

Meeting people in business cultural differences and phrases

Introduce yourself to the other people in the class.

Do the same again, but this time meeting again after some time.

How similar or different were those conversations to how you usually do so in business in your own language?

Here are some descriptions of introducing yourself and meeting people in Japan. Which ones are true of your typical business dealings?

- “I’d like to introduce myself” is quite often the very start of the conversation
- New employees often stand up in front of the whole department and give a “self-introduction” speech
- Japanese people often have a ready prepared introductory speech to use whenever they meet people
- People often mention their company name before their own name
- It is more common to mention your company than your job title
- “Nice to meet you” often goes before hearing the other person’s name
- Bowing is obligatory
- Eye contact is brief
- The phrases when you meet someone are quite fixed, and the replies are exactly the same
- If you meet a large group of people you say the same things to each person
- There isn’t much difference between formal and informal introductions
- Exchanging business cards tends to be early on
- Business cards should be handed over with both hands and with the text the right way up for the other person to read
- Business cards should be examined carefully
- Comments on business cards are often just be confirming their name or commenting on where their office is
- Business cards should be placed on the table during the meeting and then put in a dedicated business card holder
- Never write anything on another person’s business card
- It is fairly easy to signal the end of a conversation
- Conversation endings are fairly short

Which nationalities do you do business with? How are those things similar or different in their countries, do you think?

What phrases are associated with these things from above?

Starting conversations

Introducing new members of staff

Questions about the other person

Talking about your job and company

Phrases after giving your name

Exchanging business cards

Commenting on business cards

Ending conversations

Check your answers with the next page.



Starting conversations

- I don't think we've met./ I don't think we've been introduced.
- Sorry to interrupt, but... suggested I should come over and introduce myself.
- Are you new?/ Is this your first day?/ Have you just started (here)?

Introducing new members of staff

- I'll take you round and introduce you to a few people I think you need to know.
- This is Steve Smith. He starts tomorrow./ He's the replacement for.../ He'll be taking... 's position.
- Now I'll take you over to meet... You two both...

Questions about the other person

- How about you?/ What about you?
- That's interesting. So, do you...?

Talking about your job and company

- We mainly...
- I work for.../ I work in the ... branch/ office/ department of...
- I'm (presently/ currently) working on...

Phrases after giving your name

- Nice/ Good/ Pleased/ Delighted to meet you
- Hi/ Hello/ How are you?/ How's it going?

Exchanging business cards

- Perhaps we should exchange business cards./ Do you have a business card (on you)?
- Here's my business card.
- It's (all) written on my business card.
- I have a business card with me (somewhere).
- Let me just get my business cards./ Just a moment while I find my business cards.
- My mobile number is written here.

Commenting on business cards

- Ah, so your office is in...
- ... department? Does that mean you work with...?
- Sorry, how do you say your family name/ middle name/ company name/ street name?
- Do you have an extension number?

Ending conversations

- There are one or two other people who I should introduce myself to, so...
- I'd better get to the next workshop before it starts.
- (Well, it was really) nice meeting you.
- I'll contact you next week.
- I hope we have the chance to meet again soon/ at the next meeting.
- It's been really interesting talking to you. I'll contact you for more details about.../ I'll definitely follow you suggestion on.../ I'll look into...