

'If you destroy a bridge, be sure you can swim.'
African (Swahili) proverb

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CASE STUDY

Al-Munir Hotel and Spa Group



STARTING UP

A

Work in pairs. Ask each other the questions in the quiz. Then turn to page 132 to find out how good you are at building relationships.

1 YOU ARE IN A ROOM WITH A GROUP OF PEOPLE WHO DON'T KNOW EACH OTHER. DO YOU:

- a) introduce yourself?
- b) introduce a topic of conversation?
- c) wait for someone to say something?

2 WHEN YOU ARE INTRODUCED TO PEOPLE, DO YOU REMEMBER THEIR:

- a) name?
- b) face?
- c) clothes?

3 ON FESTIVE OCCASIONS, E.G. NEW YEAR, DO YOU:

- a) send greeting cards to everyone you know?
- b) reply only to cards received?
- c) send e-mails?

4 DO YOU THINK SMALL TALK IS:

- a) enjoyable?
- b) a waste of time?
- c) difficult to do well?

5 DO YOU PREFER:

- a) to socialise with colleagues only if you have to?
- b) to socialise often with colleagues?
- c) not to socialise with colleagues?

6 DO YOU LIKE TO HAVE CONVERSATIONS WITH:

- a) people who share your interests?
- b) almost anyone?
- c) people who are your social equals?

B You are going to listen to Gillian Baker, Business Relations Manager with an international training organisation, talking about how companies can build strong business relationships. What factors do you think she will mention?

C  CD1.15 Listen to the interview and check the predictions you made in Exercise B.

D What are the most important relationships for you a) at your place of work/study, b) outside your place of work/study? Why?

VOCABULARY

Describing relations

A Complete the table below with these verbs, which are often used with the word *relations*.

break off build up cement cultivate cut off damage develop disrupt
encourage establish foster improve jeopardise maintain promote
restore resume sever sour strengthen undermine

Positive meaning

build up relations

Negative meaning

break off relations

B Choose the correct verb in each sentence.

- Sales staff who are impolite to customers *disrupt* / *damage* the reputation of a company.
- We are planning to *promote* / *establish* branch offices in Spain next year.
- By merging with a US company, we greatly *strengthened* / *maintained* our sales force.
- Relations with customers have been *fostered* / *undermined* recently by poor after-sales service.
- Thanks to a new communications system, we are *souring* / *improving* relations with suppliers.
- A strike at our factory last year *resumed* / *disrupted* production for several weeks.
- We could not agree on several points, so we *broke off* / *cut off* talks regarding a joint venture.
- The success of our new product launch was *cemented* / *jeopardised* by an unimaginative advertising campaign.
- In order to gain market share in China, we are *building up* / *cutting off* relationships with local agents.
- Business relations between the two countries have been *severed* / *fostered* by official visits and trade delegations.

C Match these sentence halves. Then make five more sentences with the verbs in Exercises A and B.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 Widespread rumours of a hostile takeover bid are certain | a) are a credit to its highly effective PR Department. |
| 2 The Accounts Department's very slow payment of invoices | b) have cemented relations between the two companies. |
| 3 The long-term contracts, which will run for the next five years, | c) its close relations with several major foreign investors have been jeopardised. |
| 4 The excellent relations the company enjoys with the local community | d) is causing stormy relations with some of the company's suppliers. |
| 5 As a result of the government's imposition of currency controls, | e) to strain relations between the two leading French software companies. |

D Give an example of a company you know which is good at building relationships with its customers. How do they do this?

See the DVD-ROM for the i-Glossary.



LISTENING

Business partnerships



Alison Ward

A CD1.16 Alison Ward is Head of Global Corporate Responsibility at Cadbury, the chocolate maker. Listen to the first part of the interview and complete this information about Cadbury's Cocoa Partnership.

Launched	1
% Cadbury cocoa beans from Ghana	2
% yield from the land	3
Average age of farmers	4
Cadbury partners in Ghana	5

B CD1.17 Listen to the second part and complete these extracts with up to three words in each gap.

- Well, we're really proud that we've achieved for our Cadbury Dairy Milk brand ...
- So it means that people around the world can now make an and ...
- Fairtrade's an interesting marque in that it's not only in consumer markets – it's very well – but it also has great power back in

C CD1.18 Listen to the final part and answer these questions.

- What other partnership does Cadbury have?
- What does Alison say about the changes in the supply chain with that partnership?

D Think of any other partnerships similar to that of Cadbury and the farmers from Ghana. Tell your colleague about it.

Watch the interview on the DVD-ROM.



READING

Business networks in China

A Where can you meet people to build good business relations?

B Read the article on the opposite page quickly and say who these people are.

