

EXTERNAL ELEMENTS OF INTERCULTURAL MANAGEMENT

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Abstract: *Because nowadays we attach a great importance to our look, this article wants to highlight certain aspects of intercultural management that are external to us, the personal label with which we "come into contact with the whole world" and also this article gives some suggestions that I want to consider for business success. As speakers of a language, we are both "producers" and "consumers" of it. In a sense, this is also the case for the dress code, the "language" of clothing: we dress in a certain way and this send messages to others; We perceive how others are dressed and so we receive messages from them. But there is no difference: we are not the ones who produce the signs. Beyond fashion, myths and mores, clothing, accessories, gesture, face expression, posture and body lines are the first elements that give visual identity to any person. In the business environment, as in the world of fashion, immediate visual identity is the one that generates the first impression.*

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JEL Classification Codes: M14.

1. INTRODUCTION

What we see below, wants to look at our external aspects, such as time, clothing, gifts that we give in the professional environment and business cards, which, in my opinion, every person is a "business card" after the way they present them in front of others. The definition of punctuality varies from culture to culture. The cultural priority of time has close links to another priority: relationship versus results. When people are important and the nurturing of relationship matters, the time necessary for those activities is flexible.

2. CHRONEMICS – THE STUDY OF TIME

What does it mean to be "on time"? The definition of punctuality varies from culture to culture. The cultural priority of time has close links to another priority: relationship versus results. When people are important and the nurturing of relationship matters, the time necessary for those activities is flexible.

You might have an appointment in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia at 10 a.m. and you might be the second appointment on the person's agenda, and you might still be waiting at 11 a.m. Everybody is so important that no meeting can be rushed for the sake of a schedule that is imposed

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arbitrarily. In Buenos Aires/Argentina, traffic snarls often delay people from arriving on time at meetings, and although an apology is expected, lateness is not considered an insult. Both Saudi Arabians and Argentinians have strong orientations towards building relationships in order to do business effectively.

In results-oriented cultures, adherence to schedules is much more important. In Israel, for example, promptness is a basic courtesy as well as an indication of seriousness about work. In Russia, time is not related to cost or profits, and punctuality – being “on time” – is an alien concept: “Russians are notoriously not on time, and they think nothing of arriving long after the appointed hour, which is not considered as being late” (Richmond, 1992).

Time

Time orientation plays a big role in all cultural models. Hall differentiates between monochronic and polychronic time orientation. Monochronic time is linear and people are expected to arrive at work on time and work for a certain number of hours at certain activities. In polychronic cultures, time is an open-ended resource that is not to be constrained. Context sets the pace and rhythm, not the clock. Events take as long as they need to take; communication does not have to conclude according to the clock. Different activities have different clocks.

An overview can be found in the table 1, below:

Table 1. Monochronic versus polychronic time orientation

Monochronic people	Polychronic people
• do one thing at a time	• do many things at once
• concentrate on the job	• are highly distractible and subject to interruptions
• view time commitments as critical	• view time commitments as objectives
• are low context and need information	• are high context and already have information
• are committed to the job	• are committed to people and human relationships
• adhere rigidly to plans	• change plans often and easily
• emphasize promptness	• base promptness on the importance and significance of the relationship
• are accustomed to short- term relationships	• have a strong tendency to build lifetime relationships

Source: Hall, 1990

In cultures with a monochronic time orientation, time is linearly looked upon, which means that activities are scheduled in order to be managed successively and sequentially. In cultures with a polychronic time orientation, different time frames become indistinct. Time is not a linear but a circular concept, which means that several activities are run simultaneously. According to Hall, the United States and many Central European cultures (Germanic and Scandinavian cultures) are monochronic, whereas Latin American, Arabian and Mediterranean cultures can be considered as rather polychronic.

Information Flow

With his fourth dimension, Hall addresses the different speeds in which information is coded and decoded in communication situations. What is meant with the speed of the information flow in different cultures, (Hall, E. and Hall, M.R., 1990) expressed as:

“In the United States it is not too difficult to get to know people quickly in a relatively superficial way, which is all that most Americans want. Conversely, in Europe personal relationships and friendships are highly valued and tend to take a long time to solidify.”

