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Global Etiquette

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Global Etiquette

Objectives

Upon completion of this chapter, you will

- understand cultural differences in making introductions, greetings, and handshakes as well as customs related to business card exchange.
- understand how position and status affect cultural interaction.
- be familiar with rules of etiquette that apply to communicating by telephone and electronically with persons of other cultures.
- understand how cultural differences in dining practices may affect intercultural communication.
- be familiar with the cultural nuances of tipping.
- understand how practices of giving gifts vary from culture to culture and the role of gift giving in establishing favorable intercultural relations.
- learn the importance of travel etiquette in conveying a positive image of a person's firm and country.

When you conduct business abroad or in the United States with someone of another culture, knowledge of certain rules of business and social etiquette is important. **Etiquette** refers to manners and behavior considered acceptable in social and business situations. **Protocol** refers to customs and regulations dealing with diplomatic etiquette and courtesies expected in official dealings (such as negotiations) with persons in various cultures.

President Clinton, during his first state dinner abroad on a visit to Korea, confused his translator and embarrassed South Korean officials when he stepped to the microphone to give his dinner speech and invited a translator to stand between him and President Kim Young Sam. Because in South Korea it is an insult for anyone to stand between two heads of state, President Clinton had committed a serious *faux pas*. (Kim, 1993, p. A5)

Proper social behavior includes learning cultural variations in making introductions, exchanging business cards, recognizing position and status, communicating interculturally, dining practices, tipping etiquette, giving gifts, and traveling.

INTRODUCTIONS, GREETINGS, AND HANDSHAKES

Being sensitive to cultural variations when making introductions will ensure that your first encounter with a person from another country leaves a positive impression. First impressions are made only once but are remembered for a long time.

The procedure for making introductions varies from culture to culture. People from the United States and England use first names almost immediately; however, introductions are more formal in some other cultures. Titles are used when introducing people in Germany and Italy; titles often indicate the person's profession or educational level. Germans always address each other as "Herr Guenther" or "Frau Kurt" in and out of the office, reserving first names for close friends and family.

Remember that in some cultures, such as the Chinese, the surname comes first and the given name last. Ching Lo Chang would be addressed as Mr. Ching.

President Clinton, in a meeting in Korea, addressed South Korean President Kim Young Sam's wife, Mrs. Sohn Myong-suk, as Mrs. Kim. He should have addressed her as Mrs. Sohn because in Korea, it is the custom for women to maintain their maiden name when they marry. (Kim, 1993, p. A5)

Men and women from the Latin American countries often add their mother's maiden name to their surname, so you should use the next-to-last name when addressing them. Thus, Evelyn Rodrigues Castillo would be addressed as Señiorita Rodrigues. When women marry, they drop their mother's surname and add their husband's father's surname. When in doubt, ask what name is to be used (Martin & Chaney, 2012). Egyptians use the title plus the first name when making introductions. In some cases, the French form of address is used for women, for example, Madame Susan. In Iraq and in India, titles such as Professor and Doctor, used with the last name, are used as part of the introduction. In African countries, such as Nigeria and Kenya, titles are used with last names until you get to know the Nigerians and Kenyans well and they ask you to call them by their first name (Devine & Braganti, 1991, 1995, 2000). Because of such widely diverse customs in the use of titles, it is wise to research the customs of the particular culture involved.

A handshake, an embrace, or a bow, depending on the culture, accompanies introductions. Handshakes may vary from the soft handshake of the British to the firm handshake of U.S. people. Hugging or embracing when being introduced is considered inappropriate in business situations in the United States but is common in many South American countries. The bow, common in China and Japan, is uncommon in many other cultures.

Customary greetings vary from culture to culture. Persons from other cultures are struck by the informality of U.S. Americans who often say "Hi!" to complete strangers. In most countries of the world, this practice is uncommon. People of the United States are often perceived as insincere when they use the standard greeting of "Hi, how are you?" which does not mean that they are actually inquiring on the state of someone's health. This outward show of friendliness is often misleading because people from the United States are actually private and slow to form friendships. The use of "Hello, I'm pleased to meet you" is preferable, as it conveys a more sincere message.

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British-born journalist Henry Fairlie, in writing “Why I Love America,” recalled this encounter with a four-year-old boy riding his tricycle in the suburbs shortly after his arrival in the United States:

“As I passed him, he said Hi!—just like that. No four-year-old boy had ever addressed me without an introduction before. Recovering from the culture shock, I found myself saying in return: Well—hi! He pedaled off, apparently satisfied.”

Fairlie, who comes from a country where you can tell another person’s class from their greeting, observed that the greeting “Hi!” is a democracy. In America, anyone can say “Hi!” to anyone else. (Fairlie, 1983)

In addition to the informal “Hi!” often used when meeting someone, persons of the United States engage in other ritualistic greeting behavior. When greeting an office colleague, one person will say, “Good morning, how are you?” The appropriate response is, “Fine, thank you. And how are you?” Some people make the mistake of forgetting that this is only a ritual and proceed to describe in detail the state of their health. Remember, the appropriate response is, “Fine, thanks.”

Gunter Lensges, an exchange student from Germany, recalled his experience with ritualistic greetings when he returned to the campus apartment he shared with three U.S. students following his first day of classes.

When one of his roommates said, “Hey, man, what’s going on?” he was impressed that they seemed interested in how his day had gone and proceeded to recount his experiences in his classes. Noticing the strange expressions on his roommates’ faces, he asked, “Did I say something wrong?” They then explained to him, “When we say, ‘Hey, man, what’s going on?’ we don’t really want to know. You’re supposed to say, ‘Not much, man, and what’s going on with you?’ Then we’ll say, ‘Not much.’”

When greeting people, the handshake is customary in many countries. Egyptians, both men and women, shake hands when being introduced. Men of India shake hands with other men but not with women. In African countries, such as Nigeria and Kenya, shaking hands is customary. In Saudi Arabia, handshakes are numerous and elaborate. In Finland, handshakes are firm and are typical greeting behavior for men and women—women are customarily greeted first. Although a firm handshake is considered the norm in the United States, it may be considered impolite in some cultures. Handshakes in other cultures vary from the soft grasp of the British to the brusque grasp of Germans. A summary of how various cultures differ in their ideas of a proper handshake follows in Table 1.

Although a kiss or hug is considered inappropriate as a form of greeting in the United States, in other countries it is customary. For example, in Saudi Arabia, the handshake is accompanied with a light kiss; even males in Saudi Arabia kiss both cheeks after a handshake. In the Russian Federation, the “bear hug” may follow a strong, firm handshake between good male friends; neighboring Finns, on the other hand, do not hug, kiss, or have body contact with strangers. People in Latin American countries also embrace, often accompanied by a couple of slaps on the back (Samovar, Porter, & McDaniel, 2009) (see Figure 1). Egyptian women who are close friends, as well as women in some African countries, often hug or kiss each other as part of the greeting.

