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| **Title: Business etiquette across countries and cultures** |
| Language: English  CEFR Level: B2/C1 |
| Author: VitBox team |

Descriptor:

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| Mode of communication / Activity, strategy or competence:  speaking, reading, writing | Scale:  Building on pluricultural repertoire |
| Descriptor:  **B2**  Can identify and reflect on similarities and differences in culturally determined behavioural patterns (e.g. gestures and speech volume or, for sign languages, sign size) and discuss their significance in order to negotiate mutual understanding.  Can, in an intercultural encounter, recognise that what one normally takes for granted in a particular situation is not necessarily shared by others, and can react and express themselves appropriately.  **C1**  Can identify differences in sociolinguistic/-pragmatic conventions, critically reflect on them and adjust their communication accordingly. | |

Introduction to task

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| **Goals of the activity:**  generating awareness of cultural behaviours to avoid misunderstanding in formal contexts. Practise identifying potential misunderstandings caused by cultural differences.  **Introducing the activity in the classroom:**   * ask participants to talk about appropriate behaviours in business meetings * ask participants to identify the most important things to remember when arriving to a meeting with colleagues from other countries? * Do they think a meeting with colleagues from a single country differs from an international meeting? Why? Why not?   **Description of the main activity:**  This activity can be carried out in blended learning courses as an online activity or in traditional courses as a classroom activity.  Have the students look at a text on business etiquette. project the text on a screen for collective reading if needed.   |  | | --- | | **The Essentials of Business Etiquette**  source: business insider 1. Be on time. Make sure you come on time and prepare for the meeting ahead of time. You don't want to waste anyone else's time by not being punctual. Leaders need to start on time so people can depend on that" 2. Make introductions. If everyone doesn't know one another in the meeting room, you need to make introductions. You should do this by starting with the person of the highest rank first. 3. Have a strong agenda. This is part of being prepared, but you should have a good, strong agenda so that you can stay on track. If you do get off track, you should have a strong facilitator to get you back on track. 4. Sit appropriately. If it's a sit-down meeting, you need to adjust your chair so that you're at equal height with everyone else at the table. Some people don't adjust their chairs, so they end up being the little kid in the meeting. 5. Speak up. When people speak in meetings they need to speak loudly enough so that everyone hears what they're saying. Many men and women, especially women, do not speak loudly enough. And speaking softly is a subtle nonverbal action that can affect your professionalism. 6. Understand the unwritten speaking rules. It's not polite to interrupt others, but in some meetings, you have to interrupt at some point or you won't be heard. Understand the rules so that you can have a productive meeting. 7. Do not have your phone out. A lot of people keep their phones on the table during meetings. Don't do this. Even if you aren't looking at your phone, it can get distracting if it starts lighting up or making noises. 8. You can drink coffee, but you need permission for anything else. If you're going to eat, it needs to be OK with the entire group. 9. Clean up after yourself. This is especially true if you were drinking or eating during the meeting. You need to clean up after yourself and leave things the way you found them, otherwise, it's not professional. 10. Don't save all your questions for the end. Ask your questions at the appropriate time. Do not be the person who starts asking questions and adding stuff that doesn't need to be added when everyone's getting ready to go. |   Ask students what they think about these rules, do they identify with them?  Ask students to get into groups of 4/5.  Ask the students to discuss in their groups about which of these rules they consider applicable to their context and which they think is different in their culture.  • Can they think of any other countries they have visited or read about where these rules would be different?  Ask the groups to identify rules that might be different in other countries, allow them to go into the internet to search for business etiquette in different countries.  • What did they find?  • Did you find information on a country where the rules were very different?  **Peer feedback – class discussion**  Ask the participants to share their findings.  • Which countries seemed more different to yours?  • Why do you think the rules are different?  • What is the business meeting etiquette in your country and why do you think that is?  • Do you think the business meeting etiquette is affected by properties of the culture of the participants or the culture of the country where the meeting is taking place?  **Assessment**  Fill in the following table, or have their peers fill it in. The success in the completion of the task is determined by the number of questions answered affirmatively.   |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  | |  |  | | --- | --- | | Yes | No | | | Did the students engage in a conversation about business etiquette in different countries? | |  |  | | --- | --- | |  |  | | | Did the groups identify which of the rules in the text they read where familiar to them and which weren’t? | |  |  | | --- | --- | |  |  | | | Did the groups research online about business etiquette in other languages? | |  |  | | --- | --- | |  |  | | | Did the groups compare the business etiquettes in their different countries/cultures?? | |  |  | | --- | --- | |  |  | | | Did they talk about the origins of the rules in each culture? (Why the rules are different in each of their cultures) | |  |  | | --- | --- | |  |  | | |