How to Conduct Business in Spain
There's much more to than just eating tapas by the Mediterranean and exploring ancient Roman ruins.

Spain is the 4th largest economy in the European Union and one of the top 20 exporters anywhere in the world. Spain is the home of a number of international corporations, in addition to its renowned tourism industry.

Before you complete any deals on the Iberian Peninsula, you'll need a good handle on the local business customs that will be expected of you, even as an expatriate.
A Note on the Language

- The differences between the Mexican Spanish and Castilian Spanish dialects are subtle enough that you should be fine using the both interchangeably.

- One thing to take note of is that Castilian Spanish pronounces “Z” as “Theta”, (similar to how “th” is pronounced in English) rather than the Mexican “Zeta”.

- In the northeastern part of Spain and its outlying islands, the native language is Catalan, which is a completely different language than Spanish.
Meeting New People in Spain

• There are a few rules you'll need to become familiar with in Spain for business meetings.

• Some customs are commonplace such as shaking hands upon first introduction. However, this is typically reserved for first-time meetings.

• According to expat resource channel Kwintessential, once a relationship - even if only budding - has been established, it's common for men to embrace and give each other pats on the back.

• Similarly, female friends will give quick kisses on both cheeks to say hello and goodbye, always starting with the left cheek.
Run A Business Meeting in Spain

• A crucial part of conducting a successful business meeting in Spain is earning trust. This means that you'll need to spend a good deal of time with the business partner before any deals are actually discussed.

• In the United States many people like to get straight to business and don’t have time for small-talk or to discuss personal matters. This is the exact opposite situation when doing business in Spain (and most European countries).

• By developing a more meaningful relationship, business partners will have a stronger allegiance to you as a person then a traditional business relationship.
Mind Your Behaviors and Appearance

- By and large, Spanish businesses will always opt for in-person meetings when appropriate, as opposed to phone or teleconferences.

- Many business dealings can hinge on how you present yourself - including how you speak about your past achievements.

- While in some countries, it is expected of you to tout your past successes in the workforce, this can come across as boastful in Spain.

- It's much better to err on the side of modesty when talking about your accomplishments.
Know Your Place

• "Going over someone's head" is generally frowned upon in most countries, and this is especially true in Spain.

• Hierarchy and seniority within the company should dictate whom you have meetings with, and certainly important when it comes to any form of negotiation.

• Be sure to do business with those who are on the same level as you professionally.

• It is also important to evaluate the risks and viability of doing business internationally, make sure to read our Spain risk assessment guide.
THANK YOU

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