FOREWORD

The business world is rapidly growing and changing. Some primary factors that have caused such changes include exponential changes in technology and a growing world market. Markets in developing and developed countries give American businesses the opportunity to increase overseas sales and service revenues. Those individuals that can help accomplish such a goal will subsequently enjoy many benefits.

Consequently, many career opportunities have emerged in the international business field. Many schools have begun to offer undergraduate and graduate degrees in the international business field. Careers in international business are very demanding. These careers require individuals to travel abroad frequently, to learn more about different cultures and to develop several business skills.

This booklet is designed to help college students become more familiar with many different business aspects that are not taught in the college curriculum. These aspects will help aspiring college students in their goal in acquiring a career in international business. The booklet will concentrate on the often neglected subject of business etiquette. The knowledge gained from learning business etiquette will help these students handle business situations more effectively. Finally, the booklet will introduce these students to some situations that may challenge their ethics.

Business etiquette has to be supplemented with a sense of business ethics. Business ethics are different in definition to moral ethics but are partially constructed from moral ethics. Generally the business philosophy of a country, defines the business ethics and delineates the business etiquette deemed acceptable. For example, in Korea much of the
ethics and etiquette concerning women is based on the philosophy that women should not be active business participants. In Korea, if a woman and a man apply for the same position and if both have the same qualifications then the man will be chosen for the position. Even though, this is deemed unethical by some and illegal by the government in the United States, in Korea it is acceptable and does not provoke any ethical or legal issues.¹

It is important that future executives understand the basics of business etiquette and begin to understand the different ethical situations they may encounter in their international business career.

INTRODUCTION

Many people aspire to join the business world. This world is perhaps the greatest and most fundamental that currently exists. Many who are poor have made their fortunes through business while others have increased their fortunes.

In international trade it is important for individuals to possess a thorough knowledge of basic business skills. Understanding and accomplishment of these basic business skills will help individuals understand and learn different countries’ business etiquette and ethics. However, many of these skills are not usually taught in most academic curriculums.

The importance of business etiquette has been overlooked in many business curriculums. However, in today’s highly competitive business world, knowledge of business etiquette can make a great difference in the first step to getting an international business career.

The good old boy system is slowly vanishing; however, it still exists. One advantage, or perhaps one primary weapon against the good old boy system is to possess good business etiquette. Business etiquette is a skill that will help many achieve a higher skill level. It is not a guarantee, but having knowledge of etiquette can aid in opening doors. Business etiquette is important primarily in that it provides not only a method by which an individual may be distinguished from hundreds of other college graduates, but also from highly trained individuals who have had “previous exposure,” in such situations.

Many students and graduates have learned that they must acquire many of these skills the hard way - through experience. Unfortunately, the school of experience charges a
very high price. Once a mistake is made, that mistake may cost the individual more than just plain embarrassment from not knowing, but also the closing of many doors.

After World War II, three dominant world economies emerged - Japan, what is now known as the European Union and the United States. The primary focus of this booklet will be the interaction between American and Japanese businesses. In short, this booklet will provide valuable information to those who are about to enter an international business career and a refresher for those who are currently in an international business career.

\[2\] Cushman, Donald; Kozminski, Andrezj. page 9.
For westerners dealing with Japanese, simple differences in business practices can be troublesome obstacles to successful negotiation. It is then imperative to know about the Japanese business method of doing business. The Japanese method of doing business is based on a long history of etiquette and work ethic.

Japan's Feudal age set an individual to a certain group, where the individual could only better themselves within that group. According to De Mente the always present distinct relationship or lack of relationship between the individual and the group "underlies not only the etiquette and ethics of Japanese Business men but also of Japanese behavior."³

BACKGROUND

Japan has emerged as a dominant economic power after World War II. This small island exports to many different countries, mostly in those located in South East Asia, the United States and Russia. Japan has emerged as a highly technological country capable of producing high quality electrical and general machinery.

³ De Mente, Boye, page 32.
The top chart in Exhibit 1 represents Japan's export markets. Japan's exports to the United States increased from about 23% in 1960 to 38% in 1992.

The bottom chart in Exhibit 1 represents Japan's import markets. The United States was the primary importer into Japan in 1960, with 40% of the total imports, but in 1992 the imports into Japan dropped to 20%.

