



Access to Asia: Your Multicultural Guide to Building Trust, Inspiring Respect, and Creating Long-Lasting Business Relationships

Sharon Schweitzer , Liz Alexander

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Create meaningful relationships that translate to better business"Access to Asia" presents a deeply insightful framework for today's global business leaders and managers, whether traveling from Toronto to Taipei, Baltimore to Bangalore, or San Francisco to Shanghai. Drawing from her extensive experience and global connections, author Sharon Schweitzer suggests that irrespective of their industry, everyone is essentially in the relationship business. Within Asia, building trust and inspiring respect are vital steps in developing business relationships that transcend basic contractual obligations. Readers will find in-the-trenches advice and stories from 80 regional experts in 10 countries, including China, Hong Kong, India, Japan, and Korea. Discover the unique eight-question framework that provides rich interview material and insight from respected cultural experts Track cultural progress over time and highlight areas in need of improvement with the Self-Awareness Profile Learn the little-known facts, reports, and resources that help establish and strengthen Asian business relationships

Effective cross-cultural communication is mandatory for today's successful global business leaders. For companies and individuals looking to engage more successfully with their counterparts in Asia, "Access to Asia" showcases the critical people skills that drive global business success.

Access to Asia: Your Multicultural Guide to Building Trust, Inspiring Respect, and Creating Long-Lasting Business Relationships Details

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Nicholas Wirth says

Very absorbing book about U.S. and Asian culture. The U.S. quiz made me realize just how much I don't know about my own country. Can you name the 3 U.S. territories and 2 U.S. commonwealths if a visitor asked you? I need to study more!

Kathy says

Access to Asia is a useful resource and cultural background material for anyone wishing to gain a deeper understanding of this region of the world, and the impact of culture on business. The text is very thoroughly researched and referenced, combining academic studies, 100 interviews with business professionals, and what seems like extensive first hand experience. The opening chapters give an overview of essential theoretical understandings of culture, which situate the reader to understand and utilise the information given. The book then proceeds to examine The USA and 8 Asian countries for cultural insights. The text is structured around 8 core questions that are identified as essential to building relationships. A very useful reference resource. The only concerns I had were that at times the text was poorly edited/phrased, and that the font size in my edition and general layout were small, making for harder reading.

I received this text as a Goodreads First Reads in exchange for honest feedback.

Paola Guevara says

As a college graduate who majored in International Business, the most important piece of information that's engraved in me is the phrase: in order to understand another culture, one must understand their own. Schweitzer and Alexander do a great job in starting the book off with valuable knowledge on U.S. culture before diving into Asian cultures, making it easier to digest the information because it's already in the back of your head. Access to Asia provides a highly informative, yet enjoyable read on extremely crucial factors that go into not only doing business with a global partner, but those traveling into Asian countries as well.

Definitely would recommend!

Leah Haney says

Access to Asia is an important read for anyone who considers themselves an international businessperson, or even just a citizen of the world. As a professional artist this book has been vital to my understanding of the broader art scene, as art is an expression of culture. This is a comprehensive guide to understanding societies across the world, and a fascinating window into the diversity of the east.

Leah K. Haney, AVAA Artist of the Year, 2012 Austin, Texas USA

Kristen Eggers says

As a Marine Biologist, having an awareness of intercultural communication is crucial. My field requires me to interact with many different cultures when collaborating on global environmental stewardship. Access to Asia has provided a valuable framework for me to explore the depths of international cultures, as well as my own, and I look forward to future guides for other regions of the world as well.

Kristen M. Eggers, B.S. Aquatic Biology, University of California at Santa Barbara, USA

Cayah says

Every day I interact with global customers. After finishing Access to Asia, I realize intercultural communication is fundamental to my business practice. I relish the opportunity to showcase respect for foreign protocol, enhancing a wide variety of my international business relationships.

Even in this day-and-age, women in business can be scrutinized, marginalized, and underestimated. However, Sharon's book has equipped me with an arsenal of knowledge about the most influential Asian countries and how I can succeed in my role as a female leader - I can approach any situation with grace and confidence.

