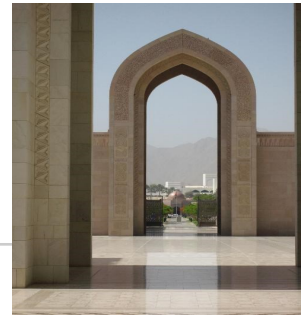




# Oman



## Country Overview:

*Location: Middle East, bordering the Arabian Sea, Gulf of Oman, and Persian Gulf, between Yemen and UAE*

*Size: 309,500 sq km*

*Population: 3,154,134 (July 2013 est.)*

*Capital: Muscat*

*Exports-commodities: petroleum, reexport, fish, metals, textiles*

*Imports-commodities: machinery and transport equipment, manufactured goods, food, livestock, lubricant*

*Currency: Omani Rials (OMR)*

*Ethnic groups: Arab, Baluchi, South Asian, African*

*Religion: Ibadhi Muslim 75%, other (Sunni Muslim, Shia Muslim, Hindu) 25%*

*Government type: Monarchy*

*Chief of State and Head of Government: Sultan/Prime Minister Qaboos bin Said Al-Said (Sultan since 23 July 1970; Prime Minister since 23 July 1972)*

*Language: Arabic, English, Baluchi, Urdu, Indian dialects*



## Sultanate of Oman / Saltanat Uman

### Meetings and Negotiations

-Make sure to have plan a meeting far in advance. **Avoid** times that conflict with prayer. Typical business hours are 8am to 12pm and 4pm to 7pm.

-The customary greeting is “As-salam alaikum” (peace be upon you) and replied with “Wa alaikum as-salam” (and upon you peace).

-When introduced to business partners, shake everyone’s hand. If there is a women present **wait** for her to extend her hand.

-**Do not** be late. Keeping people waiting is a sign of disrespect. However, do not expect the meeting to end of time.

-Hospitality is closely connected to establishing trust. Invest time in getting acquainted.

-Omanis welcome guest with a variety of different Oman traditions. For example, serving

coffee or kahwa. **Do not** decline these beverages.

-Omani companies have a strong vertical hierarchy. Decisions will be made from the top-down, meaning the process will be slow.

-Business cards are **not** a common part of Oman culture. If you do extend a business card make sure to give one to everyone in the room.

### Business Attire

-Omani men wear the traditional full-length white robes and turbans.

-Foreign men are expected to wear conservative black or brown suits.

-Women wear conservative suits with little or no jewelry.

### Behavior

-Omanis keep a close distance when talking, they believe it helps build trust.

-Omanis keep strong eye contact during meetings. By returning the eye contact it is viewed as mutual understanding.

-Omanis take their time when deliberating, **do not** rush a decision.

### Gift Giving

-Gifts are not necessary, but appreciated.

-Gifts should **not** be opened in public.

-When giving the gift, present it to the **highest** official and with both hands.

### Appropriate Gifts:

- perfumes without alcohol, books, art work

### Gifts to Avoid:

- alcohol, perfumes with alcohol, pork or pigskin items, personal items, knives, art of women, cigars

## Business Tips continued

### Conversation

-Omanis are quiet soft spoken people. **Avoid** being to loud or using your hands when speaking.

-Conversations can be slow do not feel obligated to speak during periods of silence.

-If the answer is “yes” it often mean “possibly”.

-Meetings are often interrupted by phone calls. Be prepared to have to break.

-The person asking the questions in a meeting are often the least important. Those quiet and in the background make the final decisions.

-Be prepared to present one concept multiple ways.

-Due to the language barrier it may be helpful to have a presentation outline in both English and Arabic.

### Topics to Discuss:

-sports, friends, family, holidays, growth in economy

### Topics to Avoid:

-Israel, women, dogs, religions, cigars, politics