

**Montgomery County Business Development
and Sister-City China Mission**

September 15-25, 2013

Shanghai – Xi'an – Benxi – Beijing

Travel Suggestions and Business Etiquette



Section 1: Travel Suggestions

Before you go

- Check TSA (Transportation Security Administration)—A must read for all air travelers. Follow instructions to reduce your wait time at the security checkpoint.
- Check US Depart of State's Website for general TIPS FOR TRAVELLING ABROAD
- Make two copies of your passport identification page. This will facilitate replacement if your passport is lost or stolen. Leave one copy at home or with friends or relatives. Carry the other one along with a passport size photo with you in a separate place from your passport.
- Leave a copy of your itinerary and contact information with family members or friends at home so that you can be contacted in case of an emergency.
- Check your Travel Documents to bring with you:
 - a. US domestic and international airline tickets. If you have an E-Ticket, you need to bring an E-Ticket Confirmation letter sent to you from Airlines or our agents;
 - b. China domestic airlines normally allow 44lbs checked luggage, All liquids, gels and aerosols in containers larger than 2.4 ounces must be packed in your checked bag
 - c. Finalized tour itinerary with detailed hotel information and emergency contact information of our local offices.

Dress

For the non formal events it is suggested that you dress for comfort. Sandals, shorts, and jeans are widely accepted. Coordinate your outfits for multi-tasking. Dress in layers to suit various weather/temperature changes. The weather has recently been record-setting hot in Shanghai and Beijing and it is recommended to bring summer clothes for early September and long-sleeved T-shirt, shirts and thin coats for cool and rainy days.

Jet Lag Precautions

Jet lag happens when your body's inner clock falls out of sync with daily cycles of light, rest and meals as you cross time zones to reach your destination. Its symptoms are fatigue, irritability and vague disorientation. You cannot totally avoid jet lag, but you can minimize its effects:

- Get several good nights of sleep before your departure.
- Set your watch to your destination time when you board the plane, and adjust sleep and meals accordingly.
- Try to sleep on the plane.
- Walk around the plane occasionally, do isometric exercises at your seat.
- Drink plenty of water and fruit juice while flying.
- Avoid alcoholic and caffeinated drinks during and after the flight.

- Upon arrival, throw yourself into your new schedule, avoid naps, and try to stay awake until your normal sleeping time.

Medication

- If you take prescription medication, be sure to bring enough to last the entire trip. Always carry medications in the original prescription container when traveling. Keep the medications with you and do not pack them in checked baggage.
- Long-term travel overseas might cause tourists to develop stomach upset; a change in water, food, sleep habits and/or climate may all cause discomfort. Bring anti-diarrhea medications such as Imodium and Lomotil just in case.
- For the latest overseas travel health information, please contact the Center of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) by visiting their website and choose the destination you are going to visit: <http://wwwn.cdc.gov/travel/destinationList.aspx> , or by calling their toll-free number: 1-800-CDC-INFO , 1-800-232-4636

Vaccinations

Vaccinations are not mandatory for travel to China & Southeast Asia with the exception of anyone traveling from or via an infected area. For the latest overseas travel health information, please contact the Center of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) by visiting their website for more information <http://wwwn.cdc.gov/travel/> or by calling their toll-free number 1-800-CDC-INFO

Water

Tap water is not considered safe to drink in China except Hong Kong despite the fact that water in China is commonly chlorinated and processed. Drink only bottled water or boiled water. Bottled purified water and soft drinks are easily obtained at reasonable prices either in hotel or in grocery markets.

