

UNIT : BUSINESS

TOPIC: BUSINESS IN DIFFERENT CULTURES

2 Business in different cultures

Get ready!

1 Before you read the passage, talk about these questions.

- 1 What are some ways people greet each other in formal and informal situations?
- 2 What are some things foreigners might accidentally do that are offensive in your culture?



Conducting Business Overseas

Conducting business overseas is full of **pitfalls**! There are many different customs regarding **etiquette**. You may make a major social **gaffe** without realizing it! This guide outlines the areas where mistakes commonly occur.

Consider how you will address your business associate. It is polite to address someone by their **title** and **surname** in many places.

The handshake is recognized worldwide, but in the States and Britain people generally shake hands only once, when they first meet. Be **aware** that in Japan, it is rude to make **eye contact** when shaking hands, and in many Asian countries it is **customary** to bow.

If you are invited to someone's house, you should take a gift to thank them for their **hospitality**. But be careful! Your choice of gift is very important. **Avoid** giving white flowers in Japan or clocks in China because they symbolize death. Be **conscious** of eating customs. In Europe and the States, you may **offend** your **host** if you leave food on your plate. However, in Asia, a clean plate indicates you are still hungry.

In conclusion, the best way to conduct business internationally is by researching **manners** and customs. Only this way can you ensure that you won't make a terrible social **blunder**!

Reading

2 Listen and read this guide to business etiquette. Then, choose the correct answers. Say four things you have learned from the text.

- 1 What should you NOT do when visiting Japan?
A give your host a gift
B bow when you meet someone
C leave food on your plate after a meal
D look a person in the eyes during an introduction
- 2 What should business travelers do before doing business



Vocabulary

3 Choose the word which has the same meaning as the underlined word.

- 1 Looking his client in the eye when they shook hands was a major gaffe.
A blunder
B hospitality
C host

6

2 What should business travelers do before doing business in other countries?

- A purchase reasonable gifts
- B learn the country's language
- C research the country's etiquette
- D memorize new partner's surnames

gifts



3 According to the passage, when do British people shake hands?

- A when greeting business partners in the morning
- B when first being introduced to someone
- C when accepting a gift
- D when entering someone's house



C host

2 Her manners were typically British.

- A pitfall
- B etiquette
- C hospitality

3 He was conscious that he must leave some food on his plate.

- A aware
- B customary
- C eye contact

Z

4 Choose the correct word pair to fill in the blanks.

- 1 Mr. Sui thanked his ____ for the wonderful ____ .
A title - surname B host - hospitality
C hospitality - pitfall
- 2 ____ making eye contact because it may ____ the other person.
A Customary - avoid B Offend - host
C Avoid - offend
- 3 It is ____ to call someone by their title and ____ .
A aware - title B customary - surname
C avoid - hospitality
- 4 There are a number of ____ people can fall into such as not using a correct ____ .
A pitfalls - title B hosts - surname
C hospitality - eye contact

Speaking

7 With a partner, act out the roles below, based on the dialogue from Task 6. Then switch roles.

USE LANGUAGE SUCH AS:

Are you ready for your business trip?

I'm scared I'm going to ...

It's customary to ...

Student A: You are going on a business trip to another country. Explain to Student B that you are worried about:

- greeting people
- giving gifts

Listening

Listening

5 Listen to a conversation between two colleagues about a business trip. Mark the following statements as true (T) or false (F).

- 1 ___ The speakers are taking a trip to Japan together.
- 2 ___ The woman asks the man to explain parts of Japanese etiquette.
- 3 ___ The woman plans to purchase a gift before she arrives in Japan.

6 Listen again and complete the conversation.

- Co-worker 2: I've been reading up on Japanese 1 _____. It's got me worried.
- Co-worker 1: What are you worried about?
- Co-worker 2: It's full of 2 _____. I'm scared I'm going to make some terrible social 3 _____.
- Co-worker 1: I'm sure that if you're careful of your 4 _____ you'll be fine.
- Co-worker 2: That's not the point. Good manners in Japan are different from manners here. Sometimes they're the complete opposite!
- Co-worker 1: Like what?
- Co-worker 2: Well, here you make 5 _____ when you shake hands. In Japan that's rude.
- Co-worker 1: Really? I wasn't 6 _____ of that.
- Co-worker 2: And it's 7 _____ to give gifts to your hosts, but there are so many gifts that can be offensive!

- giving gifts

Student B: Your colleague is going on a business trip abroad and is worried about etiquette. Help Student A plan for his or her trip.

Writing

8 You are writing a guide for business people visiting your country. Using the guide and the conversation from Task 7, write a guide to etiquette (100-120 words). Talk about:

- What is customary for people to do when they greet each other
- What people should be aware of during meals
- What sorts of gifts are appropriate

