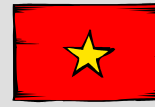


CONDUCTING BUSINESS WITH PEOPLE FROM



VIETNAM



Greetings



Vietnamese shake hands when greeting formally, but otherwise greet verbally, bowing the head slightly and standing at a distance of about 3 feet. Names in Vietnam are structured with the family name first, followed by a middle name and a given name. Professionals or officials are addressed by one or more appropriate titles.

Conversation



Visitors should avoid rushing into discussion and allow enough time for each party to become acquainted. A reliable translator is essential. While many Vietnamese now speak English, they may not be proficient enough to conduct a meeting.

Gestures



One does not touch another person's head, the body's most spiritual point. It is rude to summon a person with the index finger. Instead, one waves all four fingers with the palm down. Hand gestures otherwise are limited because verbal communication is preferred. Men and women do not show affection in public, but it is common for members of the same sex to hold hands while walking. Vietnamese use both hands to pass an object to another person. Crossing the index and middle fingers is impolite.

Business Attire



Normal business attire consists of a suit and tie for men and suit or dress for women. During the hotter months, formal dress for men is a shirt and tie or golf shirt and slacks, depending on the situation.

Hierarchy/Family



Age and position are revered. Vietnamese value marital fidelity, generosity, gentleness, and hard work. The lazy, selfish and disloyal are despised. Neighbors help each other and families support one another. Men are considered the authority in the family.

Manners



Saving "face" is extremely important. Public criticism or display of anger is considered severe, is taken very seriously and is likely to cause offense. Often a Vietnamese will respond to an uncomfortable or unpleasant situation with a smile or no expression, which should not be interpreted as a flippant or condescending attitude.

Cognitive Styles



Vietnamese respect those who respect others. Vietnamese culture places high value on politeness, discretion and respect for age and position. Face-to-face discussions are favored over telephone calls. Protocol is extremely important in Vietnamese business relations.

Currency

The official currency is the *dong*.

Ethnic Make-Up



The majority of the population is ethnic *Kinh* (Vietnamese).

Language



Vietnamese is the official language.

Religion



Buddhism is practiced by 55% of the population, about 12 % is Taoist and 8% is Roman Catholic.