Cayah C. Haney,

CEO, Living Proof Creative/ Former Director of Operations for MRG, Austin, Texas USA

Kaitlyn says

Self-Assessment and knowledge of self has historically been the starting point for leaders who succeed. Before we can analyze another culture we must study and understand our own. Drs. Schweitzer and Alexander lay a fascinating foundation for exploring 10 Asian cultures by examining US culture first. Within each of the Asian chapters, they also provide an opportunity to self-evaluate. Brava!

Kaitlyn Haney

MA Candidate, Texas State University, School of Psychology, San Marcos, TX

Amanda says

With innovative analysis of ten Asian cultures that blends history and statistics with the illustrative experiences of international business professionals, Sharon captures the essence of each country in this

indispensable business guide. Her method provides a clear and concise overview of each nation, illuminating the intricacies of Asiatic cultures and providing insight that removes cultural barriers to make way for successful business relationships. What is so remarkable about Access to Asia is that Sharon turns cultural idiosyncrasies- which can make different cultures seem like a minefield of quiproquo and misunderstanding- into fascinating nuances tied to each country's rich history. This book gives readers the tools to enter into the Asian market with culturally-adapted strategies and skills, a brilliant tool for any business professional.

Sunny says

Schweitzer's book, Access to Asia, provides an accurate and concise explanation of South Korea. As a South Korean native, this guide is easy to read and comprehend for anyone interested in the country's political, economic, social, and cultural traditions, making it an excellent read for the public. The book provides insight on subtle cultural differences by guiding the reader through its eight question framework and self-quizzes.

Rian Nejar says

A review of a First Reads book received free of cost... While informative, and nicely organized, I found that the authors' reliance upon anecdotes to form cultural inferences missed cultural nuances and sometimes presented invalid information. Minor editing and proofreading errors, and innumerable references (also employed to arrive at the authors' inferences) as well as links to websites providing inane questionnaires and soliciting purchase of other books, were distracting.

At the outset, in this book, the quotation "*Culture is the accumulation of life experiences spanning generations*" is simply an individual opinion stated, which can hardly be said to accurately reflect cultural practices derived from family, religion, mythology, literature, philosophy, and personal learning and training among other influences. If this quotation may be taken at face value, what *Western* culture could we employ to describe ourselves as Americans? Experiences of the idealistic early years, and "manifest destiny," during the formation of the colonies and the republic? Or experiences during the civil war, and continuation of divergent ways of life despite all efforts to integrate and unify the nation? Or colonizations, and the great wars of the twentieth century, or experiences of economic exploitation and of contemporary times, where we continue to see huge chasms in social unity, and a general lack of direction and admirable purpose?

I've had the good fortune of having lived in many of the Asian countries described: China, Japan, India, and Malaysia. I was hosted in China by a founder of a manufacturing company who had me interact regularly with his employees both professionally and socially. My experiences tell me that the observations of one individual, stated as fact within the book, that "*Chinese find it fun to test you; some of it is just plain fun for them, and some of it is to find out what your limits are*" is, quite simply, incompatible with my findings, and incongruent with the observation of their respect for formality described by the authors themselves. This sentiment is most likely a projection by one whose anecdotal statement has been employed: I have been personally entertained by this individual and know this to be a possibility. In beginning discussions on Indian culture, similarly, the authors use a worn cliché, one that the very same individual, who commented about the Chinese, employed with me, that of the movie '**Slumdog Millionaire**.' Another, employed similarly, is '**City of Joy**.' While such connections may have some conversational or entertainment value, they do not

open eyes, or enlighten in any useful manner. For those curious, that individual, whose comments the authors quoted, indicated that he found Slumdog Millionaire strange and quirky. I maintained a respectful silence then, not rising to his bait!

