

CONDUCTING BUSINESS WITH PEOPLE FROM



CUBA



Greetings



Men greet with a handshake. They often shake hands with everyone when entering a home or greeting a group. Most women kiss each other once on the cheek and offer a verbal greeting. Kissing on the cheek is common between friends of the opposite sex. Cubans generally address each other with *compañero*, but visitors should use *Señor* or *Señora*. They may use a professional title without a surname.

Conversation



Cubans are often impassioned in their opinions and will argue their convictions with energy. Men especially like to debate the economy, international politics, and baseball. Cubans use hand gestures while talking to reinforce ideas and emotions, which makes conversation rather lively. People stand close while talking, often touching or tapping each other when making a point. It is not considered rude to interrupt a friend or acquaintance during conversation.

Gestures



One beckons by waving fingers inward with the palm down. Beckoning people with the palm up is a hostile gesture.

Business Attire



Tropical weight (the very lightest due to the extreme heat) suits or sport coats and trousers are expected of men for business dealings. Women may dress as they please; trousers are acceptable, though shorts are not.

Hierarchy/Family



Cubans maintain strong family ties. Cuban women are active participants in the labor force, represent the majority of the country's specialists, and hold leading government and administrative posts. However, traditional values maintain a strong influence on family relations, so women are also responsible for most household chores and childcare.

Manners



Courtesy is expected and hospitality should not be lavish, being offered to groups rather than individuals. Maintaining eye contact while talking is important, especially in a formal situation. Lack of eye contact may be considered a sign of insincerity or spite. You will be expected to be on time, but Cubans can be more relaxed about scheduling. It is best to have a prior appointment.

Cognitive Styles



Cubans are friendly, warm, communicative, enthusiastic, and hospitable. Cubans' sense of humor allows them to joke about almost anything, even hardships. While many Cubans love their country, economic hardships have created complex emotions about building a life amid Cuba's relative poverty. Cubans have a casual view of time. Punctuality and schedules are not stressed.

Currency

Unit of currency is the Cuban Peso and the coin is the centavo.

Ethnic Make-Up



Cubans of Spanish decent comprise about 66% of the population. 12% are of mixed heritage.

Language



The official language is Spanish.

Religion



Roman Catholic majority.