Asians, Northern Europeans, and most North Americans are uncomfortable with touching and hugging. People of Greece have no firm customs for greeting others; they may shake hands, embrace, and/or kiss a person at the first meeting or at every meeting. Bowing is the customary form of greeting in Japan. In China, bowing is also customary, but a handshake is

TABLE 1 Handshakes by Culture

Culture	Type of Handshake
U.S. American	Firm
Asian	Gentle (shaking hands is unfamiliar and uncomfortable for some; the exception is the Korean, who usually has a firm handshake)
British	Soft
French	Light and quick (not offered to superiors); repeated on arrival and departure
German	Brusque and firm; repeated on arrival and departure
Latin American	Moderate grasp; repeated frequently
Middle Eastern	Gentle; repeated frequently

Source: Adapted from these books: *International Business Etiquette: Asia and the Pacific Rim* (2002); *International Business Etiquette: Europe* (1999); and *International Business Etiquette: Latin America* (2000) by Ann Marie Sabath, Franklin Lakes, NJ: Career Press.

also acceptable. When conducting business with people of Japan or China, the handshake is often combined with a bow so that each culture shows the other proper respect (Baldrige, 1993; Samovar et al., 2009) (see Figure 2). In India, the traditional greeting is the *Namaste*, which a person says while pressing palms together with fingers up and placing the hands below the chin; a slight bow accompanies this gesture when greeting supervisors or others to whom you want to show respect (*CultureGrams*, 2010).



FIGURE 1 Greetings in Latin American Countries



FIGURE 2 Greetings in Japan Involve Bowing at the Waist

BUSINESS CARD EXCHANGE

An important aspect of business protocol is the proper procedure for exchanging business cards. Because all business contacts require a business card, the admonition of a well-known credit card company, “Don’t leave home without it,” applies.

Although most U.S. businesspeople carry business cards, they do not always exchange them when meeting unless there is a reason to contact the person later. Rank, title, and

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profession are taken seriously in some cultures, so it is important to include your position and titles or degrees in addition to your company name on your card. Include foreign headquarters where appropriate, as well as your fax number and perhaps e-mail address. Avoid colored type and paper. Be conservative by choosing white paper with black ink (Martin & Chaney, 2012).

Cultural variations exist in the presentation of the card. The practice in the United States of glancing at the business card and promptly putting it in the pocket is considered rude in countries like Japan. The Japanese examine the business card carefully and make some comment while accepting it. During meetings, place the business cards of others attending in front of you on the conference table to refer properly to names, ranks, and titles. Use both hands when presenting your card in Japan or South Korea; position the card so that the person can read it (Axtell, 1993; Baldrige, 1993; Chaney & Martin, 2007) (see Figure 3).



FIGURE 3 Business Card Presentation in Japan

An exchange of business cards is an expected part of all business introductions and most personal ones in Europe, including the Scandinavian countries. Because Scandinavians are respectful of age, include your company's date of establishment on your business card when the company's history is a long one (Turkington, 1999). Other parts of the world in which an exchange of business cards is the norm include the Middle East, the Pacific, Asia, and the Caribbean. Australian businesspersons do not usually carry business cards; thus, when you offer them your card, you may not receive one in return. In Latin American countries, business titles are important, so be sure to include them on your business cards (Moran, Harris, & Moran, 2011). In most countries of Southeast Asia, Africa, and the Middle East (with the exception of Israel), avoid presenting the card with your left hand as the left hand is reserved for taking care of bodily functions. In non-English speaking countries, have the information on your card printed in English on one side and in the local language on the other.

POSITION AND STATUS

Position and status may have an impact on the success of intercultural communication encounters. No standard definition of social class exists that applies to all countries because people in different cultures have their own way of identifying the classes. Some cultures believe that people should occupy their proper places and that some are entitled to more respect than others.

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Most people of the United States show limited respect for rank and authority, although many other cultures are very conscious of position and power.

Although the United States is not considered a nation of classes, distinctions in position and status do exist. Because class distinctions in the United States are subtle, visitors from other cultures may not be able to spot the existence of a class structure and may believe the official propaganda of social equality. Visitors to New York, Washington, DC, and other cities, however, may see both the homeless and more affluent persons in public places. Although a system of inherited titles and ranks does not exist in the United States, certain factors distinguish between the top class, the upper-middle class, the mid-middle class, and the lower-middle class. Money is one factor associated with class. Further distinctions are made between those who have inherited money but are not currently employed and those who have inherited money and are employed. Style, taste, and awareness are equally important. Social class is also associated with educational opportunities and a person's occupation or profession (Fussell, 1983).

Status is associated with education in a number of cultures. Educational titles are used in introductions as a sign of respect and acknowledgment of the person's educational achievement. In Germany and Italy, executives and other professionals are proud of titles preceding their names, as they often reflect their education or profession. People with a college degree are entitled to be called Doctor (*Dottore* in Italian); the same rule applies to architects and lawyers. In Germany, the U.S. equivalent of president or managing director of a company is called *Herr Direktor*; a female doctor is addressed as *Frau Doktor*; and a female engineer is addressed as *Frau Ingenieur*. In Mexico, a lawyer is addressed as *Licenciado*, a title that is considered very important. In England, special protocol exists for addressing royalty, peers, clergy, and others. The managing director in a British firm is usually the top official and equivalent to a U.S. corporate president (U.S. corporate vice presidents do not carry much clout abroad) (Axtell, 1990).

In some cultures, such as India, a very rigid class system exists, with a society divided into castes. The particular caste a person belongs to is determined at birth; each **caste system** has its status, rights, and duties. Although discrimination based on caste has been outlawed, in many areas, particularly rural ones, it is still a major influence on life in India. In India's rigid caste system, interaction between members of different castes is often limited, as in the case of India's untouchables (Samovar & Porter, 2003).

Cultural differences also exist concerning the status of women in a society. Women in some cultures play a less prominent role in business than do men. In South Korea, women are considered inferior to men and thus have lower social status. Women, even those with college degrees, are rarely employed as executives; they usually hold jobs as teachers or secretaries. Social and economic inequality between men and women is also apparent in China, Malaysia, and Singapore; men are clearly the ones in positions of authority (Chaney & Martin, 2007; Turkington, 1999).

The Arabs are becoming more accustomed to women executives, and they are beginning to accept women executives from other countries. U.S. women doing business with the Arabs should understand this difference in cultural attitude and should make a special effort to conduct themselves appropriately, including dressing very modestly. In some Middle Eastern countries, men may refuse to work with women; women executives in Latin America may not receive the same respect given to men executives.

Women in the United States are being given increased opportunities for business travel, management positions in overseas operations, and transfers to overseas assignments. The

progress U.S. women have made in the workplace is viewed by many as setting a precedent for other countries because the United States is often perceived as a catalyst for international change.

In some cultures, such as the Chinese, people are very aware of age and hierarchy. Age is viewed as an indication of seniority. In addition to the Asian culture, the Arabian world has a great respect for age. Advanced years represent wisdom and respect. Age takes precedence over rank, but rank is still important. In the Japanese society, knowing the rank of the people with whom you come in contact is important. The middle-level manager in a large company outranks a department head from a smaller company. The higher the rank of the person you are introduced to, the lower you bow. The person of lower rank bows first and lowest. Status is also shown by who goes first when entering a room or an elevator. Those of lower rank wait for those of higher rank to precede them. If you are the foreign guest, you may be expected to enter a room ahead of others, so if you are motioned to enter the room, do so quickly. When the Chinese or Japanese enter a room, they generally enter in protocol order, with the highest-ranking person entering first. They will also assume that the first member of your negotiating team to enter the room is the head of your group and has the higher rank. Sitting in rank order from highest to lowest during a meeting is helpful (Axtell, 1998; Turkington, 1999).