Japanese learned about the United States culture, customs and language to aid them in conducting business more efficiently. However, now that Japan is the primary exporter to the United States, American company representatives should learn more about Japanese culture,
Understanding Japan

customs and even language not only to ease business communication but also to increase
negotiations.

The trend has been incredible, more schools are offering courses in Japanese and more
companies are training their employees to learn more about Japanese culture, customs, and
business etiquette.

STRUCTURE

Exhibit 2

The top chart in Exhibit 2 represents Japan's export structure and how it has changed

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5 Agency of Industrial Science & Technology, Http://www.aist.go.jp:80/Htmls/Japaninfo/Trade
Understanding Japan from 1960 to 1992. Primarily, the export of general machinery, electrical machinery and automobiles have increased. General machinery exports have increased from 5% to 20%. Electrical machinery exports have increased from 7% to 21%. Automobile exports have increased from 2% to about 17%. The United States is one of the primary importers of the electrical machinery exported by Japan.\(^6\)

The bottom chart in Exhibit 2 represents Japan’s import structure and how it has changed between 1960 and 1992. The only major item importer in greater percentage in 1992 than in 1960 is fish and shellfish. As the Japanese workforce has become more industrialized and has moved away from agriculture and fishing, the import of fish and shellfish will continue to increase. Other major items imported include raw materials, but primarily, Japan imports those items that will aid it in meeting energy needs. For example, crude oil, was imported in great amounts in the 1980s. Japan also imports machinery, but that machinery primarily consists of machines used in national security and defense such as F-16s from the United States.\(^7\)

\(^6\) Ishihira, Shintaro, pages 39-41.

\(^7\) Ibid, pages 65-73.
Exhibit 3 represents the top 10 countries to which Japan exports. In Japan these countries are referred to as partners.

As can be seen in the exhibit, the United States imports 28.2% of the exports from Japan. The second highest country importer from Japan is Taiwan with only 6.2%. For this and other reasons, companies in the United States and Japan need to learn better communication skills. Many Japanese have already learned about the U.S. culture, customs and language.

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Agency of Industrial Technology & Science, Http:\www.aist.go.jp:80\Htmls\Japaninfo\Trade
Exhibit 4 displays the top ten importers into Japan. As can be seen, the United States holds the top spot with 22.4%. The second highest importer into Japan is China with 7.3%. Generally, the export/import relationship between Japan and the United States is about the same. Again, demanding the improvement of communication skills between companies in the United States and Japan. American businesspeople must further learn more about Japanese customs, business and social etiquette, and language.

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9Agency of Industrial Technology & Science, Http:\www.aist.go.jp:80\Htmls\Japaninfo\Trade
As a culture, Japan is different from most Western cultures, they have a distinct alphabet and a very complex language. Their method of doing business is essentially different from the American method of doing business.

Primarily “Japanese behavior is guided by codes of etiquette rather than by standards of morality.... Etiquette defines proper behavior in Japanese society more often than do moral codes..... Rather than adherence to a strict code or moral system that does not take the consequences of act into consideration, proper etiquette guides behavior.”¹⁰ Japanese business follows this code of behavior and proper conduct is situation specific. The consequences taken into consideration are those that might affect the Japanese business philosophy. The basic philosophy that rules the Japanese business culture is that of groupism, familiasm, and the overall belief that Japan is one big company - JAPAN, INC. ¹¹

GROUPISM

Most individuals feel that the welfare of the group must be sought and that the benefits for each individual will come from that group.

This philosophy follows into the workplace. Where Japanese businessmen feel that the company, their co-workers all belong to one group and there is no such thing as one person ultimately in charge. All decisions are arrived at through consensus.

¹⁰ Alston, Jon. page 22.
¹¹ Ibid, pages 10-33
There are many methods by which the Japanese arrive at a consensus. The systems used known as Ringi Seido,\textsuperscript{12} quality control circles, and the basic management structure.

\textit{Ringi Seido}

In a ringi seido system, a manager, or other worker who has an idea sets forth the problem that he/she thinks currently exists, and writes a proposal to correct the problem. The proposal is known as the ringisho and is passed around to all the managers that are affected, and then to all the workers that are also affected. Each person who reads the ringisho adds comments and suggestions to the ringisho.\textsuperscript{13} This way each person knows what proposed changes may occur, and has an opportunity to recommend strategies and actions that may help make the implementation and operation of the plan much easier. The advantages of such a philosophy come when each person who might be affected by the plan has already had an opportunity to view the plan, and to make suggestions as to the implementation and maintenance of the plan. This reduces resistance when the plan is actually implemented, unlike in the United States where a plan is implemented and then resistance is handled accordingly.

