



展望 (Prospect) 全国高等院校英语专业系列精品教材

# 国际商务礼仪

白士彦 许秀妍 主编

*International  
Business Etiquette*

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International Business Etiquette

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# 国际商务礼仪 International Business Etiquette

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# 前 言

随着国际政治、经济及文化的往来日趋频繁，国际商务礼仪作为一门实用性较强的交叉学科正日益受到外语教育界以及商务界的广泛关注。国内外有越来越多的高校开设国际商务礼仪课程，并受到学生的普遍欢迎。为适应国际商务礼仪教学和现实的需求，编者针对我国普通高等院校的学生，编写了以理论指导为依托，应用性为主的《国际商务礼仪》，旨在丰富学生在跨文化背景下从事商务活动的知识，增强学生不同文化和背景下的体验，以提高学生跨文化商务沟通的能力。

本书最鲜明的特点是其实用性与实时性。在内容安排上，通过基本的理论引导，本书围绕国际商务活动中核心的商务场景和环节进行了具有代表性的讲解和案例分析，并引导学生自主思考并解决问题。语言表述简明，能够让学生更好地在英语语言环境中理解掌握国际商务礼仪。

全书共分十个章节。

第一章为国际商务礼仪绪论，总体介绍了商务礼仪与国际商务的关系和基本知识。第二章、第三章、第四章介绍日常国际商务办公环境下的礼仪，如称呼、拜访、着装以及办公室礼仪等。培养学生在日常国际商务交流中的模式化习得。第五章、第六章介绍商务接待与会客之道，包括不同文化下接待风格的迥异、馈赠礼品礼数的差异等等。第七章为国际商务沟通礼仪，介绍了从宏观的国际通用的沟通风格介绍到跨文化视角下沟通的差异。第八章、第九章、第十章分别以三个主题为核心，介绍了国际商务会议、国际商务用餐以及宗教文化对商务礼仪的影响。本书结合知识测试、案例阅读，讨论了中西方文化观的融合与差异，中西方世界观在对知识、社会、自然、宇宙等认识方面的差异与互补，以及在商务沟通中的体现。随着中西方文化、经济沟通的不断加强，国际商务礼仪的养成是对当代国际性人才的必然要求。

由于时间、资料、编者能力等条件的限制，书中定有不足之处，恳请读者提出宝贵的意见，批评指正，以便再版时及时更正。

编 者

2017年2月

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# **Chapter One**

## **Introduction to International Business Etiquette**

### **Part One General Introduction**

#### **I. Some basic concepts**

##### **1. What is etiquette?**

When we talk about etiquette, we often think of such behavior as giving up your seat to a pregnant lady or an elderly person, queuing for a bus according to who arrived first or simply saying “please” or “thank you”. Then what is etiquette? According to *Cambridge International Dictionary of English* (1997), etiquette is the set of rules or customs which control accepted behavior in particular social groups or social situations. In our daily life, whether we realize it or not we are always subconsciously adhering to rules of etiquette. Much of these are unwritten. In fact, etiquette is not only about rules and regulations but also about providing basic social comfort and creating an environment where others feel comfortable, respected and secure.

##### **2. What is business etiquette?**

Business etiquette is the ways how professional business people conduct themselves around others with grace. Business etiquette is made up of more significantly important things than simply knowing how to greet your trading partner appropriately. Minimum knowledge of it is necessary if business people want to get a deal smoothly and successfully.

### 3. What is international business etiquette?

International business etiquette refers to the behavior guidance applicable throughout the world for international business people to establish harmonious relationships in the global working environment and to smooth the way to all business activities.

Modern business is global and demands people to travel to foreign countries and mix with foreign clients, colleagues or customers. People from different cultures have varying etiquette rules around areas such as personal space, communication, gift giving, food, business meetings, etc. Moreover, some of them are unwritten. When two or more different cultures mix, it is easy for small etiquette mistakes to be made that could have negative consequences. This creates a complex situation for people as it is hard to balance the focus on both international business etiquette and other business activities at the same time. Anyone working on the international stage needs to understand international business etiquette. For instance, in Arab and some Asian countries, it is important never to use your left hand to receive a business card, as this hand is reserved for personal hygiene. In Japan and Singapore, you should give or receive business cards with both hands, often accompanied by a small bow. Consequently, in international business be sure to treat everything seriously, no matter whether these items hold a lot of significance in your home country or not. It may seem trivial to you, but it can make or break a business deal.