A consulting firm trying to establish a partnership between a Mexican and U.S. client arranged a party at a local hotel to celebrate the new business. Invitations were sent to all those involved. Only Mexican administrative assistants attended; none of the executives attended. The party organizers later learned that Mexican companies are very hierarchical and do not mix socially with people of other ranks. Mexican executives chose not to attend upon learning that administrative workers were also invited. (Wilén, 2000, pp. 71–72)

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION ETIQUETTE

Aspects of protocol related to successful intercultural communication include telephone manners and cyberspace etiquette, sometimes referred to as **netiquette** (network etiquette).

Many intercultural encounters are via the telephone. When talking on the telephone, the initial impression is formed mainly by vocal quality (70%) rather than on the words spoken (30%). Thus, opinions are formed more on how something is said and the voice tone rather than on what the person actually says (Mitchell, 2000).

Good telephone manners include answering the phone promptly (first or second ring), identifying yourself properly by giving your department and your name, and being courteous at all times, including the frequent use of “please” and “thank you.” Successful telephone communication involves recognizing and avoiding behaviors that typically irritate others. Avoid putting people on hold as this has been identified as the single most irritating behavior. Other negative behaviors that should be avoided include making mouth noises, not paying attention, and having a negative or rude attitude. A positive behavior appreciated by callers is “the voice with a smile.” Callers also appreciate a cheerful attitude.

When voice mail is used, be brief but complete when leaving a message. Include your name, company, the date, and the time of the message. Give your phone number slowly and include a brief summary of what the call concerns.

Because more companies are communicating by e-mail, certain rules of etiquette should be observed. E-mail is more informal than a letter or memorandum and is inappropriate for conveying certain types of messages. Negative information, such as a person’s failure to get a

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promotion, and personal information, such as announcing the birth of a baby, is not an appropriate use of e-mail. Proper “netiquette” avoids the following:

- **shouting**—typing the message in all capital letters.
- **dissing**—speaking ill of someone.
- **flaming**—sending vicious, insulting messages.
- **spamming**—mass mailings of commercial advertisements or material cross posted to numerous news groups (Segaloff, 1998).

In addition to these suggestions, avoid the use of humor and sarcasm. Remember that cultural variations exist in what is perceived as humorous. Also avoid a tone that is even slightly critical (Miller, 2001).

Because a firm may be liable for information leaked into cyberspace, employees should be very careful about the messages they send. A good rule to follow: If you would not want your message posted on the company bulletin board, do not send it via e-mail. Pressing the Delete key after sending a message does not mean that it cannot be tracked back to you (Miller, 2001).

Care should be taken in deciding how a message should be sent. The advantages of using e-mail include low preparation, fast delivery time, personal, and convenient for the receiver. The disadvantages are lack of confidentiality and the lack of nonverbal interaction (Kenton & Valentine, 1997). Certainly, not all countries use e-mail with equal frequency. According to Internet World Stats, June 30, 2011, the two countries with the highest number of Internet users are China, comprising 23.0% of world users, and the United States, with 11.6% of world users. In China, the number of Internet users is 485 million, representing 36.3% of the population; in the United States the number of Internet users is 245 million, comprising 78.2% of the population. Other countries in the top 10 Internet users (from highest to lowest) are India, Japan, Brazil, Germany, Russia, United Kingdom, France, and Nigeria.

When corresponding with international persons via e-mail, avoid addressing people by their first names. Be sure to write out the name of the month when specifying a date, include country codes for telephone numbers, and indicate which time zone is being referred to when making such statements as “I will telephone you at 2 P.M. Friday.”

The use of fax messages is increasing as a quick method of communication between countries. Points of etiquette regarding the transmission of fax messages are as follows:

- Call ahead to confirm the fax number and to alert the person that you are sending a message (in case the fax machine shares a line with a person’s telephone). The message should follow within 15 minutes.
- Certain documents should not be faxed—documents of more than 10–15 pages, personal or confidential information, and negative news.
- Avoid using the fax when impressions are important. Résumés and proposals submitted on fax paper will not get the same attention as those submitted on good-quality, linen finish paper (Ford, 2003; Glassman, 1998).

DINING PRACTICES

Cultural dining practices vary widely. In many parts of the world, the main meal is at noon, although in the United States, the main meal is in the evening. In Mexico, lunchtime is from 2 P.M. to 4 P.M. and is the main meal of the day. However, in places near the U.S.–Mexican border,

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local businesses conform more to the U.S. lunchtime of noon to 2 P.M. The dinner hour also varies. In the United States, the dinner hour varies from 5 P.M. to 7 P.M., but in such countries as Spain, it may be as late as 10 P.M. In some cultures, business meals are eaten in private homes, although in other cultures, they are usually eaten at restaurants. When entertaining visitors from other countries, be considerate and ask them whether they prefer the main meal at noon or in the evening and take them to restaurants where they have a choice of a light or heavy meal (Devine & Braganti, 2000; Martin & Chaney, 2012).

Cultural variations exist in the number of courses typically served. A formal luncheon usually consists of two to three courses, and a formal dinner consists of three to seven courses. In some countries, including those in Latin America, even informal meals typically have numerous courses. In Italy and France, salads are often served after the main course rather than before.

Dining practices are viewed differently in various cultures. A U.S. dining practice that seems unusual to people of other cultures is the serving of a glass of iced water at most restaurants. Other countries that serve water do so without ice or serve bottled mineral water. Another dining practice that is viewed with astonishment is the habit of offering coffee at the beginning of a meal; serving coffee at the end of the meal is common in most cultures. The popularity of decaffeinated coffee in the United States has not yet spread to other countries, so visitors are often surprised by a waiter's question of, "Will you have regular coffee or decaf?" Another U.S. custom that sometimes amazes people from other cultures is designating certain sections in restaurants as smoking and nonsmoking. A practice that makes little sense in other cultures is the U.S. custom of conducting business at breakfast. The French especially do not like breakfast meetings; they prefer a leisurely breakfast with time to read the paper in the morning. The French do conduct business over lunch; however, the meal may last two hours or more. Another U.S. business custom questioned by people in other cultures is the lengthy cocktail "hour" before dinner. Italians have commented that the endless rounds of cocktails before ordering a meal are exhausting and may result in discussions that make little sense (Baldrige, 1993; Martin & Chaney, 2012).

The manner of eating is also diverse. The **U.S. eating style** uses the "zigzag" technique: cutting the meat with the knife held in the right hand and the fork in the left, then placing the knife on the plate, shifting the fork to the right hand, and eating. Diners using the **Continental eating style** place the fork in the left hand and knife in the right; they use the knife to push food onto the back of the fork, and then move the food into the mouth with the tines of the fork down. Asians typically use chopsticks especially for eating rice but may or may not use a spoon for soup. They appreciate foreigners' attempting to use chopsticks and are often willing to demonstrate correct usage. Chopsticks are placed on the chopstick rest at the conclusion of the meal (or when pausing during the meal); they should not be placed in an upright position in the rice bowl (Martin & Chaney, 2012; Sabath, 2002).

Other cultural variations in dining also exist. Tahitian food is eaten with the fingers. In the Middle East, be prepared to eat with your fingers if your host does so but use the right hand only. In Bolivia, you are expected to clean your plate; Egyptians and Filipinos, however, consider it impolite to eat everything on your plate (Axtell, 1993; Turkington, 1999). In China, avoid taking the last item of food from the serving platter unless you want to convey to the host that you are still hungry (Turkington, 1999).

