



Fiji



Country Overview:

Location: Oceania, island group in the South Pacific Ocean, about two-thirds of the way from Hawaii to New Zealand

Size: 18,274 sq km

Population: 896,758 (July 2013 est.)

Capital: Suva

Export-commodities: Sugar, garments, gold, timber, fish, molasses, coconut oil

Import-commodities: Manufactured goods, machinery and transport equipment, petroleum products, food, chemicals

Ethnic groups: Fijian 57.3%, Indian 37.6%, Rotuman 1.2%, other 3.9%

Currency: Fijian dollar (FJD)

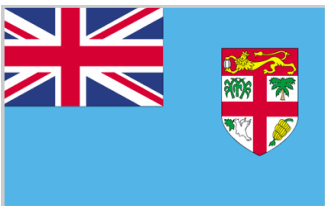
Religion: Protestant 55.4%, Hindu 27.9%, Roman Catholic 9.1%, Muslim 6.3%, Sikh 0.3%, other/unspecified 0.3%, none 0.7%

Government type: republic

Chief of State: President Ratu Epeli NAILATIKAU (since 30 July 2009)

Head of Government: Prime Minister Laisenia QARASE (since 10 September 2000)

Language: English (official), Fijian (official), Hindustani



Republic of Fiji / Matanitu ko Viti

Meetings and Negotiations

-There are cultural differences between indigenous Fijians and Indo-Fijians or Fiji-Indians.

-**Most** business people are Indo-Fijians, although there is a growing presence of Indigenous Fijians.

-Most business people prefer to be called by their first name, rather than using Mr./Mrs. and a surname.

-Use **titles** in formal correspondence.

-When addressing certain indigenous Fijians of chiefly status, **always** use either the title “Ratu” (men) or “Adi” (women; pronounced “An-dee”) with their first name.

Business Attire

-Business dress is informal. Normal attire for men is

trousers with an open-neck, short-sleeve shirt. For more formal business meetings a tie might be worn, normally with a short sleeve shirt. Suits and jackets are **seldom** required.

- Men wear conservative, dark colored business suits. Suit-shirt-tie outfit typically indicates that someone is an executive. The traditional long-sleeved batik shirt is also **appropriate** in formal and business situations.

-Women typically wear suits or dresses that are elegant and feminine with good quality accessories. **Avoid** short, tight fitting, and sleeveless attire.

Behavior

- Standing with hands on hips is seen as an expression of **anger** or arrogance.

-Indigenous Fijians **do not** like to be touched on the head; it is considered a traditional **taboo**.

-Pointing to a person while talking to them is generally considered **rude**.

Gift Giving

-Gifts are to be opened in **private**, not in the presence of the giver.

- It is **not** necessary to bring a gift to a first meeting, although it will be accepted graciously.

-Wrap presents in green, yellow and/or red, avoid black and white.

Appropriate Gifts:

-Very simple gifts are often exchanged at a first meeting. Something with a corporate logo is appropriate.

-Safe gifts include chocolates or flowers.

Gifts to Avoid:

-Avoid giving frangipani or white flowers as they are reserved for funerals.

Business Tips continued

Conversation

-Personal space tends to be an arm’s length, and may vary with strangers and friends and family.

-Touching during conversations **only** tends to take place between Fijian women. There is generally **no** touching during interactions.

-Direct eye contact tends to be acceptable in **most** situations.

-Punctuality tends to be **important** for Fijians who live and work in urban areas. Indo-Fijians are generally **very** punctual.

-Fijians generally think of foreigners as benefactors, which may be a legacy from colonial

times when the British governed.

-Indo-Fijian men tend to be more direct and express their opinions more than any other group.

Topics to Discuss:

-Fijian customs and traditions

Topics to Avoid:

-western gender roles