Money Matters

For all of your Asia destinations, it is always wise to carry your currency in different forms of cash, traveler's check, and credit cards. A few tips:

- Exchanging Money: You can change money at hotels, Major arrival and departure airports, and at major Bank Branches. The official exchange rate is adopted in most places so it's unnecessary to shop around for a better deal. Retain a few of your exchange receipts because you will need the receipt to convert local currency to your home currency at the end of the trip.
- Credit Cards: Master Card, Visa, American Express are accepted in most 4 star or above hotels, major tourist shops, and upscale shopping centers, but may not be particularly welcome in smaller local stores or in remote areas throughout Asia.
- Personal Checks: Personal checks are generally not acceptable outside North America.
- ATMs (Automated Teller Machine): There is now a reasonably extensive network of ATMs in major Asia cities and this can be a convenient way to get your hands on money. The exchange

rate on ATM withdrawals is similar to credit cards but there is a limit on maximum daily withdrawal amount. For credit-card cash advance, service fees apply and the rate varies.

Shopping

Shopping is always a part of the travel experience. China is known as bargain shoppers' paradise, offering a marvelous selection of arts and crafts such as jade, silk, rugs, cloisonné, ceramics, antique, painting, furniture and more. Purchasing an item in the area where it is "noted for" has proven to be the best value. Please carefully check the quality of the products, and always ask for a receipt with product descriptions. When shopping it is wise to use credit card for large purchases. Retain all receipts. Purchase insurance for items that you have shipped.

Always keep in mind that a purchase is between the buyer and the seller. It is also suggested to learn what are Restricted and Prohibited by U.S. Customs and Border Protection!

Section 2: Business Etiquette

Saving and giving face

Before beginning, recognize that the following qualities are valued by the Chinese and therefore relevant to your Chinese business interactions today

- Respect for elders and rankings (note that the latter is particularly important when dealing with government officials)
- Patience
- Politeness
- Modesty

Greetings

Address a person using his or her family name only, such as Mr. Chen or Ms. Hsu. The Chinese family name comes first and is usually one syllable. A one or a two-syllable given name follows a family name. For example, in the case of Teng Peinian, Teng is the family name and Peinian is the given name. In some instances, Westernized Chinese might reverse their names when visiting and sending correspondence abroad. Therefore, it is always a good idea to ask a native speaker which name is the family name.

For business purposes, it is traditionally acceptable to call a Chinese person by the surname, together with a title, such as "Director Wang" or "Chairman Li." Avoid using someone's given name unless you have known him or her for a long period of time. Formality is a sign of respect, and it is advisable to clarify how you will address someone very early in a relationship, generally during your first meeting.

Do not try to become too friendly too soon, and do not insist that your Chinese counterparts address you by your given name. The Western pattern of quick informality should be resisted.

The Chinese way of greeting is a nod or slight bow. However, when interacting with Westerners, Chinese usually shake hands. Bear in mind that a soft handshake and a lack of eye contact do not necessarily indicate timidity. It only implies that the person is not accustomed to the firm handshakes commonly used in the West.

Approaching Business in China

Business in China relies heavily on personal relationships: make sure you have some! Doing research on the market is important in China, but personal relationships are equally essential to business success here. It is crucial to establish and maintain good relationships with key business contacts and relevant government officials. Attending industry networking events, contacting industry associations and municipal or provincial investment promotion bodies, and following up on personal introductions are all good ways to start the relationship-building process. While many firms have done business successfully with credible firms in China, it is important to remain aware of potential scams that you may encounter as you approach business in China.

Attending and Conducting Meetings

Top tip: Don't be late, and know who's the boss! In general, meetings in China follow the same format as those in US, albeit with a bit more ritual. The Chinese generally value punctuality, so arrive on time or even slightly early for meetings or other occasions. The following points should be kept in mind:

- **Dress Code:** Government officials and top management dress formally for meetings, while business people at working levels may adopt a more casual style. If you're not sure, go formal – it will convey respect and seriousness. In the summertime, there can be a suggestion for men to “go casual.” This means polo shirts or button-down short sleeve shirts, as opposed to suits and ties (or shorts – which are definitely not appropriate).
- **Addressing others:** Seniority is valued in China. It is important to address your counterparts by their title (Chairman, Director, etc.). Find out who the most senior person in the room is, and address them first.
- **Introducing yourself:** Say your name clearly, and remember to state both the company you work for and your position. As a point of reference, know that Chinese will refer to their company first, then their title, and then their name when introducing themselves to others.
- **Handshakes:** As in the U.S., meetings often start with handshakes. Ensure that you are not too aggressive with your handshake. Don't be surprised if you are at the receiving end of a decidedly non-aggressive handshake. If things go well, you may also be on the receiving end of a prolonged handshake: anything goes. In western business contexts, you have probably found yourself in “squeezing” contests (among men): who has the stronger grip? In China, the question will be “who lets go first?” Don't be shy about holding on if your counterpart is enjoying the contact – it is meant well.
- **Giving/Receiving business cards:** Similar to introductions, hand out business cards to the most senior official first. Chinese use both hands when giving and receiving anything of value, including gifts and particularly business cards; you should do the same as this is one of the first points at which you will make an impression. Take a moment to look at and acknowledge the individual's card. Have your own cards translated into Chinese on one side. Your title is important; this is how your hosts will determine who should be invited to meetings, what weight your words carry, and where you will be seated.
- **Your name:** Having a Chinese name, ideally one with meaning rather than a transliteration of your English or French name will be taken as a sign of respect as well. The best approach is to have a local contact or native speaker help create one for you.
- **Seating Arrangements:** The host will take the lead, and you will likely have a name card or designated seat based on your role in the organization.
- **Meeting structure:** Particularly in government circles, meetings may follow a fairly formal structure, with the senior member of the hosting party introducing himself/herself and colleagues, and then proceeding to state his or her views and position on the matter in question. Following this, the leading member of your party should do the same. Subordinate members of

the Chinese party will not usually speak unless asked to do so by the most senior person; your observance of the same protocol (even if your management style permits a more fluid approach) will have the advantage of conveying who is in authority and who, within your own team, may have special expertise or authority in a given area.

Dining

Top tip: Follow the leader! Business often gets conducted during meals. As with business meetings, food and seating are determined by the hosts. The following points should be kept in mind when dining formally with the Chinese:

- Beginning to eat: Follow cues from your hosts and start eating when the hosts begin. There will be cold dishes placed on the table when you are seated; wait to be invited before you dig in.
- Keeping pace: At formal banquets and high-end restaurants, serving staff may keep up an almost constant rotation of dishes. They will also change your plate frequently with a clean one, so as not to mix dishes and flavors. While at first this may be distracting, accept the rhythm and you will soon cease to notice it. In order to have a sense of what is coming next, know that the meal will proceed with meats of various varieties and peak with a fish course, followed by a staple (rice, dumplings, noodles) and wind down with a sweet or dessert.
- Refusing food: The Chinese tend to offer a lot of food, and it is acceptable to refuse food if you have dietary restrictions or allergies. However, it is a sign of politeness to accept some of everything, and sample (even a little of) all dishes served. But don't eat or drink all of something you don't like, since this may be taken as a sign that you want more! This is where the rotation of plates can serve to your advantage: a nod to the wait staff to remove a plate will allow for your preferences to be accommodated unobtrusively.
- Drinking: While local wine can be preferred at banquets, the Chinese more frequently offer strong distilled alcohol called baijiu or mao-tai (a very special type of baijiu) for toasts – and there may be many toasts during a meal. Never drink from the toasting glass except during a toast – and don't let the size of the glass fool you as to the power of the contents! The Chinese know that their alcohol is considered strong for foreigners, and under normal circumstances, they will not push you to drink. Some hosts will provide drinking yogurt to help protect your stomach, which can be helpful to allay the effects of the alcohol. Try to avoid drinking baijiu on an empty stomach as you will feel the effects of the alcohol quickly – it's a good idea to eat something before the toasts begin. If you cannot or do not drink for medical or personal reasons, this is respected but you should advise your host or your working level contact of this at the beginning of the banquet, or even beforehand. It will be noted carefully by your hosts and arrangements will be made to avoid embarrassing you.
- Toasting: Your host will start off the banquet with a toast to your presence / friendship/ cooperation / getting to know each other / clinching a deal. You may choose to reciprocate, toast for toast, or to wait until the host, his or her colleague, and one other member of the hosting party has toasted. Typically, the principal guest is expected to toast a few courses after the host toasts. If you are toasting, your comments should be warm and sincere, and your toast should not be any longer than your host's. When toasting, the Chinese normally say gan bei,