When dining in other countries, be aware that animals considered delicacies in some countries are viewed as pets in others. For example, dogs may be on the menu in such Asian countries as South Korea, while they are considered pets in the United States.

When a man from Tonga went to a U.S. neighbor's home to purchase a pony that had been advertised in the local newspaper, the neighbor, who asked why the Tongan wanted the pony, was told that he was buying it for his son's birthday. While the neighbor watched in shocked disbelief, the Tongan struck the pony in the head, put the dead pony in his truck, and drove home. The police were called; when they arrived, they found a birthday party in progress. They also observed that the pony was being cooked for a typical Tongan birthday feast. (Ricks, 2006, p. 5)

Dining in Japan, especially in Japanese homes, requires sitting in a kneeling position on a *tatami* mat. Men keep their knees three or four inches apart; women keep their knees together. Being able to lower yourself to this position and rise from it gracefully requires practice. If you have frequent contact with the Japanese, practicing this art is warranted (Axtell, 1993).

TIPPING

People communicate nonverbally by their tipping practices; those who are basically miserly and those who are generous reveal these traits by their tipping behavior. Although it is difficult to establish definite rules for tipping, generally when service has been good or when service people go out of their way to do a favor, a tip is merited. If the service is very bad, you are not expected to leave a tip but should report the situation to the manager. "Insult tipping" (leaving a few coins) shows a lack of respect and is inappropriate regardless of how poor the service.

Trends in tipping appear to have changed in the past few years. Although a tip of 15% of the bill was considered to be a generous tip in fine restaurants, 20% is now closer to the norm when the service is excellent.

Traveling in the United States involves numerous situations in which tipping is expected. When traveling, have a supply of \$1 and \$5 bills in your pocket for tipping the cab driver, the bellhop, and other service personnel who may carry your luggage, summon a cab, or perform other services, such as delivering food or small appliances to your hotel room. Travel tipping needs to be included in anticipated travel expenses; tipping service personnel at a resort or luxury hotel may add an additional 25% to your bill (Chaney & Martin, 2007; Martin & Chaney, 2012).

Tipping in a nontipping culture can offend or insult the people of that culture. However, letters of thanks to people who have been especially helpful, including hotel managers, are very much appreciated. Tipping in Japan is frowned on. People in this culture consider helping you with your luggage a gesture of hospitality and would be offended if you tipped them. If a hotel employee has performed an extra service that you want to reward, place the yen in an envelope because the Japanese would consider openly receiving money as embarrassing or as "losing face." Likewise in Singapore and South Korea, tipping is not expected, although this practice seems to be changing in hotels where international businesspersons stay (Martin & Chaney, 2012).

A U.S. professor with little travel experience, while attending a business conference in Puerto Vallarta, visited a nice restaurant recommended by the concierge at the conference hotel. When she received the bill, she noticed that 15% had been added, assumed that this was the tip, and left no extra amount. As she was leaving the restaurant, the server ran after her, pointed to the bill, and said, "*La propina!*" The professor tried to explain that the tip was included in the bill, but the server was clearly unhappy at receiving no tip. (What the professor did not know was that the amount added was a tax and that she was expected to leave a tip of 15–20%.) (Martin & Chaney, 2012, p. 121)

In many places, such as Europe, a service charge is added to the restaurant and hotel bill. Although no additional tip is expected, the trend is to leave an extra amount, especially if the service was good. In the absence of a service charge, leaving the usual 15–20% that is customary in the United States is recommended. Observing cultural differences in tipping can communicate nonverbally that you have researched the country and that you consider local customs to be important (Axtell, 1993; Sabath, 1999, 2000, 2002).

GIFT GIVING

Each country has its seasons and occasions for giving gifts. Gift giving in some cultures is an art and is considered an integral part of building intercultural professional and social relationships. The careful selection and wrapping of a gift and presenting it at the proper time with panache (style) conveys to others your social sensitivity and good manners.

Business gifts in the United States are very modest in price; the rule to follow (because of tax regulations) is to limit the price to \$25 or less. Business gifts are sometimes given to members of your staff on such occasions as birthdays and Christmas. In addition, secretaries are generally treated to flowers and/or lunch on Secretaries' Day. Remember that business gifts to staff members should be personal; an electric pencil sharpener is inappropriate. However, they should not be too personal—cologne or lingerie to a member of the opposite gender could be misinterpreted. A gift certificate to the person's favorite restaurant or specialty shop is in good taste. Subordinates wait for their supervisors to set the tone on gift giving. If you are new in an office, ask what tradition is usually followed in exchanging gifts. Several years ago when the office Christmas party was popular, colleagues often exchanged gifts as part of the occasion. The practice of exchanging gifts among colleagues, even token gifts (the office grab bag), seems to have been discontinued in many firms in favor of contributing the amount of money you would spend on such gifts to a local food bank or pooling the amount to give gifts of food or money to members of the custodial staff (Martin & Chaney, 2012).

In the United States, gifts are opened in front of the giver. The gift is admired, and appreciation is expressed verbally. The oral expression of thanks is followed by a written note of appreciation unless the gift is small and is used as an advertisement (e.g., a paperweight with the company logo). Business gifts to the office or department, such as a basket of fruit or box of candy, are opened immediately and shared by all. (The manager's taking the gift home to share with his or her family is considered to be in poor taste.) The manager writes a note of thanks to the company that sent the gift and conveys expressions of appreciation from staff members (Samovar & Porter, 2004). Gifts are also opened in the presence of the giver in Brazil and Belgium. In the Arabian countries, you must present a gift when others are present so it will not be interpreted as a bribe. In some countries, however, gifts are not opened in the presence of the giver. In Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Korea, you should not open a gift in front of the giver, and you should accept the gift with both hands (Bosrock, 1995, 1997a, 1997b).

Although flowers make appropriate gifts, learn cultural taboos related to color, variety, and number. Red roses are associated with romance in some cultures. In some countries, such as China, white is the color of mourning, and gladioli are often used in funeral sprays; thus, a gift of white gladioli is inappropriate in China. Although a gift of flowers in any color is considered appropriate by most Brazilians, purple flowers should probably be avoided as they are associated with death by some segments of the population. In most European countries, avoid a gift of

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carnations, which are for cemeteries only. Chrysanthemums are inappropriate in Belgium, Japan, and Italy; they are associated with funerals and mourning. Although flowers are not expected by a Mexican host, they are appreciated; however, avoid sending yellow, red, or white flowers as these colors have negative connotations for some Mexican people. In some cultures, the number of flowers given has a special significance (Barnum & Wolniansky, 1989). Armenians give an odd number of flowers on happy occasions; even numbers of flowers are associated with death. For the Chinese, four is the most negative number (it sounds like their word for death), so gifts of four flowers—or four of anything else—should be avoided (Dresser, 2005). Because in Thailand and Hong Kong three is a lucky number, give gifts in threes in these countries (Bosrock, 1997a). A flower shop in the host country is the best place to get information concerning local customs about giving flowers (Sabath, 2002).