Contrary to what the authors claim, Hindus *do not* consider people invited into their homes 'gods.' This is a misconception arising from a literal interpretation of "*Athithi daivo bhava*," which, in Sanskrit, translates roughly (my Sanskrit is quite sketchy these days) to 'A guest is God-like.' These verses in Sanskrit, poetic and beautiful, are implemented in varied practice as cultural habits. Hindu folks treat guests with respect, and cater to their every need, but do not **religiously** (if that is the extent of the authors' implication) consider them gods. That's just silly; I ought to know, for I grew up in a Hindu family.

The strange quotation from Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, "**No one can hurt me without my permission**," in a section discussing formality of business people in India, seems out of place and rather disturbing. Can that quotation not be interpreted as shared responsibility by victims for harm inflicted? Gandhi's statement may apply where oppression and exploitation of the Indian people by colonial powers are concerned, but its relevance to contemporary business practices seems tenuous at best.

As for descriptions of other countries, Japan, and Malaysia, I think the authors are reasonably accurate, though I have seen Japanese folks interact quite informally with the *gaijin*, which I most definitely was, and probe me for my sentiment regarding the nuclear bombing of their cities. Malaysians can be quite direct and informal from the very first meeting; they can also be openly disdainful of the west. The information provided in the book can nevertheless be employed reliably, and contextual cues sensed can help with greater success in forming relationships.

Overall, a book that is an interesting collection of anecdotes, an organized guide, and an illuminating read for the inexperienced business traveler.

Jonathan Roberts says

As an internationally competitive swimmer, this book has helped expand my horizons of the places that swimming takes me and has made me feel more comfortable with the places I go. Swimming has taken me to the Far and Middle East and this book has given me a better appreciation for the places I go. I will be heading to World University Games in Taiwan next month and I look forward to rereading the Taiwan chapter in anticipation of my trip. I will also urge my teammates to inquire about the chapter so they can have a better understanding of the island that they are heading to.

On top of being a swimmer, I am also an international relations and asian studies major and this has been a perfect supplement to my studies. I have already shared the book with many of my classmates.

This is a must read for any person doing business in Asia or for someone who wants to learn more about cultures in this dynamic part of the world.

Sharon Jackson says

Comprehensive culture guide and an informative treasure!

Thank you Sharon Schweitzer and Liz Alexander - I found your use of an interactive format and engaging writing style refreshing. The information on India's culture and business relationships has proven particularly helpful in my professional communications with Rice University academics, Houston's energy corridor specialists and our immense international community. Based on what I've read so far, you two have created a comprehensive culture guide and an informative treasure! I look forward to your next book to learn more about global diversity and other world cultures!

Nicole says

I received this book through a Goodreads giveaway. I found it very interesting and it opened my eyes to many different issues of importance related to Asian culture. I appreciated all the different chapters focused on various countries, such as China, India, Japan, and Singapore, to name only a few, because there are both similarities and differences between all these countries. Each chapter has a comprehensive review of key cultural observations and protocol tips. I will re-read this book ahead of trip to Asia or business interactions with Asian companies.

Emilie Lostracco says

Access to Asia is highly the perfect handbook for businesspeople preparing for an Asia trip or for international business/international relations students studying culture throughout Asia. Schweitzer and Alexander's book provides chapters, subheadings, and clear charts that make the text extremely easy to navigate, making finding answers to your specific questions (such as, "what business gift would be most appreciated in Myanmar?") fast and easy. I love how each country profile begins with a quick true or false quiz on the history, structure, and culture of the country so you can test your knowledge before reading. I find this tool more helpful to remember important historical events or cultural customs than simply reading a block of text.

Esther Sanchez says

Anyone who loves to learn about cultures, work abroad, or just love to read need to have Access to Asia on their bookshelf. This book contains respectable, honest information about the Asian countries. Readers will be taught about everyday life, how to interact properly and be given advice on improving speech in different regions. Schweitzer and Alexander do a great job at breaking it down into countries and topics. As a college student planning to study multiple cultures, this book encourages a positive foundation and the curiosity to continue learning more about regions throughout Asia and different cultures around the globe.

