

Company culture in Germany

COMMUNICATION

LEVEL
Upper-intermediate

NUMBER
EN_BE_3908X

LANGUAGE
English

lingoda

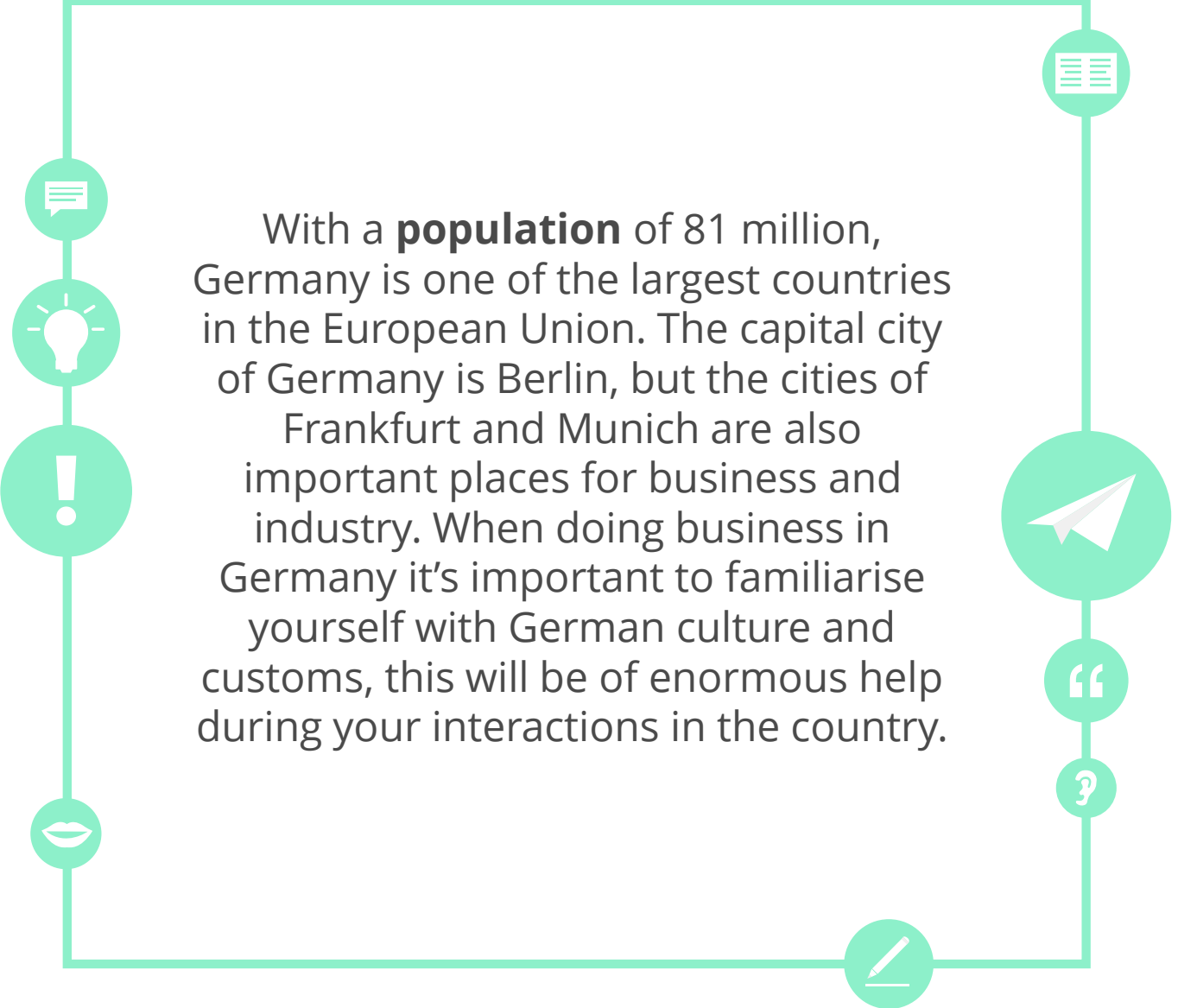




Goals

- Can understand typical business culture and conduct in Germany
- Can use the future perfect and new vocabulary to make realistic promises and predictions





With a **population** of 81 million, Germany is one of the largest countries in the European Union. The capital city of Germany is Berlin, but the cities of Frankfurt and Munich are also important places for business and industry. When doing business in Germany it's important to familiarise yourself with German culture and customs, this will be of enormous help during your interactions in the country.



