

Cross-Culture Cafe

FRENCH BUSINESS ETIQUETTE

www.crossculturecafe.com



READ



CONNECT



AUDIO



WATCH



DISCUSS



APPLY

CONNECT



WHAT COMES TO MIND WHEN YOU THINK OF FRANCE?

SHARE SOME THINGS YOU KNOW OR HAVE HEARD ABOUT FRANCE OR THE FRENCH.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UVZzydTzeyw>

Do you think stereotypes are always true?

What did you learn about France from this short video clip?

AFTER THIS TRAINING, YOU WILL...



be more aware of cultural differences between the French culture and your own;



be better prepared for business travels and meetings with French business partners.



use vocabulary to describe (French) culture;



VOCABULARY



MATCH THE VOCABULARY TO THE CORRECT DEFINITIONS.

cuisine

the golden rule

attire

chic

cooking; culinary art; kitchen

elegantly and stylishly fashionable

a basic principle that should be followed to ensure success in general or in a particular activity

clothes, especially fine or formal ones



VOCABULARY



MATCH THE VOCABULARY TO THE CORRECT DEFINITIONS.

accessories

distinction

propriety

courtesy

condition of being different; difference

the details or rules of behavior conventionally considered to be correct

politeness

an article or set of articles of dress, as gloves, earrings, or a scarf, that adds completeness, convenience, attractiveness to one's basic outfit.



APPLY



————— FILL IN THE BLANKS WITH THE CORRECT WORDS FROM THE VOCABULARY. —————

- This restaurant is famous for its excellent _____.
- What has happened to common _____ and using words that convey respect and gratitude?
- One of _____ in this class is punctuality.
- Every girl wants to be pretty and _____ especially when Prince Charming comes forth.
- Some classic fashion _____ include jewelry, bags and scarves.
- It's easy to make the _____ between a good speech and a bad speech.



AUDIO



DO AS THE FRENCH DO

LISTEN TO TWO AUDIOS ON A CHINESE BUSINESS MAN MEETING MADAME MARTIN IN FRANCE FOR THE FIRST TIME. ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

1. Did the first business meeting go well? Why or why not?
2. What faux pas do you think Mr. Tao made in the first scenario?
3. What did Mr. Tao want to do to please Emma but which she did not take so well?
4. Name some traits that describe the French business culture.
5. What are 'safe' topics to talk about in French culture? What things should be avoided?

What are some differences between your business culture and the French business culture?



READ



FRENCH CULTURE

READ THE FOLLOWING SHORT ARTICLES ON FRENCH CULTURE AND SOCIETY AND MATCH THE HEADINGS TO THE PARAGRAPHS. EXPLAIN THE UNDERLINED PHRASES.

Conversation

Business Negotiations

Business Culture

Workday

In French business culture people prefer to keep their professional life and family life very much separate. This helps to maintain a consistent structure of formality in the workplace. When you are engaged in small talk at the beginning of a meeting or a networking event, it is in your favour to keep the topic of discussion purely professional and avoid questions about the other person's personal life, family or even what they did on the weekend.

It is common for French people to ask a lot of questions and to interrupt somebody before having finished their argument. It is a common habit which signifies interest in the speaker and in the discussion. Welcome topics of conversation include praising French cuisine, art, music and philosophy. A golden rule of French conversation is don't talk about things you know little about. Be prepared to answer questions about your country, especially regarding history and politics.



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French business emphasizes courtesy and a fair degree of formality. Wait to be told where to sit. Business is conducted slowly. You will have to be patient and not appear ruffled by the strict adherence to protocol. Never attempt to be overly friendly. The French generally compartmentalize their business and personal lives. Discussions may be heated and intense. High-pressure sales tactics should be avoided. The French are more receptive to a logical presentation that explains the advantages of a proposal in full.



CONNECT



ARE YOU AN EXPERT ON FRENCH ETIQUETTE?

FINISH THE FOLLOWING SENTENCE STARTERS AND COMPARE YOUR SENTENCES TO THE ACTUAL ADVICE

1. Do not offer gifts ...

2. French business etiquette dictates....

3. Do not take a gift of wine,

4 Giving certain flowers is not recommended ...



CONNECT



ARE YOU AN EXPERT ON FRENCH ETIQUETTE?

FINISH THE FOLLOWING SENTENCE STARTERS AND COMPARE YOUR SENTENCES TO THE ACTUAL ADVICE.

