

will be completed the next day, *inshallah*,” save yourself from disappointment and accept that it will not. But do not be worried the first time you hear your flight attendant on Pakistan International Airlines announce, “*Inshallah*, we will be landing in Lahore shortly.”

Planning

Planning or preparing for something in the distant future is uncommon in Pakistan, the prevailing attitude being more in tune with “take it as it comes.” The lack of forward-thinking appears to be related to how much control Pakistanis think they have over what happens; the more control, the more attention to planning. The private sector tends to be more concerned with planning than the public sector. It is not unusual for someone in a high position, especially in a large bureaucracy, to decide to meet on short notice, even the same day. Those summoned must drop whatever they are doing and attend the meeting if the person calling it is of a higher status.

This happens frequently, making it difficult to plan far in advance.

Spontaneity

An analytical, methodical approach to work is a western characteristic. Pakistanis tend to react spontaneously, except in bureaucracies where there are strict procedures to follow. Rote learning is the norm in Pakistani schools. Graduates tend not to be as analytical as graduates of western schools.

Socializing at work

Socializing on the job is customary, even expected because Pakistanis consider social relations more important than task. For Pakistanis, there is little distinction between their personal and professional lives. It is perfectly acceptable to call someone at home at any time to discuss work. Similarly, it is standard practice to use work time to socialize. Foreigners sometimes fail to understand the extent to which good social relations determine professional success.

Individualism versus Collectivism ♦ ♦ ♦

Whereas individualism dominates western culture, collectivism is central to many Asian cultures, including Pakistan's. A collectivist culture is one in which people are organized in strong cohesive groups to which they offer loyalty in exchange for support

and protection (Hofstede, 1991). Pakistanis tend to speak as a group rather than as individuals. They always say, “We did this,” rather than “I did this,” in formal meetings and general conversation.