



INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION – Cross Cultural Etiquette

Lesson 4



Version without a key



WARM UP

- Brainstorm the notion of cultural baggage. What is it for you?



Think and answer the questions:

- 🗨 How do you understand the notion of cultural baggage?
- 🗨 Does cultural baggage play a role in intercultural communication?



READING. Read the text.

Cross-Cultural Business Etiquette

by Lisa Magloff, Demand Media

Every culture is different, and has different styles of etiquette. Every day deals are lost through misunderstandings, even between relatively similar cultures. These misunderstandings do not have to be huge to have an effect on your business – a poor first impression could leave your prospective partner or customer with a bad feeling. Knowing the right etiquette can help you avoid this and save you a great deal of wasted time and money.

■ Clothing

Wearing the appropriate clothing makes a good first impression and sets the tone for how you will be seen. If you work in an industry in which casual dress is the norm, make sure it is also the norm in the country and company you are visiting. For example, men tend not to wear suit jackets and ties in Colombia and the Middle East, but are still expected to be dressed smartly.

Women may also need to think about the appropriate skirt length, makeup, jewelry and heel height. When in doubt, it is always best to dress conservatively, and in dark colors.

■ Conversation

Communicating in a foreign country can be difficult. Often you may find that your business colleague speaks English -- but if they speak imperfectly, you will need to remember not to correct them as that may be seen as impolite. You should also determine what makes an appropriate topic of conversation in the country you are visiting. For example, in Japan, people do not tend to talk about money, and in Switzerland personal questions are usually not appreciated among mere acquaintances. It is a good idea, however, to learn a bit about the history of the country or place you are visiting and to be prepared with a few questions about local culture to use as a conversation starter.

■ Greetings

Many countries have their own style of greeting, and there is nothing more off-putting than try to kiss someone who is only expecting a handshake, or holding out your hand pointlessly while the other person bows. In many countries, it is also polite to give small gifts when meeting someone. Make sure you find out the local custom and avoid giving an overly expensive gift that the other person will feel the need to reciprocate. In many Southeast Asian cultures, business cards are usually exchanged and no one is taken seriously who does not have a business card. The cards must also be treated with respect, and not shoved immediately into a pocket.

■ Forms of Address

While people in the U.S. tend to call colleagues by their first name in all but the most formal situations, this would be considered rude in many other cultures. When you first meet someone, listen carefully to how they are introduced to you and then use that form of address. When in doubt, use a person's title and last name until they invite you to use their first name. Also keep in mind that in some cultures, people with academic degrees expect to be addressed by this qualification, as in "Professor" Smith. In some cultures, people with a Ph.D., or doctorate, expect to be addressed as "Doctor Smith".

■ Time And Space

In some cultures, it is not expected that people will be on time. If your colleague or customer is late for a meeting, it is best to take a relaxed view. People from different cultures also have different ideas about personal space. Standing close or touching another person may be considered appropriate. However, this may not apply to those of the other sex. For example, in the Middle East, men often hug each other and hold hands, but do not touch women they are not related too, and the same is true of women. In Mexico, it is OK to give a friendly pat on the back, but in China you should never touch the other person. While in Thailand and India, handshakes are fine, but you should never touch a person's head.

Source: <http://smallbusiness.chron.com/cross-cultural-business-etiquette-2907.html>



READING COMPREHENSION

Answer the questions:

- Why is it important to know the cross cultural etiquette?
- What is the best way to dress if you don't know the dress code of the company you are going to visit?
- Is it appropriate to correct your business colleagues when they speak English imperfectly?
- What rules should be obeyed during greetings in business meeting among members of different cultures?
- What forms of address are the most appropriate ones?
- Give examples of different ideas about personal space in different cultures?



LANGUAGE FOCUS 1 – VOCABULARY PRACTICE

Exercise 1 - which of the words in the text have the following meaning?

set the tone		to push someone or something forcefully
in doubt		to be likely to behave in a particular way or have a particular characteristic
tend to		to establish a particular mood or character for something
off-putting		to touch someone or something gently and usually repeatedly with the hand flat:
shove		slightly unpleasant or worrying so that you do not want to get involved in any way
pat		to be uncertain

☑ Exercise 2 - Complete the sentences below with the words from the previous exercise. Some of the words have to be put in a correct grammar form.

