

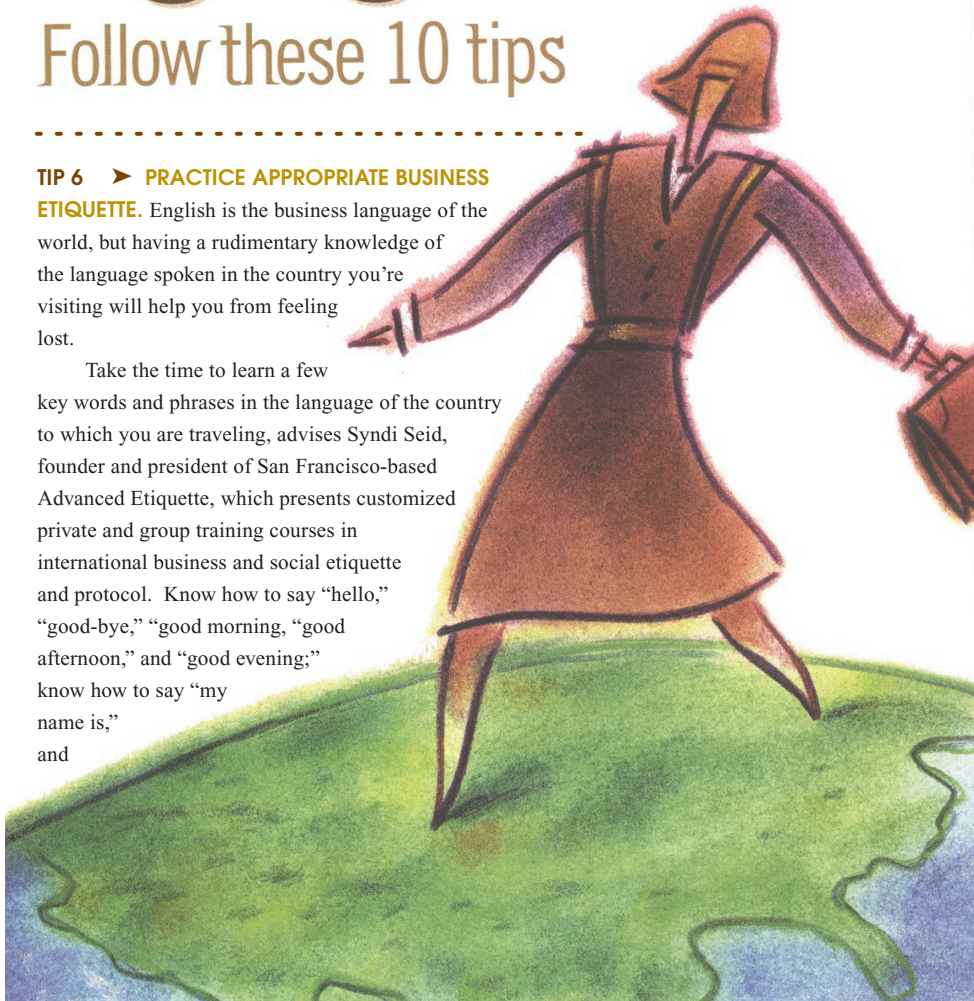
Want to go global?

Follow these 10 tips

TIP 6 ► PRACTICE APPROPRIATE BUSINESS

ETIQUETTE. English is the business language of the world, but having a rudimentary knowledge of the language spoken in the country you're visiting will help you from feeling lost.

Take the time to learn a few key words and phrases in the language of the country to which you are traveling, advises Syndi Seid, founder and president of San Francisco-based Advanced Etiquette, which presents customized private and group training courses in international business and social etiquette and protocol. Know how to say "hello," "good-bye," "good morning," "good afternoon," and "good evening;" know how to say "my name is," and



"please," and "thank you."

Also know the appropriate physical and oral greeting when entering a room. In most countries a cordial handshake, good eye contact, and proper standing posture are the keys to making a good first impression. In other countries, however, such as Thailand and India, religious practices may prevent the display of physical contact.

There, the traditional greeting is to press your fingers and palms together with your elbows close to your body, as in prayer. In Thailand this is called Wai (pronounced "Why") and in India the greeting is Namaste (nah-mas-tay).

In the United States it's customary to ask for a person's business card and then tuck it into a pocket or purse without looking at it. In Asia that would be considered rude. There, when you

accept someone's business card, be sure to grasp it in both hands, look it over (front and back), and only then put it away.

Accept hospitality when it is offered, Seid emphasizes. In Latin America, for instance, it is customary to break bread in the house of the person with whom you're doing business. Refusal of tea, coffee, or a meal is an insult in many countries and could kill the deal.

Seid also recommends mastering the skills and rituals of international dining, including the proper use of chopsticks, a fork and a knife, and even your hands. As a guest, wait for the host to initiate orders to the server and to begin eating each course. If presented with something unpalatable, Seid advises, "Try a small bite, and then get full very quickly!"

NOTE: This reprint has been excerpted from the complete article containing all ten tips. If you would like a reprint of the entire article, please contact *Syndi Seid's Advanced Etiquette* and it will be sent to you.

SEID'S OTHER COMMONSENSE TIPS:

- **Be sensitive to other cultures.** Do not compare American ways to those of the country you are visiting and do not act like everything in the United States is bigger and better. Do speak properly – that's English, not American – by always using complete sentences and proper grammar. Do not use slang, jargon, abbreviated words, or acronyms. When speaking by telephone and voicemail, speak clearly and slowly, especially when leaving your telephone number. Always repeat the number, including the country and area codes.

- **Watch your body language.** Never point your finger in any way. It is improper and impolite. Pointing is properly performed through the use of an open hand and palm, with all fingers together, gently waving in the direction you are pointing. Do not cross your legs. In Europe, for women to cross their legs



is considered crass, and in Asian countries it suggests premature familiarity.

- **Thank you notes are still in.** Especially when you are the visiting person, do send a thank you note within 24 to 48 hours after the meeting. For business lunches, it is appropriate for both the host and the guest to write notes. Thank you notes are best written by hand and sent through regular mail. They should not be done by email, fax, or telephone except under special circumstances.