1. Do not begin eating until...

2. If you expect to be delayed,...

3. Meetings are to discuss issues,...

4. If you do not speak French,...

How is French etiquette the same or different from your culture?



WATCH



FRENCH BUSINESS CULTURE

WATCH THE SHORT CLIP ON FRENCH BUSINESS ETIQUETTE.
ANSWER THE QUESTIONS ON THE NEXT SLIDE.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uUOEBO-KOWU> (Pls cut at 2:20)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=McZOF9pu_HU



DISCUSS



FRENCH BUSINESS CULTURE

- What's the best way to go about the language barrier?
- How do the French go about problem-solving?
- Is it important to have a relationship when doing business?
- Is it considered rude to express your opinion? Why or why not?
- What preparations do you need to make for a meeting in France?
- What is the recommended business attire?

What is the greatest difference to your culture?



DISCUSS



FRANCE VS. YOUR COUNTRY

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Create a short role-play on how you would introduce yourself to your new French colleagues.

Formality is highly regarded in France. You should always address your superiors and those you meet for the first time using 'Monsieur' or 'Madame'.

In a French business context, introductions are always made using both your first and last name. At times, you may hear others introduce themselves with their last name first, followed by their given name.



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French style handshakes are known to be brisk and light. You should expect a loose grip with only one or two up and down movements. If you're not familiar with this light style of handshake, you could easily walk away with the costly wrong impression that the other person is in a hurry to get away from you!

First impressions in France are heavily dependent on appearance. Quality business attire, jewelry and accessories will earn you valuable points in the office. Grooming is another important issue in France.

If you were working for a French company, which of these characteristics may seem challenging for you?

APPLY



QUIZ-TIME

BASED ON WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED TODAY, ARE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS TRUE OR FALSE?

true

false

Having a business lunch is formal and long.

It is acceptable to ask a lot of questions and to interrupt somebody who is speaking.

French people do not keep their professional life and family life separate.

Friends may greet each other by lightly kissing on the cheeks.



APPLY



QUIZ-TIME

BASED ON WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED TODAY, ARE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS TRUE OR FALSE?

true

false

Denim is acceptable for professional business meetings.

It is acceptable to call your boss by his/her first name.

Avoid exaggerated claims, as the French do not appreciate overstatement.

The French are very detailed in their meetings.



APPLY



WHAT HAPPENED THERE?

After being invited for a private dinner in Paris, a Chinese entrepreneur decided to reciprocate the gesture by offering two bouquets of chrysanthemums and bringing a best-of-breed wine from his own country. The meal didn't last long...

What went wrong?

It is only after the dinner the Chinese man found out that chrysanthemums are primarily used as funeral flowers in France. He also realized that he should have not brought wine, because his small gift implied that the host could not choose a good wine himself.



APPLY



FINAL TASK

Mr. Tao and Mr. Xang meet with Monsieur Richard Maurice and Madame Emma Martin to present their proposal for a joint venture between Investoment and Chan Ching. They are meeting each other for the first time in a restaurant. The goal of this meeting is to get acquainted with one another and to lay the groundwork for a joint venture between Investoment and Chan Ching.

In small groups, prepare a short role-play depicting this scenario, how you would handle it and what the outcome of this meeting might be .

Points to keep in mind are: introduction, conversation topics, formality, negotiation and attire. Don't forget what happened in the audio!



APPLY



SUMMARY

- Name three characteristics to describe French business culture.
- What are important dos and don'ts regarding French etiquette?
- How is French etiquette similar/different to your culture's etiquette?



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FOR MORE TRAINING MATERIALS, PLEASE SUBSCRIBE TO MY NEWSLETTER AND CHECK OUT
WWW.CROSSCULTURECAFE.COM FOR MORE CROSS-CULTURAL AND BUSINESS ENGLISH
TRAINING MATERIALS FOR ESL LEARNERS!

Slides 4+5

MATCH THE WORDS TO THE RIGHT DEFINITIONS.

cuisine	the golden rule	attire	chic
accessories	distinction	propriety	courtesy

- cooking; culinary art; kitchen
- elegantly and stylishly fashionable
- a basic principle that should be followed to ensure success in general or in a particular activity
- clothes, especially fine or formal ones
- the details or rules of behavior conventionally considered to be correct
- condition of being different; difference
- Politeness
- an article or set of articles of dress, as gloves, earrings, or a scarf, that adds completeness, convenience, attractiveness to one's basic outfit.

