

**PART I: CROSS-CULTURAL KNOWLEDGE ASSESSMENT**

**Step A: IMPORTANCE TO OUR WORK**

Please cover the right hand scale and go through all the items rating their importance to your work. Record your rating by circling the appropriate number on the 5 point scale in the left hand scale. 1=low, 5=high. Rate all items before you go to the next step.

**Step B: PERSONAL NEED FOR DEVELOPMENT**

Please cover your response in the left hand scale. Start again at item #1. Provide your opinion on the need for training and development for yourself by circling the appropriate number on the 5 point scale for each item in the right hand scale. 1=low, 5=high.

**Step C:** Multiply the importance score and the need score to get your overall score for each item on the list. If the overall score for any item is greater than 9, you will want to improve your cultural knowledge before pursuing international business leads.

Importance to Work	Item	Need For Development
1 2 3 4 5	1. Able to entertain foreign business delegates successfully.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	2. Able to greet people and respond to their greetings correctly (in English even).	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	3. Able to say “No” politely.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	4. Know the ways in which your counterparts make decisions (their values, attitudes, and process).	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	5. Be able to negotiate win-win contracts using subjective negotiating strategies.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	6. Know which subjects are taboo and which subjects will further your relationship in business conversations.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	7. Be able to use titles and names correctly so as to not offend.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	8. Know the customs around personal space and touching.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	9. Know the customs around gift-giving and how to deal with those customs within the constraints of your business.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	10. Know the ways in which employer-employee relationships work.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5		1 2 3 4 5

**PART II: CROSS-CULTURAL PREPARATION ASSESSMENT**

1. What preparation have you already done in terms of cultural training? (Indicate your choice(s) by a check; you may check as many as you wish.)

- None
- Talked with Canadians from that culture
- Read about that culture

- Taken cultural training
- Traveled in that country on business or holidays
- Participated in a cultural exchange
- Lived in that country

2. Do you read international newspapers? (Check one)

- Never
- Once per year
- Once per month
- Once per week
- Once per day

3. Do you know anyone personally or professionally from your counterpart's country?

YES                      NO

4. What contact have you had with your foreign counterpart? (Indicate your choice(s) with a check; you may choose as many as you wish.)

- None
- Phone conversation
- Face to face meetings in their country
- Face to face meetings in Canada
- Spent several weeks with them in their country conversing on a daily basis
- Other \_\_\_\_\_ (please specify)

5. In what situations do you feel your lack of cultural knowledge/skills is problematic? (Indicate your choices(s) with a check; you may choose as many as you wish.)

- Negotiating strategies
- Business entertaining
- Titles and forms of address
- Gestures
- Giving gifts
- Appropriate dress
- Cognitive style
- Value system
- Business Practices
- Other \_\_\_\_\_ (please specify)

6. Please rank the following in order of your interest in attending a training about each topic. (Place a '1' beside the topic that is most important for you to learn about, a '2' beside your next choice and so on.)

RANK ORDER

- \_\_\_\_\_ How to socialize in the community
- \_\_\_\_\_ How to entertain business counterparts
- \_\_\_\_\_ How to negotiate culturally sensitive win-win contracts
- \_\_\_\_\_ How employer-employee relationships work
- \_\_\_\_\_ How to use titles and names correctly

7. What do you need to accomplish in the first 30 days in your new work environment? (Indicate your choice(s) with a check; you may check as many as you wish.) CHECKLIST

- Take business counterpart out for a lunch/dinner
- Introduce yourself to new associates
- Participate in meetings
- Make polite disagreement
- Hire people
- Notify someone of a problem
- Say "NO" politely
- Sell ideas or products
- Make appointments with decision makers
- Make a toast
- Negotiate a contract
- Initiate changes to work routines
- Other \_\_\_\_\_ (please specify)

8. How would you describe your knowledge and skills in the culture in which you will be immersed? (Circle one number)

None            1            2            3            4            5            Extensive

9. What do you think your foreign counterparts would identify as challenges in working with you? (Indicate your choice(s) with a check; you may check as many as you wish.)

- Body language
- Conversations
- Business jargon
- Business practices
- Social customs
- Differences in values and beliefs
- Other \_\_\_\_\_ (please specify)

10. Will you have access to cultural interpreters?

YES            NO

## WHAT DO PEOPLE WEAR?

Put the correct country in the blanks provided.