Exhibitors at a trade show could not understand why Chinese visitors were not stopping by their booth. Workers were wearing green hats and were using them as giveaways as well. They later learned that for many Chinese, green hats are associated with infidelity; the Chinese expression “He wears a green hat” indicates that a man’s wife has been cheating on him. When they discarded the green hats and gave out T-shirts and coffee mugs instead, they had a number of Chinese visitors. (Dresser, 2005)

Gift giving is very much a part of conducting business in such countries as Japan. Japan’s major gift-giving times are *Ochugen* (July 15) and *Oseibo* (December). Companies give gifts to their customers as an expression of appreciation for past and future business. They also reward their employees at these times with large bonuses. U.S. companies that have ongoing business relationships with the Japanese should remember their associates with a gift at both of these times. Because Japan is one of the United States’ largest trading partners, knowing the nuances associated with Japanese gift giving is considered an important aspect of protocol with people in that culture (Samovar et al., 2009).

The Japanese are a gracious people for whom gift giving seems to be an art. The wrapping of the gift and the manner of presenting it are just as important as the gift itself. Gifts are beautifully wrapped but without the ornate bows and other decorations typically used on gifts in the United States. The color of the wrapping should be consistent with the occasion: red, gold, and white for happy events; black and purple or black and white for other occasions. The Japanese do not open a gift in front of the giver, so you should avoid opening your gift in their presence. Also avoid giving a gift when someone else is present. Do not surprise your Japanese host with a gift, as it might cause the person to lose face. Let your host know ahead of time by mentioning, for example, that you have found a special commemorative coin to add to his collection. Favorite gifts with the Japanese are imported liquor, consumables of high quality, and designer-made products with such names as Gucci, Tiffany & Co., or Mark Cross. Musical tapes and CDs are also good choices. Avoid giving gifts manufactured elsewhere in Asia, as this is an insult (Baldrige, 1993; Sabath, 2002).

A Japanese American whose firm conducted business in Japan told how he once averted a near disaster in U.S.–Japanese relations. His company selected and addressed 500 Christmas cards to its Japanese joint-venture partner. The cards were red (in Japan, funeral notices are red). The Japanese American manager stopped the mail just in time. He said, “We almost sent 500 funeral cards to our Japanese partner!” (Engholm, 1991, p. 228).

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These additional guidelines for gift giving in Asian countries should be observed because of the importance placed on this aspect of developing and maintaining harmonious business relationships:

- Take time to research the perfect gift; it could be related to the Asian counterpart's profession or hobby. Adding an item to a person's collection is much appreciated.
- Always wrap gifts (no bows) and include an appropriate card. Although wrapping the gift in red paper (the color of luck) is appropriate, using red ink when addressing the card or writing the accompanying note is not; in China, using red ink indicates a desire to sever a relationship forever.
- Be aware of superstitions and taboos related to gifts. Avoid any gift depicting white wolves because the wolf is symbolic of cruelty and greed. Also avoid a gift of straw sandals in China.
- Recognize the significance of numbers in gift giving: Three is a lucky number in Thailand; eight and nine are lucky in Hong Kong (the word for "eight" sounds like "prosperity"; the word for "nine" is a homonym for "eternity").
- Expect a gift to be declined out of politeness at least once in some Asian countries; they will then accept. You are expected to decline once and then accept with thanks (Engholm, 1991). Because gift giving is very important in the Japanese culture, asking advice from a Japanese colleague or from someone who has lived in Japan is recommended (Axtell, 1993; Yager, 2001).

Knowing when to present the business gift is also important. In Korea, business gifts are usually given at the beginning of formal negotiations. In Germany, however, business gifts are seldom exchanged at the beginning of negotiations but may be given at their conclusion. In Latin American countries, present gifts only at the conclusion of negotiations.

Other gift-giving practices and guidelines in various cultures include the following:

- When dining in a person's home in Western Europe, present your gift when you arrive so that it does not appear to be intended as payment for the meal.
- Avoid giving gifts to the French until a personal relationship has been developed. Avoid gifts of perfume or wine; those are their specialties.
- Gifts to Germans should not be wrapped in black, brown, or white.
- Avoid gifts of a clock in the People's Republic of China, as the clock is considered a symbol of bad luck. (In Korea, however, the clock is considered good luck and is an appropriate gift.)
- A striped tie is not an appropriate gift to a British man; it may represent a British regiment other than his own.
- Avoid gifts of a knife or handkerchief to persons in Latin America. The knife is interpreted as a desire to cut off the relationship; the handkerchief is associated with tears.
- Avoid gifts of liquor or wine for an Arab. Because alcohol is illegal in Islamic cultures, the gift would be confiscated by customs.
- Because the cow is sacred in India, do not give any gifts made of cowhide.
- In Islamic countries, exercise restraint in admiring personal possessions; you will probably find yourself the recipient of the object you have admired (Axtell, 1993; Stewart, 1997).

When people of the United States select business gifts for people in other countries, they should remember that the gifts should be made in the United States, be utilitarian, and have conversational value. Good choices include things that are representative of the United States, such

as Native American art or jewelry, DVDs of U.S. movies, U.S.-made sports equipment, or food that is unique to the United States, such as candy, nuts, and California wines. Avoid gag gifts; people of some other cultures do not appreciate them (Stewart, 1997).

TRAVEL ETIQUETTE

Travel etiquette begins with a pleasant, positive attitude and a sense of adventure, especially in international travel. People who approach international travel with eager anticipation—who look forward to meeting new people, seeing new places, and experiencing a new culture—seem to have more favorable experiences than those who approach travel with a sense of foreboding. In other words, people seem to get what they expect.

Because most international travel is by airplane, etiquette in this section concentrates on air travel and covers such topics as dressing and packing for the trip, behaving properly on the plane, and handling problem situations.

Travel dress is important because the people you meet, including ticket agents, will be strangers who will judge you first by your appearance. Being well dressed makes a favorable impression on others and in many cultures is associated with competency and respect. You are a representative of your company and your country; dressing professionally sends the message that you care about the impression you make on your compatriots and on persons of other cultures. Another benefit of being well dressed (wearing a suit or executive casual) when traveling is that you get better service from airline personnel and from hotel employees on your arrival. Women may want to wear their business blouse and jacket with coordinating slacks and then carry a skirt in the carry-on luggage and change in the plane lavatory just before landing. This is especially important when a presentation is scheduled for the same day or when you are being met at the airport by a business colleague from the host country (Chaney & Martin, 2007).

When packing for a trip, keep in mind that conservative business attire is usually preferred in other countries. This means dark suits for men and women, classic leather shoes, and good-quality accessories. Your luggage should also be of good quality to create a positive impression. All belongings should be packed in the luggage; carrying personal belongings in shopping bags does not convey a professional image. Checking large suitcases and limiting carry-on luggage to the size and number specified by the airline is important. Women should remember that they are responsible for their own luggage, including lifting a suitcase to the overhead bin of the airplane. Luggage with wheels is a good investment. With multiple bags, a porter or a cart may be used.

Travel etiquette also involves courteous treatment of airline personnel. When flights are late or canceled, travelers should remain calm and be polite to travel clerks who are anxious to get them to their destinations. Passengers who are courteous when they are inconvenienced often receive better treatment, including free food and lodging, than those who are rude and insensitive. Flight attendants should also be treated with respect. Although they are not tipped, flight attendants, as well as the captain/cocaptain, should be thanked when they are standing near the exit (Chaney & Martin, 2007).

