



VCAT VIRTUAL CULTURAL AWARENESS TRAINER



Leader Engagements - Pakistan

GREETINGS AND RAPPORT

- Begin engagement with small talk, and wait for your counterpart to bring up business.
 - Good topics include your counterpart's health, family, and travel experience.
 - Avoid talking about politics, religion, ethnicity, and female family members.
- Greet elders, or highest ranked men first.
- Handshakes are common between men and women in business situations, though not always in casual or social settings. Greet with a nod if necessary.



HOSPITALITY

- Hospitality is very important in Pakistan. It's impolite to decline offers of tea.
 - At meals, accept as much as you can eat, and finish all of the food on your plate.
- Taking leave can take longer than you expect. At the end of meetings, you will often be offered a final cup of tea. It's polite to chat before saying goodbye.

RELIGION

- If counterparts interrupt a meeting to pray, don't delay or disturb them.
- During the month of Ramadan, don't eat, drink, or smoke in public during the day. Try to schedule fewer or shorter meetings during this month.

WORKING WITH LEADERS

- After initial greetings during engagements, stand and chat until being invited to sit.
- You might meet counterparts in both formal offices, or somewhat casual professional clubs.
 - In professional clubs, use the opportunity to get to know counterparts personally.
 - Avoid overly political or sensitive topics in both situations.
- Allow your counterpart to lead formal engagements, and give input where necessary. Avoid trying to get to every point on your agenda.
- Pakistan's military is bureaucratic. Decision making is in the hands of higher ranked officials.

BUILDING TRUST

- Pakistanis value honesty in their relationships. During engagements in both formal and informal settings, be as honest as operationally possible.
- If your counterpart requests something that is not feasible, don't directly reject their request, but also don't make promises you can't keep. It's best to underpromise and overdeliver.
- If you need to deliver criticism, do so privately and politely.

KEY PHRASES

| ENGLISH | URDU |
|------------------|----------------------|
| Hello | asalaamo 'aleykum |
| Hello (response) | wa 'aleykum asalaam |
| Yes | jee haan |
| No | jee nahin |
| Please | bur-aaye mehurbaani. |
| Thank you. | shukriah |
| Excuse me | memuaaf kijiya |
| Goodbye. | khudaa haafiz |