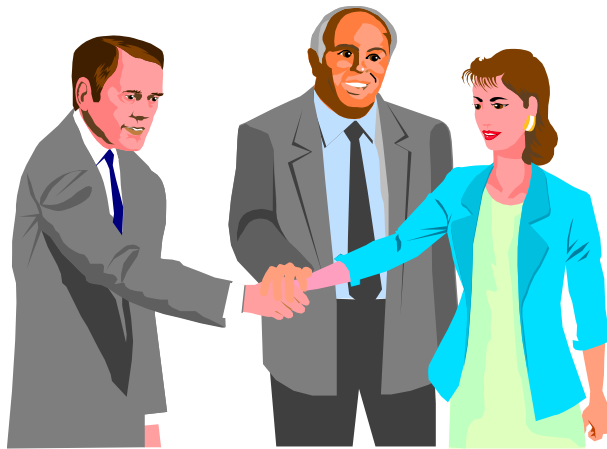
Men: conservative dark suit and tie	
Women: dress or skirt and blouse	MEXICO
Men: dark trousers and light colored long or short sleeved shirt and tie, without a jacket	
Women: light-colored long-sleeved blouses and skirts, tend to be more frilly and decorative	
More Formal Offices: stockings and business suits	MALAYSIA
Men: shirts without pockets; if they do have pockets, they should be empty; laced shoes, NOT loafers, and NOT striped ties	
In General: clothes should be of excellent quality but they do not have to look new, clothes should be conservative	AUSTRALIA
Women: wear pants much less than in North America	
	ENGLAND

## HOW DO PEOPLE GREET EACH OTHER?

Put the correct response in the blanks provided.

How do you do?	“Fine thanks.” (they are not inquiring about
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	your health.)
How are you?	“Yes.” (even if you are hungry.)
Have you eaten? Or Have you taken food?	“Nice to meet you.”
G’ day.	“Buenos dias”
Hola.	“Hello” or “G’ day”



## HOW TO USE PEOPLE'S NAMES

If the name is difficult to pronounce, which is common when you are hearing a foreign name for the first time, ask the person to pronounce it again slowly. Write the phonetic pronunciation of the name on a small note pad. (It is rude in some cultures to write on the back of the business card.)

### **Australia**

In Australia, full names are used for initial greetings, and "Sir" is an address of respect. Australians are quick to go to a first-name basis. Wait for them to initiate the use of first names. "Mate" will be heard more often than "Sir". It refers to anyone of one's own sex, but if they say "My mates", it refers to their friends. Women also refer to other women as "mate". As part of Australia's classless society, academic qualifications are downplayed - in public. In Australia, a title - whether academic or job-related - does not command respect in and of itself. The individual must still win the respect of others.

### **England**

In England business titles are not used in conversation but do find out the honorary titles of anyone you will be in contact with, and use them no matter how familiar you are with the person. Doctors, clergy, etc. are addressed by title plus last name; however, surgeons are addressed as Mr., Mrs., or Miss. Rather than "sir," you should use the title of the person you are addressing, eg. "Yes, Minister", and not "Yes, sir". The English are beginning to use first names, but you should wait for your hosts to initiate this. Despite my earlier suggestion, you should avoid repeating the other person's name during the conversation.

## **Malaysia**

There are three distinct cultural groups in Malaysia: the Indians, the Chinese, and the Malays. Each has different rules about whether the first name is the given name or the surname, titles, and protocol. Most business is done with the Chinese, so I will focus on them. Most business people you meet should be addressed with a title and their name or, if they have no title, Mr., Mrs., Miss. Be careful not to omit titles that may be important to that person and to your understanding of that person. Chinese wives do not generally take their husband's surname, but instead maintain their maiden names. She should be addressed as Madam plus her maiden family name.

Be sure to match your hosts formality; if he asks you to call him Mr. Gupta, don't say, "just call me Bob". Also, last names may come first. Others may have already Westernised their name, so the rule is ask, "What would you like me to call you?"

## **South Africa**

In South Africa, be sure to use the title Doctor or Professor when appropriate; address a lawyer as Mister. Refer to an advocate who pleads in the Supreme Court as Advocate with the last name. Use first names only after a South African does.