The Japanese see this system as a great opportunity to cross-training managers, since these managers have to interact with almost every part of the company. Additionally, the ringisho aids executives in developing the social skills necessary to become budding executives. Unlike, most negotiations in the United States, the acceptance and support of the group “does

\textsuperscript{12}De Mente, Boye. page 79.
\textsuperscript{13}Alston, Jon. page 15.
not preclude keeping track of who does favors for whom."14 These scores will be settled in the future by other managers who propose change.

The Ringi Seido system breaks down barriers among divisions that exist in large corporations and decentralizes decisions.

The main disadvantages are the timeliness of the plan coming into place, for a typical ringisho, may take up to 5 months to 1 year. Each person who takes an interest in the proposed change must be consulted, and even a minor change in the original ringisho can slow down the process.

**Quality Control Groups**

Another type of system, that involves group work but at the non-managerial level is quality control groups. The quality control groups are made up of "clerical workers, assembly-line personnel,"15 and any other individuals that work at the non-managerial level. These groups meet several times a month to discuss methods by which they can improve their productivity, working conditions, and product quality. The quality control members study their own work performance. Subsequently, they take on the role of supervising and inspecting their work. The economic advantages of such a system can clearly be seen in the reduction of supervision needed in the assembly lines.16

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14 Alston, Jon. page 17.
15 Ibid, page 22.
These quality control groups resemble in structure and concept American teams. In order for a foreign negotiator to work better with a Japanese company, you must first understand team concepts and how to work in teams.

**Management Structure**

The group concept extends to the working environment of managers and clerks. Japanese companies feature very few private offices. The typical office plan involves two rows of desks arranged facing each other, with the desk of the supervisor arranged perpendicular to the two rows. The general principle behind this arrangement is to provide a working environment where every other member of the group both monitors the fellow worker's performance and also to provide answers and guidance to fellow employees.\(^{17}\) This results in worker's improving their productivity and establishing closer relationships with co-workers. Unlike many working environments in the United States, co-workers cannot gossip about each other during work hours. Which of course, decreases the amount of mis-communication and secrecy in the office and increases worker satisfaction.

There is little competition among Japanese workers reduced by the close work environment, and the basing of pay and promotion primarily on seniority. For those individuals who posses more skills when hired will start off at a slightly higher position. However, subsequent promotion will be based mostly and primarily on seniority.\(^{18}\)

\(^{17}\) Ibid, page 19.  
\(^{18}\) Ibid, page 22.
Top management does not have the same role as management in the United States. Primarily, the majority of management in Japanese companies are individuals who have exerted leadership. Japanese companies have managers, but do not actually have “business executives in the Western sense. Masaaki Imai, managing director of Cambridge Research Institute-Japan, says that in a situation where employment is permanent and management is collective, there can be no such thing as an executive.”\textsuperscript{19} Furthermore, most managers in Japan act on behalf of the company and not on their own behalf. In the United States, many managers look at short term returns in order to increase their bonuses, times they may even use creative accounting to control income. Japanese managers have a great amount of loyalty to the company’s economic welfare. This loyalty is developed through groupism and results in the company to be viewed as another family.

**FAMILIASM**

The company is seen as another family by the Japanese businessman. He has developed this loyalty from not only the group working environment, but also from because most Japanese companies had offered in the past a life-time contract to employees. Consequently, the livelihood of the company results in the livelihood of the businessman. The company also takes on the role of family, by providing several services to its employees, including finding its employees spouses.\textsuperscript{20}

\textsuperscript{19}De Mente, Boye, page 82.  
\textsuperscript{20}De Mente, Boye, page 93.
This relationship affects many types negotiations. Basically, if you wish to negotiate with any individual you first do so in a personal meeting and not through a cold, unfriendly phone call. It is imperative then for you to possess the communication skills required in any face to face communication.

JAPAN, INC.

