

Usually patience, politeness and a “thank you” help. An overtly aggressive posture on your part may complicate matters and cause your partners “to teach the foreigner a lesson.”

Despite many frustrations, you will receive much better treatment than a Nepalese person because you, as a foreigner, are special.

Suggested approach

It is always best to begin a project in Nepal with blanket approval from the highest authority. Then, break the project into smaller components for processing through the government system. Don’t expect much tangible progress in your first few meetings with government officials. Instead, invest the time to build friendly relationships. Good personal relationships will give you access to information, contacts and linkages that may be particularly useful when attempting to understand or influence government decision making.

Have information about your project ready for the government authorities. Be prepared to answer their questions and adopt their suggestions, some of which may contrast with your plans.

Avoid conflict, confrontation and other situations that could cause your Nepalese partners to lose face. Since keeping face is an important cultural characteristic, your partners may be reluctant to disagree with you openly. They may show their disagreement by delaying implementation. If they do, review the situation and approach the concerned bureaucrats indirectly through a mediator.

Your Nepalese partners will respect you if you respect them. A condescending attitude toward them will make you unpopular. Remember that social status and hierarchical order are highly valued by Nepalese bureaucrats. You can accomplish your goals by blending patience and tact.

When dealing with all public sector officials, we recommend the “SIR” approach:

- ◆ See them. Meet them often, even if you perceive no immediate gains.
- ◆ Inform them. Keep them well informed of developments even if they don’t ask for information.
- ◆ Respect them. Be respectful always. Remember that status and prestige are highly valued.

***Non-governmental Organization Professionals* ◆ ◆ ◆**

Context

In the West, NGOs have altruistic objectives and provide not-for-profit services. In Nepal however, the NGO

sector is not as clearly defined as it is the West. Nepalese NGOs include for-profit organizations, such as cooperatives, private limited companies and