



# Prepackaged Sales Meeting Tips for Business Success: Focus on Asia



## **Introduction to Prepackaged Sales Meeting**

### ***Module: Tips for Business Success: Focus on Asia***

Dear Broker/Firm Trainer:

NAR research indicates that 1 in 5 REALTORS® has been involved in an international real estate transaction. If this surprises you, you might ask yourself if business opportunities are being lost because your agents do not understand the elements of an international real estate transaction. The bulk of “international” business takes place in local markets and sales agents need a base level of knowledge to help them attract (and keep) this business, which often comes about from a former client whose needs have expanded beyond the domestic level.

NAR has created a series of modules to help you provide an introduction to global market transaction elements. These modules are designed to be incorporated into your regular sales meetings; many of which can be expanded, based on the firm’s needs. They include resources for additional information for agents seeking a more in-depth understanding of the topic.

Keep in mind that these modules *will not* make your agents “international experts.” (NAR offers advanced training and certification for REALTORS® who work in markets where they will benefit from this.) Rather this information is designed to provide agents with enough basic information on a range of topics so that when the potential client walks through the door who:

- *is looking to buy a vacation home in Mexico,*
- *has recently immigrated to the U.S. and is unfamiliar with U.S. industry practices,*
- *has recently inherited a property in Europe,*
- *wants to invest in an London flat to house a child studying abroad for a year or, a U.S. flat for a student coming to the U.S.,*
- *is a U.S. military spouse from Iraq, Germany, Korea, or any number of countries where U.S. military personnel is based and may marry local citizens,*
- *received in inquiry from oversees about a new development, or*
- *a dozen other possible scenarios...*

...Your agents will be able to assure this potential client or customer that they can help with this transaction!

This module introduces licensees to some of the initial and more subtle cultural issues they should know to successfully do business with clients from the Far East. Some of the protocol is not strictly adhered to in the United States but carries a great deal of importance with our Asian neighbors. To engage in successful business transactions you should be aware of these examples and refer to the Resources page for additional reading material.

We hope you’ll find this module useful in your sales agent training program, and we welcome your feedback. Questions or comments can be sent to [NARglobe@realtors.org](mailto:NARglobe@realtors.org). For information on other international training resources from NAR, visit our web site at [www.REALTOR.org/international](http://www.REALTOR.org/international), or contact Heidi Henning, Manager, International Education and Membership at [hhenning@realtors.org](mailto:hhenning@realtors.org) (800.874.6500; x8376).



## Broker/Trainer Instructions

1. Time required: 15-20 minutes
2. Select two people to participate in the Asian Business Demonstration. Only one person has to do minimal speaking but the other must be familiar with the content so she can do the pantomime at the appropriate times. Give each a copy.
3. The broker/trainer will be the Narrator in the demonstration.
4. If time permits, have a run through with the participants before doing it in front of the group.
5. Following the demonstration, ask if members of the audience noticed any cultural faux pas. If so, list them on a flip chart or board.
6. Go through the items listed on the 'Lessons to be Learned' page. Make a copy for all attendees.
7. Have participants pair up and practice going through the steps of business card exchange with each other. Be sure they stand! (Refer to Lessons to be Learned handout.)
8. As time permits, discuss local resources for marketing and servicing Asian clients. Invite legal counsel or individual familiar with Fair Housing laws to participate in discussion to address questions/concerns regarding the impact of Fair Housing laws on targeted marketing activities.

## Asian Business Demonstration

**Narrator:** The big day has finally arrived. Ms. Wang, from Hong Kong, is coming to town to view potential investment properties. Mr. Lester has spent time going through the MLS trying to find properties meeting Ms. Wang's requirements. He read somewhere that gifts were appropriate so he has that covered. He also heard Asian investors need time to develop trust in a business relationship before they commit. That's not so different than anyone else he's worked with. He is confident trust-building will not be a problem. Well, she's here. He's ready.....let's go!

**Mr. Lester:** Hello Ms. Wang. I'm Tom Lester. It's a pleasure meeting you. (He offers his hand and shakes hers with a heavy pump.)

**Narrator:** Mr. Lester takes his cardholder out of his hip pocket, opens it, licks his thumb and takes out a card, quickly handing it to Ms. Wang. She receives the card appropriately, looks it over carefully and gently places it on the table beside her. Ms. Wang then carefully removes her card from her leather cardholder, presents it to Mr. Lester and bows ever so slightly. Mr. Lester takes her card, turns it over and asks the name of the hotel where she is staying.

**Narrator:** Mr. Lester scribbles the hotel name on the back of her card, puts it in his cardholder and slides it back into his hip pocket.