"The Japanese think of Japan as a small, resource-poor nation surrounded by stronger, wealthier, and often threatening foreign countries." For many Japanese businessman, the company acts on behalf of the country. Any negotiations with foreigners will be based on strict etiquette. However, if a business negotiation does not seem to profit the company or the country it is most likely that they will not accept it. It is important to understand that etiquette will fog this issue. If an American businessman asked for a yes/no answer to a deal, the Japanese businessman will probably say that he will think about it, when in fact he just said such to not hurt the American businessman's feelings. It is imperative, once again for you as a negotiator to develop your communication skills, especially listening.

21 Alston, Jon. page 31.
Current Issues:

Most Japanese feel that other countries are threatening to Japan, but it is slowly changing. Many Japanese figures in high political power, are clamoring for Japan and Japanese businesses to "stand up" for themselves and do not let other "threatening" countries take advantage of Japan. Shintaro Ishihara is one of the strongest advocates of this philosophy. He has written a book that asks Japanese businessmen to stand up to America. Even though, this may sound as one man's radical ravings, his book is a Japanese national bestseller.
LEADERSHIP IN JAPAN

Leaders in Japan mostly maintain harmony and morale of their workers. Their primary responsibilities are analogous of a team leader. Any disagreements or any type of decision is made through the consensus of the group. With the use of the ringi seido and quality control groups, most meetings are called just to confirm the decision proposed, since by this time, the decision has been approved by most parties. You will probably have a tendency to bring issues forth and try to resolve them in these meetings.

When leaders do not know what course of action to take, he/she will call a meeting in order to discuss the matter with his assistants. The leader than has the responsibility to take the course of action to which the assistants agreed. He will make an official decision, but he will primarily be responsible to make sure that the implementation runs smoothly.

American companies are shifting towards hiring leaders that are like those in Japan. Leaders who will primarily maintain the harmony and morale of workers. Leaders who will motivate workers, listen to worker’s complaints and address worker’s concerns. To be a good leader you must master communication and management skills.
SOCIAL CUSTOMS IN JAPAN

Social skills in Japan are very different to those in the United States.

A Japanese business man will achieve a corresponding social status as a result of that individual's status gained from "being employed by a leading company." (24, De Mente). The social behavior of juniors or inferiors to behave in "a prescribed manner" not only in the business environment but at all times. It is a form of social behavior that dates back to Japan's Feudal age. It is also primarily due to the way management is styled. Seniority is the primary basis for promotion and pay. A form of expression in social contact is the bow. Socialization does not take place in Japan like it does in the United States. The primary rule is seniority, the hierarchical harmony that must exists and many rules of etiquette that must be followed. The primary underlying rule of etiquette is simply to make sure that any action taken not only follows rules of etiquette and the Japanese work ethic, but also that it will not offend or differentiate the individual from the group. For example, an individual can not tell another person to sit down until they let that person know what their position is in relation to them.22

Unlike many in the United States, socialism does not take place on a friendly, I am equal level. The primary purpose between exchange at work is the talk of work, and that is how socialization takes place. The next section describes methods by which

22 De Mente, page 38.
you can acquire more social skills for an American company. These skills may help to
train you to learn more about dealing with Japanese etiquette.

Unlike in the United States, there are some social customs that many Japanese
businessmen practice and are sometimes demanded by the social and business
structure.

One important social custom, which may present an ethical issue to some
American businessmen is going to bars or cabarets. Japanese businessmen like to go
to these bars and cabarets to relax and blow off some steam. To them, such practices
are perfectly O.K. and do not see anything wrong with offering the companionship of a
beautiful young woman to foreign negotiators. 23 You should go to the bar with them.

23 De Mente, Boye, page 101.
SOCIAL SKILLS

UNITED STATES

Social skills is perhaps one of the most difficult skills to acquire and master. Social skills are determined primarily by the working environment. In conservative environment there are more “stricter rules,” that need to be followed than in a more liberal environment. Furthermore, there are also some social skills that are more acceptable in certain regions of the country.