## II. Why should we learn international business etiquette?

Globalization has increased the amount of international business transactions and has derived a greater need for business managers to understand the etiquette of doing business in foreign countries. Saying wrong words, making wrong gestures or acting in a certain way, may not only ruin a business deal in some countries, but could also involve you in religious or legal proceedings. You will need to utilize your knowledge of cultural diversity and intercultural communication when you are developing business relationships overseas. Therefore, it is recommended that you take the time to learn international business etiquette and cultures.

## III. Classification

### 1. Greeting etiquette

Business greeting is how to welcome someone with particular words or a particular action, or to react to something in the stated way in a business situation. It is your first opportunity to make a positive impression on business contacts. If you make a poor impression, you may lose your deal. An effective business greeting is to display your poise, grace and professionalism. For example, many western countries accept hugs and kisses as a popular form of greeting, while in China, a handshake or a simple and kind salutation is common.



## **2. Dressing etiquette**

Dressing etiquette is the way we communicate with our clothing and dress. The professional image of a company is reflected on your professional dress. For instance, wearing of a black tie is inappropriate in the presence of Japanese clients as black ties are worn during mournings. So selection of your dress must be made with great care.

## **3. Office etiquette**

Office etiquette is a code of conduct that features expectations for office behavior according to conventional norms to facilitate the co-workers interaction in the workplace. The way you do your job, and the way you work with people is critical to your success. For instance, office gossip might not make or break your career but it can cause a lot of unnecessary stress which should be avoided at all costs. You would not want someone to gossip about you and neither will the other person.

## **4. Business reception etiquette**

Reception is the beginning of the business. A perfect reception can give guests a good first impression; it also can foster a good cooperating image and a mental outlook, a start for future business activities. For example, staff should keep the reception area neat and clean, provide magazines for visitors to read while they wait, offer guests coffee or water, and greet people appropriately.

## **5. Gift giving etiquette**

Gift giving is a way of expressing gratitude or appreciation. It gains you respect, further business relations and even ensures success. In many places such as in North America or the UK, gift giving is rare in the business world. In fact, it may carry negative connotations as gift giving could be construed as bribery. However, in many other places, gift giving and its etiquette are central in business practices.

## **6. Communication etiquette**

Communication is vital in any business situation, and the effectiveness of your communication can make or break your business. For example, e-mail messaging is the most commonly-used medium of communication in almost all kinds of businesses. Although an e-mail can be generally informal, it is important to set the right tone for your reader. Before composing your e-mail, consider who the recipient is. And never use e-mail addresses that are not appropriate for use in the workplace, such as “honeygirl@...”.

### 7. Meeting etiquette

Meeting etiquette is the code of behavior that a person needs to follow in meetings. When you're required to attend one, it's important for you to conduct yourself in a respectful and professional manner. For instance, in American business, the work mantra of "time is money" is highly valued. Based on this, it's advisable to arrive on time, despite the fact that a small wait may be necessary before a planned meeting commences.

### 8. Religion and etiquette

Religion functions in many ways to human beings and the society as well. Lacking of the knowledge of religion and etiquette may result in serious conflicts and consequences. For instance, if at all possible, try not to schedule meetings during Ramadan. The workday is shortened, and since Muslims fast during Ramadan, be understanding if they could not offer you tea or any other beverage.

### 9. Dining etiquette

Dining manners are an important part of business etiquette with most of the deals; and interviews and meeting are cracked over the dinner table. For instance, never use a toothpick or your fingers to remove food particles between your teeth. Instead excuse yourself to go to the bathroom. The same applies if you are sneezing or coughing a lot.

## Part Two General Principles and Challenges of International Business Etiquette

*To have respect for ourselves guides our morals; and to have a deference for others governs our manners.*

—Lawrence Sterne

### I. Warm-up

Before reading the following passages, please think about and discuss the questions below.

- ❖ What are the general principles of international business etiquette? Which do you think

is the most important? Give your argumentation.

- ❖ What are the main challenges of international business etiquette?
- ❖ Before you conduct an international business, what should you do?

