

Honduras



Country Overview:

Location: Central America, between Guatemala, El Salvador, and Nicaragua. Borders the Pacific Ocean and Caribbean Sea

Size: 112,090 km sq

Population: 8,448,465 (July 2013 est.)

Capital: Tegucigalpa

Exports-commodities: apparel, coffee, bananas, cigars, shrimp, gold

Imports-commodities: machinery and transport equipment, industrial raw materials, fuels, foodstuffs

Currency: Lempiras (HNL)

Ethnic groups: Mestizo (mixed Amerindian and European) 90%, Amerindian 7%, Black 2%, and White 1%

Religion: Roman Catholic 97% and Protestant 3%

Government type: Democratic constitutional republic

Chief of State / Head of Government: President Porfirio LOBO Sosa (since 27 January 2010); Vice President Maria Antonieta GUILLEN de Bogran (since 27 January 2010);

Language: Spanish (official), Amerindian dialects.



Republic of Honduras / Republica de Honduras

Meetings and Negotiations

-Be **punctual**, even though your Honduran counterpart may not be.

-When meeting a member of the same gender it is common to greet each other with a firm handshake.

-When meeting a member of the opposite gender, a nod and a verbal greeting is acceptable. A handshake is also common, however it is **customary** to wait for the woman to extend her hand first.

-Direct eye contact is acceptable, and is often maintained by people in high social and economic positions.

-It is **respectful** to use a title when addressing someone, especially if they were introduced with a title.

-Address teachers as “professor/a”, doctors as “doctor/a”, and someone with a 4-year degree as

“licenciado/a” or “ingeniero/a”.

-For those that do not have a professional title, it is respectful to address them with “Senor”, “Senora”, or “Senorita” followed by their surname.

-If possible, translate one side of your business card into Spanish.

-During negotiations **avoid** hard selling and pressure tactics. Hondurans prefer to build harmonious relationships.

Business Attire

-Men: wear a suit and tie, usually in dark colors

-Women: wear skirts or slacks with a nice shirt and shoes.

-For both men and women it is **important** to be well-groomed and dress on the conservative side.

Behavior

-Always hand things to people.

Avoid tossing things because it is

a gesture reserved for animals.

-In business situations people will take the time necessary to finish the task at hand without worrying about finishing by a specific deadline.

Gift Giving

-**Avoid** giving gifts at the first meeting as they may be construed as bribes.

-However, gift giving is common in social situations.

Appropriate Gifts:

-If invited to a home, an appropriate gift is a quality bottle of wine or candy.

-An invitation to lunch means that the person who **extended** the invitation will be paying for the meal.

Gifts to Avoid:

-**Avoid** giving gifts at initial meetings because it may be considered a bribe.

Business Tips continued

Conversation

-It is common to touch hands, arms, and shoulders during conversation. However, touching is **less** common in business meetings and between genders.

-Small talk is not necessary, but is appreciated as a friendly gesture.

-Hondurans are very friendly and may avoid saying “I don’t know” because they don’t want to appear unhelpful. Instead, they may tell you what they believe you want to hear.

-Often times, meetings will not follow a strict agenda and may go on for longer than scheduled. Additionally, it takes **time** for a

decision to be made because decision making is often a top-down process.

Topics to Discuss:

-Tourist sites, family, job, home, and sports (especially soccer)

Topics to Avoid:

-Local politics and unrest in Central America