**Narrator:** Feeling the time is right, Mr. Lester presents a gift to Ms. Wang. It is wrapped in blue paper with a white ribbon. Ms. Wang politely opens the gift and thanks Mr. Lester.

(Individuals portraying roles pantomime actions above while narrator reads.)

**Ms. Wang:** Thank you.

**Narrator:** Mr. Lester, feeling he is on a roll, continues by saying...

**Mr. Lester:** Susie, you don't mind if I call you Susie do you? Let's get down to business. (He puts his arm on her shoulder as they walk away.)

# Lessons To Be Learned

## **1. Shaking hands**

- a. Chinese extend a hand first
- b. Chinese and Japanese shake with a weak grasp
- c. Koreans maintain eye contact
- d. Korean women rarely shake hands

## **2. Business Cards**

- a. In Asia, a business card is an extension of the individual
- b. Exchanging business cards is a ceremony
- c. Always bow when presenting your card
- d. The deeper the bow the greater the respect being shown
- e. Never carry business cards in your hip pocket
- f. Always carry cards in a nice metal or leather cardholder
- g. Always present and receive cards with both hands
- h. Always present your card with the writing facing the receiver
- i. Never lick your thumb and peel off a card
- j. Never turn someone else's card over and write on back
- k. Always examine their card carefully and place on table

## **3. Gifts**

- a. Modest gifts are appropriate at first meeting
- b. Blue or white wrapping paper signify death
- c. Black and white paper unacceptable
- d. Gifts may or may not be opened when received
- e. Koreans especially sensitive about Japan; do not bring gifts from there or refer to personal contacts in that country

## **4. First Names**

- a. NEVER use first names until you are invited to do so

## **5. Touching**

- a. NO, NO, NO!! Asians generally do not like being touched by people they do not know

## Additional Tips for Broker Use

Following are additional business tips pertaining to working successfully with Asian clients and customers (for broker use and to share with agents, as appropriate). Note article on lawful target marketing in Resource section to ensure Fair Housing Law compliance.

- If you expect to do a lot of business with a specific Asian culture, consider having your business card printed two-sided; English on one and the appropriate Asian language on the other.
- Locate an Asian-owned or operated gift store in your community and have them handle the wrapping. The wrapping is equally as important as the gesture itself.
- Learn a few polite phrases, e.g., Hello, Good-bye and Thank-you of the language of your prospective client/customer. (See Language Toolkit Module for resources.)
- Firms located in communities highly populated by a specific ethnic group may wish to consider hiring an office staff person fluent in the language. In addition to assisting agents, if needed, this can convey friendliness and an invitation to consumers to use the firm's services. Fair Housing laws dictate that individual agents can't automatically be designated to service clients/customers based on ethnicity. Consult legal counsel for more information.
- Once the firm is prepared to be responsive to Asian client and customers, market your services in community publications that reach the specific ethnic group(s) you wish to target. Be sure to use a professional translator (and someone familiar with the culture) to create or translate the ads to ensure they are technically and culturally correct. Again, Fair Housing laws address advertising (print and electronic) that target specific audiences. Be sure to market your unique services to the population at large, and consult legal counsel with questions regarding marketing materials that promote services related to a specific ethnic group.

## Resources

1. Kiss, Bow, or Shake Hands, Terri Morrison, Wayne A. Conaway, & George A. Borden, PhD.
2. DO'S and TABOOS of Hosting International Visitors, Roger E. Axtell, John Wiley & Sons, Inc. 1990
3. DO'S and TABOOS of INTERNATIONAL TRADE, Roger E. Axtell, John Wiley & Sons, 1989
4. "Passport Japan: Your Pocket Guide To Japanese Business, Customs and Etiquette" Dean Engel and Ken Murakami
5. "Business Japan: A Practical Guide To Understanding Japanese Business Culture" Peggy Kenna and Sondra Lac
6. "Culture Shock Japan" Rex Shelley
7. "Chinese Business Etiquette: A Guide to Protocol, Manners, and Cultures of the Peoples Republic of China" Scott Seligman
8. Website: [www.culturegrams.com](http://www.culturegrams.com)
9. DVD: "REALTORS® Reaching Out to the World Around Us" The CENTER for Education and Private Enterprise, P.O. Box 1327, Columbia, MO 65205, or NAR Library, 430 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60611-4087
10. "Lawful Targeting" by Nan Roytberg. REALTOR® Magazine, April 2005 (pp. 20-21).
11. CIPS Course: Asia/Pacific and International Real Estate. Course description, schedule and sponsorship information available at: <http://www.realtor.org/cipshome.nsf/pages/Education#CourseDescriptions>