





# CHINESE CULTURAL AWARENESS



Oct 2015



## CN versus AU - Societal Differences

Aspects		
<b>Ethnic Culture</b>	Centered around <b>“Relationship”</b>  “Reclusive” – each minding his/her own business (especially with “strangers” and people outside of the relationship network)	Centered around “individuals”
<b>Source of Trust</b>	Trust those around you  Don’t “lose face” and credibility by failing to live up to written or oral agreements	Trust the contract  Don't get into legal hassles by not fulfilling the agreement
<b>Business Culture</b>	Quite and reserved (Not fantastic communicators)	Outspoken (Eloquent; effective communicators)
<b>Dealing with Business Counterparts</b>	indirect; courteous; take things personally; long memory for both favours and humiliations	Direct; more matter-of-factly; memory for conflict superseded by business objective
<b>Ability to Make Immediate Response</b>	Weak	Strong

## CN versus AU - Value Differences

Aspects		
<b>Interpersonal</b>	"Relationship" comes first	"Economics" comes first
<b>On "Humility"</b>	"Humility" viewed as a virtue	"Humility" is a sign of weakness; there is every reason for the able to be proud
<b>What Commands Respect</b>	Respect for seniority, wisdom, ability	Respect for success, achievement, wealth
<b>On "Family"</b>	Children should learn to respect the elder, love the young, and rely on the "extended family"	Children should learn to be independent
<b>On "the Strong" and "the Weak"</b>	It is not righteous to bully	It is an honor to win; business is all a competition; it is only natural that the weak is preyed on by the strong
<b>Discipline</b> (in following procedures and schedules)	Strong	Depends on the individual
<b>Shame or Humiliation</b>	Long memory; need and urge to exonerate	Tends to be superseded by business priorities
<b>Priorities</b>	Mixed: business, individual, factional, nationalistic, and political	Almost strictly business



# Business Culture

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- Greeting is no different in China than it is in Australia. A normal handshake is appropriate, regardless of the age, seniority or sex of the person you are greeting.
- China's ethical system involves respect for superiors, duty to family, loyalty to friends, sincerity and courtesy.
- Age brings increased respect and status.
- Chinese lower their eyes slightly as a sign of respect.
- Staring may make Chinese uncomfortable.
- It is very important for Chinese people to "maintain face" in everything they do. Therefore, never insult or openly criticize someone in front of others.
- The relationship you develop with a person represents your relationship with his or her entire company.



# Seniority

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- Seniority is important in China.
- Entry order: The most senior person takes the lead and other visitors follow in descending order of seniority.
- Greeting and Introduction: The most senior person should always be greeted / introduced first followed by others in descending order of seniority.
- Seating: The most important person should be seated in the middle (opposite the host) then ranging down each side of the room in order of seniority, the second most important person will sit on the left hand side of the most senior person and the third most senior will sit on their right.
- Speaking: If two leaders representing groups of people meet in a larger setting, it is not uncommon for the two leaders to speak with the remainder being spectators (but it is appropriate for the leaders to call on other members of the group to make specific contributions).

# Business cards

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- Under all circumstances the business card should be handled with proper respect, so it's best not to write on it, fold it, throw it across the table, or stick it in your back pocket and sit on it.
- It is a sign of respect to hold the card and peruse it and, if appropriate, express your admiration.
- When you're meeting with a group of people it is acceptable to greet everyone first and only then proceed with the process of exchanging business cards.
- The business card is given and received using two hands with the Chinese characters side up.





# Entertainment

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- Dinner or karaoke are common after-hour kinds of entertainments.
- The Chinese are immensely proud of their food and it could cause offence if you turn something down that is being offered.
- Finishing a bowl or a plate can be interpreted as a sign that you'd like another serving and it's therefore not uncommon to leave food on the table at the end of a meal. The serving of fresh fruit (usually melon) is the sign that the meal is over and people usually leave fairly soon thereafter.
- Chinese banquets (dinners) have a clear beginning and a clear end and things don't drag on. The host of the dinner will indicate where they want their guests to sit. The senior representative will normally sit next to the host.



# Conversation

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- Many Chinese are somewhat more inhibited in sharing their views on political topics and are often more loyal to and respectful of institutions and the government than many Westerners are.
- Politically sensitive topics are best to be avoided as conversation topics.

# Names

- The family (surname) name in China is written first, followed by the given name, i.e. Yu Yang is Ms. Yu with Yu being the family name and Yang being the given name.
- Married women do not take on the family name of their husbands. The given name usually contains one or two Chinese characters. However some Chinese have adopted western names which will appear on their name cards as they would in the west, eg, Mandy Yu.





# Common Chinese Words

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- Hello : Ni Hao (Knee How)
- Goodbye : Zai Jian (Zy Ge-an)
- Thank you : Xi Xi (Sher Sher)
- The Chinese whilst appreciating their guests can not speak Chinese will appreciate the effort to greet and bid farewell in Chinese.

# DOs and DON'Ts

DOs	DON'Ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be aware of all favors done for you and prepare to respond in kind. In China, business relationships are personal relationships; establish a trusting personal relationship that demonstrates your respect.</li> <li>• Business cards are important, especially in Chinese. Always present your business card with both hands</li> <li>• Provide a gift as a sign of friendship; gifts are provided after the meeting and before leaving; using two hands to give and receive the gifts; the most senior guest will receive a more expensive gift than the others</li> <li>• Speak slowly and if needed repeat the comments.</li> <li>• Interpreter is important and common; each party normally has its own interpreter; interpreters usually sit behind their own speakers respectively. When using an interpreter, break the sentences up and stop frequently to allow the interpreter to interpret.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid unintentional criticism of others.</li> <li>• Don't poke fun at someone, even if in fun.</li> <li>• Don't be put off by the use of mobile phones in meetings, it is common for Chinese to leave their phones on and take incoming calls and send text messages.</li> <li>• Do not open gifts in front of your hosts.</li> <li>• When possible – do not allow a very junior staff to attend an older client</li> <li>• Don't mention the word "Death"</li> <li>• Don't wave at clients with upturned hand/fingers</li> <li>• Don't be too friendly to the opposite sex especially towards your client's spouse               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- no hugging</li> <li>- no kissing</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

# DOs and DON'Ts

DOs	DON'Ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Always allow the guest to walk ahead of you</li><li>• Become their friend<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- be prepared to offer service beyond “job description”</li></ul></li><li>• Be patience for results<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- it may take a while before you see any results!</li></ul></li><li>• Be modest and practical</li><li>• Focus on “Relationship” – not immediate business results</li><li>• Be respectful all the time</li><li>• Be prepared for negotiation</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Don't ask direct questions about their financial affairs and wealth until the relationship has been solidified.</li><li>• Don't worry if they are not looking at you when they speak – steady eye contact can be viewed as inappropriate and a gesture of challenge or defiance</li><li>• Never give the following gifts:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Clock</li><li>- Colour – white or black</li><li>- Straw products</li><li>- Recycled paper cards</li></ul></li><li>• Don't discuss fees before the relationship has been established</li></ul>



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