A passenger standing in line at an airline ticket counter listened to a person yelling and screaming at the ticket agent. After the mad, rude customer left, the passenger complimented the ticket agent on his patience, attitude, and calm demeanor. The clerk replied, "Thank you for your kind words, but don't worry; it's all right." The passenger asked, "How can it be all right?" The clerk answered, "It's all right because, you see, that man is going to Cleveland, but his luggage is going to Singapore." (Dosick, 2000, p. 50)

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Proper behavior during the flight is especially important because of the close quarters. Complete strangers are forced into another person's intimate space. Therefore, airline passengers should be especially considerate of those around them and careful that their behavior does not offend anyone. Because of the limited space, passengers should refrain from wearing strong fragrances. They should respect the preferences for conversation of those seated next to them. Those who do not want to talk can take out a book or papers to work on to discourage a conversation. Do not put the seat back in a reclining position when traveling in the main cabin without first asking permission of the person seated behind you. Because of the limited space, it is difficult for the person seated behind you to exit, to eat or drink, or to work with the seat in front of him or her in a reclining position. Passengers should also remember to stay out of the aisles as much as possible and limit their time on the telephone and in the bathroom. If they are traveling with their family, passengers should make sure that their children do not engage in such activities as kicking the seat back of the person in front of them or standing up in the seat and staring at the person behind them (Chaney & Martin, 2007).

Sometimes problem situations arise because other passengers do not know or practice proper etiquette. When confronted with an incessant talker, you might say, "I would like to talk more, but I must finish this report." To the person in coach who reclines his seat, you might respond, "Would you please pull your seat forward while I am eating?" (Asking the flight attendant to make this request is also appropriate.) If you are seated next to a crying baby or a loud, obnoxious person, ask the flight attendant for another seat assignment.

International businesswomen typically travel as part of their jobs; they will benefit from knowing and following certain guidelines to make their travel experiences safe and enjoyable. Safety suggestions include taking a taxi rather than public transportation at your destination, selecting a nice hotel and eating there, and avoiding driving in other countries. (Hiring local drivers or taking taxis for special side trips is recommended.) Practice hotel safety; make sure other people do not know your room number; check escape routes in case of an emergency evacuation; put valuables in the room safe-deposit box; hang a "Do Not Disturb" sign outside your door whenever you are in your room; and do not open the door when someone knocks. If you plan to shop or explore the city, ask the concierge about sections of the city considered unsafe for women (Axtell, Briggs, Corcoran, & Lamb, 1997; Martin & Chaney, 2012). Women travelers should also practice street safety; wear your handbag next to your body using a long strap placed around your neck (or wear the handbag underneath a top coat) and keep matches from your destination hotel with you in case you wish to take a taxi back to your hotel and encounter a taxi driver who does not speak your language. (Matches usually contain the hotel's name, address, and phone number.) Taking with you a personal safety device, such as an alarm, may provide a sense of security. Rather than taking your usual early morning jog, pack a jump rope and exercise in your room (Martin & Chaney, 2012).

A summary of rules for business and social etiquette for the 10 countries with which the United States conducts most of its international trade follows.

Brazil

Use titles when making introductions. To show respect, the title *Doutor* or *Doutora* (Doctor) is used, especially with older people, even though they may have neither an MD nor a PhD degree. Brazilians shake hands when greeting each other. During personal greetings, women include one to four air kisses to each cheek when shaking hands. The number of kisses has significance; married women usually kiss twice, while single women kiss three times. Although men do not kiss each other during personal greetings, they do pat each other on the back. Business cards

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should be printed in English on one side and in Portuguese on the reverse side. Brazilians use the Continental style of eating. Visitors should remember to avoid eating with the hands and to keep both hands above the table while dining. In addition, one should drink from a cup or glass, not from a bottle or can. A tip of 10–15% is appropriate in a restaurant when a tip has not been added to the bill. Business gifts are appreciated but are not usually given at the first meeting. Mementos of the visitor's country are appropriate; inappropriate gifts include knives or anything sharp (suggests a desire to sever the relationship) and handkerchiefs (associated with funerals). Gifts are opened in the presence of the giver.

Canada

Social and business etiquette in Canada is similar to that of the United States, but Canadians are more conservative than people of the United States. As in the United States, a firm handshake accompanied by eye contact is the customary greeting when meeting someone; the handshake is repeated on departure. Greeting behavior among French speakers will usually include cheek kissing. Both the American and Continental styles of eating are common. Do not eat food while walking on the street; always sit down or stand while consuming food. You may refuse food offered without causing offense. Most business entertaining is done in restaurants, and tipping is about the same as in the United States. Visitors to Canada should remember that in addition to the Goods and Services Tax that is included on the bill, they are expected to tip an additional 15–20%. Because of the strong French influence in certain parts of Canada, French cuisine is offered in many restaurants. If invited to someone's home, take flowers (but not white lilies, as they are associated with funerals) to the hostess; chocolates are also appropriate. Gifts are opened immediately in the presence of the giver (Axtell, 1993; Martin & Chaney, 2009, 2012; Powell, 2005).

China

Because greeting someone is a solemn occasion, the Chinese bow or nod without smiling. When greeting Westerners, however, they usually offer a handshake. Remember that rank is important in China, so the senior person should be acknowledged first. In establishing business relationships, dining plays an important role. Business entertaining is typically conducted in restaurants at lunch or dinner. Because seating etiquette is important, waiting for your Chinese host to indicate where you are to sit is recommended. Leaving a small amount on your plate is a good idea to indicate your satisfaction with the food. Although the Chinese do not tip, foreigners are expected to tip. A common practice when tipping restaurant servers or taxicab drivers is to give them a handful of change. Giving gifts is a common practice except at a first meeting. Expect the Chinese to decline a gift three times before they eventually accept it. The Chinese do not open gifts in the presence of the giver (neither should you when you are given a gift). Recommended gifts (wrapped in red) are pens of high quality or a paperweight. Gifts to avoid are clocks, white flowers, and handkerchiefs because of their association with death. In addition, knives and other cutlery should be avoided as they suggest a wish to sever ties (Martin & Chaney, 2009, 2012; Powell, 2005; Sabath, 2002).

Germany

When you greet people in Germany, remember to use last names and a firm handshake. Maintain eye contact during introductions. Status is recognized; men allow people of higher status or older women to precede them when entering a door or elevator. When dining in a restaurant, a service charge of 10–15% is generally added to the check. Although you do not need to leave

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an extra tip, it is customary to round up to the next large number. Tipping too much should be avoided as it is viewed as showing off. Try some German specialties: beers, sausages, and potato pancakes. Eating everything on your plate is considered polite. When invited to a German home, bring the hostess a gift of flowers (an odd number except 13 and no red roses). Gifts to your German host should be simple and rather inexpensive as Germans consider expensive gifts to be in bad taste. A gift of a good wine is also appreciated; however, do not give a gift of beer since the Germans are considered the world's beermeisters (Braganti & Devine, 1992; Powell, 2005; Sabath, 1999).