The social skills that you practice should depend on the working environment. For example, if everyone always seems to have a tendency to eat bagels for breakfast, you should also try to eat bagels. However, if you do not like bagels, do not force yourself to eat bagels, but instead try a distinctly different dish. Always try to order a dish that is distinctively different. For example, in the bagel example you would order differently if you ordered a donut, but you would be distinctively different if you ordered a croissant. It is important to order distinctively different because it gives your co-workers the following impression:

*She/he ordered a croissant, I suppose that she/he doesn’t like bagels, but she/he has good taste.*

However, if you just ordered something that is different your co-workers will probably get the following impression:

*She/he ordered a donut, I suppose she/he doesn’t want to be like the rest of us and order a bagel, what a jerk!*
Albeit, some people will have a different perception of you ordering a croissant, you must remember that it will be most likely that they will be more understanding to your distinct difference, and not just a difference.

You should be able to interact within the social environment of your company if you practice common sense. Some mistakes that most recent college graduates make include over-eagerness and a tendency to become a shy individual, even if they were not before. In most companies, either extremely conservative or somewhat liberal, you do not want to start by making one of these mistakes. When you are overeager, you will annoy many of your co-workers, and many of your supervisors will see you as a very immature individual that possesses little self-control. Some of the symptoms that your supervisors and co-workers consider as signs of over-eagerness and which you should try to avoid exerting include:

- Asking to be put on more projects even though, you haven’t finished other projects,

- Volunteering for every type of company event, company sponsored community events, or any other kind of events.

- Offering to help your supervisors and co-workers with anything that comes up, such as getting coffee for them, parking their car and so forth.

- Continuously asking people to go to out to lunch with you.

- Finally, anything that may be deemed as a desperate attempt to become part of any group, such as intrude by laughing within a group that has just told an inside joke for which you
Social Skills

absolutely cannot know its meaning. We all have seen on several television comedies how individuals try to join a group by pretending to be part of that group. This pretending doesn’t work in television comedies and it won’t work in the business environment.

Needless to say, that you shouldn’t show any eagerness, but you must not be over eager, control your enthusiasm and channel that energy into more productive ventures, such as learning more about the company but in this case it is best if you don’t advertise it to the entire company that you are doing so. You are a smart individual and your talents will be apparent to others, so don’t worry about advertising them.

Another common problem most college graduates suffer when they recently enter the business world, it that they sometimes exhibit unduly shyness. Even if they are not shy, they tend to keep to themselves. This type of behavior is perhaps more damaging than being over-eager, since its interpretation can be that you do not enjoy your job, or the company and do not like your fellow employees. Most of the time, this will be a false misconception about you, you might actually love your job, the company and your fellow employees. Some of the symptoms that your supervisor and fellow employees consider as part of these aloofness and that you should try to avoid include:

• Smiling very infrequently.

• Greeting individuals when needed rarely.

• Eating lunch by your self, and not asking anyone to join you.
Social Skills

• Working away from the start of the day to the end, without taking the time to make small talk with co-workers or supervisor.

• Finally, never becoming involved in any type of company or company related activity.

Avoiding being shy is easier than being overeager. The best thing that you can do is ask fellow co-workers to go to lunch with you, volunteer for some company or company related events, and smiling. The basic skills that transcend such divisions as regions, and corporate environments include smiling, greeting, and understanding.

AT COMPANY SOCIALS

Always try to find a way to get invited to company socials.24 Once you are at a social you must have proper etiquette. Depending on the social different type of etiquette will be required. However here are some basic etiquette that follows all types of socials:

• Do not just go by and leave. If you are going to attend, plan to be at the social for a significant time.

• You should leave only after an important person leaves, such as your supervisor, or the president of the company. But do not leave immediately after, you should wait at least twenty to thirty minutes after that. If you leave after a person who is considered lowly at the office, you will then be associated with that person.

• Try to socialize and meet people, but do not do so in excess you do not want to seem

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over-eager.

- Above all, have a good time and enjoy the social.25

**JAPAN**

In Japan, a hierarchical system exists where each individual possesses a station in life and the individual must adhere to the proper behavior for that particular position at all times. There are however, like in the United States some very basic and necessary rules. When someone that has a higher position is present you must undoubtedly pay that person the proper respect. Generally, you must always smile, and greet the person with great politeness.

**Smile**

Perhaps the most difficult social skill to master is the smile. When you smile, your smile should be sincere and not forced. Do not force yourself to smile, since your co-workers, supervisors, and others will notice that you are being insincere.

**Greetings**

Greetings should be sincere, appropriate and necessary. Do not greet someone just because you think you need to, greet them with sincerity and kindness. The greeting should be appropriate according to the your and the other person's position.