Critical review of Hall's study

Hall raises no claim that his four dimensions cover all cultural differences. His cultural dimensions are rather to be understood as a general orientation. Often, Hall's work is only presented in a condensed form and occasionally, only one dimension, mainly context orientation is mentioned; sometimes his work is reduced to two dimensions, namely context and time (Kutschker and Schmid, 2002).

Hall himself points out that apart from cultural differences also individual ones exist. Moreover, the dimensions are not independent from one another. Thus, a low-context orientation often comes along not only with a polychronic time orientation but also with a preference for a quick information flow and a comparatively high significance of the personal space.

3. DRESS CODE

Business people must be particularly sensitive to dress in other cultures because of the negative image tourists have created. Westerners often assume that their leisure dress is appropriated everywhere. The standard business dress around the world is the suit, shirt, and tie for men, and some sort of suit or dress for women. That sounds easy, yet there are enough variations indicating authority that businesspeople must be aware of local customs and tradition. Some examples how to dress correctly are to be found in the following box.

Dress Code around the world – some examples

Argentina:

- Dress is very important for making a good impression. Your entire wardrobe will be scrutinized.
- While Argentines are more in touch with European clothing styles than many Latin Americans, they tend towards the modest and the subdued. The provocative clothing in Brazil, for example, is rarely seen in Argentina.
- Business dress is fairly conservative: dark suits and ties for men; white blouses and dark skirts for women.
- Both men and women wear pants as casual wear. If you are meeting business associates (outdoor barbecues, called asado, are popular), avoid jeans and wear a jacket or blazer. Women should not wear shorts, except when invited to a swimming pool.

(Morrison et al. 2006)

China:

- For business, men should wear conservative suits, shirts, and ties. Loud colors are not appropriate. Women should also wear conservative suits, with high-necked blouses, and low heels – their colors should be as neutral as possible.
- At formal occasions, no high heels or evening gowns are necessary for women unless the event is a formal reception given by a foreign diplomat. Men may wear suits and ties.

France:

- The French are very aware of the dress. Be conservative and invest in well-made clothes and shoes.
- Men should wear dark suits and the women should also wear conservative suits.

India:

- For business dress, men should wear a suit and tie, although the jacket may be removed in the summer. Businesswomen should wear conservative dresses or pantsuits.
- For casual wear, short-sleeved shirts and long trousers are preferred for men. Women must keep their upper arms, chest, back, and legs covered at all times.
- Note that wearing leather (including belts, handbags, or purses) may be considered offensive, especially in temples. Hindus revere cows, and do not use leather products.

Saudi Arabia:

- Foreigners should wear Western clothes that approach the modesty of Saudi dress. Despite the heat of the desert, most of the body must remain covered.
- Men should wear long trousers and a shirt, preferably long-sleeved. A jacket and tie are usually required for business meetings. Keep shirts buttoned up to the collarbone. Saudi law prohibits the wearing of neck jewelry by men, and Westerners have been arrested for violating such rules.
- Women must wear modest clothing. The neckline should be high, and the sleeves should come to at least the elbows. Hemlines should be well below the knee, if not ankle-length. The overall effect should be one of baggy concealment; a full-length outfit that is tight and revealing is not acceptable. Therefore, pants or pantsuits are not recommended. While a hat or scarf is not always required, it is wise to keep a scarf at hand (Borden, 1994).

For example in large companies - banking, consulting or IT, the code training is quite strict and sober, given that employees are permanently in touch with different clients and, at the same time, because each employee is the brand of the company.

A woman can wear:

The standard business deal for women involves wearing a jacket - both in combination with a simple skirt and a sarafan dress, or a pair of matching pants with a pair of cloth trousers. It's not always necessary to wear the shirt, so sometimes you can choose a decent shirt (without inscriptions, logos or shimmering colors) or a simple, knitted or cotton blouse.