## II. General principles of international business etiquette

There are many written and unwritten rules and guidelines for international business etiquette. The caveat is that there is no possible way to know all of them! Basic knowledge and practice of etiquette is a valuable advantage, because in a lot of situations, a second chance may not be possible. Therefore, the following part introduces only a few general principles that matter now.

1. Always be honest and sincere. Remember that it takes a long time to develop trust and a good reputation and only one small mistake can make you lose it.
2. Be courteous and thoughtful to the people around you, regardless of the situation. People will remember your kindness, probably much longer than you will expect!
3. Don't differentiate against people by positions. Showing respect and courtesy to everyone and having a consistent demeanor could improve your reputation or credibility and help you avoid discomfort or damaging your chances in any unexpected turn of events. "Treat OTHERS the way you want to be treated."
4. Be concerned about your appearance. Being wrinkled, unshaven, smelly or unkempt could intentionally or unintentionally communicate that you don't care enough about the business, the event, or the business partners.
5. Make introductions promptly and correctly. Remember and use people's names. Spell and pronounce them correctly.
6. Stand when meeting someone and/or shaking hands.
7. Prepare a business card.
8. Respect personal space. It's wise to observe your environment closely and learn where people draw the line between cordiality and intrusiveness before you act. And then you need to be careful not to cross that line.
9. Use care and discretion when giving gifts. Do not make a foreign partner feel obliged to reciprocate.
10. Dress appropriately for all occasions.
11. Be punctual at business meetings. Do not keep others waiting.
12. Remember the table manners.
13. When you initiate a call, you should identify yourself and tell them the basic nature of your call.

14. Return calls within 24 hours. Even if you don't yet have an answer to the caller's question, call and explain what you're doing to get the requested information, or direct them to the appropriate place to get it.
15. Learn to write a strong, appropriate business letter in the old-fashioned way, and use it in your e-mail. Be sure to address the person by the correct title, and spell their name right. Answer important letters within three days, and all letters within two weeks or sooner.
16. Impress your clients and JV partners by communicating appreciation.

### III. Challenges in international business communication

With the increasingly more globalization and rapid speed of integration nowadays, the cooperation between companies across the world has become more popular, which usually involves a highly diverse workforce in terms of nationalities and cultural backgrounds. The businesses face challenges from differences in language, values, business ethics, business practices, etiquette and expectations. However, when communicators have significant different cultures, miscommunication is likely to happen. These dissimilarities can have a negative impact on team cohesion or on staff productivity. Not understanding the language and customs of other cultures can lead to poor sales and public relation disasters. This part would focus on the main communication barriers in international business in order to give international communicators some implications of the way how to effectively communicate in international business. The differences mainly derive from cultures.

#### 1. Cultural barriers

Language difference is an obvious barrier to intercultural communication. A person speaking only Chinese and a person speaking only English won't be able to communicate verbally. Even though both speak English, the same English word may have different meanings to people from different cultures. Body language also differs across cultures. In addition, perception on value of time and personal space for conversations and negotiations are another major barrier to international business communication. What's more, most English-speaking cultures are low-context, meaning they put a message into explicit words. In these cultures, saying "no" when you mean "no" is just considered straightforward or honest. But, high-context cultures, such as Japan and China expect the listener to pick up more meaning from the general situation. More details will be introduced in Chapter Seven.

#### 2. Ideological barriers

Ethnocentrism

A person who assumes that his own culture is superior to the rest of the world holds

ethnocentrism orientation. Ethnocentrist believes his own culture is the central one and other cultures are incorrect and defective. The negative impact of ethnocentrism on intercultural business communication is obvious: it can lead to behaviors of not treating people from other cultures well and fairly.

Negative Stereotypes and Prejudices

Stereotypes and prejudices about people from other cultures can cause communication problems and offense. For example, an American manager may think that customers from a certain culture lack strong English skills or are incapable of good communication. This prejudice can motivate the manager to exploit the clients when negotiating.

Part Three Case Study

Read the following cases and then answer the questions.

