ITALIAN BUSINESS ETIQUETTE

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Do you have the same ‘stereotypes’ of Italy?
be more aware of cultural differences between Italy and your own country;

use vocabulary to describe (Italian) culture;

be better prepared for business travels and meetings with Italian business partners.
VOCABULARY

MATCH THE VOCABULARY TO THE CORRECT DEFINITIONS.

- **demeanour**: conduct; behavior; appearance
- **compassion**: a feeling of sympathy and sorrow for another who is stricken by misfortune, accompanied by a strong desire to help the suffering.
- **elegance**: the quality of being graceful and stylish in appearance or manner; style
- **loyalty**: faithful adherence to a sovereign, government, leader, cause
LISTEN TO THE AUDIO ON BUSINESS ETIQUETTE IN ITALY. ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

• Did the first business meeting go well? Why or why not?
• What was Florenzo and Ezio’s professional demeanor?
• What shocked Su and Ming? What were they expecting to happen in this meeting?
• Name some traits that describe the Italian business culture.

Now answer these same questions about your culture and point out the differences between your business culture and Italian business culture.
Appointments are mandatory and should be made in writing 2 to 3 weeks in advance. The goal of the initial meeting is to develop a sense of respect and trust with your Italian business colleagues.

Although written agendas are frequently provided, they may not be followed. They serve as a jumping off point for further discussions. Decisions are not reached in meetings. Meetings are meant for a free flow of ideas and to let everyone have their say.

A third party introduction will go a long way in providing an initial platform from which to work. Italians are intuitive. Therefore, make an effort to ensure that your Italian colleagues like and trust you. Networking can be an almost full-time occupation in Italy and personal contacts allow people to get ahead. They also tend to be wordy, eloquent, emotional, and demonstrative, often using facial and hand gestures to prove their point.
1. Women generally extend their hand for greeting before the male.

2. Italian business people prefer when people look them in their eyes when communicating.

3. Entertain a few minutes of small talk before a business meeting commences.

4. A belief in status and hierarchy is essential in all aspects of Italian society.