AT COMPANY SOCIALS

Company socials are very formal and require that the Japanese businessmen act with utmost etiquette. In most socials, once again the businessmen is expected to act according to their position. They cannot show any form of rowdiness and it is expected that everyone dress almost the same. Any individual showing any type of difference is ostracized by the group.26

26 Alston, Jon, pages 44-55.
**MANAGEMENT SKILLS**

**UNITED STATES**

It is necessary to have good management skills. Management skills are very much the same as social skills but involve taking different types of actions, which at times can be in-actions. The secret to your success is to develop the ability to balance good performance, get along with your co-workers and understand how the organization works.

Take the necessary time to set objectives and periodically assess your progress. Sometimes the immediate demands of a busy environment may overshadow the importance of taking time to plan and organize. Done properly and on a timely basis, you will find that good planning is critical to your success. Remember, for every minute spent planning you gain 10 minutes in value-added productivity and efficiency. Focus on immediate goals and don't be distracted by long-term objectives. In other words, do the best you can in your current position and don't get ahead of yourself by seeking out new opportunities before the time is right.  

**JAPAN**

Management is expected to focus not only on the individual goals of the company but also on the long-term objectives of the country. It would be unethical and a breach of etiquette for a Japanese manager to take actions that would benefit him more than the company.

Management in Japanese, although based on a hierarchy is very interactive. As discussed

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27 Inroads, Inc., page 2.
Management Skills

before, management uses the Reingo Seido system and quality control groups. The management structure functions similar to the team concept in the United States. Remember, in teams the leader does not rule, but guide. Meetings are used efficiently and are usually short. Team members should put aside differences in order to produce an effective working group. Team members do not blame each other when something does not work out, and all problems are solved on a reasonable basis taking into consideration team members's feelings, the objectives of the team, and the goals of the team. Management in Japan, acts very similar to this, and they adhere to a strict code of etiquette.

KNOWING YOUR JOB

UNITED STATES

As basic as this concept sounds, you must truly understand what is involved in knowing your job. You must of course understand your responsibilities, but you must also have an understanding of what really awaits you when you begin your career in the business world. Being accountable for your actions and understanding what hard work is are concepts you should become familiar with before you begin your career in international trade.

JAPAN

The hierarchical social system and seniority based promotion system delineates the job responsibilities for Japanese businessmen. Most Japanese businessmen do know their responsibilities, and unlike in the United States, it is considered proper etiquette for a Japanese businessman to only dedicate himself to his job.
Management Skills

Being Accountable for Your Actions

UNITED STATES

It's important that you accept responsibility for your actions and not be afraid to make a mistake. If you learn from your mistakes, you gain knowledge and become an asset to the company. No one expects you to be perfect; if you beat yourself up for making mistakes, you will be your own worst enemy. We all make mistakes, and how you accept responsibility for them and react to them is critical to your career development in any company.

JAPAN

It is important for you to understand that in Japan, businessmen are expected to be perfect and are usually not expected to make any form of mistakes. They can always, and should always, ask the advice of group members, and such a technique should not result in a mistake.

Understanding What Hard Work is

UNITED STATES

"The work environment can be tough, the demands may seem unreasonable, the hours long, the work can sometimes be tedious and the people you encounter may not always be what they seem."28 You must keep your spirit up and remember that there are rewards that your current job will bring to you. In international trade careers, you will encounter many different cultures,

28 Inroads, Inc., page 2
Management Skills

learn about different customs, and experience different working environments.

**Knowing Yourself And Others**

**UNITED STATES AND JAPAN**

Before you enter any type of negotiations, either for a job proposal or for a multi-million dollar international deal, you must first know yourself and then others. In most countries, especially Japan, this skill is a must, without it you will not be able to even begin any type of negotiations and your working relationships with your fellow employees will leave much to be desired. The end result of knowing yourself and others will be what is currently referred to in the business community as “networking.” Many in the business community refer to networking as one of the most important factors to achieving success. There are a few steps and principles that must be followed in order to know yourself and others efficiently. These include the basic social skills discussed earlier, meeting your new co-workers, learning how to work with upper-level management, and becoming part of the group.