- 1 Li Ka-shing 2 Gary Wang 3 Helen Wong 4 Zhou Junjun 5 Andrew Grant

C Read the article again. Which paragraph:

- begins by talking about the origins of *guanxi*?
- gives examples of what can be achieved if you have connections?
- talks about how *guanxi* is changing?
- talks about top connections made at MBA programmes within China?
- talks about how a business started through connections made at a European business school?
- talks about networking through multinational companies?
- talks about Chinese businesspeople wanting something in return for connections?
- suggests that making connections might take time and effort?

D Answer these questions.

- What is *guanxi*?
- What examples are given of things you can achieve if you have good *guanxi*?
- What can Western companies do if they are involved in informal groups?
- How is *guanxi* changing?
- Why does Ogilvy Public Relations Worldwide hold annual parties for previous employees?



E Find words or phrases in the article which mean the following.

- 1 using or taking what you need from a supply of something (paragraph 2)
- 2 when someone always supports someone or something (paragraph 3)
- 3 being responsible for what you do and willing to explain it or accept criticism (paragraph 3)
- 4 a moral or legal duty to do something (paragraph 3)
- 5 people you know who can help you, especially because they are in positions of power (paragraph 4)
- 6 talking to other people who do similar work in order to help each other (paragraph 6)
- 7 determination to keep trying to do something difficult (paragraph 7)

F Discuss these questions.

- 1 What advice would you give to someone trying to develop business relationships in China?
- 2 A foreign company is opening a branch in your country. What factors should it consider?
- 3 In your experience, are certain nationalities better at building relationships than others? If so, which ones?

How East is meeting West by Frederik Balfour

Guanxi. It's the first word any businessperson learns upon arriving in China. Loosely translated, *guanxi* means "connections" and it is the key to everything: securing a business license, landing a distribution deal, even finding that special colonial villa in Shanghai. Fortunes have been made and lost based on whether the seeker has good or bad *guanxi*.

Now, like so many things in China, the old notion of *guanxi* is starting to make room for the new. Businesspeople—local and foreign—are tapping into emerging networks that revolve around shared work experiences or taking business classes together. Networking that once happened in private rooms at smart restaurants now goes on in plain view—at wine tastings for the nouveau riche, say, or at Davos-style get-togethers such as the annual China Entrepreneurs Forum held annually at China's Yabuli ski resort. By tapping into these informal groups, Western companies can theoretically improve their understanding of the marketplace, hire the best talent, and find potential business partners.

Guanxi goes back thousands of years and is based on traditional values of loyalty, accountability, and obligation—the notion that if somebody does you a favor, you will be expected to repay it one day. One of Asia's most successful businessmen, Hong Kong billionaire Li Ka-shing, has used his *guanxi* particularly astutely over the

years, in the process winning valuable licenses and permission to build huge real-estate developments. Playing the *guanxi* game is still imperative, especially for foreign investors.

Many of China's networkers meet through an American or European MBA program. Gary Wang attended INSEAD, the famous French business school outside Paris. Today, he runs a YouTube wannabe called Tudou that was built largely on connections made at business school. A fellow student who worked at Ogilvy & Mather Worldwide helped out with public relations. And another INSEAD graduate, Helen Wong, a partner at Granite Global Ventures, helped Wang raise \$8.5 million after a friend heard him speak at the China Europe International Business School (CEIBS) in Shanghai. "Without knowing all these people through INSEAD," says Wang, "Tudou probably never would have happened."

Executive MBA programs, all the rage now in China, have become *Guanxi* Central. Targeted at senior executives and high-powered entrepreneurs, the programs are attracting some of China's most successful businesspeople. "It's important to have friends in different industries and meet people from different cities," says Zhou Junjun, who runs the Chinese operations of a South Korean systems company and did an Executive MBA at the Cheung Kong Graduate School of Business in Beijing.

Multinational companies, of course, provide rich opportunities for networking, too. Ogilvy Public Relations Worldwide holds an annual party for former employees, many of whom now work for the company's clients, including Lenovo, Johnson & Johnson, and solar-panel maker Suntek. McKinsey has plenty of alumni who have moved into senior posts at major companies and start-ups. "Obviously, they became a valuable network for us," says Andrew Grant, who runs the firm's China practice in Shanghai.

If one thing has remained the same for foreigners in China, it is this: cracking the *guanxi* code still takes hard work and perseverance. Networking at an alumni barbecue or wine tasting goes only so far when trying to build relationships of any lasting value. After the first 30 minutes at these functions, say people who have attended, foreigners and locals almost invariably break off into separate groups.

What's more, Chinese businesspeople are more experienced and globally savvy than they were just a few years ago. They're looking for business connections who can help them expand outside China or get their company listed on a foreign exchange. "People want something more professional and strategic from their relationships," says Li Yifei, Viacom's chief representative in China. "They want to know how good your *guanxi* is back home."

