

Main Sectors of Opportunity for Canadian Business

- agricultural and food products and services
- communications and information equipment and services
- mine, metal, mineral products and services
- forest products, equipment, services
- construction industry
- fisheries, sea products and services
- defence programs, products, and services
- industrial machinery, plants and services
- consumer products

Source: Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada.

Negotiating in Hong Kong

All important business in Hong Kong should be done face to face. Courtesy calls and personal meetings increase the chances for success. Meetings with Hong Kong business people take place on time, but subordinate staff may wait up to half an hour for senior staff to arrive. Tea is served during business meetings, but do not touch it until your host does.

In negotiating with business people from Hong Kong, never talk about failure, poverty, or death, especially around Chinese New Year. Such subjects are held to be offensive. Listen for nuances. Sometimes to avoid actually saying no and thereby sounding discourteous, Hong Kong business people will hesitate, or display extreme cautiousness. Understand that this is a polite way of refusing a request.

To criticize, point out errors, or challenge a Hong Kong business person during negotiations is considered extremely discourteous, and will cause him to lose face. The Chinese may criticize each other, but you should not join in any criticism of a third party. Agreeing with such criticism will only place you in general disfavour.

As in other parts of Asia, business people in Hong Kong often take more time to make decisions. And do not be surprised if your Hong Kong partners look for propitious locations for their business facilities.

A Hong Kong businessperson's word was considered binding and traditionally oral contracts were honoured as a matter of personal integrity. Today, however, agreements tend to be put in writing, especially contracts with Western businessmen.

A note of warning, be careful. "Tea money" used to be offered as tips to people (repairmen, delivery people, etc.) to facilitate business transactions. This practice has declined, however, as official steps are taken to eliminate such payments. Hong Kong has passed ordinances that specifically prohibit the acceptance of commissions, rebates, or other favors without special permission from the employer or principal of the firm concerned.

Contacts

For more information about getting investment from Hong Kong, interested Canadian companies should contact the following:

External Affairs and International Trade Canada
 Hong Kong Desk
 East Asia Trade Development Division (PNC)
 125 Sussex Drive
 Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0G2
 Tel. (613) 995-6962
 Fax. (613) 996-4309

Commission for Canada
 Investment Officer
 13th floor, Tower 1
 Exchange Square
 Connaught Place
 Hong Kong
 Tel. (011-852) 847-7414
 Fax. (011-852-5) 847-7441
 Telex (802) 73391 (73391 DOMCAHX)