



Building Relationships

Traditionally, the British can be quite formal and sometimes prefer to work with people and companies they know or who are known to their associates. The younger generations however are very different; they do not need long-standing personal relationships before they do business with people and do not require an intermediary to make business introductions. Nonetheless, networking and relationship building is often key to long-term business success.

Most British look for long-term relationships with people they do business with and will be cautious if you appear to be going after a quick deal.

If you plan to use an agenda, be sure to forward it to your British colleagues in sufficient time for them to review it and recommend any changes.

Business Meetings

Punctuality is highly important in business situations, and even more so with the Scots. In most cases, the people you are meeting will be on time. Call if you will be even 5 minutes later than agreed. Having said that, punctuality is often a matter of personal style and emergencies do arise. If you are kept waiting a few minutes, do not make an issue of it. Likewise, if you know that you will be late it is a good idea to telephone ahead and offer your apologies.

How meetings are conducted are often determined by the composition of people in attendance:

- If everyone is at the same level, there is generally a free flow of ideas and opinions.
- If there is a senior ranking person in the room, that person will do most of the speaking.



In general, meetings will be rather formal:



- Meetings always have a clearly defined purpose, which may include an agenda.
- There will be a brief amount of small talk before getting down to the business at hand.
- If you make a presentation, avoid making exaggerated claims.
- Make certain your presentation and any materials provided appear professional and well thought out.

- The British rely on facts, rather than emotions, to make decisions. Be prepared to back up your claims with facts and figures.
- Maintain eye contact and a few feet of personal space.
- After a meeting, send a letter or email summarizing what was decided and the next steps to be taken.





Characteristics of Good Language Learners

How can you know if you are a good language learner? Here are some guidelines and strategies you could use to motivate yourself to be a good language learner.

1. Good language learners find their own way, and take charge of their learning. They determine the methods that are best for them as individual learners. They learn from others and experiment with different methods.
2. Good language learners organize their studies of the language, and they organize information about the language they study.
3. Good language learners are creative, and understand that language is fluid. They experiment with the language and play with grammar, words, and sounds.
4. Good language learners make their own opportunities for practicing the language inside and outside of the classroom.
5. Good language learners learn to live with uncertainty. They focus on the meaning of what they can understand, not getting frustrated with what they do not understand. They also continue to talk or listen without necessarily understanding every word.
6. Good language learners use mnemonics and other memory strategies to recall what they have learned.
7. Good language learners make mistakes work for them, not against them.
8. Good language learners use linguistic knowledge, including knowledge of their first language, in learning a second language.
9. Good language learners use contextual clues to aid their comprehension of the language. They maximize the use of all potential contexts surrounding words or phrases, to enhance their understandings.
10. Good language learners learn to make educated guesses.
11. Good language learners learn chunks of language as wholes and formalized routines to help them perform beyond their competence. For example, they may learn idioms, proverbs, or other phrases knowing what the whole phrase means without necessarily understanding each individual part.
12. Good language learners learn certain tricks that help keep conversations going.
13. Good language learners discover techniques that fill in the gaps in their own comprehension.
14. Good language learners explore different styles of speech and/or writing to vary their communication skills according to the formality of the situation.





Here's the Answer

Thai New Year Phrases for Songkran

Songkran is known as Thai Traditional New Year's, which falls during the 13th and 15th of April every year. Do you know any English words or phrases that you can use during the Buddhist Songkran festival? First look at the pictures below and guess the English words or phrases before looking at the expressions next to them.

- Traditional Thai perfume



- Pour scented water onto the hands of revered elders and ask for blessing



- Sprinkle water onto a Buddha image



- Water gun



- Soft-prepared chalk



- Splash water



- Be careful, slippery road.



Q: During Songkran festival, family members will gather together. So...what do you usually do when you see each other on that day?

A: We express our respect to our elders who are our parents, grandfathers, and grandmothers by pouring scented water onto their hands. The elders in turn wish us good luck and prosperity for the coming year. So, to me Songkran Day is a Family Day.

Q: What about at the temple? What activities do you do there?

A: We offer alms to monks, meditate, and listen to sermons. In addition to that, we also carry sand to the temple and build sand pagodas, as well as bathing rites for Buddha images and monks.

After all of that is done, we can now go and joyfully splash water on each other.



By Napassawan

Bits and Pieces

Songkran Tips



Every year, during Songkran festival, thousands of people flood the streets to join the celebration. Whether for “good luck” or for any other reason you have for joining, remember that safety is a must. To ensure you are well prepared, here is a list of survival tips:

Protect yourself – Remember that there is no exemption to get wet during the celebration. In fact, everyone from kids to adults are having fun refreshing themselves with water. The best way to arm yourself is to buy a water gun or bring water containers so that you will not just be a target, but can drench against them as well. Yet, make sure the water gun is cable of shooting long distance and has a huge reservoir.

Buy protection for your camera – If you wish to bring your camera to capture fun moments with festivalgoers, then you should invest in something to protect it. Or better yet, buy a disposable waterproof camera instead. This way, you can bring back captured pictures without having your camera risk getting damaged.



Dress accordingly – There is no dress code for such event. So, leave your pants and shoes at home and wear something like the locals. T-shirts, a pair of short and flip-flops are definitely perfect for such water splashing celebration. But before you forget, take note of the color of your shirt as light colors tends to become see through when wet.

Avoid big roads – In case the event starts and still you're not yet ready to start playing, then you better avoid big roads as participants are often positioned waiting to throw water on passerbies.



By Pimravee

Leave your valuables at home – If you wish to accessorize yourself with jewelry, please do not. It is better to leave them at home as they may get lost during the water fight events. As for gadgets, better not bring them as they might get damaged as soon as the participants start spraying water.

With this list of tips, you can safely join the Songkran festival for 2016. But as part of every tradition, respect is a must-have. Even if you're not a Buddhist, you can give alms to the monks and join streets parties as you wish. However, if you chose not to then you better witness the rituals from the safety of your hotel room. Lastly, like what you did to your neighbors back home, wish them good luck for the new year, you can do the same in Thailand, just try wishing the locals a Happy New Year in Thai by saying “Sawasdee Bee Mai”!