Germany

What do you already know about Germany?



food

culture

landscape

famous sights



Test your knowledge of Germany

	TRUE	FALSE
1. Germany is the largest economy in the European Union.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. The German economy is very innovative and focused on exports.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. When it comes to climate change, Germany is a pioneer in terms of development of renewable energy sources.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. German is the official language of Germany but there are also several recognised minority languages, such as North Frisian and Low German.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. It might be a stereotype but it is true that sausages are a very popular food in Germany.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Germany is a parliamentary democracy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



A visit to Germany

Have you ever been to Germany before? Do you recognise any of the places below? Where would you most like to visit in Germany and why?



landscape



urban
environment



Making promises and predictions using the future perfect

- We use the future perfect to speak about a completed action in the future. When communicating in Germany it's always a good idea to be direct and suggest a realistic outcome for whatever has been discussed. The future perfect is a good tool for doing this.

- We form the future perfect with the simple future of the verb *to have* (will have) + the past participle of the main verb
- For example: *I will definitely have finished the report by Friday morning*





Adverbs of certainty

- We use adverbs of certainty to express how we feel about a particular action or event. Sometimes it can also be appropriate to use adverbs of certainty in conjunction with the future perfect. The phrases using adverbs and the future perfect are highlighted completely in bold.

Adverb	
certainly	He will certainly have finished the project by the end of the month.
clearly	While there has clearly been a mistake, it can be easily fixed.
obviously	Under the circumstances there will obviously be no charge for the additional services.
probably	She will probably have arrived at the airport by now.
definitely	You will definitely be attending the meeting on Friday, won't you?



Using the future perfect with adverbs of certainty

- Both the future perfect and adverbs of certainty are really useful tools to use when making promises and predictions in a business context.



We will have worked on this project for nearly a month by then, so we will **definitely** see some progress.



Predicting the future

Can you make predictions for the future with the cards below using adverbs of certainty?



cold weather this
winter in
Germany

miss a flight
because of a
delayed train

inform the
customer about
the status of their
late order by the
end of the day

be in touch soon
regarding your
offer



Using the future perfect

Can you give sample answers to the questions below using the future perfect?



Will you have the results of the test by the end of the week?

Will they have made a decision by the end of the day?

Will she have arrived at the conference yet?

Will you have had enough time to make a decision by tomorrow morning?

Will he have finished the report by next week?

Will we have managed to gather enough information by next week?

Will you have spoken to them by this afternoon?

Will his plane have landed yet?

Will she have heard back by next month?



Now it's your turn!

Think about your own working situation. What will you have done by tomorrow, next week, next month, next year? Practise using the future perfect in your answers.





Understanding business culture and conduct in Germany

- It's important to gain an overview of business culture and conduct in Germany. Below are some crucial points to bear in mind.

- **Communication style**

- German people are direct people. Get straight to the point when communicating. Be as polite as possible as you do not want to sound too direct or rude.

- **Personal space and touching**

- In Germany it is generally preferable to guard your own personal space. Touching may be seen as an infringement of personal space.

- **Eye contact**

- Direct eye contact shows interest and respect during a conversation. However, try not to stare too much.



Business greetings in Germany

- Whether you are meeting someone for the first time, or reacquainting yourself with colleagues or clients you have already met before, it's of crucial importance to take the time to greet people appropriately. Remember to treat everyone with equal respect.

- Shaking hands with both men and women when arriving and leaving is the correct way to greet. Even when there is a large group to greet, take the time to shake hands with everybody. Do not use the first name of the person you are doing business with, ALWAYS use the title and the surname.





Views of time in Germany



- Punctuality is highly valued, especially when doing business. Do not arrive late to any meeting or appointment.



Remember, in Germany it is extremely important **to be on time!**



Non-verbal communication/gestures:

- Take into account the following different gestures and their meaning.

- OK: You can use thumbs up. Waving the hand back and forth with the palm up usually means "no".
- Moving your hand with the palm inwards in front of your face means that, you believe the person in front of you is crazy.
- At the end of a presentation, instead of clapping, Germans knock on the table gently with their knuckles.





Company culture in your home country

Imagine someone from Germany was visiting your home country to do business. What advice would you give them? In what way does the culture in your home country differ from that in Germany?



non-verbal
communication

greetings

eye contact

personal space

communication
style

timekeeping



Put your knowledge into practise

Look at the phrases in the boxes below. How might they be helpful when doing business in Germany? Can you make a complete sentence with each phrase and relate it to one of the tips from the previous slides?



Excuse me...

I'm sorry...

Can I introduce you to...

This is my colleague...

I think we should...

I'm sorry I think that was a misunderstanding on my part...

Hello, it's nice to meet you, my name is...

Let's start with...

Pardon me...



