

October 20, 1997

Ms. Sandi Groundwater
Art Director and Marketing Manager
AsiaNet

Dear Ms. Groundwater:

I am glad to have the opportunity to contribute to AsiaNet's newsletter. Attached is my submission.

I would be happy to contribute an article each month. Will the monthly deadline be the 20th of each month? Please let me know.

Sincerely,

Rochelle Kopp

Hosting Japanese Visitors

by Rochelle Kopp

A Japanese customer, supplier, or other guest is going to be visiting your office. What do you do to make the meeting a successful one?

- Exchange business cards. At the start of the meeting, exchange business cards with each person. Spread the cards out in front of you on the table • you can refer to them during the meeting to remember names.

- Serve drinks. Be sure to bring in coffee or tea, served in nice cups.

- Slow down. Speaking more slowly and leaving out buzzwords, slang, and idioms will help Japanese understand you better. But remember that talking louder doesn't help.

- Be organized. Provide a written agenda for the meeting. Also give each guest a folder or notebook with as much information about the topic you are discussing. Due to the language barrier your guests may have difficulty absorbing everything during the meeting, so they will appreciate having materials to study later.
- Break bread together. Taking your Japanese visitors to lunch or dinner is not only polite, it gives you a chance to talk with them in a more relaxed setting. This will promote the important getting-to-know-you process.
- Send them home with a souvenir. Give a small gift to each of your guests to thank them for their visit.

Rochelle Kopp is Managing Principal of Japan Intercultural Consulting, which assists American firms doing business with the Japanese and Japanese firms doing business in the U.S. She is author of *The Rice-Paper Ceiling: Breaking Through Japanese Corporate Culture* (Stone Bridge Press). Contact: phone 773-528-1370, fax 773-528-4233.