Japan

In Japan, the usual form of greeting is a bow rather than a handshake; however, many Japanese who regularly associate with persons of other cultures may use both a bow and a handshake. Follow the lead of your Japanese host. The exchange of business cards is common, so be sure you have a good supply. These should be printed on one side in English and the other side in Japanese. Remember to address your Japanese host by his last name; only family members and close friends use the first name. Most business entertaining is done in Japanese restaurants. Some Japanese specialties include *sake* (rice wine) and *sashimi* (sliced raw fish). Do not tip in restaurants; the waiter will return the money if you do. Although being invited to a Japanese home is not the norm, if invited, remember to remove your shoes at the entrance of the home. A box of candy, rather than flowers, is an appropriate gift for the hostess. Because social and business etiquette are very different in Japan, do a thorough study of the culture and its customs before you go (Axtell, 1993; Devine & Braganti, 1998; Martin & Chaney, 2009, 2012; Sabath, 2002).

A world traveler from Switzerland describes how he temporarily lost his fondness for eating fish while dining at a lavish Tokyo restaurant. After he had sampled numerous delicacies, the *pièce de résistance* was served: A live fish still flopping on the platter was brought to the table; the *maitre d'* then delicately sliced the live fish and served it to the guests. (Axtell, 1993)

Mexico

Shaking hands is the usual greeting in Mexico, and people also shake hands when saying good-bye. People who are friends will greet each other with an embrace or touch on the elbow. Kissing on the cheek is also common. When introduced to a woman, a man will bow slightly and will shake hands if the woman initiates it. Address the person by his or her last name, as first names are not used during initial meetings. Business cards are exchanged at a first meeting but remember to include the Spanish translation on your cards. Be sure to indicate your position with your company and your university degrees. Deference is shown to someone whose age, social status, or position warrants it. The altitude of Mexico City may affect your digestion, so eat lightly and carefully. Always order bottled water as tap water is not considered safe. Although Mexicans expect you to sample the fare, they will understand if you decline dishes such as *tripe* (stomach of sheep). Unlike many European cultures, Mexicans do not expect you to eat everything on your plate. You might want to sample such national dishes as *mole poblano de guajolote* (turkey in a sauce of spices, herbs, and chocolate), *quesadillas* (folded tortillas filled with cheese), and *frijoles refritos* (mashed and fried cooked beans). If invited to a Mexican home, send flowers ahead of time; avoid marigolds (used to decorate cemeteries) and

red flowers (used for casting spells). Appropriate gifts include U.S. cigarettes, a gold cigarette lighter, a gold pen, art books, or a bottle of scotch (Devine & Braganti, 2000; Martin & Chaney, 2009; Powell, 2005; Sabath, 2000).

The Netherlands

In the Netherlands, both men and women shake hands when greeting each other. The handshake is firm and accompanied by eye contact. Waving when greeting another person from a distance is acceptable, but shouting is considered impolite. Although men do not kiss each other as part of the greeting, women who are good friends may kiss on both cheeks. Business cards are typically exchanged at initial meetings. Because English is spoken by most Dutch businesspeople, business cards may be in English only. The Dutch expect you to clean your plate and to rest both wrists on the table while dining. Visitors will want to try some Dutch specialties, such as *erwtensoeep* (a thick pea soup) and *lamstongen met rozijnensaus* (lamb's tongue with a white wine sauce). Dining in restaurants is expensive, so you might want to try the numerous alternatives that are available: snack bars, cafes, street stalls, and restaurants that sell only pancakes. Since restaurants include a 10% service charge on the bill, you do not need to add an extra amount. However, adding 10% when the service is good is appreciated. When invited to your Dutch host's home, it is appropriate to bring flowers or to send them the following day. Business gifts should be given only after a relationship has been developed with your Dutch associate. Appropriate gifts include desk accessories or books (Braganti & Devine, 1992; *CultureGrams*, 2010; Martin & Chaney, 2012; Powell, 2005; Sabath, 1999).

Singapore

Greeting behavior in Singapore varies according to the culture, but most residents are now comfortable with shaking hands. Since Singaporean men are unsure about whether businesswomen shake hands, women should be prepared to initiate the handshake or to simply nod the head in response to being introduced. Following the lead of your Singaporean host is recommended when it comes to greeting behavior because of cultural differences in bowing, touching, and shaking hands. After introductions, business cards, which may be printed in English only, are commonly exchanged using both hands. Tipping in restaurants is usually 10–15%, which may be included in the bill. Taxi drivers and hotel personnel are not generally tipped unless some extra service is provided. Eating customs depend upon the culture, for example, Malays and Indians often sit on the floor while dining rather than eating at a table. Gift giving is as important in Singapore as it is in other countries of Asia. Appropriate gifts include brand-name items and gifts that are typical of your city or area of the country. Avoid gifts of scissors or knives (convey a desire to sever the relationship), clocks (bring bad luck), or flowers and handkerchiefs (have funereal connotations). Since numbers have significance to your Chinese and Indian business colleagues, give gifts in even numbers to those of Chinese descent and uneven numbers to Indians (signify good luck).

South Korea

In South Korea, the usual greeting between men is a bow, accompanied by a handshake. To show respect, the left hand is placed below the right forearm while shaking hands. Women do not shake hands as frequently as men. Following the handshake, business cards are exchanged between professionals during initial encounters; the cards are presented and received with

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both hands. Both age and social standing are taken into consideration when greeting someone. Because Koreans are proud of their cuisine, you will want to sample some of their spicy foods and such delicacies as *pulkogi* (strips of beef that are marinated and barbecued) as well as the alcoholic drink *soju*, which is frequently served with meals. Those who conduct business in South Korea should remember that meals are served and eaten, usually with periods of silence, before socializing begins. When invited to a Korean home, it is appropriate to bring a small gift, such as fruit, flowers, or candy. Business gifts, although not a necessity, are appreciated and should be made in the giver's country. Gifts should be of good quality, yet inexpensive; they are opened in private rather than in the presence of the giver (Bosrock, 1997a; *CultureGrams*, 2010; Martin & Chaney, 2012; Sabath, 2002).

United Kingdom (England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland)

A soft handshake accompanied by "How do you do?" is the common greeting in the United Kingdom. Although the typical U.S. greeting of "Hi" is acceptable in casual situations, it is too informal for business occasions. In addition, avoid saying "Have a nice day" when departing (the British interpret it as a command). As in the United States, first names are often used after knowing the person only a short time. When dining in various parts of the United Kingdom, you might want to try some of their specialties: crumpets, steak and kidney pie, or Scotch eggs, which are deep-fried hardboiled eggs with a coating of sausage and breadcrumbs. Pubs and restaurants, rather than private homes, are used for most business entertaining. Although restaurants typically add a service charge, you are expected to add an additional 10% when the service is good. When invited to dine in a British home, a flower bouquet (except for white lilies) is an appropriate gift for the hostess. A bottle of good wine is also appreciated (Axtell, 1993; Martin & Chaney, 2009, 2012; Powell, 2005; Sabath, 1999).

United States

Introductions are important to making a favorable initial impression in the United States. During introductions, it is important to mention first the name of the person having the highest rank; age and gender are no longer considerations in whose name should be mentioned first. Both men and women are expected to rise, smile, and shake hands when being introduced in business situations. (Women may choose to remain seated and refrain from shaking hands on social occasions.) The typical U.S. handshake is firm and brief; it lasts only a couple of seconds. Eye contact is expected when shaking hands. Business cards are exchanged on business occasions only when the parties plan to contact each other at a later time. There is no set ritual for the exchange of business cards. People of the United States use the American zigzag style of eating. Using good table manners is important. Refusing food offered is impolite; taking at least a small amount of food is expected. People usually leave some food on the plate to indicate they have had enough to eat. Tipping is expected; the amount to tip in restaurants ranges from 15 to 20%, depending upon the service and the restaurant. Gifts in the United States must be quite modest due to the legal limit of \$25 that can be spent on a business gift. Gifts to people of other countries should be U.S.-made; local crafts, Native American art, wines or liquors, and food items are appropriate choices.

