



## Do's & Don'ts in Singapore

- ▶ Group interests, harmony and mutual security are more important than the individual
- ▶ Always treat elders with the utmost respect and courtesy; make sure they are introduced, greeted and offered food and drinks first
- ▶ Rather than rejecting someone by saying "no", say "I will try" or "I will see" thus allowing you and the other party to save face
- ▶ Chinese Singaporeans shake hands but the handshake is lighter and a bit more prolonged; Malay Singaporeans might refrain from shaking hands with the opposite sex
- ▶ Traditionally Chinese Singaporeans have 3 names. Their surname/family name is mentioned first followed by two first names. They might adopt a Western first name that will be placed in front of their Chinese surname. f.i. Tony Seow Jia Bao
- ▶ Indians might not use a surname in Singapore. Instead they put the first letter of their fathers surname in front of their own first name; f.i. M. Nithi
- ▶ Your hierarchical position within the company is considered to be your achievement; it should be clearly indicated on your business card. One side of the card should be in English, the other in Chinese
- ▶ Appointments are necessary and should be made at least two weeks in advance by email or phone, it's customary to reconfirm you appointment one day in advance
- ▶ Personal relationships are essential to business success, as is your network. Relationships are maintained by frequent short lunch or coffee meetings or phone calls
- ▶ Singaporeans are quite sensitive to body language and prefer a calm demeanour. Try to tone down facial expressions and body language and refrain from speaking loudly

***These do's and don'ts assist you in making a good first impression when meeting business partners.  
However for a successful business outcome, a tailored cross-cultural approach is key.  
We gladly provide you with more country and industry specific advice and workshops.***

