

meeting and, if possible, go to the meeting with someone the individual knows. In other words, do not walk in cold.

Manners and courtesies

Pakistanis are renowned for their gracious manners. It is a characteristic of their culture to be deferential to superiors, elders, and guests. Pakistanis expect you to be courteous and well-mannered at all times, too, even when its 45 degrees Celsius!

Relationships

Relationships are more important than tasks. Tasks that require a person's assistance are not begun until the social niceties are completed. Getting right down to work is perceived as being rude because it indicates that you consider the task more important than the people involved.

Relations between the sexes

Canadian males must be very careful in dealing with women in Pakistan. Foreigners have great difficulty dealing with cultural differences in the relations between the sexes. Even in non-traditional marriages where a woman appears to be very western, her relationship with her husband and family may be traditional. She may maintain a distance or aloofness from her male colleagues and if this is extended to you, do not misunderstand.

Physical contact between men and women in public is taboo. However, it is quite common for couples of the same sex to hold hands, a practice not associated with homosexuality. As a general rule, males should never touch a woman no matter how friendly she might be. Foreign couples should refrain from embracing in public.

Shaking hands is a big issue. Canadian men should shake hands with men, but not with women unless the woman extends her hand first. For Canadian women, the reverse holds. Shake hands with all women, but wait for men to extend their hands before offering yours. This advice is based on much discussion and experience. It is embarrassing for everyone when a Canadian extends his/her hand and there is no response from the other side. It is a convention that takes time getting used to.

It is inappropriate to ask a man directly about his wife, unless you have met her previously. Do not ask, "How's your wife?" It is correct, even expected, to ask, "How's your family?"

Hospitality

Pakistanis will lavish their hospitality on you and treat you as an honoured guest. You should be hospitable, too. Always offer tea or a cold drink when