At the accessories section, you should be guided by the "less is more" principle, so you choose at most a ring, besides the wedding ring, a thin bracelet, small earrings and a sober chain, all of them quality and less ostentatious. A business person can give a great importance to the gift: make sure it matches the rest of the dress, be in a neutral color (brown, beige, gray or black) and quality. Under no circumstances can you present yourself with rucksack bags in shimmering colors with patterns or inscriptions.

If it comes to shoes, the heels must have a maximum of 5-6 cm, boots are not accepted (than those with a very simple and not very long pattern), so do not accept any sports shoes, sandals, as they do not Give the outfit a professional look.

A man can wear:

Here things are not so complicated, but that does not mean that the way you decide to get dressed at work as a man should be looked at in a simplistic manner. It is true that you do not have as many alternatives as a woman, and that's because a suit is holy in a man's wardrobe and always unbeatable compared to other outfits. On the other hand, a suit does not have to become a reason for your office. There are alternatives to this piece of clothing. But let's start with a classic piece: the costume. If the job forces you to go dressed daily, then you must have at least one for each season. The predominant colors for men's outfits are black and marine blue, but we can sometimes include brown or dark gray. The advantage of the costume is that it can be a versatile dress item. You can wear both your pants at the costume in combination with a sweater and the

jacket combined with a pair of jeans, but very simple. Also, sometimes you can give up the jacket, especially in the summer. Caution: It is not recommended to match a suit with a short-sleeved shirt, not even in the summer. In an elegant combination they have no place, given the informal character they denote.

Special attention should be paid to the fabric of the shirt: always choose quality materials such as cotton or silk. As far as colors are concerned, it is preferable to go in open colors, such as white or blue. If we talk about ties, they may or may not be optional, depending on how comfortable you feel about it and the activities you carry out daily. It is advisable to opt for a tie especially when attending important business meetings, discussions and meetings with superiors or other special events in the company. Otherwise, a man can wear the costume without the care of a tie and he will look as elegant.

The overall message is clear: you have to show respect and sincerity by the way you dress and by respecting certain rules of appearance of the host culture. That does not mean you have to adopt your clothes to the customs of the host culture. Keep in mind that you are a representative of your country and the way you are dressed is based upon your own point of view as a business man or a business woman.

In a company where several nationalities work, there is no dress code for each nationality, but there can be a dress code for each company or department.

One such example is the Romanian IT Outsourcing Outsourcing Company, which for two years has developed a new organizational culture (implemented since autumn last year), which involves the introduction of the game into the workplace and through which all employees are "enrolled" in a team called the Star Team. Thus, in this new formula, employees also have dress code rules and the tunics they wear at work are marked by different colors: if field managers (including those who work at a distance) have navy blue tunics, those in the department Research and development have gray tunics, while bosses - the top management team - have tunics of brick color. In addition, they receive 'grades' or 'medals' depending on their performance.

Arab clothing, especially feminine, has provoked many controversies over time in the West. France is the country that has also initiated a bill banning women from the famous wave. What Westerners do not understand, however, is that people raised in Islamic religion do not look at this way of dressing you as tragically. Women are not disturbed either by the long veil that covers their entire body, nor by the wave that has to cover their hair. According to the Koran, the beauty of the woman must come from within, humility, faith and politeness being qualities more important than physical ones. Besides, the Muslim woman has to wear covers only when it comes out in public, so as not to see the shapes and the hair by strangers, and there is no obligation in the family to wear these pieces of clothing.

Arab clothing, both feminine and masculine, differs from state to state. It is important to note that there are more modern and more permissive Arab states and states extremely entrenched in religion, where the woman outside the wave and abaya also wears a full face mask, made of textile or even metallic, in order not to let his physical traits are not known at all. Such a state, extremely conservative, is Saudi Arabia. Today, however, the young women have modernized their clothing, the material from which the garments are made, not just cotton or flax, but also various silks, brocades or other fine materials adorned with expensive stones. The same thing happens with the men's clothing, slightly modified, with embroidery, stones or other modern fireworks.

