feel obligated to spend more than what your budget allows.

"If money is an issue, particularly given the current economic conditions, giving a homemade gift, such as a craft or baked goods, is acceptable," he says.

Second, regardless of whether the gift is homemade or cash, always include a short note of appreciation. Third, consider the length of time you have been receiving the service and whether you live in an urban or rural setting where tipping levels may vary. Finally, consider the relationship to the service provider. Are you close? Is the relationship informal? Some suggestions for tipping are:

- Day care provider: \$25 and a gift from your child
- Doorman: \$25 or a gift
- Parking garage attendants: \$30 or a gift

 
SHARE
 Print
 Email
 Subscribe
Facebook
Tweet
<input type="text"/>

- Housekeeper: no more than one week's pay or a gift
- Nanny: no more than one week's pay or a gift from you and your child
- Newspaper carrier: \$20 or a gift
- Package carrier: a gift of no more than \$20
- Home caregiver: no more than one week's salary or a gift
- Pet groomer: the cost of one session or a gift
- Trash collectors: \$20
- Baby sitter: no more than one evening's pay
- Hairstylist for women: no more than the cost of one visit
- Hairstylist for men: the cost of one haircut

Mail carriers working for the United States Postal Service may not accept cash gifts, checks, gift cards, or any other equivalent.

"Given the depressing realism of the current economy and that many people are having a difficult time making ends meet, try to avoid the associated stress of holiday tipping. Ultimately common sense, the uniqueness of your relationship with the service provider and of course the spirit of holiday giving should guide your decisions," Barber says. "Finally, avoid the concept that no tip will lead to poor service, because if that is the case, change service providers. In the end, do what you feel in your heart is the right thing to do."

The UNH Department of Hospitality Management at the Whittemore School of Business and Economics combines business fundamentals as well as classes geared toward the service industry sector. Hands-on education proves to be a strong and integral part of the experiential and academic curriculum. The department also offers the first-ever EcoGastronomy Program, which integrates UNH's strengths in sustainable agriculture, hospitality management, and nutrition to offer a unique academic program emphasizing the interdisciplinary, international, and experiential knowledge that connects all three fields.

The University of New Hampshire, founded in 1866, is a world-class public research university with the feel of a New England liberal arts college. A land, sea, and space-grant university, UNH is the state's flagship public institution, enrolling 12,200 undergraduate and 2,300 graduate students.

-30-

Media Contact: [Lori Wright](#) | 603-862-0574 | UNH Media Relations

Researcher Contact: [Nelson Barber](#) | 603-862-3571 | UNH Department of Hospitality Management



T-hall

Copyright © 2012 UNH Media Relations, 15 Strafford Ave, University of New Hampshire, Durham, NH 03824.
UNH is part of the University System of New Hampshire.
[ADA Acknowledgement](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [UNH Home](#) | [E-mail Webmaster](#)