

Diversity Awareness & Understanding

INDIA

Macomb County
Defining Business + Life

Many Cultures, One Home

Map of India



Geography

India is the world's seventh largest country in area occupying 1 million sq mi (Compared to Macomb County 482 sq mi). The country encompasses a varied landscape including the capital city of New Delhi, the world's highest mountains, the Himalayas, barren dunes in the Thar Desert, and lush river plains along the Ganges. This diverse landscape supports a wealth of natural resources including fertile agricultural land and mineral resources.

Introduction

Once a nation torn by colonialism and regional warfare, India has rallied around a strong sense of nationalism, religion, and family centric values to become the world's second most populous country and an emerging economic powerhouse. As one of the planet's "Billionaires", having a population of 1,129,866,154, in 2007, India is a nation that has long supported a large population of great diversity. Spurred by population increase India's economy has experienced considerable growth. Supported by agriculture, manufacturing, construction, and an emerging service and tourism sector India has been successful in diversifying and modernizing its economy. With continued growth projected in the nation's population and economy, India will continue to expand on its rich diversity, impacting both its people domestically and the international community.

Macomb County Profile: Persons of Indian Descent

Total population	5,545
Male.....	2,904
Female.....	2,641
Under 18 years old.....	1,487
18 to 64 years.....	3,864
65 years and over.....	194
Speak a language other than English at home (population 5 years and over).....	4,393



India's Flag

Languages

The official language of India's central government, as well as its states, is Hindi. English was also given official status by the central government. According to the national census of India, 114 languages and 216 dialects are spoken in the country with 18 of those languages deemed major languages.

Society, Culture & Religion

The people of India speak hundreds of languages, practice many of the world's great religions, and participate in a complex social structure that incorporates a rigid system of social hierarchy. Influences of Hinduism and caste systems have created a culture that emphasizes hierarchical relationships in all aspects of life. People typically define themselves by the groups to which they belong, rather than their status as individuals. Indians tend to be very patriotic, and most support their government's efforts to increase their country's prestige. Religion is a very important aspect of life in India. Hindu, a religion, which originated in India, is the most practiced religion in India with 81 percent of the population engaging in this religious denomination. Islam is the second largest religious denomination in India with 13 percent of the population practicing. Other minority religious groups include Christianity, Sikhism, Buddhism, and Jainism.

Etiquette & Customs

- Behaviors contrary to religious traditions are not easily tolerated.
- The traditional Indian greeting is the namaste. To perform the namaste, press the palms of your hands together below your chin, near the heart, and gently nod or bow slightly.
- Titles and status are very important in India, therefore when greeting someone use their professional title.
- With such a strong social structure, there is little anxiety about life because individuals know and accept their place in the society or organizations.
- Traditional male chauvinism is strong, and women do not have equal privileges.
- Passivity is a virtue in India.
- Hindus do not eat meat and Muslims do not eat pork.
- Eat only with the right hand, because the left hand is considered unclean.

General Business Practices

- Networking, face-to-face meetings, and building relationships are the means to business success in India. Business in India is highly personal.
- Keep an open mind, and never criticize India's poverty, belief systems, politics, caste system, or any business practices you may not understand or appreciate.
- Bargaining and negotiating is a continual lifestyle in India.
- Information is accepted openly as long as it does not challenge religious and social structures.
- Indians appreciate punctuality, but do not always practice it themselves. Keep your schedule open for last-minute changes.
- Request appointments as far ahead as possible in order to ensure schedule coordination from Indian counterparts.
- Indians have a less hurried attitude toward time than Westerners.
- During negotiations with Indian organizations it is important not to get overly legalistic and rigid.
- Indian firms are very much interested in technological advancements and assistance.
- Expect delays due to bureaucratic and communications barriers.
- The word "no" has harsh implications in India, but evasive refusals are more common and are considered more polite.
- For business dress, men should wear a suit and tie. Businesswomen should wear conservative dresses or pantsuits.
- Wearing leather may be considered offensive, because Hindus revere cows and do not use leather products.



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People may use portions of this brochure for other purposes but please refer to original sources listed on the main brochure for accuracy and relevancy.

Sources:

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