Women's clothing is also different depending on nationality. In the Gulf countries women wear abaya and black shayla. In other countries like Egypt, Morocco, Lebanon or Jordan, the clothes are more colorful and embroidered. The wave is of several kinds and can also be

captured in several ways. Thus, Shayla is the dark, rectangular, medium-length wave that covers the hair and neck. It is worn by women in most of the Persian Gulf countries. Hijab is the simple, square, long to shoulder tress that covers the hair and neck. Khimar is the long wave that covers the hair, neck and shoulders and can reach to the waist or knee. Al-amira consists of two pieces, namely a headband and a scarf that is placed over the bonnet to cover not only the head but also the neck. This type of wave is mainly worn in Syria. Chador is a long wave that covers the entire body, not just the head. It is especially worn by women in Iran. Niqab is worn by conservative women, a wave that covers the whole face, leaving only the eyes. Some women even cover their eye area with a transparent material. The most conservative and challenged wave is Burqa. This is a large piece of cloth covering the woman from head to toe, including face and eyes. In the area of the eye, the canvas is slightly perforated so that the woman can see but not be seen. Both niqab and burqa are commonly found in women's clothing in Saudi Arabia, the country most strongly anchored in Islamic customs, misunderstood, or Afghanistan.

On the other hand, women who leave their eyes and hands on sight feel the need to remove these parts of the body as much as possible. Thus, the eyes are embellished with stunning makeup with kajal and the hands are decorated with henna tattoos. Henna tattoos have become a trend in Arab countries, simple tattoos being replaced by tattoos plus various applied crystals or gold tattooing tattoos. In fact, there are various events where henna is given great importance, such as "Henna Night", the evening before marriage when the girls and the bride are tattooing, this ritual assuming it is a luck. On special occasions, women give up their everyday clothes and dress up jalabiya, a dress made of selected materials in various colors, with stones and embroidery.

4. BUSINESS CARDS

To communicate well and build successful relationships with people from around the world, the right handling of business cards is part of any intercultural competence. One of the first official acts in being involved in international business is the exchange of business cards. Business cards have an important function.

Forms of Address: Chinese Names (Seligman, 1999)

The first thing you need to remember about Chinese names (as we can see in the figure 1) is that the surname comes first, not last. More than 95 percent of all Chinese surnames are one syllable – that is to say, one character – in length; some of the most common examples are Wang, Chen, Zhang, Li, Zhao, and Lin. For business purposes, it is traditionally acceptable to call a Chinese person by the surname, together with a title such as Mister or Miss or even Minister or Managing Director.



Figure 1. Forms of Address - Chinese Names

Thus Mr. Wang, Managing Director Liu, or Ms. Zhao would all be acceptable forms of address, and there is no problem with mixing an English title and a Chinese surname in just that order (Seligman, 1999).

This can be best demonstrated by the example of Japan. Like other countries of the world, Japan has its own business customs and culture. If someone fails to adhere to these traditions, the individual runs the risk of being perceived as ineffective or uncaring. The exchange of business cards is an integral part of Japanese business etiquette, and Japanese businesspeople exchange these cards when meeting someone for the first time. Additionally, those who are most likely to interface with non-Japanese are supplied with business cards printed in Japanese on one side and a foreign language, usually English, on the reverse side. This is aimed at enhancing recognition and pronunciation of Japanese names, which are often unfamiliar to foreign businesspeople. Conversely, it is advisable for foreign business people to carry and exchange with their Japanese counterparts a similar type of card printed in Japanese and in their native language. These cards can often be obtained through business centers in major hotels. Of course, this also applies to other countries and an example of a bilingual business card from Vietnam can be found in the following.

A bilingual Vietnamese business card (Rothlauf, 1998)

Vietnamese names and forms of address

The full Vietnamese name (as we can see in the figure 2) is usually composed of two or three parts. In contrast to the European tradition, the surname comes first. As a middle name, “Thi” for a girl and “Van” for a boy are often used. For the actual first name, a careful selection takes place, since it is common belief that especially the first name will influence the person’s life. Girls are often named after flowers or trees, e.g. Hong (rose) or Lien (lotus), while the boys’ names are often connected to certain characteristics, such as smart (Minh) or virtuous (Duc). (Rothlauf, 1998).

