



Tunisia



Country Overview:

Location: Northern Africa, bordering the Mediterranean Sea, between Algeria and Libya

Size: 163,610 sq km

Population: 10,732,900

Capital: Tunis

Exports-commodities: clothing, semi-finished goods and textiles, agricultural products, mechanical goods, phosphates and chemicals, hydrocarbons, electrical equipment

Imports-commodities: textiles, machinery and equipment, hydrocarbons, chemicals, foodstuffs

Currency: Tunisian Dinar (TND)

Ethnic groups: Arab 98%, European 1%, Jewish and other 1%

Religion: Muslim 98%, Christian 1%, Jewish and other 1%

Government type: Republic

Chief of State: President Moncef MARZOUKI (since 12 December 2011)

Head of Government: Prime Minister Hamadi JEBALI (since 14 December 2011)

Language: Arabic, French

Tunisia is the 70th largest economy in the world.



Tunisian Republic / Al Jumhuriyah at Tunisiyah

Meetings and Negotiations

- Hand shakes are the customary greetings between business partners.
- Greeting of opposite sexes is a simple head nod of acknowledgment.
- The host is **expected** to introduce everyone in the room to the guest of honor.
- Make sure to say good bye to everyone individually.
- Exchanging of business cards is a **formal** process.
- Invest time getting to know people on a personal level. Tunisians often ask questions about families, friends, and personal interests.
- During meetings, Tunisians believe in an open door policy, and will come in and out as they please.
- Decisions are made through

great deliberation, it is **important** not to rush Tunisians for an answer.

-Tunisians view deadlines as fluid rather than set in stone. Plan accordingly.

-High pressure tactics will lead Tunisians to pull out of negotiations rather than make a decision faster.

Business Attire

-Tunisian attire will be conservative and formal.

-Men: wear dark colored suits, mainly black or brown

-Women: wear either a suit or dress, but will cover the arms and legs. They **avoid** wearing a lot of jewelry

Behavior

-Tunisians pride themselves on success. Often they will name drop or state prominent achievements.

-Interruptions are common and frequent, especially for explanation or clarification.

-Tunisians **do not** understand the Western concept of personal space. Often they stand close and will hold your arm or hand.

Gift Giving

-Gifts are **not** expected, but are appreciated.

-Gifts should be given with both hands.

-A gift **will not** be open in public.

-Present gift to the highest official attending the meeting.

Appropriate Gifts:

-nuts, fruits, cake, candy, flowers, photos of the city

Gifts to Avoid:

-perfumes with alcohol, cigars, alcohol, anything made with pig, art work of females

Business Tips continued

Conversation

- In general it may take **many** visits to accomplish a simple task. Be patient.
- Never** criticize in public. It is important for them to feel confident.
- Tunisians do not want to be disrespectful, therefore they

rarely say 'no', but instead say 'maybe'.

-Keep your temper. Tunisians are calm and soft spoken.

-**Avoid** looking at the clock. It is viewed as rude and disrespectful.

-Keep **strong** eye contact. It is viewed as a sign of respect and sincerity.

-Always ask about the family as whole, **avoid** asking about a single person, especially daughters or wife.

Topics to Discuss:

-family, friends, sports, universities

Topics to Avoid:

-females, religion, animals