

MORE ABOUT HANDSHAIKH LTD

www.handshaikh.com

SUMMARY. Handshaikh Ltd is a British training company that operates in UK, Europe, USA, Canada and the Arabian Gulf countries to provide customised business seminars, briefings, talks and induction training - and general advice - that focus on the cross-cultural aspects of Westerner's work, life and relationships with Arabs in, or from, the Gulf countries of Kuwait, Saudi, Qatar, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates and the Sultanate of Oman. Handshaikh also offers other services in connection with Gulf Arabs described below.

DEFINITION OF NEED. The first step in planning an event is always to decide what the audience needs and to agree the right number, level and type of speakers appropriate to the audience, venue, running time etc. etc. To discuss a possible event for your organisation please email mail@handshaikh.com

SEATING. Seating is in comfortable chairs usually in a half-moon layout as close as is possible to the speakers. Seating is rarely in straight rows although this may be necessary for large audiences in large auditoria. Seating, and the general layout of the room, is always arranged to encourage a convivial and informal atmosphere.

REHEARSAL OF PRESENTATIONS ETC. TO BE MADE TO ARAB CLIENTS. Handshaikh is often asked to comment and assist the preparation and presentation of presentations and other material (such as proposals) due to be submitted to Arab clients. Early consultation with Handshaikh Ltd is advised.

NOTE TAKING. Audiences are invited to take notes but the cost of the event often includes a copy of Handshaikh Ltd's comprehensive book on Gulf cross-cultural matters *Don't they know it's Friday?* now in its 10th reprint. To learn more of the book see www.handshaikh.com

NEGOTIATION TRAINING. Handshaikh offers one-to-one negotiation training as a separate matter - not as part of a public event described elsewhere on this web site. Negotiation training is usually an individual and private event, granting opportunities for senior company executive to experience first-hand the kind of negotiation techniques that the Gulf Arab side will probably offer when they personally, or the company generally, is engaged in face-to-face contractual negotiations at a senior level. This training is not normally offered below board level and is wholly confidential.

PROMOTIONAL/COMPETITIVE EVENTS. A number of companies have asked Handshaikh to give a short presentation within the company's overall sales and marketing 'pitch' to potential Gulf clients. Such companies seek to demonstrate that not only is it wholly competent in its core business, it has also faced the wider, cross-cultural aspects as well and is comfortable with Gulf business situations.

PARTICIPATION IN OTHER EVENTS. Handshaikh can provide a contribution to seminars or other events arranged by others, e.g. a 30 minute talk within a management training day entitled, for example, 'Cross cultural matters in the Gulf' or 'How business is done in the Gulf'.

FAMILIES. Although Handshaikh Ltd is primarily concerned with assisting Westerners who have business interests in the Gulf, many clients ask for advice on life and circumstances relevant to spouses and children who will accompany or join the 'bread winner' in the Gulf from time to time. This advice is normally provided in two parts: (1) the unchanging or background circumstances of the country/location followed by (2) an up-to-date brief on schooling, job opportunities, shopping, air travel and medical facilities etc. appropriate to the family concerned. Handshaikh has useful contacts with Gulf-based companies.

DOCUMENTS AND TRANSLATION. All written material for Gulf Arabs must be of the highest standard. There are several considerations, e.g. the mixture of English and Arabic on the same page is accepted in most but not all countries of the Gulf. Such subjects are not complex but they should be addressed. Handshaikh can advise on the best layout and style of all documentation intended for Gulf Arab

readership and - as a preliminary to translation - Handshaikh can proof-read or re-write a client's existing English language proposal, document etc. Handshaikh Ltd can make recommendations to assist the selection of competent, confidential translators. Leave time for translation; don't rush your translator!

SPONSOR/AGENCY SELECTION. The contractual relationship between a Western company and its Gulf national or company is not easily severed regardless of the performance of either side. There are scores of unhappy (and happy) Gulf business relationships. The selection of any sponsor/agency relationship must be decided only after the greatest possible care has been taken and never lightly. Handshaikh can advise on the pitfalls involved and can provide confidential advice on the safest names in the Gulf.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO MAGAZINES, TRAINING VIDEOS, TV AND AUDIO PROGRAMMES. Handshaikh Ltd has provided articles on cross-cultural matters for a number of magazines, e.g. British Business Group Dubai's 'BBG Calling' and 'Britain In Business'; Financial Times Business 'Resident Abroad'; Committee for Middle East Trade (COMET) 'Opportunity Middle East', 'The Treasurer' magazine, Qatar British Business 'Forum', Kogan Page's 'Doing Business in the UAE', Kogan Page's 'Doing Business in Bahrain'. Dubai TV's 24 hour Business Channel, Dubai TV, Dubai FM, and the Emirates airline in-flight audio programme have all featured contributions from Handshaikh Ltd. Handshaikh is ready to provide Gulf cross-cultural input to all media.

JOBS IN THE GULF. Although not a job agency or career counselling organisation, Handshaikh may be able to advise on the best routes for seeking employment in the Gulf. 'Short tempered' people should not apply for Gulf jobs!

