

Hello everyone!

Today's topic is: [American Business Culture](#)

Understanding the social rules of the American workplace can help you to communicate more effectively, and improve your chances for career success.

Activities:

1. American Business Culture Quiz
2. Three Key Factors of American Business Culture
3. Social Interactions in the American Workplace



*Special Announcement:*



***ESL Ann Presents***

**American Job Interview Skills for English Language Learners**

**Four-week Summer Workshop: August, 2023**

**Dates: August 2, 9, 16, 23 (Wednesdays)**

**Time: 8:00am - 9:00am**

**[Click here for more information](#)**

Workshop registration available June 1, 2023.

Go to [eslann.com](http://eslann.com) for more information and to register

(This workshop is not affiliated with SJPL)

# American Business Culture Quiz



## True or False:

1. Most Americans have traveled abroad and have a worldly mindset.
2. Respect is earned through achievement rather than through age or background.
3. Self-deprecation is often misunderstood by Americans as a sign of weakness. Sell your strengths.
4. Americans work shorter hours and tend to take more vacations days than other cultures.
5. Americans focus on long-term results.
6. Americans like efficiency. Time is money – don't waste it.
7. Many Americans define themselves by their occupation.
8. It's ok to be late for a meeting as long as you enter the room quietly.
9. Once a decision is made, change is resisted and new ideas are not welcome.
10. Employees often refer to their colleagues *and* bosses on a first name basis.
11. The lack of hierarchy in the office means that the boss's decision can be overruled by the subordinates.

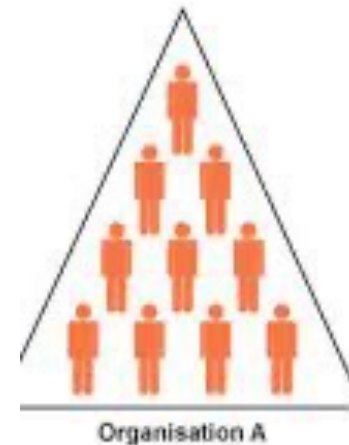
# Three Key Factors of American Business Culture

1. American companies are not very hierarchical.
2. Americans Like Direct Communication.
3. Business Relationships are Not Personal.



# American Companies Are Not Very Hierarchical

- Employees treat each other more or less the same regardless of their positions.
- Employees often refer to their colleagues *and* bosses on a first name basis.
- Overall attitude is more friendly and equal.
- Being overly formal and polite might seem strange (treating bosses and older colleagues as above you might seem odd and unnatural).
- American business culture stresses the individual initiative and achievements.



# Americans Like Direct Communication

Americans are direct. They say what they mean:

- “yes” means “yes”
- “no” means “no”
- “maybe” is not a polite way for saying “no” – it really does mean maybe.



# Americans Like Direct Communication

- In business, Americans are used to making up their minds quickly and decisively.
- They trust straightforward and to-the-point information.
- Americans love efficiency. Getting to the point is efficient.  
(do not waste time with unnecessary conversation)
- When working with Americans, you are expected to speak-up in group settings, even with various levels of the hierarchy present.

*Time is money!*



# Americans Like Direct Communication

Being direct is not being rude:

- You can be very direct and still be respectful.
- Respectfully disagree.
  - Show appreciation and explain the reasons why you disagree.
- You're expected to be honest and upfront with your feelings, opinions, etc.
  - Don't "beat around the bush."





# Social Interactions in American Companies

Your company is not your family.

- You are not expected to spend time with your colleagues outside of work.
- “Outside of work” social activities are rare and usually optional.
- You don’t see your colleagues outside of work unless you have a genuine friendship.

No,  
your *company* is *not*  
your *family*.

# Social Interactions in American Companies

Americans like colleagues who are approachable and friendly.

- Generally, Americans have a sense of humor, like to laugh and enjoy talking with people at work.
- Handshakes are expected but other touching, such as hugging, is considered inappropriate.
- Small talk in the workplace is expected (informal, and friendly).
- Being overly formal and polite might seem strange.  
(treating bosses and older colleagues as above you might seem odd and unnatural)



# Business Relationships

- Business relationships are formed between companies, rather than between people.
- Americans do business where they get the best deal and the best service.  
(customer loyalty is generally not important)
- Americans are focused on the deal, on the result. They do not need a relationship to make a deal.
- Verbal agreements are rarely considered binding. A deal is confirmed by a signed contract.





*The American dream is focused on hard work and getting things done.*