

Business Etiquette at Chinese Meals & Banquets

Meals and Banquets are excellent opportunities opportunity to discuss business topics and to introduce new initiatives with your Chinese counterparts. The following are some tips that will enhance your success at these events.

- Learn to use chopsticks
- Wait for your host to seat you; it is considered unacceptable to position yourself at a table
- Leave some food on your plate; otherwise it will be refilled by your host
- Take part in all “Ghan Bai” (Dry Cup) toasts
- Chinese meals contain many courses, always leave room for more
- Birds and fish are served with the head, expect this
- Avoid inserting your chopsticks in your rice and leaving them there, this signifies death
- These table behaviors are acceptable in China
 - Using a toothpick at the table
 - Spitting bones on a plate
 - Making noises while eating
 - Putting elbows on table
 - Reaching across the table for food
 - Smoking during a meal
 - Picking up a bowl of rice to one’s mouth

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Mark Hehl's career spans over 30 years and includes leadership roles in international operations, technology transfer, quality, reliability, cost reduction, supply chain improvement, ISO 9001 implementation and lead time reduction in many industries in North America, Europe, Asia and Latin America. As a past executive for the Timex Corporation, Mark implemented Six Sigma at major suppliers in China and at other worldwide corporate facilities. In recognition of his contributions, these Chinese suppliers honored him with the award of the Chinese name **何文楷** “Ho Man Kai”, which is Cantonese for “good and knowledgeable.”

Mark was a Delegate and featured presenter at the II CONGRESO INTERNACIONAL DE CALIDAD (Second International Quality Congress) in Quito, Ecuador and at the Third China-American Quality Symposium held in Shanghai, China. He has also authored over 15 technical papers on various Business Process Improvement & International Business Development subjects and is writing a book titled Improving Your Operations in Emerging Countries.

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