

INTRODUCTION

The increasingly global nature of our economy requires people to live abroad or travel internationally for work in the public, private and non-governmental sectors. Whether stationed in a foreign country for a few days or a few years, success depends on your willingness to adapt to, and learn about, different cultures. Culture shock, language differences, family adjustment, pressure to show results quickly, and other stressful aspects of overseas work can make your stay an onerous experience. Once adapted, however, it can be one of the most rewarding experiences of a lifetime.

This guide is intended to increase your effectiveness in the Pakistani work environment by sensitizing you to many of the cultural differences you will encounter, and by giving you practical tips on how to deal with them.

Inshallah, God willing, in the chapters that follow, we will:

- ◆ describe differences between Pakistani and Canadian work-related behaviour;
- ◆ increase your understanding of Pakistani behavioural patterns by explaining the values which underpin them; and
- ◆ help you communicate more effectively in a Pakistani work environment by explaining how to recognize the factors which affect communication, highlighting specific differences in communication styles and suggesting helpful modifications to your way of communicating.

The Pakistani content of this guide has come from Pakistanis who have worked with North Americans in the business world and in government. Most Pakistanis we consulted are urban professionals, educated abroad, fluent in English, and female. Although not representative of the Pakistani population as a whole, they reflect the views of Pakistanis with whom you are likely to be associated.

A word of caution.

The danger inherent in a guide of this kind is to run the risk of stereotyping. Readers should bear in mind that