**Meeting Your New Co-Workers**

**UNITED STATES**

Every employer has an orientation program which is unique to its culture. In this program you must make sure to take note of the messages that the body language of the presenters say. If the body language is positive, then you must also strive to adhere to such policies. If the body
Management Skills

language is negative, then you should try to use as much sensitivity as possible if the subject is discussed. Be smart, do not waste this great opportunity to learn about the company and its culture. It may be the only time you have such virtually risk-free opportunity.

If your company does not have a formal orientation program, then your supervisor will introduce you to the rest of the staff. In most cases, you will probably be on your own when it comes to meeting everybody else. A typical introduction may go as follows:

“Hi, my name is Mary Smith. I'm working for John Peters in Financial Services.”

This will usually prompt others to introduce themselves. In general you will first start the process of becoming part of the company culture by first discussing the weather, sports or the best food available in nearby locations.

JAPAN

In Japan introductions usually involve not only the person's name, where they are working, but also the name of the company, and what their social position is.


Management Skills

Working with Upper-Level Management

UNITED STATES

Many individuals start with having pre-conceptions as to how upper-level management should act. They either believe that all those who have such positions act either as great managers and persons, or as horrible managers and persons. However, such unrealistic presumptions will be detrimental to your career. You should not have such presumptions, and don’t be intimidated by individuals with authority.31 Showing any form of shyness may lead them to believe that you are not upper-level management material. However, you should not be over-eager either. Find a middle ground, and act according to your perception of the manager, a perception you should gather from experience dealing with the manager and not from office gossip.

Becoming part of the group

JAPAN

Learning to become part of a group is very difficult. You will discover many differences among your co-workers. You may or may not be able to relate to some of these differences. However, you should not be overly hostile and clearly show that you are part of the group and will easily blend with everyone.

Some of the steps needed to become part of the group were discussed in the social skills

31 Ibid, page 5.
section. Generally, greet and get to know people of within the group. Remember that at times your values will be challenged, remember that you do not have to give up your values in order to become part of the group. You may have to changed them a little. You must always remember to have a personal sense of ethics and not to be carried away by the group.

Respecting Your Co-Workers

JAPAN

Needless to say, this is a must. Most of your co-workers will be probably more knowledgeable about the work environment -- regardless of their educational background. You will make more allies in the work-place if you respect your co-workers for their experiences. Ask them about the company and their experiences. You will be surprised how eager many of your co-workers are to help you if you show an interest in what they do.

Companies encourage their employees to always have respect for their co-workers, either by changing the office space plan or by affecting the working environment. Currently, many large companies in the United States are shifting towards these plans. These plans include involve using more teams, having quality control circles and decentralizing decisions. For example, the Business Consulting group, of Arthur Andersen, in Dallas was praised for using creative office space usage.
Management Skills

According to the article, the space usage encouraged teamwork, and employees interacting more with co-workers and management which resulted in higher productivity and less employee-management misunderstandings.  

Don't Take Yourself too Seriously

UNITED STATES

First of all, in this competitive business world, you are very lucky to be employed by a company that conducts some form of international trade. Most companies that are involved in international trade are usually medium-sized to large. You worked hard and competed against others for a limited number of opportunities. But, you need to keep your feet firmly planted on the ground, understand the importance of humility and maintain a good sense of humor. You should also carry these thoughts when you go abroad to negotiate or when you are representing your company at any international affair.

In the Foxholes

UNITED STATES

At times, in your work experience you will be in a foxhole. A foxhole is a situation where you and perhaps your supervisor, or president or managing partner of your company, will be faced to resolve a situation. You are then in a foxhole together against what that situation may bring. In these cases, your position will probably be ignored and you will be treated as any other upper level management. You should use all your skills and talents at this time to contribute to resolving the issue.

You should not mention or broadcast your involvement, since your superiors did notice and took note of your contribution. If you brag, it is likely that you will be perceived as not having much maturity or professionalism.

Needless to say, being in a foxhole with your superiors is a great opportunity to demonstrate your skills and to prove yourself. Use common sense and don’t let your ego run away with you.33

Knowing The Organization

Knowing the organization does not involve memorizing organizational charts of your department or company, but to getting to know the workers, their respective departments and how everything fits together. You can start the process by reading the Chairman’s letter in the annual report or by reading the company’s newsletter if the company has one. Understand their policy, there are many printed books and manuals as to how the company operate. One weekend, you should check them out and read them at home. You might learn more about the company than you thought.

