

Business Etiquette in China and India

IFMA, Swissôtel Métropole, Geneva
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Welcome

It's my pleasure to be here with you today.



AGENDA

1. Business cards
2. Handshakes
3. Dining etiquette
4. Gift giving



BUSINESS CARDS

Your business card is an **extension** of your professional self.



BUSINESS CARDS

Giving & Receiving

1. Present and receive business cards with both hands.
2. Present your card with the writing facing the recipient.
3. Comment on the other party's business card.
4. Put their business card away respectfully.



Chinese Style Handshake

- Light.
- Prolonged.
- Combined with a slight bow of the head.



HANDSHAKES

Indian Style Handshake

- Light handshake with 2-3 movements.
- Most Indian women do not shake hands with men.
- Namaste is sometimes used.



China and India Seating Arrangements

- Host and guest of honour sit facing the door.
- Host and guest of honour sit farthest from the door.

China

Chopsticks and table manners

- Place chopsticks on the holder or on the edge of your bowl when resting.
- Hold the bowl of rice in your hand when eating.
- Do not be offended by slurping sounds.
- Do not blow your nose at the table.

India

Eating with your hands

- Wash before and after every meal.
- Use your right hand only.
- It's OK to ask for a spoon.
- NEVER pass or receive anything with your left hand.

GIFT GIVING

Are business gifts appropriate?

- Gifts are a sign of friendship and appreciation.
- Consider the legal implications.
- Keep gifts small and inexpensive.



GIFT GIVING

Suitable Gifts

Swiss chocolates

Writing implements

Sweets

Mugs

Calendars

Office decorations

Books

Company memorabilia

Music boxes



Thank you and
enjoy your lunch.





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Presenter: Kara Ronin, Executive Impressions

China and India are important destinations for international business. Both countries offer plenty of opportunity, yet they also present great obstacles when it comes to culture.

Business cards, handshakes, dining etiquette and even gift giving may seem trivial when doing business. However, these acts incorporate hidden cultural nuances that can impact the relationship building process and ultimately the success of your future business endeavour.

This information sheet will provide you with a basic understanding of business etiquette in China and India so you have the tools to bridge cultural gaps and form solid, lasting business relations.

- **Use gold on your Chinese business card; it is an auspicious colour.**
- **In India, wrap your gifts in red, yellow or green. In China, wrap your gifts in red or gold.**
- **A prolonged handshake in China is a positive sign.**
- **Never write on a business card, or shove it in your trouser pocket.**
- **Never leave your chopsticks standing upright in a bowl of rice in China.**
- **In India, the left hand is considered to be unclean.**
- **In China, never blow your nose at the table.**
- **Suitable gifts: chocolates, sweets, calendars, books, pens, mugs, corporate items.**

Business Cards

When you exchange business cards in China and India, you exchange an important human emotion: respect. The key to conveying respect is to consider your business card to be an extension of yourself.

- Present and receive business cards with both hands.
- Present your business card with the writing facing the recipient.
- Comment on the other party's business card.
- Put their business card away in an appropriate card case or organiser.

Handshakes

Handshakes in China and India must convey trust and respect. Even though these two messages are important in many countries, the style of handshake used to convey them can differ.

- Chinese style handshakes are light, sometimes prolonged, and usually accompanied with a slight bow of the head and shoulders.
- Indian style handshakes are light with two to three up-and-down movements.
- Let the other person guide you to know whether a handshake or Namaste is preferred in India, particularly if you are greeting a woman.
- Lack of eye contact when shaking hands signals respect.

Dining Etiquette

Business dining in China and India is an important part of the relationship building process. By following the suggested seating arrangements and table manners, it can be one of the best ways to make a personal connection with your potential business partner.

- The host and guest of honour should sit facing the door in both China and India.
- When resting during a Chinese banquet, place your chopsticks on the holder provided or on the edge of your bowl.
- When eating with your hands in India, use your right hand only.
- In India and China, leave a small amount of food on your plate when you have finished.

Gift Giving

In both China and India, gifts are often exchanged as a sign of friendship and appreciation. At the successful conclusion of a business endeavour or at the end of your business trip, it is customary to offer a small gift to your Chinese or Indian business contact.

- Gifts are usually refused two or three times as a sign of modesty.
- Gifts are generally not opened when received.
- Unsuitable gifts for China: clocks, cut flowers, fans, knives and scissors.
- Unsuitable gifts for India: white flowers, frangipanis, leather products for Hindus, and pigskin or alcohol products for Muslims.

You can keep up-to-date with Kara's international business etiquette advice on her blog www.executive-impressions.com/blog, connect with her on Twitter [@execimpressions](https://twitter.com/execimpressions), on the Executive Impressions Facebook Page, or on LinkedIn www.linkedin.com/in/karonin.

Executive Impressions is an international business etiquette consultancy based in Lyon, France. We offer corporate training, private coaching and consulting services. If you are interested in the services we offer, please contact Kara directly at kara.ronin@executive-impressions.com.

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