

CONDUCTING BUSINESS WITH PEOPLE FROM



PHILIPPINES



Greetings



Businessmen should expect to shake hands firmly with Filipino men. There is no physical contact between men and women in public. Men should wait for a Filipino woman to offer her hand. Among Filipinos, much can be communicated via eye contact and eyebrow movement. Filipinos may greet each other by making eye contact followed by a raising and lowering of the eyebrows. A traditional Filipino may demonstrate respect upon greeting an elder by placing the elder's hand or knuckles on his or her forehead.

Conversation



Speak in quiet, gentle tones. Filipinos revere harmony. The only time you are likely to hear loud Filipinos is when they are boisterously happy. Once you become accepted, Filipinos are very sociable and love to talk. Expect to be asked very personal questions. They will also ask how much you paid for something, out of concern that you may have been cheated.

Gestures



Most North American gestures are recognized. Since pointing can easily be mistaken for an insulting gesture, Filipinos rarely indicate objects or directions by pointing with their fingers. Indicating "two" with the fingers is done by holding up the ring and little finger, instead of the forefinger and middle finger. Staring has various nuances in the Philippines, most of them negative. Avoid staring at Filipinos. If you are stared at, look away. To stand tall with your hands on your hips is always interpreted as an aggressive posture. A Filipino may try to attract your attention by brushing a finger against your elbow. Beckoning someone with palm up and wagging one finger can be construed as an insult.

Business Attire



Business dress is often casual: dark trousers and white, short-sleeved shirts for men, sans tie; white long-sleeved blouses and skirts for women. Filipinos are very style-conscious.

Hierarchy/Family



The nuclear and extended family is the main source of support and stability. The whole family may be shamed by the action of one member. Filipinos are very status-conscious. This sometimes extends to issues of race – for example, the lighter the skin, the higher the status.

Manners



Be on time for all business appointments. Filipinos consider everyone worthy of respect. The more important you are, the more you are expected to be humble and generous. Celebrate the conclusion of a business deal by inviting Filipino partners to a restaurant. The person who issued the invitation always pays – unless it is a woman. Invite the wives of business partners to dinner, but not to a luncheon. Never decline an invitation to a social event. Remember to show respect for elders. Despite boisterous partying and hard drinking (by men), Filipinos find public drunkenness shameful. Do not get out of control.

***Fun Fact:** The United State chain Dunkin' Donuts is extremely popular and are served with pride in many homes.

Cognitive Styles



Social contacts are more important in the Philippines than business ones. The pace of business negotiations in the Philippines is much slower than in the United States. Filipinos must get to know you, and this involves asking about your family and personal background. Rather than presenting their own ideas, they more often react to the input of others. It is difficult for them to confront and to give an outright "no."

Currency



Unit of currency is the Peso and the coin is the Centavo.

Ethnic Make-Up



Although the majority of Filipinos are of Malaysian descent, most have Hispanic surnames.

***Fun Fact:** A Filipino delicacy is balut, a soft-boiled fertilized egg with a half-grown duck or chicken embryo inside complete with beak, bones and feet. Men are expected to try it because it is believed to enhance male potency.

Language



English and Pilipino (based upon Tagalog)

Religion



83% Roman Catholic.