

UDC 395

BUSINESS ETIQUETTE RULES IN THE AMERICAN SOCIETY**VIKTORIIA LEPEKHINA****MARIIA SHURUPOVA***State University of Humanities and Technology, Orekhovo-Zuevo, Russia*

The article presents a brief overview of the main advice for successful communication with the American partners in business sphere. The author emphasizes cultural differences between the American and Russian reality, which should be taken into account when choosing verbal and non-verbal language means in business communication situations.

Introduction. Many people, who for one or another reason, are forced to build business relationships with foreign partners often think about how to behave correctly at business meetings and how to make a favorable impression. As a part of the proposed research, we will study the rules of behavior at meetings and receptions, cultural peculiarities and business traditions accepted in the United States.

The United States is a country of many nationalities and, therefore, a territory of great cultural diversity. Even Americans who have lived in the United States for generations are bound to have Irish, German, Italian, or other roots.

Americans are straightforward, friendly, and open-minded. Their rapid transition to informal communication may seem unexpected or even rude to more reserved Europeans.

In the United States, individualism is valued – people are proud of their personal achievements, initiative, and success.

The phrase “time is money” became famous thanks to Benjamin Franklin, and Americans still adhere to this principle. They value people who know how to manage their time. In the business sphere, punctuality is an indicator of reliability and discipline.

The main part. Entrepreneurship is one of the most important economic, social, and cultural factors that have shaped American civilization at all stages of its history. In the United States, the conditions were initially favorable for the broad, free and rapid development of entrepreneurship. Colonization of the vast expanse of free land based on migrant capitalism required, as a basic condition, maximum economic initiative, diligence, ingenuity, and business acumen. All this has become the historical and cultural guide of the American entrepreneurial tradition.

In the United States, earlier than in other countries, the most effective technology, modern transport, and communication technology were widely used, mass production and mass consumption developed that created the “American way of life”. The United States has become the birthplace of large corporations, management, marketing, and public relations. But the evolution of American business was not a simple and smooth path: the relationships of companies with each other, with other social groups, the state and society were repeatedly subjected to serious tests, which forced businessmen to look closely at the surrounding reality, to have clear ideas about the needs of society, both related and unrelated to the market. Individual and institutional (corporate) economic culture has been the basis for the perception and evaluation of a number of aspects of American civilization by the most far-sighted businesspeople who are not indifferent to the present and future of their country.

Unlike writers, travelers, philosophers, historians, and all those who simply observed and evaluated reality, entrepreneurs claimed to be those who could not only talk about social problems, but also directly participate in their solution. In the world of big business, as the Americans called large corporations, the concept of its service to society was gradually formed, which has changed significantly over the past hundred years and transformed into social responsibility. During the XX century both American society and corporations have moved away from the traditional notion that entrepreneurs only care about profit. Concern of the public interest has become the rule in the United States these days and the norm of business activity. One way or another, this also occurred in the social and cultural environment of other countries.

Introduction and greetings

In general, American greetings are informal. This is not a sign of disrespect, it is a demonstration of the equality of all those present.

Americans do not necessarily shake everyone’s hand at a meeting. One may be greeted with the words “Hello” or “How are you?”, or even just “Hi”. The handshake should be short but firm. At the same time, it is important to maintain eye contact.

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When bidding goodbye, an American can say "We'll have to get together" or "Let's do lunch". It is just a friendly gesture. One should not take this as an invitation if an American colleague does not tell the exact time and date.

When introducing a person, it is recommended to give a brief description of the person introduced. For example: "Janet Freeman, I'd like you to meet Fred Harrison. He designed the brochure we are using for this campaign".

Americans tend to quickly switch to names (that is, to "you" – ты), sometimes immediately after meeting. This is especially true for young companies.

Gestures and body language

- ✓ It is strongly recommended to keep a distance when talking – at least 60 cm. If an American feels that a person is standing too close, they can retreat without even thinking about it;
- ✓ Americans smile a lot, even to strangers, and expect smiles in return;
- ✓ Some people like to slap their colleagues on the back as a sign of friendship.

Corporate culture

- ✓ Americans regard a business card simply as a source of information for the future and exchange them without much effort. If a business card is immediately put away in a wallet or in the back pocket of trousers, it is not an insult;
- ✓ Americans prefer straightforwardness in communication. "Yes" means "yes", "no" means "no". If an American says "maybe", this is not a form of veiled refusal, it is really "maybe";
- ✓ A person should not hesitate to ask questions if they do not understand something. Americans ask a lot of questions and are not afraid of admitting that they do not know something;
- ✓ Interrupting the speaker is indecent. a person is expected to wait for a pause, say "Excuse me" and wait for attention to be paid. At the same time, people quite often get stuck in the conversation, so it is not advisable to make large pauses in speech, if one does not want to be interrupted;
- ✓ Americans value the written word very much. Oral agreements are rarely legally binding. When entering into a contract, it is necessary to make sure that one reads everything written in a small print;
- ✓ When communicating in writing, it is very important to correctly indicate titles and addresses;
- ✓ Americans regard being late as a sign of disrespect and carelessness. For business meetings, it is customary to arrive about 5 minutes earlier. If a person is 10-15 minutes late, they are bound to call and apologize;
- ✓ It is very important to meet the deadlines. If a person says they will provide information by a certain date or call at a specific time, this is exactly what is expected to be done. People who do not comply with the agreements are considered irresponsible and unreliable;
- ✓ Meetings are usually quite informal in atmosphere, but serious in content. If additional materials are received before the actual meeting, participants should familiarize themselves with them;
- ✓ A partner is expected to actively participate in the meetings. a person who is silent for a long time may be considered unprepared or unable to make a significant contribution to the case;
- ✓ Americans love facts and figures. In this respect it is advisable to use statistics to back up one's opinion.
- ✓ The meeting usually ends with the development of a plan that the participants must implement. Negotiations are considered successful if specific decisions are made;
- ✓ As a rule, one person is responsible for making the final decision. Americans can start negotiations with inflated demands, but they are ready to make concessions and consider various possibilities;
- ✓ The goal of most negotiations in the United States is to sign a contract for a specific deal. Long-term relationships may not be the primary goal;
- ✓ Negotiations are usually information-intensive and can seem fast-paced. This is another manifestation of the "time – money" principle;
- ✓ Americans are ready to discuss business over the phone, even if they have not seen the interlocutor in person;
- ✓ In business speech, Americans tend to use sports terms ("Touch base", "Call the shots", "Ballpark figures", "Game plan");
- ✓ In general, Americans like to laugh and like people with a sense of humor;
- ✓ Golf is a popular sport, especially among senior executives. a golf course can often be a place for business meetings.

Gifts

- ✓ At business meetings, as a rule, it is not customary to present gifts. a person should not consider it an insult if someone refuses a gift;
- ✓ If a person is invited home, it is highly recommended to bring flowers, candy, fruit, books, or wine;
- ✓ Americans will appreciate a gift from a partner's native country. a good choice would be local art or craft samples, books, candy, or alcohol;
- ✓ Gifts in the form of cash are unacceptable in any situation.

Conclusion. When preparing for any cooperation with foreign partners, it is important to know and respect their cultural characteristics and traditions. Knowing the specifics of business etiquette in the United States will help you to successfully establish relationships with American companions and potential business partners. This knowledge can also be useful when preparing for an interview or when learning English with a native speaker.

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