VISITS BY GULF ARABS. Many Gulf Arabs visit business premises and factories in the West and elsewhere. However, for the visit to go especially well there are a number of guidelines and procedures which may not occur to the Western host. Handshaikh can advise.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. *Where and when is the next Handshaikh seminar? Is there a programme of courses?*

- There are open Handshaikh courses available via The Middle East Association in London but normally Handshaikh comes to your company or organisation anywhere in the USA, Europe and the Gulf at a time that suits you. Each event is tailor-made for your circumstances.

2. *Who should attend a Handshaikh seminar from my organisation?*

- Everyone! It's best to include not only those who will be in direct personal touch with Gulf Arabs either as resident executives or as visitors, but also 'Head Office' staff of all grades and levels who need to comprehend the nature and techniques of Gulf business, and the cross-cultural stresses involved so that they can react and play a part appropriately.

3. *What happens at a Handshaikh seminar?*

- One or more speakers, well experienced in the Gulf, give a series of short, informal talks on subjects appropriate to the audience's needs. Videos etc. are used.

4. *What does my organisation have to provide for a Handshaikh seminar?*

- A room with comfortable chairs, a screen, a LCD projector and a VHS video player.

5. *How long is a Handshaikh seminar?*

- Normally a half-day or a full-day event is sufficient. But a sequence of events building on one another over a period of time is also possible.

6. *I've been offered an appointment in the Middle East. Can Handshaikh help me and my family decide if I should accept the job?*

- Handshaikh will be pleased to give basic advice free of charge.

7. *My company is about to sign a deal with an Arab sponsor/agent. Can Handshaikh help?*

- **Most certainly! Stop everything** until you have spoken to Handshaikh! You may be about to make a big mistake in contractual terms.

8. *We are all off on a tour of several Gulf countries. What help can Handshaikh give?*

- Handshaikh can participate in the organisers' pre-departure brief.

9. *We have plenty of people with experience of the Gulf. Why should we bother with Handshaikh?*

- Many organisations have people who have had dealings with Gulf Arabs. Handshaikh will seek to capture this experience by encouraging comments and anecdotes from all such persons (sometimes as a formal speaker within the programme) to the benefit of the whole audience. Handshaikh talks 'with' an audience, not 'at' it.

10. *I don't know what to wear in the Gulf. Can Handshaikh advise me?*

- Please email mail@handshaikh.com for basic advice.

11. *Can Handshaikh advise on selection, race and gender issues?*

- Absolutely. This important topic is often a feature of Handshaikh's seminars.

12. *I don't know how to address Arabs when I meet them. As a woman, do I initiate the hand shake as I would in the West? What happens if I am asked to a meal? What help can Handshaikh give me?*

- A woman should not initiate a handshake with a Muslim man, but a man must shake hands with another man, Muslim or not. Please email mail@handshaikh.com for basic advice.

13. *We are spending a fortune on an exhibition in the Gulf but we don't really know how to cope with Arabs whom we hope will visit the exhibition stand. Can Handshaikh help with the etiquette involved?*

- Handshaikh often provides this type of advice.

14. *We don't need a full seminar but we would like someone to take 30 minutes in our quarterly Manager's Day. Can Handshaikh help?*

- Handshaikh will be pleased to play a part, large or small, in your event. Some organisations use Handshaikh to give a short talk on cross-cultural matters affecting life and business with Gulf Arabs as an interesting and deliberately 'different' topic to set managers thinking about broader issues.

15. *We have some Gulf Arabs visiting the factory. Can Handshaikh help?*

- Most certainly.

16. *What are the first steps of arranging a Handshaikh seminar?*

- Handshaikh will wish to talk about your needs in some depth, ideally about a month beforehand so that the seminar itself satisfies your requirements. But short notice events are also possible. Email mail@handshaikh.com

17. *How many speakers are there in a Handshaikh seminar?*

- Usually just one speaker; sometimes two. Once, seven speakers were needed.

18. *Does Handshaikh provide translators?*

- No, but Handshaikh can make recommendations.

19. *You keep mentioning 'Gulf Arabs'. I don't really understand who you mean, nor do I know what is included in the terms 'The Middle East', 'The Arab League' and 'The Levant' or 'The Magreb' - let alone 'The Fertile Crescent' or 'The Muslim World' - because I don't know anything about Islam except what I read in the newspapers, which frightens me. It seems that all these expressions and groupings are somehow mixed up together.*

- All Handshaikh sessions include some explanation of these and other terms to help de-mystify the Region as a whole. NB: Arabs are not all the same! Handshaikh is particularly experienced in the Arabian Gulf countries, i.e. Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, the UAE and Oman. And the facts of Islam are invariably included in a seminar.

20. *Where can I buy books about Arabs and the Middle East?*

- Please see www.handshaikh.com for a huge list of books!

21. *I am the head of the HR department about to write the Job Specification to select a person for an appointment with Arabs. What is the most important quality needed?*

- PATIENCE! Handshaikh can help write the country and cross-cultural elements of a Job Specification.

22. *What else can Handshaikh do?*

- Please see the details above.

23. *What do people think about Handshaikh?*

- Please email mail@handshaikh.com for audience feedback.