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When is a gift something more?

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Today, most large companies have a gift and entertainment (G&E) policy in place. The question for many small- to mid-sized organizations is when should one look to implement a policy? The answer is as soon as your company begins to entertain clients and starts working with vendors on internal projects. A gift policy should protect both the firm and employees by enforcing guidelines on the acceptance of gifts. The policy created by the company should set limits on the value of a gift or entertainment one may receive. For example, my organization does business with the US government. We hold an event in Washington, DC, and we invite our clients every year. We must ensure that the lunch we provide does not exceed the government's limit for gifts (a value no greater than \$20)^[1] —no small task when doing business in our nation's capital.

A gift and entertainment policy will also define what an employee can receive in terms of dollar value, the type of gift, and from whom. For example, giving gifts to public officials can be viewed as a bribe. Throughout this article you'll see several examples of common-sense rules for G&E policies. The following information is taken in part from Accenture's and General Motors' (GM) publicly available gift and entertainment policies.

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