Giving Gifts Around the World

In today’s modern world gifts are an important and often ___________ part of cultivating strong relationships. In many countries business is made by ___________ gifts. However, gift giving can be a problem when you do not understand the culture and ___________ of the recipient’s homeland. In some cases, giving the wrong gift can even make ___________ worse.

It is important to know when people expect gifts, so become ___________ with the holidays that a country ___________. Muslim people, for example, exchange cards during the three-day festival at the end of Ramadan. In a country where Christianity prevails, most people exchange gifts during the Christmas holidays. However, there are many differences. While Scandinavians give gifts on Christmas Eve, Italians give ___________ to their loved ones on Epiphany, January 6th.

When you travel a lot you might want to give someone a gift. In western countries we usually give a gift upon ___________, in eastern cultures gifts are given before the guest leaves. When you’re invited to someone’s house, it’s almost always ___________ to give a housewarming gift.

__________ of when you decide to give a gift, it is important to think about the kind of gift to give. It would be wrong to bring chocolate to a Belgian friend or a bottle of wine to a French ___________. Even bringing flowers can be troublesome. For example, certain flowers, such as chrysanthemums in Europe, are reserved for funerals. Roses, in many regions, are often too ___________. And in some countries it is ___________ to give an even number of flowers, while in others, odd numbers should be chosen.

Also consider religious customs. In India, for example, people value animals, especially cows. It would thus be ___________ to give someone a leather briefcase. You shouldn’t give a Hindu a handkerchief either, because it often symbolizes sorrow and death.

Lastly, the ritual of presenting gifts ___________ from culture to culture. In Asia it is ___________ polite to refuse a gift the first time. It shows modesty and people may appear ___________ if they accept the first time. Unlike some western countries, it is unfitting to open the gift in the ___________ of the giver. Asians often take the gift and set it aside to open later because they don't want to ___________ the giver if they don't like it.

While giving gifts varies dramatically from country to country, following general guidelines and doing a bit of ___________ helps you avoid making major mistakes.
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In today’s modern world gifts are an important and often overlooked part of cultivating strong relationships. In many countries business is made by exchanging gifts. However, gift giving can be a problem when you do not understand the culture and customs of the recipient’s homeland. In some cases, giving the wrong gift can even make relations worse.

It is important to know when people expect gifts, so become familiar with the holidays that a country celebrates. Muslim people, for example, exchange cards during the three-day festival at the end of Ramadan. In a country where Christianity prevails, most people exchange gifts during the Christmas holidays. However, there are many differences. While Scandinavians give gifts on Christmas Eve, Italians give presents to their loved ones on Epiphany, January 6th.

When you travel a lot you might want to give someone a gift. In western countries we usually give a gift upon arrival, in eastern cultures gifts are given before the guest leaves. When you’re invited to someone’s house, it’s almost always appropriate to give a housewarming gift. Regardless of when you decide to give a gift, it is important to think about the kind of gift to give. It would be wrong to bring chocolate to a Belgian friend or a bottle of wine to a French host. Even bringing flowers can be troublesome. For example, certain flowers, such as chrysanthemums in Europe, are reserved for funerals. Roses, in many regions, are often too personal. And in some countries it is customary to give an even number of flowers, while in others, odd numbers should be chosen.

Also consider religious customs. In India, for example, people value animals, especially cows. It would thus be disrespectful to give someone a leather briefcase. You shouldn’t give a Hindu a handkerchief either, because it often symbolizes sorrow and death.

Lastly, the ritual of presenting gifts differs from culture to culture. In Asia it is considered polite to refuse a gift the first time. It shows modesty and people may appear greedy if they accept the first time. Unlike some western countries, it is unfitting to open the gift in the presence of the giver. Asians often take the gift and set it aside to open later because they don’t want to embarrass the giver if they don’t like it.

While giving gifts varies dramatically from country to country, following general guidelines and doing a bit of research helps you avoid making major mistakes.