A helpful rule to remember in most cultures is to follow the lead of the people in the other culture. If they shake hands, so do you. Eat what they eat and when they eat. If the other person gives you a gift, be prepared to reciprocate. Researching the country before you travel is always good advice.

Terms

Caste system	Etiquette	Shouting
Continental eating style	Flaming	Spamming
Dissing	Netiquette	U.S. eating style
	Protocol	

Exercise 1

Instructions: Encircle T for true or F for false.

1. T F In Japan, a business card should be presented with both hands.
 2. T F Throughout Latin America, the main meal of the day is in the evening.
 3. T F Flaming and dissing are terms associated with “netiquette.”
 4. T F Introductions are more formal in Germany than in the United States.
 5. T F Bolivians expect visitors to eat everything on their plate.
 6. T F Tipping is more common in the United States than in China and Japan.
 7. T F The practice of serving a glass of water with meals is universal.
 8. T F In China, the gift of a clock is considered a symbol of good luck.
 9. T F In Germany, business gifts are usually exchanged at the beginning of formal negotiations.
 10. T F When selecting travel attire, the main consideration is comfort.
-

Questions and Cases for Discussion

1. How do introductions vary between the United States and other cultures?
 2. Describe cultural variations in business card exchange.
 3. Explain class distinctions in the United States and India.
 4. How are gender and age related to position and status in the United States?
 5. Identify some guidelines for proper telephone etiquette.
 6. Explain the difference between the terms “flaming” and “shouting” in relation to netiquette.
 7. What are some advantages and disadvantages of using e-mail?
 8. Identify some cultural differences in dining practices.
 9. Explain the difference between the U.S. and Continental eating styles.
 10. What are some guidelines for tipping appropriately? How do tipping customs vary?
 11. What are some guidelines for effective business gift giving in the United States?
 12. What are some cultural differences in gift-giving practices? What gifts are considered appropriate for a person from the United States to give to someone in another culture?
 13. Identify some cultural taboos concerning giving flowers as gifts.
 14. Give some guidelines for airline travel attire and suggestions for proper behavior during the flight.
 15. What are some travel guidelines for international businesswomen?
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CASES

The following procedure is recommended for analyzing the cases: (a) read the case carefully paying attention to details, (b) read the questions at the end of the case, (c) reread the case,

taking notes on or highlighting the details needed for answering the questions, (d) identify relevant facts, underlying assumptions, and critical issues of the case, (e) list possible answers to the

questions, and (f) select the most logical response to the question. Your professor may ask that you submit answers to the case questions in writing.

Case 1

Mark was in charge of a negotiating team sent to Japan. On learning the importance of gift giving to a successful business relationship in this culture, prior to departure he asked his secretary to wrap these gifts: a clock with the company logo, a leather briefcase, a country ham, and a pen and pencil set marked "Made in Japan." His secretary wrapped the gifts attractively in bright red paper and with matching bows and mailed them to his Japanese hosts. What rules for appropriate gift giving in this culture have been followed? Which have been violated?

Case 2

A U.S. executive was invited to dine in the home of a Latin American businessman. The dinner invitation was for 9 P.M. The U.S. executive arrived promptly at 9 P.M. bearing a gift of an unwrapped bottle of Scotch for his host and a dozen yellow and white chrysanthemums for the businessman's wife. Discuss the appropriateness of the U.S. executive's behavior.

Case 3

Joe Anthony, a U.S. graduate student, was beginning a semester-long internship in Mexico City with an international health care products firm. After he had been there about a week, some male employees invited him out to a bar to sample the

local specialty, bull's testicles. Joe had heard about this practice considered a sign of young Mexican machismo (male power). The idea did not appeal to him because something he had eaten recently had made him queasy. What are Joe's options? What are the possible implications or consequences of each option? What would you do in such a situation?

Case 4

When Sara Canton boarded her flight to Barcelona in New York City, she was seated in the middle with an unkempt person who apparently had not bathed recently on one side and a crying baby on the other. The person in front of her immediately reclined his seat. Sara knew she would not be pleased making a seven-hour trip under these circumstances. What can Sara do to make the trip more bearable?

Case 5

A businessman from Singapore, upon visiting the United States for the first time, was unfamiliar with U.S. tipping customs. He could not understand the cool reception he received when he did not tip the taxi driver who took him to his Dallas hotel, the bellman who helped him with his luggage, the concierge who provided special services, or the server in the hotel restaurant. Explain what the visitor from Singapore should have known about U.S. tipping customs, including specific amounts and/or percentages, in each of these situations. Be prepared to cite specific books on etiquette that include U.S. tipping information.

Activities

1. Practice introducing your U.S. manager to each of the following:
 - a. An Italian manager, John Giovanni, with a college degree
 - b. Chung Lo Wang, a manager from China
 - c. Marco Comerlato Velasquez, a business associate from Brazil
 - d. Thomas Edward Peacock, a British associate who has been knighted
2. Role-play to show how a business card is presented to someone from Japan.
3. Review back issues of the *Wall Street Journal* or a news magazine such as *Time* and make a copy of an article related to a cultural faux pas committed by either a person from the United States when traveling abroad or someone from another culture when visiting the United States. Share your information with the class.

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4. Research the dining practices of such countries as Zimbabwe, Samoa, and Tanzania; write a one-page summary identifying major differences between dining practices in the United States and these countries.
5. Research the tipping practices of a European and an Asian country of your choice and make a comparison with tipping practices in the United States. Report your findings to the class.
6. Research the gift-giving practices of one of the following countries and make a brief report to the class: Japan, Taiwan, Egypt, Argentina, or Germany. Include appropriate and inappropriate gifts and other related information, such as gift presentation and reciprocation.

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Glossary

Caste system is the rigid system of class in India. The society is divided into castes where a person is determined to belong at birth. Each caste has its status, rights, and duties.

Continental eating style is a manner of eating in which the eater places the fork in the left hand and knife in the right, uses the knife to push food onto the back of the fork and then moves the food into the mouth with the tines of the fork down.

Dissing is a term meaning to speak ill of someone.

Etiquette refers to the manners and behavior considered acceptable in social and business situations.

Flaming refers to sending vicious, insulting messages via e-mail.

Netiquette refers to cyberspace or network etiquette.

Protocol refers to customs and regulations having to do with diplomatic etiquette and courtesies expected in official dealings with persons in various cultures.

Shouting is typing a message (via e-mail) in all capital letters.

Spamming refers to the cyberspace term for mass mailings of commercial advertisements or material cross-posted to numerous newsgroups.

U.S. eating style is a zigzag style of eating used by people in the United States: cutting the meat with the knife held in the right hand and the fork in the left, then placing the knife on the plate, shifting the fork to the right hand, and eating.

Answers to Exercises

True/False

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. T | 6. T |
| 2. F | 7. F |
| 3. T | 8. F |
| 4. T | 9. F |
| 5. T | 10. F |