

CONDUCTING BUSINESS WITH PEOPLE FROM



ARGENTINA



Greetings



Shake hands upon meeting someone and when you leave. Women and men may greet each other with a kiss on each cheek and also by shaking hands. Greet the most senior person present first to show respect.

Address people using their titles such as Doctor, Engineer, Professor, etc. to show respect. Sustained eye contact generally will be seen as demonstrating interest in what the person is saying. Smile.

Conversation



Argentines are very sociable and enjoy small talk. Appropriate topics may include sports (esp. futbol – soccer), the arts, restaurants, etc. Women may be asked indiscreet questions such as whether they are married and how much they weigh – these questions are deemed acceptable in Argentine culture. Avoid questions about family and personal life, politics and religion, and Indian heritage. Do not criticize Argentina's government, cities, sports teams, traditions or culture.

Gestures



Physical contact like arm touching or shoulder patting are common. Putting your hands on your hips indicates you are overly assertive; hitting your right fist on your left palm signifies that you believe what you are talking about is stupid. The OK sign and the thumbs up gesture are profane gestures in Argentina.

Good eye contact shows interest but women must avoid overdoing it – it may be misunderstood as a romantic interest.

Business Attire



Argentines value stylish, quality clothing. For business, men wear conservative dark suits; women wear conservative yet elegant business suits, skirts & blouses, or dresses. Do not wear shorts.

Hierarchy/Family



Senior executives and people with professional, financial or social status are always shown the most respect. Grandparents and senior citizens are also highly regarded. Family comes before business.

Manners



Traditionally, a solid social relationship must be created before business is transacted. Smiles and small talk are appropriate but avoid jokes.

Wait for someone to seat you. Persons of equal status should be seated across from one another. Be on time for business meetings but don't be surprised if you are kept waiting – bring along reading material or something productive to do.

It is rude to eat in public anywhere other than in a restaurant. Smoking is widespread. If you smoke, first offer a cigarette to those around you.

Cognitive Styles



Argentines are concerned about strong personal relationships, and are not generally open to new ideas. They look at problems from a subjective perspective, may be influenced by religion or politics, and are reluctant to disagree with those they like. Their decisions consider the impact upon the extended family and friends. Machismo is a prevalent social attitude that is increasingly being challenged.

Currency



Unit of currency is the peso and the coin is the centavo. 100 centavos = 1 peso.

Ethnic Make-Up



Of the countries in Latin America, Argentina is the most European, with large contingents of Italian, Yugoslavian, French, German, Irish and British calling Argentina home. 85% are of Spanish, Italian, Jewish, German or English descent; 15% are mestizo (Spanish & Indian), Indian and other minorities.

Language



Spanish (Castellan or Castilian – heavily influenced by Italian), Lunfardo (slang combination of Spanish, Italian, French & English), business language is English.

Religion



90% Roman Catholic