

BUSINESS ETIQUETTE IN BRAZIL

by Olegario Llamazares*

Brazil is one of countries with greater racial and cultural mix (what is known as a melting pot). It has important communities from Africa, Portugal, Spain, Germany, Japan, Lebanon and other countries. These groups have mixed together and have managed to create a unique lifestyle, with business etiquette rules quite flexible, though should be known by foreign negotiators that visit the country.

- The most usual form of greeting is shaking hands (kisses on the cheeks among women) and the expressions *Como vai*? (How are you?) or *Tudo bem*? (Everything okay?)
- In presentations to senior people is advisable to use treatments of *Senhor* (Mister) or *Senhora* (Mistress) preceding the family name. Young executives quickly tend to call themselves by first name.
- Professional tittles (such as Ph. D, Director, Engineer) are more less used than in other Latin American countries.
- In conversations you should avoid sensitive issues like politics, religion or the country's deforestation. It is preferable not to make comparisons with Argentina. Anyway Brazilians are very open minded and it is difficult to offend them.
- Topics for preliminary talks are football their national team, known as the *Canarinha* (for the yellow color of the shirt reminiscent of canaries) is the most laureate of the world the music (samba and *bossa* nova) and family (especially children).
- The Brazilians consider themselves American. To refer to them you should not use the terms "Latino Americans", "South Americans" and even less "Hispanics". You should not use either the expression "in America" when speaking about the United States
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To obtain the complete *Negotiation and Business Etiquette Guide in Brazil* click <u>here</u>.

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