Asking for help

Knowing when and how to ask for help is a respected skill. If you have encountered a situation abroad where you do not know how to resolve pending issues, do not hesitate to ask for help. You may even want to hire a consultant, or guide to aid you in that country. Pride shouldn’t stand in the way, remember to not to take yourself too seriously.\(^{34}\)
SUMMARY

You should try to develop your management skills when you first start your career. With the help of these management skills you will quickly be promoted to a management level position. In international trade you will discover that management skills are not a plus, but essential in any type of negotiations. You will be dealing with different people and your management skills will allow you to effectively communicate and negotiate. Once again, by interacting with people who are different from you and by establishing a diverse network of business acquaintances and mentors, you will enhance your overall effectiveness on both a personal and professional level.
Communication is a cycle. There are three main processes. The processes are to obtain, verify, and transmit information. Figure 2-1 depicts these cycle of face-to-face communications.\textsuperscript{35}

![Diagram of communication cycle](image)

There are three main steps to communication which are obtain, verify and transmit.

\textsuperscript{35} Procter & Gamble, page 1.
Communication affects presentations, discussions, reviews, meetings and subsequently everyday office interactions.

We obtain information by listening. Listening is the most demanding, but most productive part of communication.

There are few steps for you to follow in order to learn to listen effectively. These steps are as follows:

- Stop talking
- Be patient
- Show what you want to listen
- Listen for facts and feelings
- Empathize
- Do not be argumentative or critical.
- Ask questions.
Communication Skills

**Stop Talking**

You must stop talking even if the situation that the other person is describing has happened to you before. Many times, you may want to share information and end up telling that person an entire story and you still have not listened to them. Also, do not talk on the phone, or do not do anything else besides listening to that person. If you want to take notes about the conversation, ask the person first if you may do so, in order to not aggravate them more.\(^\text{36}\)

**Be Patient**

In some international negotiations the translators may take a long time to express the idea completely. Allow time for the idea to be expressed. Do not interrupt assuming that you know what the other individual wishes to say. You might find out more if you are just patient. After all, a minute spent listening may mean a million-dollar deal made or a million-dollar loss prevented.

**Show that you want to listen**

Help the talker feel free to talk. Use positive body language. Look and act interested at what the talker is telling you. You should listen and understand rather than to oppose.

\(^{36}\) Ortega, Nancy, July 20, 1995.
Communication Skills

Listen for facts and feelings

At all times, maintain eye contact with the talker and be on the alert for any non-verbal signs. Non-verbal signs might be such as the shaking of hands, the shifting of feet or constant eye movement.

Empathize

Try to put yourself in the other person’s place so that you can see their point of view. However, do not interrupt them and start telling them about your opinions. If you want to give advice, wait until the talker has finished telling you the situation and has specifically asked for your advice. When you do give advice, always include some form of assurance as to the credibility of the advice, do not compromise yourself and do not make any promises.

Do not be argumentative or critical.

Try not to discuss or criticize the situation or any event of the situation. Being argumentative or critical puts the other person on the defensive causing for the lines of communication to be closed.

Ask questions.

When you ask questions you show to the other person that you are indeed listening. Also, by asking questions you help to develop discussion points. You might also, discover some
information that may not have been mentioned if you did not ask a question. Do not assume that the talker knows what you don’t know. When dealing with Japanese corporations, this will be your primary key. You may have to ask different versions of questions until you are sure that you understand what is being discussed.

Finally, in order to be a more effective listener you should eliminate what are referred to as communication barriers. Typical communication barriers include repetitive value statements, unchangeable positions, lack of purpose, and time pressures. You should try to make sure that you have open communication. Some signs of closed communications include rationalizing, blaming others, hostility and withdrawal.

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37 Procter & Gamble, page 3.
38 Procter & Gamble, page 2.
CONCLUSION

One of the most demanding fields is international trade. The world is growing fast and it necessary for education among all individuals to continue. There is much literature currently available that will help aspiring individuals to learn more about etiquette and ethics of different countries. Etiquette and ethics are very essential in the conduction of any business and social event. Generally, for many appropriate etiquette and ethics distinguish highly motivated individuals from everyone else.

This booklet was designed to help the beginner to understand some basic concepts concerning trade with Japan and how to build some basic skills.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


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