Business dress in Germany

- You might already be familiar with the English expression - dress to impress - but what constitutes an appropriate dress code for doing business in Germany?

- Depending on the industry, formal or informal dress code is required. Try to wear conservative clothing and neutral colours. It is generally frowned upon for women to wear very expensive and/or elaborate accessories.





Business communication in Germany



- Meetings: Be on time. No small talk.
- Negotiations: Germans tend to be extremely detail-oriented. Business is usually hierarchical. Avoid conflict and confrontation.



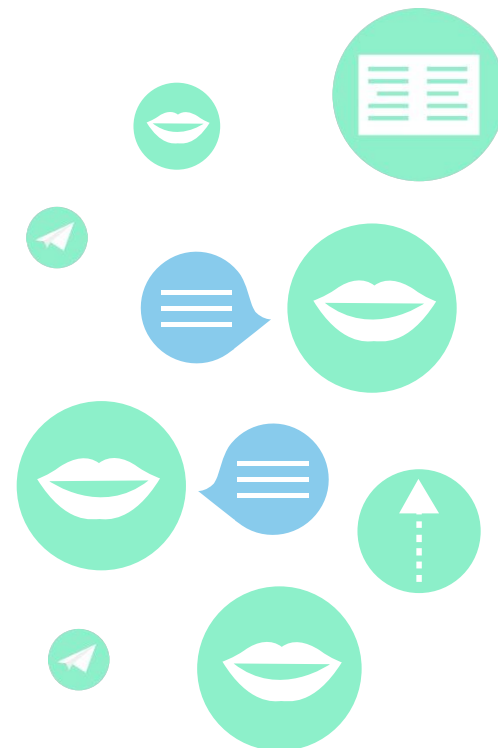
Remember - in Germany details are of crucial importance!



Dress to impress

Read the quote below. Do you agree? What are the rules for business dress in your home country? In what ways is business dress in your home country similar or different to that in Germany? Should someone's style of dress play such an important role in business? Give your opinion.

“You've got to dress to impress in business. It might not seem fair but how you look makes a real impression on people. Dress scruffily and you will come across as lazy and unreliable but turn up with a well-ironed shirt and shiny shoes and you'll come across as someone who is organised, motivated and good to do business with.
”

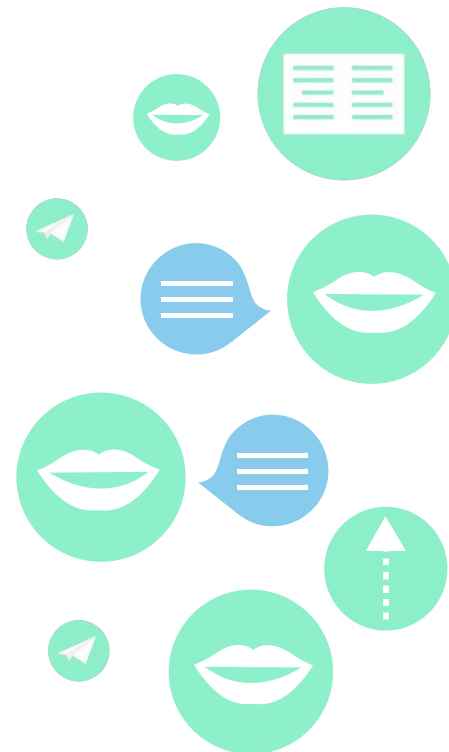




Putting your knowledge into practice

You and a colleague have an important meeting in Germany. Your colleague has never been to Germany before and knows nothing about the business culture there. Brief your colleague on how to prepare for the meeting and then roleplay the meeting to help them feel more confident. Be sure to cover all the points in the table below!

personal space and touching	style of dress
small talk	punctuality
eye contact	conflict
introductions	greetings
state the subject of the meeting	establish the details





Reflect on the lesson

Take a moment to review any new **vocabulary, phrases, language structures** or **grammar points** you have come across for the first time in this lesson.

Review them with your teacher one more time to make sure you don't forget!





Answer key

Exercise p. 5
All answers are true





Homework evaluation activity

How did you find this class? Which parts of the lesson did you find most challenging? Which were most useful? Which were not so relevant? Give your feedback here!

A vertical rectangular form with a light gray background and a white border. On the left side, there is a vertical line of ten small circles, resembling a spiral binding. To the right of this line are ten horizontal lines for writing feedback.



Homework writing activity

Several members of your team are shortly going to be visiting Germany on a business trip. They have never visited the country before and your manager has asked if you can write a short guide for their trip for them. Include facts about Germany and a brief guide to company culture and etiquette.

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