



Nigeria



Country Overview:

Location: Western Africa, bordering the Gulf of Guinea, between Benin and Cameroon

Size: 923,768 sq km

Population: 174,507,539 (July 2013 est.)

Capital: Abuja

Exports-commodities: petroleum and petroleum products, cocoa, rubber

Imports-commodities: machinery, chemicals, transport equipment, manufactured goods, food and live animals

Currency: Nigerian Nairas (NGN)

Ethnic groups: composed of more than 250 ethnic groups; the most populous and politically influential: Hausa and Fulani 29%, Yoruba 21%, Igbo (Ibo) 18%, Ijaw 10%, Kanuri 4%

Religion: Muslim 50%, Christian 40%, indigenous beliefs 10%

Government type: federal republic

Chief of State: President Goodluck JONATHAN (since 5 May 2010, acting since 9 February 2010); Vice President Mohammed Namadi SAMBO (since 19 May 2010); note: the president is both the chief of state and head of government

Language: English (official), Hausa, Yoruba, Igbo (Ibo), Fulani, over 500 additional indigenous languages



Federal Republic of Nigeria

Meetings and Negotiations

-You should turn up on time for meetings, but **be prepared** for others to be late.

-A handshake is the customary way to greet an acquaintance, though some Nigerians will bow to superiors and the elderly as a show of **respect**.

-**Try** to greet those attending in order of seniority. This can often be noted by observing who people are deferring to, who has the biggest chair, etc.

-The **primary** purpose of initial meetings is usually to get to know each other. Business may or may not be discussed. It's best show **patience** and not try to impose your agenda.

-Names are usually given in the order of first name followed by family name. Some Nigerians may use Mr., Mrs., or Miss followed by the first name of a person.

-Titles are regarded as very

important and there are many of them, for example architect and engineer are used as titles.

-It's best to **wait** to be invited before you call someone by their first name.

-When it comes to business cards, it's **best** to present your card with your right hand and then accept others' cards the same way. It's a good idea to make eye contact and smile during the process. After receiving the card it's best to place it on the table in front of you or in a case.

Business Attire

-Nigerians like to dress well and will usually come to meetings in suits or in formal local clothing.

-Be well-dressed for your meetings; for men, a tie is essential. **Conservative** business dress is recommended.

Behavior

-Nigerians usually **prefer** indirect eye contact. Holding direct eye contact can be considered

aggressive.

-Lower your eyes or bow when meeting an elder. This shows **respect**.

-The "thumbs up" sign, can be very **offensive** in Nigeria.

Gift Giving

-**Never** use the left hand when giving or receiving gifts.

-Gifts from a man to a woman must be said to come from the man's mother, wife, sister, or other female relative, **never** from the man himself.

Appropriate Gifts:

-If invited to dinner at someone's home bring fruit, nuts or chocolates for the host. A gift for the children is always a nice touch.

-gifts should be wrapped, although there are no cultural taboos concerning paper color

Gifts to Avoid:

-expensive gifts and alcohol

Business Tips continued

Conversation

-Long greetings with a decent amount of small talk are common and polite. Asking about one's health and family is usually a **good** start.

-English is the accepted language for conducting business, but **avoid** using slang terms or phrases that might be misunderstood.

-In the southwest of Nigeria, where the Yoruba tribe resides, they **frequently** use proverbs and humor throughout conversation.

-Nigerians communicate with gestures and body language, so you may have to pay attention to non-verbal cues when conversing.

- **Do not** make generalizations about religion in Nigeria. Nigeria is a religiously diverse country, so it's

important to understand and maintain an open mind.

Topics to Discuss:

-food, sports (such as soccer, the most popular sport in Nigeria), weather

Topics to Avoid:

-asking about someone's ethnicity, politics