LANGUAGE REVIEW

Multi-word verbs

Multi-word verbs are particularly common in spoken English. They are made with a verb and particles such as *at*, *away*, *down* and *off*. Four types are:

- 1 Without an object
*Networking now **goes on** in plain view.*
- 2 With an object – separable
*We'll **draw up** a new contract. / We'll **draw a** new contract **up**.*
- 3 With an object – inseparable
*They're **looking for** business connections.*
- 4 With two particles
*I'm really **looking forward to** meeting you next week.*

➔ Grammar reference page 147

A  CD1.19 **Two executives are talking about building relationships with clients. Put the conversation in the correct order. Then listen and check your answers.**

- a) They were both annoyed. My contact thought I had let him down, and his boss simply decided not to turn up at the meeting. We'd set up a meeting in Brussels by e-mail, but he called it off at the last minute. I'd already checked in at the hotel.
- b) Oh, what went wrong?
- c) Well, I'm going to carry on working until about six. We could meet after that.
- d) How did you turn it round?
- e) It's fine now, but at the start of the year, it was disastrous.
- f) So, how's the relationship with Toyota going?
- g) Well, I went over my contact's head and went directly to his boss at Toyota Motors Europe. I was really trying to clinch a deal.
- h) Glad it worked out. Anyway, are you free for a drink later?
- i) Well, I had to build up my relationship with my original contact again. At first, he kept putting me off. But eventually we met up and I focused on our relationship, not the next sale. Now we get on really well and sometimes play golf together.
- j) Was he annoyed?

B **Underline all the multiword verbs in the conversation in Exercise A. Then decide which of them has a similar meaning to each of these verb phrases.**

- | | |
|--|---------------------------|
| 1 have a friendly relationship | 6 appear/arrive somewhere |
| 2 registered | 7 disappoint |
| 3 make stronger | 8 arrange |
| 4 change something into something successful | 9 continue |
| 5 postponing/delaying | 10 cancelled |

C **Rephrase these comments using the multiword verbs from Exercise B.**

- 1 We can't hold the meeting tomorrow.
*We'll have to **call off** the meeting tomorrow.*
- 2 They've postponed the presentation until Thursday.
- 3 I'm sorry I've disappointed you.
- 4 She's arranged the conference call for nine o'clock.
- 5 This is a crucial meeting. Make sure you arrive on time.
- 6 Everyone continued working as if nothing had happened.
- 7 You'll need to register at the Hilton around four o'clock.
- 8 I have a good relationship with my new boss.

SKILLS

Networking



A CD1.20 **Networking is an essential way of establishing good business relationships. Listen to the first conversation and say whether these statements are true or false. Correct the false ones.**

- 1 Howard Clark's company is probably less successful this year than last year.
- 2 Howard's company does not have time to redesign the website itself.
- 3 Judy Masters thinks that Howard will have no problems contacting Martin Englemann.

B CD1.21 **Listen to the second, telephone conversation, then answer these questions.**

- 1 Why does the website need redesigning?
- 2 How does Martin Engelmann react to Howard's offer to redesign the website?

C **Now listen to both conversations again and complete these extracts.**

CD1.20

- 1 Hello. Haven't we somewhere before?
- 2 Maybe I could there. I know someone who's a top-class web designer [...] I'm sure he'd be interested. Why him?
- 3 Great. You haven't got his phone number, ?
- 4 Yep ... 07825 300646. Can I your name when I call him?
- 5 OK, I'll him. Thanks very much

CD1.21

- 6 I was your name by Judy Masters.
- 7 I was wondering ... well ... would you be in helping us to redesign it?
- 8 Can I suggest at our office, say, at the end of the month?

D **Work in pairs and role-play these two situations.**

- 1 The US owner of an up-market chain of restaurants phones a Canadian supplier of shellfish. The supplier was recommended by a friend of the owner.
- 2 A conference entitled 'Entry strategies for overseas markets' gives participants an opportunity to do some networking.

Student A: Turn to page 133.

Student B: Turn to page 142.

USEFUL LANGUAGE

MENTIONING PEOPLE YOU KNOW

I was given your name by Judy Masters.
Anna Kaufmann suggested I gave you a call.
A colleague/friend/acquaintance mentioned your name.

GIVING ADVICE

Why don't you give him a call?
You could meet our Systems Manager.

REFERRING TO PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Haven't we met somewhere before?
We both went to that presentation.
I think we met some time ago.

ASKING FOR HELP/CONTACTS

Can I mention your name when I call him?
She mentioned that you might be able to help me.
Have you got his phone number, by any chance?
Do you have his contact details?

ESTABLISHING COMMON INTERESTS

We have something in common. We're both interested in ...
I see we're in the same line of business.
We both do similar work. / We have similar interests.
Are you in sales or product development?