When exchanging business cards, one often asks for the other person’s name. This is also done to be able to address the counterpart correctly. If you have seen that the contact’s name is “Dr. Pham Van Pho” and he holds the title “Director”, as you can see in this example, the correct form of address would be “Dr. Pho”. In general, people are addressed with their title and their first name, or only with their title (“Thank you, Director”).

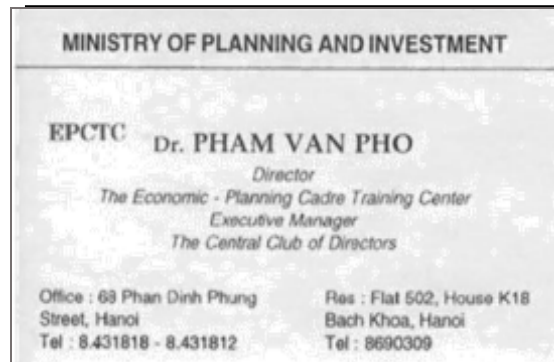


Figure 2. Forms of Address - Vietnamese names

As far as the formal description of the visitor's current position within a company is concerned, there are some particularities one should keep in mind. As an example, we suppose that you are a Marketing Director in your home country and you are allowed to sign contracts. The counterpart in Japan is on the same level and is called Kacho, but without any competence to give you all the necessary information for a final deal. Only for this purpose, one should get promoted, for example to an Executive Managing Director in order to meet somebody who has the relevant information and the support from the top management. We can see in the table below the titles and positions in Japanese companies.

Table 2. Titles and positions in Japanese companies

Japanese titles	English translation
Kaicho	Chairman
Shacho	President
Fuku Shacho	Vice-President
Senmu Torishimariyaku	Senior Executive Managing Director
Jomu Torishimariyaku	Executive Managing Director
Torishimariyaku	Director
Bucho	General Manager
Bucho Dairi	Deputy General Manager
Kacho	Manager
Kacha Dairi	Assistant Manager
Kakaricho	Chief

(Source: *Kaigaishijo Hakusho*, 1975)

When receiving a card, it is considered common courtesy to offer one in return. In fact, not returning a card might convey the impression that the manager is not committed to a meaningful business relationship in the future.

Business cards should be presented and received with both hands. When presenting one's card, the presenter's name should be facing the person who is receiving the card so the receiver can easily read it. When receiving a business card, it should be handled with care and if the receiver is sitting at a conference or other type of table, the card should be placed in front of the individual for the duration of the meeting. It is considered rude to put a prospective business partner's card in one's pocket before sitting down to discuss business matters. In order to avoid a certain kind of embarrassment, you should have a sufficient number of business cards at hand, respectively in your hotel.

Business cards are a great deal to us, and we need to take into account some basic rules when we decide to design them, whether we choose a professional for this task, or we deal with it alone.

Here are just 5 rules that you should not neglect:

1. Business cards must include all the necessary information. Do not just include classic elements such as names, contact details, but also a motto that will represent your company or you as a freelancer. This will help the recipient to remember who you are and to make an impression about your work and the quality of the services you provide.

2. Visiting cards shall in no case be crowded. Avoid uploading your business cards with too much information and keep a font size that will benefit you in terms of business card space.

3. Business cards can become very tiring at first impression if you use more than two fonts. Keep simplicity in designing business cards and avoid using too many colors.

4. A big mistake is to keep business cards that are out of date. Always try to update your business cards for a correct impression. Many of us have seen business cards with small corrections for the phone number or for another detail, and this never says that the person in question denotes professionalism but negligence, indifference.

5. Business cards must use quality paper. More recently, a lot of work has been done on designing business cards on plastic or even on metal. Try to combine the information you provide and the profile of the company you represent with the right design to get the perfect contour on the right material.

For example, a plastics company should design their business cards for its plastic representatives. This choice says a lot about the company itself.