which translates to “bottoms up”. Note that drinking is sometimes expected as proof of a close relationship where partners can reveal their true selves, even in a business context. While this expectation is slowly changing and may vary by region, it is something to be aware of. If the group at the banquet is very comfortable with each other, it is also not uncommon to go around the table toasting each member of the party. Take your cue from your hosts and from your local contact or interpreter.

- **Note:** There are great differences in dining and toasting customs among different regions in China. When in doubt, ask your host. He or she will be very happy to explain them to you and will be impressed at your interest in and respect for local customs.
- **Conversation:** The banquet is generally a social event in a formal context. Discussion will likely centre around pleasantries, background information on the region or the company, but it is not a time for negotiating or challenges. The focus may not be the food per se, but there will be pride in the offerings provided.
- **Concluding:** There is little lingering at banquets. Formal dinners often end suddenly, when the senior member of the hosting party stands up (quickly followed by staff and subordinates), briefly thanks the guests for attending, and proceeds to leave the room. This may appear abrupt the first few times you witness it, but is simply a decisive and useful way to bring the occasion to a close. If there is a dessert / fruit course, you can expect this to follow fairly shortly before the senior member of the hosting party departs. Gifts are usually offered at the conclusion of the banquet, prior to departure.

SIMPLE CHINESE PHRASES

English	Chinese	Phonetic Pronunciation
Hello	Ni hao 你好	Knee how
Hello, how are you?	Ni hao ma? 你好吗?	Knee how ma?
I'm fine thank you	Hao xie xie 好, 谢谢。	How, shay shay
Good morning	Zao an 早安	Zow on
Good bye	Zai jian 再见	Dzy "G-N" (rhymes with "bye")
Good evening	Wanshang hao 晚上好	Wan shong how
Please	Qing 请	Ching
Excuse me/I'm sorry	Duibuqi 对不起	Doi boo chee
Thank you	Xie xie ni 谢谢	Shay shay knee
No thank you	Bu xie xie 不, 谢谢	Boo, shay shay
You're welcome	Bu ke qi 不客气	Boo kuh chee
Yes	Shi de or Dui 是的 or 对	Shir duh (as in <u>Sh</u> irt) or Doi
No	Bu shi 不是	Boo shir
My name is	Wo jiao (name) 我叫。。。	Wa "G"-ow (name)
Cheers / Bottoms up	Ganbei 干杯	Gon bay
Coffee	Kafei 咖啡	Kah fay
Tea	Cha 茶	Cha
Beer	Pijiu 啤酒	Pea-Joe
Wine	Jiu 酒	Joe
Red wine	Hong jiu 红酒	Hong joe
White wine	Bai jiu 白酒	Bye joe
Orange juice	Juzhi 橘汁	Jew jur (rhymes with "fur")
Vodka	Futejiu 伏特加	Foo tuh joe
How much?	Duo shao qian? 多少钱?	Dwo show chen
The food was delicious	Hen hao chi 很好吃	Hen how chur (as in <u>ch</u> urch)
Coke	Ke le 可乐	Kuh Luh
Diet Coke	Jianfei kele 健宜可乐	"G-N" Yi kuh luh
Business Card	Ka pian/Ming pian 名片	Ming "P-N"/Kah "P-N"

Please (ching) always precedes a word

Example: Coffee please – Ching kafei (请要咖啡) Beer please – Ching pijoe (请上啤酒)

Bon Voyage! 一路顺风! (yi lu shun feng!)