

Samsung, Daewoo and Goldstar have joint ventures with AT&T, Ericsson and Siemens. In addition, the National Priority Plan has targeted telecommunications switching products and private branch exchanges (PBX) for large-scale manufacturing and distribution world-wide. Canadians can try to link up with the marketing arm of the *chaebols* and exchange technology in these areas for access to world markets.

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### Main Sectors of Opportunity for Canadian Business

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- agricultural commodities
- resource products
- automotive parts
- aerospace
- defence

Source: Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada.

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### Negotiating With Koreans

Koreans are sensitive to the intangible factors that influence personal conduct and relationships among people. They call this *kibun* and they say that if it is good, one functions smoothly. In their negotiations, Koreans try to enhance the *kibun* of both sides because they feel that to damage it will effectively terminate a relationship or even create an enemy.

Protocol and a proper acknowledgement for each other's position is extremely important to Koreans. It is therefore advisable to have a formal introduction to your Korean counterpart and the use of an intermediary may be advisable. If your prospect respects the intermediary, he will probably also respect you. Indeed Koreans tend to treat the representative of a person or group with more care than the group itself because the substitute may be more sensitive to slights.

Korean society is quite hierarchical and no business person is comfortable with another until his or her company and position are known. Business cards are very important in establishing one's place in the social order but cards are also essential because Koreans tend not to use personal names. They believe that one's name is personal property and therefore that personal names should be honoured and respected. Actually pronouncing a name can be seen as presumptuous and impolite and therefore Koreans prefer to greet each other by a title (Director) or some honorific designation.

In business, flattery is a way of life. It is considered indelicate to start immediately or abruptly on the main points of a transaction. Discussions start with peripheral matters and only gradually move to the centre. It will enhance personal rapport if you display some knowledge of the remarkable changes Korean society has undergone and express admiration for Korea's successes and achievements. The Koreans are careful not to give offense and seek to establish harmonious personal relations. That is why it is important to personalize your dealings with your Korean prospects. Find out as much as possible about their status, hobbies, philosophy, and even their birthdays.

During negotiations, be patient, gentle, firm and dignified. Formal behaviour is required at all times and this even extends to the posture adopted during discussions. Do not push too hard and, if possible, leave sensitive issues and details for go-betweens so as not to impair your own relationship with the prospect.

Do not assume that your Korean counterpart understands everything you say, even if they are extending you the courtesy of speaking English. Their English may not be as good as you think but there are also cultural differences that may impair understanding. Western logic does not always have an impact on Koreans who may be more persuaded by personal fac-