5. GIFTS

Arab Business Culture (Jehad Al-Omari, 2008)

As business is personal, exchanging favors is very common in the Arab world. There is no stigma or sense of shame attached to the giving and receiving of favors. So you should neither be embarrassed to ask for a favor, nor reluctant to grant one when asked. This is especially true for small favors: for example, arranging to visit your host's son who is studying in the West; sending medicine to his sick mother; arranging to meet a friend at the airport. These would be standard favors that would not cost much financially, nor interfere with general moral codes (Simple Guide to the Arab Way: Practical tips on Arab culture, 2003, p. 22).

In cultures where business is personal, gift-giving and exchanging favors is a universal way to please someone. However, a lot of misunderstandings can occur in this context if one is not fully aware about the right or wrong doing. The following example may underline what can happen if such a misinterpretation takes place (Martin & Nakayama, 2010, p. 279):

“One colleague of mine, Nishehs, once tried to impress our boss, Joe. Nishehs brought a well-wrapped gift to Joe and he was pleased as he received the gift, but his smile faded away quickly

right after he opened the gift. Joe questioned Nishehs angrily, “Why is it green?” Shocked and speechless, Nishehs murmured, “What ‘s wrong with a green hat?”

The misunderstanding resulted from the cultural differences between them. Nishehs is an Indian, whereas Joe is Chinese. For the Chinese, a green hat means one’s wife is having an affair.

Gifts in China (Seligman, 1999)

Because gift-giving is an area in which common practice departs from the rules, it’s hard to be categorical in giving advice on how best to proceed. The most conservative approach remains the traditional one: a single large gift for the whole group, presented to the leader either during a meeting or a banquet. On the more reckless end of the spectrum would be a very valuable gift presented in private to a powerful individual; the chances of this being construed as bribery if discovered are great.

There are a lot of questions that have to be answered (Seligman, 1999):

- Which colors should be avoided and which colors are associated with positive feelings?
- When has the right time come to hand over gifts and to whom first?
- Who starts with the exchange of gifts?
- Which kind of gifts are prohibited?
- What is the role of women in this context?
- Is there a difference between a business and a private invitation?
- What is the right value of a gift?
- Does the body language play a role?
- What about imitation as a gift?
- Is bribery a topic in this context?
- Who is receiving the gift? A person or a group? What is the status of the receiver(s)?
- What types of gifts are acceptable or unacceptable?
- What is the protocol associated with gift giving and receiving?
- Should gifts be reciprocated?

People of all cultures like to be surprised with a gift that fits into the given context. Here, your intercultural skills are required. The best intercultural recommendation one can give is to take a look at books that specifically deal with those questions.

In many countries 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 countries, gift giving and its etiquette have a central place in business practices. In order to highlight some of the different aspects of cross cultural gift giving etiquette a few examples shall be presented.

Some examples of Gifts all around the world

Gift Giving Etiquette in China

- It is the proper etiquette for gifts to be exchanged for celebrations, as thanks for assistance and even as a sweetener for future favors.
- It is however important not to give gifts in the absence of a good reason or a witness.
- When the Chinese want to buy gifts it is not uncommon for them to ask what you would like.
- It would be wise to demonstrate an appreciation of Chinese culture by asking for items such as ink paintings or tea.

- Business gifts are always reciprocated. Not to do so is bad etiquette.
- When giving gifts do not give cash.
- Do not be too frugal with your choice of gift otherwise you will be seen as an 'iron rooster', i.e. getting a good gift out of you is like getting a feather out of an iron rooster.
- Depending on the item, avoid giving one of something. Chinese philosophy stresses harmony and balance, so give in pairs.

Gift Giving Etiquette Japan

- Gift-giving is a central part of Japanese business etiquette.
- Bring a range of gifts for your trip so if you are presented with a gift you will be able to reciprocate.
- The emphasis in Japanese business culture is on the act of gift-giving not the gift itself.
- Expensive gifts are common.
- The best time to present a gift is at the end of your visit.
- A gift for an individual should be given in private.
- If you are presenting a gift to a group of people have them all present.
- The correct etiquette is to present/receive gifts with both hands.
- Before accepting a gift it is polite to refuse at least once or twice before accepting.
- Giving four or nine of anything is considered unlucky. Give in pairs if possible.