Case 1

American: I am very pleased to meet you, Mr. Sato. (The American extends his hand for a handshake.)
Japanese: (Extending his hand and shakes hands with a weak, limp grip) So pleased to meet you, Mr. Rogers.
American: This is my first time in Tokyo, and I look forward to our business association...Shall we begin our meeting?
Japanese: (Puzzled) Excuse me. (reaches into a card case and presents his card to Rogers) Here is my business card.
American: (Rogers takes out his wallet immediately and puts Sato's card in it after quickly glancing at both sides; he fumbles through his credit cards looking for a business card)... I'm sure I have a card here... somewhere...
Japanese: (Acting hurt) Do not go to any trouble...
American: (Finds one)... Ah, here's a card... (He hands Sato a bent card.)
Japanese: (Sato graciously accepts the card and reads it very carefully, and turns it over to its flip side and it is blank ... he is puzzled ...)
American: Is there something the matter? (He sees that Sato? is uncomfortable.)

**Japanese:** Not really.

**American:** Shall we begin our meeting?

**Japanese:** That would be very nice, but perhaps we can first talk about ourselves a little bit ... such as our positions in the company?

**American:** Oh, sure...

**Japanese:** (Sato has kept Rogers' cards in front of him all this time, holds it with his two hands and keeps looking at it ...)

## Questions

- (1) Why did Mr. Sato feel puzzled when Mr. Rogers first suggested starting their meeting?
- (2) Do you think it is proper for Mr. Rogers to put Sato's business card into his wallet immediately? Why?
- (3) Why did Sato insist on introducing themselves, such as the positions in the company instead of beginning the meeting?

## Case 2

Peter is the general manager of an American company in China. Recently, Jun Chen, one of the Chinese managers made a mistake at work that caused some difficulties that required a lot of effort to fix. Jun Chen was very upset about what had happened and came to Peter's office to make a formal apology. Jun Chen went into Peter's office after being told to, smiling before he spoke. "Peter, I've been feeling very upset about the trouble I've caused for the company. I'm here to apologize for my mistake. I'm terribly sorry about it and I want you to know that it will never happen again." Jun Chen said, looking at Peter with the smile he had been wearing since he walked into the office. Peter found it hard to accept the apology. He looked at Jun Chen, and asked, "are you sure?"

"Yes, I'm very sorry and I promise this won't happen again," Jun Chen said, with a smile even broader than before.

"I'm sorry I just can't take your apology. You don't look sorry at all!" Peter said angrily.

Jun Chen's face turned very red. He did not in the least expect Peter to take it negatively. He was desperate to make himself understood. "Peter," he managed to smile again, "trust me, no one can feel any more sorry than I do about it."

Peter was almost furious by now, "If you're that sorry, how can you still smile?"

### Questions

- (1) Why did Jun Chen wear a smile when he made the apology?
- (2) Do you think it is reasonable that Peter became so angry with Jun Chen? Why?
- (3) What are the different interpretations for a smile by the two in this situation?

### Case 3

Jennifer Toms, a British employee in an international corporation, was asked to send a copy of document to another department in the company by her Indonesian manager. It was after work when the order was delivered and Jennifer knew the document was too late to be sent out. So she decided to hold it until early the next day. Her manager was very cross when he saw the document on her desk and not being sent out as he ordered. Jennifer was sacked for not sending it out immediately.

### Questions

1. What are the possible reasons for Jennifer's career problem?
2. Which culture, British or Indonesian, empowers more initiative of the employees?







## Chapter Two

# Greeting Etiquette

### Part One General Rules

“Greeting” is to welcome someone with particular words or a particular action, or to react to something in the stated way. Greeting people politely is an important skill to master in a business setting. To avoid making an unfavorable first impression, be sure that you know the proper etiquette for any situation you may encounter.

Standard business etiquette establishes generally agreed-upon principles for greetings. Across the globe, people of different cultures and beliefs greet each other in various ways. Some groups follow strict codes of etiquette each time they join the company of friends and new acquaintances, while others embrace everyone they meet as an equal at the beginning of each new encounter. Although guidelines for business etiquette greetings may work well in most situations, be aware that certain greeting types are used by cultures in different parts of the world and it may be more important to be aware and responsive of particular situations than to follow a hard-and-fast rule.

#### I. What should be done by business persons before greetings?

Before greetings, it's suggested that business persons make good preparations by studying and learning about the following:

##### 1. State culture

Acquiring the art of business greeting etiquette might seem complex enough without the added consideration of international communications, but it's still appropriate to research the