



Ghana



Country Overview:

Location: Western Africa, bordering the Gulf of Guinea, between Cote d'Ivoire and Togo

Size: 238,533 sq. km.

Population: 25,199,609 (July 2013 est.)

Capital: Accra

Export-commodities: gold, cocoa, timber, tuna, bauxite, aluminum, manganese ore, diamonds, horticulture

Import-commodities: capital equipment, petroleum, foodstuffs

Currency: Cedis (GHC)

Ethnic groups: Akan 47.5%, Mole-Dagbon 16.6%, Ewe 13.9%, Ga-Dangme 7.4%, Gurma 5.7%, Guan 3.7%, Grusi 2.5%, Mande-Busanga 1.1%, other 1.6% (2010 census)

Religion: Christian 71.2% (Pentecostal/Charismatic 28.3%, Protestant 18.4%, Catholic 13.1%, other 11.4%), Muslim 17.6%, traditional 5.2%, other 0.8%, none 5.2% (2010 census)

Government type: constitutional democracy

Chief of State and the Head of Government: President John Dramani MAHAMA (since 24 July 2012)

Languages: English (official), Asante 14.8%, Ewe 12.7%, Fante 9.9%, Boron (Brong) 4.6%, Dagomba 4.3%, Dangme 4.3%, Dagrata (Dagaba) 3.6%, Akyem 3.4%, Ga 3.4%, Akuapem 2.9%, other 36.1%



Republic of Ghana

Meetings and Negotiations

- Be **punctual** and **confirm** date and time prior to meeting.
- When addressing your Ghanaian business partner, use their professional **title** or Mr./Mrs./Madame and **surname**.
- When greeting, **smile** and **shake the hand** of the most senior person first and then continue on to everyone else. **Do not** use your left hand. Also, shake everyone's hand when departing.
- Carry multiple **business cards** because they will be exchanged often. Ghanaians do not have a set protocol regarding business cards, but it is wise to treat the card with respect.
- Initial meetings are more about building a rapport, rather than discussing business. Ghanaians have a keen sense of humor and enjoy telling jokes. However until you have understood their sense of humor, it is best to refrain from telling jokes yourself.

Business Attire

- Dress modestly and professionally. **Avoid** wearing a hat; if you choose to wear one, remove it when your Ghanaian business partner enters your presence.
- Men wear suits or pants, tie and jacket. Muslim men are likely to wear a fez, or a white skull cap.
- Women dress in business suits or skirts/dress, with an appropriate top. A Muslim woman would cover her head with a piece of fabric.

Behavior

- Eye-contact is the norm between members of the same age, gender, and social class, but **overly direct eye-contact** may be interpreted as a challenge or considered **rude**.
- The thumbs up hand gesture is considered **rude**.
- Placing your hands together with the fingers pointed upwards, signals **'thank you.'**
- Placing your thumb between your

forefinger and your second finger and pointing it at someone is an **obscene** gesture.

Gift Giving

- When giving a gift use discretion and modesty; **avoid** overly lavish and expensive gifts or it may be viewed as **bribery**.
- If you choose to wrap the gift, do not be offended if the receiver does not open the gift in front of you. There are no cultural taboos about paper color.
- Do not present the gift only using your left hand because your left hand is considered **unclean**. This applies for receiving a gift as well; receive it with your right hand or both hands.
- Appropriate Gifts:** personalized gifts, desk accessory, quality pens, something specific of your own culture, cigars, whiskey, wine, flowers
- Gifts to Avoid:** carnations, pork related items and alcohol

Business Tips continued

Conversation

- Your Ghanaian business partner is likely to speak English, thus the presence of an interpreter is unnecessary.
- You will need to gain a Ghanaian's **trust** prior to making business deals. Being introduced by a mutual friend or having letters of introduction from other companies will assist this process.

- It is considered **rude** to interrupt when someone else is speaking.
- Ghanaians are **less direct** when conversing. They would rather "save face," whether it's their face or yours, than create discomfort. Sometimes this is done with the use of old sayings or short tales to illustrate a point. **Silence** is another common way of responding to a question that

can not be answered without causing discomfort.

- Be **calm** during conversation and try to **avoid** loud volumes or exaggerative arm/hand movements.

Topics to Discuss:

-Family, sports, your hometown

Topics to Avoid:

-Politics, religion, a British ex-colony