



Quick E-Tips



INTERNATIONAL
ADVANTAGE

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WELCOME! Bienvenu! Bienvenido!

Enjoy these 2 tips on **business culture** and **language learning**...

Culture/Communication Tip: Getting an Accurate Answer to your Question

In many relationship-oriented cultures (like Mexico), responses to questions tend to be "optimistic", when individuals are "put on the spot". They want you to be happy, even if it is only for this moment that you are asking the question. When asking "Can you call me tomorrow?", or "Will this be done by Thursday?" you will often hear a response that will please the listener.

In more task-oriented cultures (like U.S. and France - especially the north), people tend to be direct, giving you a response that builds in cushion or margin for error. When answering the same questions as above, you might hear, "I cannot call tomorrow, but next Tuesday, I can." In response to the second question, you might hear, "We can guarantee it by (date)", but it should be done by Friday."

Advice? In relationship-oriented cultures, try asking open-ended questions or negative questions to get an accurate answer. Try: "When can you call me?" or "Will it be difficult for you to call me tomorrow or the next day?". For the second question, try "If you think it will be finished on Thursday, when would be the latest date that it would be ready, if something goes wrong?" Asking questions in this way will give them "permission" to give you realistic answers.

In task-oriented cultures, try to use numbers and specifics. For example, "I will call you at 2 p.m. your time, on Tuesday." And then do it! This will build trust and confidence.

Language Tip: Learning New Vocabulary

Working on your foreign language skills when abroad (or when surrounded by speakers of other languages at work)?

Advice? Always carry around a small pad of paper and jot down new words. Often, there will be many new words, so try only writing down the words that you have seen/heard more than once. Ask a native speaker if it is slang or not. Annotate words that are slang for your future reference. Spend time daily looking up those words and practicing them.

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Helping companies who have employees or clients from different cultures:

- solve problems in cross cultural environments
- negotiate more effectively
- speak the language
- organize themselves to improve communication

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To your continued success around the globe,
Lisa

Lisa Koss
International Advantage - Leading Across Cultures
(623) 516-2482 (U.S.A.)
www.intladvantage.com
liskoss@intladvantage.com