Gift Giving Etiquette in Saudi Arabia

- Gifts should only be given to the most intimate of friends.
- Gifts should be of the highest quality.
- Never buy gold or silk as a present for men.
- Silver is acceptable.
- Always give/receive gifts with the right hand.
- Saudis enjoy wearing scent – 'itr'. The most popular is 'oud' which can cost as much as £1000 an ounce.
- It is not bad etiquette to open gifts when received.

Finland:

- A bottle of wine is a good token of appreciation when you go to a Finnish home (along with the flowers for the hostess).
- Business gifts should not be too extravagant or too skimpy, and should not be given at a first meeting.
- A personalized gift, such as a book on a topic of interest to your client, is appreciated.
- Fiskars scissors (with the orange handles) are the most commonly imitated Finnish product. Avoid giving any type of gift that may compete with them.

Indonesia:

- Gift giving is a traditional part of Indonesian culture. Although gifts may be small, they are given often.
- You will give gifts to celebrate an occasion, when you return from a trip, when you are invited to an Indonesian home, when a visitor comes to your office or workplace, and in return for services rendered.
- It is not the custom to unwrap a gift in presence of the giver. To do so would suggest that the recipient is greedy and impatient.

- Since pork and alcohol are prohibited to observing Muslims, do not give them as gifts to Indonesians. Other foods make good gifts, although meat products must be halal (the Muslim equivalent of kosher).
- Muslim Indonesians consider dogs unclean. Do not give toy dogs or gifts with pictures of dogs.

Israel:

- Avoid giving a gift until you know something about the person you are giving it to. Especially with Orthodox Jews and Arabs, a gift must not violate one of the restrictions of their belief system.
- If you are invited to an Israeli home, bring a gift of flowers or candy. Be sure a gift of food is kosher if it is going to an Orthodox person.
- Make sure you give or receive gifts with the right hand, not with the left (although using both hands is acceptable).

Mexico:

- Giving gifts to executives in a business context is not required. However, small gifts, such as items with a company logo (for an initial visit) or a bottle of wine or scotch (on subsequent trips), are appreciated.
- When giving flowers, be aware that Mexican folklore maintains that yellow flowers represent death, red flowers cast spells, and white flowers lift spells.
- Secretaries do expect gifts. A government secretary who performs any service for you is given a token gift. For secretaries in the private sector, a more valuable (such as perfume or a scarf) should be given on a return visit. A businessman giving such a gift to a female secretary should say that the gift was sent by his wife. Avoid giving gifts made of silver; silver is associated with trinkets sold to tourists in Mexico.
- Gifts of knives should be avoided in Latin America, as they can symbolize the severing of friendship.

United States of America (Borden, 1994):

- Business gifts are discouraged by the law, which allows only a \$25 tax deduction on gifts.
- When you visit a home, it is not necessary to take a gift; however, it is always appreciated. You may take flowers, a plant, or a bottle of wine.
- If you wish to give flowers, have them sent ahead so as not to burden your hostess with taking care of them when you arrive.
- If you stay in a U.S. home for a few days, a gift is appropriated. You may also write a letter of thanks.

The above are a few of many examples of cross cultural differences in gift giving etiquette. It is advisable to try and ascertain some facts about the gift giving etiquette of any country you plan to visit on business. By doing so, you maximize the potential of your cross cultural encounter.

Who is the gift for? Giving gifts or hospitality to certain persons, for example public officials, is often construed as a facilitation payment and arouses suspicions. However, definitions of what constitutes a public official can vary. In many countries, it can be difficult to tell the difference between an employee in a state owned enterprise and a member of the government who is also working within the state owned company.

A principle sometimes applied to determine what is an appropriate level of gift giving or hospitality is that of reciprocity, ie if I accept an offer, am I able to offer the equivalent in value in return? For example: "If my supplier offers me tickets to the theatre, would I be able to reciprocate?" If the answer is "no", then it may be seen as an attempt to buy favour and it is advisable not to accept.