1. Reporters pushed and _____ as they tried to get close to the princess.
2. We _____ get cold winters and warm, dry summers in this part of the country.
3. The success of the system is not _____.
4. He _____ my head/patted me on the head affectionately.
5. The good financial news _____ an optimistic _____ for the year.
6. What I found _____ was the amount of work that you were expected to do.



LANGUAGE FOCUS 2 – USEFUL EXPRESSIONS

Example expression: In the text find an expression that could be useful while giving an example.



EXTENDING YOUR KNOWLEDGE!

- Do you know any synonyms of “*for example*”.
- Do you know the Latin abbreviation of “*for example*”?
The Latin abbreviation of the phrase “*for example*” is *e.g.* which means *exempli gratia*.
- Synonyms of “*for example*”:
 - for instance,
 - such as;
 - (informal): like
- Try to not use always the phrase “*for example*”, try to use its synonyms as well.

Exercise: Build 4 sentences with expressions: *for example, for instance, such as and like.*

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	



CHECK YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF CROSS CULTURAL ETIQUETTE

CASE NO. 1:

Below you will find the DOS and DON'T of BUSINESS DINING ETIQUETTE. Three of the statements are wrong. Decide which statements are wrong and change them to true statements.

▼ THE DOS AND DON'TS OF DINING

- ✓ Do not order difficult-to-eat foods (pasta, ribs, lobster, etc.).
- ✓ Follow the lead of your interviewer and mirror his/her body language.
- ✓ Order alcohol to calm your nerves – control your emotions.
- ✓ Order the same number of dishes as your business partner.
- ✓ Use proper “Continental Dining Style” – no switching fork back and forth.
- ✓ Don't move your bread-and-butter plate closer to you.
- ✓ Learn the difference between a soup bowl and a finger bowl.
- ✓ Pass salt-and-pepper shakers separately.
- ✓ Place your napkin on the left when your meal is finished. Do not refold it.
- ✓ Don't forget to turn off your cell phone.
- ✓ If you're the person who initiated a business lunch/dinner – ask your partner to pay for it.

CASE NO. 2

Below you will find a number of statements about different manners in different cultures and countries. Order each statement to a proper box with a different country name.

1. In general, people in the East dress more formally, while people in the West are known for being a bit more casual.
2. Maintain eye contact and a few feet of personal space
3. Business dress is formal and conservative.
4. Hold the card in both hands when offering it, the translated side facing the recipient.
5. Business attire is conservative and unpretentious.
6. Business cards are exchanged after the initial introductions without formal ritual.
7. Never attempt to be overly friendly. This nation generally compartmentalize their business and personal lives.
8. Business cards are exchanged at the initial introduction without formal ritual.
9. Maintain direct eye contact while speaking.
10. During negotiations this nation may lose their temper, walk out of the meeting, or threaten to terminate the relationship in an attempt to coerce you to change your position.
11. Business dress is understated and stylish. Good quality accessories are appreciated.
12. Hold the card in both hands when offering it, the translated side facing the recipient.
13. Many members of this nation will look towards the ground when greeting someone.
14. Business cards are exchanged without formal ritual.
15. Business cards are exchanged after the initial introductions without formal ritual.
16. Maintain eye contact during the greeting.
17. In negotiations be prepared to back up your claims with facts and figures. This nation rely on facts, rather than emotions, to make decisions.
18. There will be a brief amount of small talk before getting down to the business at hand.
19. Meetings may appear relaxed, but they are taken quite seriously.
20. Under no circumstances should you lose your temper or you will lose face and irrevocably damage your relationship

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

1.

2.

3.

4.

UNITED KINGDOM

1.

2.

3.

4.

FRANCE

1.

2.

3.

4.

RUSSIA

1.

2.

3.

4.

CHINA

1.

2.

3.

4.