Slide 6

FILL IN THE BLANKS WITH THE CORRECT WORDS FROM THE VOCABULARY.

- This restaurant is famous for its excellent _____.
- What has happened to common _____ and using words that convey respect and gratitude?
- One of _____ in this class is punctuality.
- Every girl wants to be pretty and _____ especially when Prince Charming comes forth.
- Some classic fashion _____ include jewelry, bags and scarves.
- It's easy to make the _____ between a good speech and a bad speech.

Emma : Bonjour Monsieur Tao, welcome to France! I hope you will like this restaurant I chose for us to get to know one another. This restaurant is famous for its excellent cuisine.

Tao : Nice to meet you too, Emma. This place really looks nice. You also look very chic and pretty especially with your fashionable accessories.

Emma: Haha! You think you can win me with some flattering compliments? Not here in France Monsieur Tao and please call me Madame Martin.

Tao: Haha! Well, one of the golden rules in our culture is to bring gifts when we meet someone. This is why I brought you some flowers, these white lily and chrysanthemum flowers are the best ones I have picked from the shop.

Emma : Oh (not very happy), hmm... white lilies and chrysanthemum s?

Tao: Not just that! I also brought for you a personalized notebook from our company!

Emma: Oh, it has your company logo on it? Hmm.... I didn't know you give gifts at business meetings in China...

During the meal.

During the meal. ..

Tao: Madame Emma, I heard that a common courtesy in Europe is to bring wine for the hosts. This is why I brought some with me. It is the best wine from China! I hope that you like it.

Emma : Ce n'est pas possible! Monsieur Xiang! You see in our culture. It is the host that should choose the best wine for their guests and not the other way around. Do you think the wine I chose is not good enough for you? (A little bit upset)

Tao : (Confused), No, no, no. I think the wine is quite good. I just wanted to offer the best wine in our country.

Emma : (blew air through her mouth).

Tao: Anyway, what do you think of your role in the Middle East and how your president is handling the situation?

Emma: Monsieur! We do not talk about that. We enjoy the art of conversation and appreciate the arts, philosophy, French cuisine and music. So, tell me Monsieur Tao, what do you think of the French achievements in the world?

Tao: Hmm, ahh, I am not sure.

Emma: oh.... Well, anyway. I think it is time for me to be leaving now. I will be in touch with you again shortly. Au revoir Monsieur Tao.

Tao: Oh, so soon!?! Thank you, thank you for this wonderful meeting! It was a pleasure meeting you! Good bye!

Emma : Bonjour Monsieur Tao, welcome to France! I hope you had a good flight and that you are enjoying a comfortable stay in your hotel!

Tao : Bonjour Madame Maurice. Merci beaucoup for welcoming me! Comment ca va? Please accept my apologies, but I do not speak enough French. My French is very poor.

Emma : Oh, pas de problème! I thank you for your efforts. Let us just continue in English.

Xiang : Ok, I have prepared a short presentation for our meeting so that you can see that you won't regret doing business with us. I can assure you that we....

Emma : (interrupts) Well, please take a seat first and let me see for myself.

Tao : (Confused) oh, yes, ok, so as I mentioned, we are the best in our field and have already numerous clients in other European countries and....

Emma : (interrupts again) Monsieur Tao, France is not like other European countries and we do not like exaggerations. Please present me the details, facts and figures and then I will decide if this offer is of interest to us.

Tao: Of course, I understand. Let me show you the details.

At the end of the meeting:

Emma: Thank you Monsieur Tao, for showing me the figures. I would appreciate if you could send me the figures and charts again for last year's growth and if you could send a month by month listing so I know exactly what direction your company was heading.

Tao: So we will have another meeting?

Emma: Yes, I think several more meetings are necessary to work out the details and clear up all questions I have before we can enter into a partnership. Then we will need to spend some time on working out the specific details of the written agreement.

Tao: Oh, you are very detailed...! How about we already start with some sort of cooperation and add the written

Emma: (interrupts) Impossible! You know the French like everything in writing and would never proceed without the necessary details or let alone a contract!

Tao: Yes, yes, ok, ok, I understand.

Emma: Thank you Monsieur Tao. My secretary will be in touch with you shortly to arrange a new meeting. Au revoir!

Tao: Thank you. Au revoir!

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