How can companies support staff? Many companies take a zero tolerance approach to gift and hospitality giving and receiving. However, this isn't always the most practical approach and can mean employees find themselves in awkward situations having to publically decline the gift or hospitality.

This is particularly true for employees of multinational companies operating in countries where gift giving is an important cultural tradition and instrumental in building professional relationships such as the giving of red envelopes for Chinese New Year. Some companies have opted not to implement a global blanket ban, but rather they have set out locally determined limits for the value of gifts and hospitality that may be given or received.

Additional policies might be put in place when it comes to public officials, such as lowering the value limit on gifts/hospitality or requiring employees to obtain management approval, regardless of the value.

Employees need guidance on the company's protocol on giving or accepting gifts or hospitality. This includes seeking approval from their line manager or someone more senior, recording it in a gifts and hospitality register. Sometimes gifts of a high value might be required be donated to charity or to the company. Gifts of high value can then be auctioned at the end of the year to raise funds for charity, for example.

Guidance is usually found in a company's code of ethics or gift and hospitality policy. This will outline the company's position on gifts and hospitality, what constitutes gift giving and hospitality and set out good practice for employees. A gifts and hospitality policy needs to be consistent with all other aspects of an organisation's ethics programme in encouraging high standards of honesty and integrity in decision-making and behaviour.

So, there's no need to be a Grinch. Communicate your gifts and hospitality policy to employees and others you do business with; encourage employees to consider the ethical implications before giving and receiving gifts; and offer additional support for those who work in cultures with different gift-giving norms.

This will save both sides embarrassment and, potentially, your organization's reputation.

6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

As time passes, we realize the importance of fashion style in building a career, in developing and thriving personal business. That's why, in this article, I've decided to describe as much as possible about how people who tend to have an enviable career or a successful business should wear.

Business style grew in the '80s as women became promoted to the most important positions within companies. At that time, the dress-for-success, which consisted of a two-piece suit consisting of a jacket and trousers (with a high waist, with a stripe or pendant), or a straight-to-knee or Combined with a simple blazer. Whether they were jackets, blazers or shirts, they all had tall collars and shoulders, precisely because of the desire to equate the man, both in terms of clothing and profession.

At present, it would be a good idea to choose the clothes you want to wear at the workplace to be aware that you are dressing for the job you want. In this context, do not forget that the field in which you operate will have an important say in the dress-code you have

adopted. Therefore time (organizing), dress code and our behavior is the “key of success” of all of us.

Fashion is constantly reinventing, but, as Coco Chanel herself says, "fashion disappears, but style is eternal."

Our pursuits are a form of dialogue with a strong social and professional impact. The accessories we choose to wear, assorted with the clothes for which we opt, hairstyle and makeup all have their role in telling those around us essential things about us.

First impression in the business environment

Intended to differentiate status in society, fashion is an important tool for building an image that reflects the reality as faithfully as possible. That is why business women understand the importance of the image in society, perceive the rigors of business clothing and adapt them to their style in a harmonious way.

The first impression always counts, but it is even more relevant in the business environment. Thus, the way we choose to dress speaks for us just before we start a conversation, being also a mirror of our own personality.

Ideal clothing combinations

The most varied clothing combinations offer infinite possibilities of displaying a new outfit every day, but for a business woman, jacket and skirt suits or jackets and pants in neutral colors, white shirt, uncut shoes and a reasonable hat (Or tall, as long as it is comfortable) and a bag whose proportions are consistent with the rest of the outfit are indispensable.

The colors in the business outfit

Although neutral, business-friendly shades are considered to be black, navy, cream and gray, the evolution of fashion has prompted business women to focus more and more often on highlighting them, A spot of color. This color patch can be a colorful statement necklace, a scarf in open shades or sometimes even a shirt, jacket or skirt / pants in a more colorful color.

Because we are different, the company has encouraged the adaptation of business rigor so that the style of each one puts its mark on the outfits, while retaining the importance of the details that make the difference and the fact that certain rigor are sometimes retained without significant change.

Business is, above all, the existence of inter-human relationships, and they are based on trust developed over time, also taking into account a certain dress code appropriate to a fairly formal environment.

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