



the walker
GERMANY



PPM >

*That which glitters
is born for the moment;
The genuine remains
intact for future days.*

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe



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Social Behavior

Non-verbal communication

The German people like to respect a social distance zone, this means approx. 1 metre with a business contact and a personal distance of approx. ½ meter while interaction with good friends.

Never talk about...

... the recent history: "Third Reich", war or holocaust, unless your German counterpart brings up this topic. Be cautious, when talking about politics, religion or football, these subjects are taken very seriously. Jokes about football are to be avoided as this is a big passion across all social levels in Germany.

In general, people don't talk about their salaries or personal issues.

Trust and relationships

The German people appreciate reliable and respectful behaviour. Commitments and agreements must be respected and shall not be put into question once an agreement is reached. This behaviour would be perceived as unserious. They would expect the business partnership to work without having first to establish a personal trust relationship as well as an open and honest appearance.

The German people may be perceived as polite and sometimes as a little distant. It takes some time to build up a personal relationship, particularly in the business world, where the hierarchical structures are respected. They may place a high value on their private sphere and draw a clear line between business and pleasure.

Business Meetings

The meeting usually starts on time. An agenda is sent out in advance. It is rare that a meeting starts or ends with small talk. The meetings are conducted context oriented and the time frame is to be observed.

Business is taken seriously and meetings tend to be formal, but this does not mean that people are humourless.

Commitments and agreements must be respected and shall not be put into question once an agreement is reached.
