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Preparation for business meeting requires careful attention to all details, and perhaps a gift. This gift is a social gesture. In many countries gift giving is rare in the business world. However, in other countries, gift giving have a central place in business practices. Gift giving customs vary greatly from country to country. For this reason it is necessary to know some facts about cross-culture differences in gift giving etiquette to cement better relationships with foreign colleagues.

Some countries like Malaysia and Paraguay frown upon any gifts because in these countries a gift could be considered as a bribe. One could not give a business gift until a professional relationship is established. It is even stricter in Singapore, where government employees are not allowed to accept business gifts from firms [1]. In the United States government limits the acceptable dollar value to 25 \$ [2]. However, in some countries like Japan, Indonesia and the Philippines, exchanging gifts is strongly rooted in tradition [1].

Gift-giving is an important part of doing business in Japan. Exchanging gifts symbolizes the depth and strength of a business relationship to the Japanese. Gifts are usually exchanged at the first meeting. The gift is presented in Japan with two hands. This is also true with presenting business cards. The gift must be wrapped. The gifts of white and red colours are not accepted. White colour symbolizes death. White flowers of any kind are not given. Red is associated with funerals. Symbolism is very important in Japan. A gift with a pair of items is considered lucky, but four or nine are unlucky. A gift is refused in Japanese culture once or twice before accepting it. And gifts are not opened when received. In Singapore also, a recipient may graciously decline the gift three times before accepting it. However in Chile, business gifts can be accepted and opened right after receiving it. In Italy also it is appropriate to open the gift as soon as you receive it [3, 4].

In China, official business policy considers gifts as bribes, which are illegal. But waiting until negotiations have concluded, will eliminate the appearance of bribery when a gift is presented. If there are several gifts to present it isn't allowed to give the same items to the people of different ranks. The more senior the person, the more expensive the gift. In the Chinese culture, as well as in the Japanese, a gift isn't immediately taken, but refused three times before finally being accepted, but the giver must graciously continue to offer the gift. The gift is offered with two hands and must be wrapped. The gift isn't opened immediately. As for colours, in comparison with the Japanese, the red is a lucky colour by the Chinese. Pink and yellow represent happiness. The colours black, white and blue are associated with death or funerals. Number «four» is unlucky as well as in Japan. In this category included also clocks, handkerchiefs and straw sandals [3, 5].

In many countries, items with a sharp edge symbolize the severing of a friendship or relationship [2]. If business partner from the country known for producing a particular product which is local pride it is not necessary to offer that item as a gift. Good examples are: leather and wine in Argentina; leather in Brazil and Uruguay; beer and wine in Germany; wine in France and Italy; vodka in Russia and Poland and silver in Mexico, because it's considered too common [5].

Traditions and features of culture of the different peoples also depend in many respects on religion. So Orthodox Jews have very specific dietary laws regarding which foods are acceptable to eat. The foods that meet these stringent regulations are called kosher foods and have kosher labels. Because wine is used in religious ceremonies, it's required to be kosher even for social drinking. So, all wine and wine-based drinks consumed must be kosher, prepared and bottled by Jews. Unlike wine, other types of alcohol are not required to be kosher and can be selected as a gift [3, 2].

In the Muslim culture, the Koran forbids alcohol. Gifts of liquor or any product that contains alcohol, such as perfume, would never be selected to give. Also, forbidden are products or foods from scavengers, which includes pork, birds, and shellfish. So a leather item made from pig skin or ostrich could not be

given. Dogs are considered unclean, so any dog item, even something with a picture of a dog would not be given. Artwork that consisted of sculptures, drawings or photos showing the human body, especially a nude or partially nude female body, is not acceptable as a gift. Gifts are presented using the right hand, or both hands. The left hand is never used alone to hand someone a gift, as it's considered unclean [4].

In today's world, with global companies, giving and receiving gifts properly is an important part of international business. Many times this small detail can make the best impression. Therefore it's important to take the time to learn more about the person you're doing business with to develop good business relationships with him.

Список использованных источников

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