Don't expect others to remember your name. Begin by eluding or reminding them as to when or where you met before and give them your name quickly to save them the embarrassment of asking.

## **BUSINESS CARDS**

### **Malaysia**

In Malaysia, the exchange of business cards is not only unique from the other cultures being discussed today, it is a formal ceremony. After introductions are made, the visiting business person should offer his or her card. Make sure you give a card to each person present. Present your card either with both hands or with your right hand (with the left hand lightly supporting your right). Give your card to the recipient with the print facing him or her (so the recipient can read it). He or she will receive the card with both hands, then study the card for a few moments before carefully putting it away in a pocket. You should do the same when a card is presented to you. Never put a card in your back pocket and do not write on someone's business card.

Business cards should be printed, preferably embossed, in English. Since the majority of Malaysian business people are ethnic Chinese, you may wish to have the reverse side of some of your cards translated into Chinese (gold ink is the most prestigious colour for Chinese characters).

Your business card should contain as much information as possible, including your business title and your qualifications. Malaysians include all of this data on their card, as well as any titles of nobility. In the case of Malaysian associates, you might consider keeping a small note book to record the phonetic pronunciation of names, date of meeting, and other important information.

### **Australia**

In Australia, it is appropriate to present a business card at an introduction, but don't be surprised if you do not get one in return since many Australians do not have them. Your best approach, when dealing with Australians, is to be friendly, relaxed, modest, and unpretentious - just be yourself because they are hard to impress.

## **THE HANDSHAKE**

Another component of that first thirty second lasting impression is the body language. The most common among the countries we're discussing is the handshake. But the use of the handshake differs from one culture to another.

### **England**

In England, a handshake is standard for business occasions and when visiting a home. Women do not necessarily shake hands. A woman may extend her hand; men should wait for women to do so.

### **Australia and Mexico**

It is the custom to shake hands at the beginning and end of a meeting. Women will often give a kiss on the cheek in greeting. Men may wait for women to initiate a handshake.

### **Malaysia**

With younger or foreign-educated Malaysian, a handshake is the most common form of greeting. The standard Malaysian handshake is more of a hand clasp; it is rather limp and lasts for some ten or twelve seconds. Often both hands will be used. In Malaysia, Westernised women may shake hands with both men and women.. Malaysian businessmen usually wait for a woman to offer her hand. It is perfectly acceptable for a women to simply nod upon an introduction rather than offering her hand. Women should offer their hands only upon greeting; too-frequent handshaking is easily misinterpreted as an amorous advance. But men shake hands both on greeting and on departure. Ethnic Malays are generally Muslim.

Traditionally, there is no physical contact between Muslim men and women. Malaysian Chinese are generally comfortable shaking hands with both men and women. Many Malay Indians are Hindu. Most Hindus avoid public contact between men and women. The traditional Indian greeting involves a slight bow with the palms of the hands together (as if praying).

**South Africa**

Remember that an "African Handshake" is used between blacks and whites and blacks and blacks. To do this, shake hands and, without letting go, slip your hand around the other person's thumb; then go back to the traditional handshake.

Whites do not use this handshake with other whites. Afrikaaners and whites of both sexes shake hands when introduced. With good friends of opposite sexes: men kiss women on one cheek. Men greet close male friends with a handshake or a hug. In greeting men in a business setting, women should nod or shake hands.

**GIFT GIVING.**

**England, Australia, Malaysia, South Africa**

In England, Australia, Malaysia, and South Africa gifts are not part of doing business. Although, if you are invited to an English home, you may bring flowers, liquor, or chocolates. It is an excellent idea to send a brief hand-written thank you note promptly afterwards by messenger. In Malaysia, a gift could be interpreted as a bribe; do not give gifts until you have established a personal relationship with them.

**Mexico**

Giving gifts to executives in a business context is not required. However, small gifts, such as items with a company logo (for an initial visit) or a bottle of wine or scotch (on subsequent visits) are appreciated. Secretaries do expect gifts. A government secretary who performs any service for you should be given a token gift. A secretary from the private sector would be given a more valuable gift, such as perfume or a scarf. A businessman giving such a gift to a female secretary should say the gift is from his wife.

