

About renmenbi.com

renmenbi.com is a market insight company facilitating foreign businesses to better understand and prepare for the Chinese market.

Language barrier, cultural differences, and the Chinese business philosophy can create confusion for many foreigners. We can help you to gain the necessary insight and adopt the appropriate business perspective by learning from our market analysis, seminar, or consultation.

renmenbi.com is unique from other market insight-related services in that it focuses on the cross-cultural differences between the West and the East. Our experience in international business, especially in China, can create a better transition for you.

To learn more, please order this pamphlet or contact us at info@renmenbi.com



China, Canada, United States Ethiopia, Kenya

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Business in China

an introduction



Adapt to Local Customs and Practices

When in China, do as the Chinese do. In the Chinese business environment, this saying is particularly apt, particularly in the sometimes confusing informal dimension. Be observant: follow the customs and manners of your hosts. But most of all, be respectful: know that proper respect makes up for many a social gaff in Chinese eyes.

Adopt the Chinese Values

The foundation of Chinese business practices rests on five key concepts: relationships, saving face, reciprocity, group harmony, and humility.

Reference of Key Values

<i>Mianzi</i>	saving face ; consists of: <i>mian</i> - reputation/status <i>lian</i> - morality
<i>Guanxi</i>	network building ; system of mutual business obligations/relations
<i>Renqing</i>	reciprocity ; human emotion; it is a reflection of positive feelings
<i>Renjian</i>	group harmony ; better to act as a group than as individual
<i>Qianxu</i>	modesty or humility ; one outwardly minimizes accomplishments

Cultivate Relationships

Having an extensive network of connections is crucial for business in China, as you can call on them directly or indirectly when you face particularly sticky challenges. The practice of cultivating connections may seem unethical from a Western perspective but it is both perfectly ethical and absolutely essential in the East.

Business Practice - East vs. West



Tips to cultivate relationships

- Get introduced into an existing network
- Invest time and money
- Follow locals
- Be reliable
- Balance your interests with theirs

Understand Business Confucianism

Confucian ideals are deeply imprinted on the Chinese mentally and they manifest strongly in both every day life and the business environment. Understanding the basics of these ideals will help you to communicate effectively and appreciate the ways Chinese people behave and think in business meetings and negotiations.

Confucian Tips for Success

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| Avoid confrontation; build harmony |
| Acknowledge the hierarchy |
| Be aware of collectiveness |

Cross-Cultural Business Communication

Chinese and other East Asian cultures use a high-context language style. Communication is indirect, therefore, meaning is often implied using abstract expressions. In contrast, many Western cultures, such as American, use low-context communication, which is more explicit, direct and self-explanatory. Without being aware of this, mutual understanding in business transactions will be lost.

	Chinese	Western
Context	High	Low
Communication	Indirect, complex; implied meaning	Direct, simple; self-explanatory
Culture	Homogeneous; fixed	Heterogeneous; flexible