



EDC GUIDE

CULTURAL TIPS FOR DOING BUSINESS IN AUSTRALIA

How to maximize your success

Canada

 **EDC**
TAKE ON **THE WORLD**

When it comes to business etiquette, what's acceptable in one country, may not be in another. To be successful in international trade, you need to understand the culture, traditions and business habits of your clients and partners in your target markets and adapt your communication and business strategies accordingly.

It could mean the difference between winning—or losing—a contract.

For almost three decades, Australia has had consecutive growth, largely because of its strong economic ties throughout the region and its position as a gateway to China. In fact, until COVID-19 came along, the country hadn't had a recession for 29 years.

Canada-Australia trade and investment levels indicate how robust our relationship has become. Annual bilateral trade is around \$4 billion and Canada exports about \$2 billion worth of goods to Australia every year. On the investment side, Australia regularly receives more than 40% of Canada's total direct investment into Asia. Infrastructure, power and renewables and advanced technologies are among its key opportunity sectors.



5 KEY ETIQUETTE TIPS

1. **Business culture is similar, but not identical:** Everyone always talks about the similarities between Australia and Canada. While true, one can't assume that the way you do business in Canada can be "copied and pasted" in Australia. Each state has its own differences and business culture, preferences and practices, so taking the time to connect and learn from fellow Canadian business and Team Canada partners will help in the development of your strategy for the states and the country overall.
2. **Coffee meetings:** G'day, mate. Australia is proud of its coffee with Sydney and Melbourne having a rivalry over whose is best. Meeting over coffee is a common business practice. Australians appreciate openness and honesty. Their communication style is relatively direct and straightforward, and they enjoy building rapport by starting meetings with small talk about a range of topics, including the weather and local sports teams. Many Australians also appreciate humour and joviality, even in business situations.
3. **Presence and partners:** Australia is a competitive market with certain countries having a long-standing presence. Australia has been enforcing stronger local supply laws with minimum requirements on projects and supply chain. Having a representative with feet on the ground and working with local partners increases the chances of success and will definitely help with the challenge of covering this distant market in an opposite time zone to Canada. Establishing a network of business acquaintances can also be helpful.
4. **Modesty is best:** Most Australians demonstrate and value modesty and some may even downplay their own achievements and successes. This cultural similarity between Canada and Australia can work in your favour to help build strong relationships.
5. **Proven solutions are preferred:** Australians can be relatively risk averse and usually prefer proven and tested solutions/technologies. Even though they're receptive to new ideas, Australians sometimes wait for technologies to be tested and proven in other countries before investing in and adopting them.

INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT AUSTRALIA

- › Australia is the world's sixth-largest country in terms of land mass and a popular tourism destination. Like Canada, it has a high standard of living, well-educated workforce and extremely stable government, garnering a high international ranking for ease of doing business and global competitiveness.
- › In addition to the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), Australia has 10 other free trade agreements, including one with China called the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership. By partnering with Australian businesses, more doors to that critical Asian market will be open to Canadian companies.
- › The Great Barrier Reef is the world's largest coral reef—it can actually be seen from space—spanning more than 2,300 kilometres off the coast of Queensland, Australia. One of the world's seven natural wonders, it's the biggest living structure on the planet.
- › With more than 10,000 beaches along Australia's 60,000-km coastline, 85% of Australia's 26 million population live within 50 kms of the coast. But the country's weather conditions can be extreme, including periodic drought, flooding and wildfires.
- › If wine is what you fancy, Australia has 60 different wine regions. South Australia is home to some of the oldest vineyards in the world and the Southern Highlands and Alpine Valleys are among the most picturesque regions.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- › Visit EDC's country and market info page about [Australia](#).
- › Visit the Canadian Trade Commissioner pages about [Australia](#).
- › Visit Canadian Australia Chamber of Commerce [website](#).
- › Watch EDC's *Doing Business in Australia* [webinar](#).
- › Reach out to [Diane Belliveau](#), EDC's chief representative for Australia.

ABOUT EXPORT DEVELOPMENT CANADA

Who are we?

Export Development Canada (EDC) is Canada's export credit agency. Our job is to support and develop Canada's export trade by helping Canadian companies respond to international business opportunities. We're a self-financing Crown Corporation that operates at arm's length from the Government of Canada.

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