

# Missions to Mexico

## Training Resources

### Courtesies & Manners

As Americans, being "forward", "open", and "honest", we do not usually consider etiquette or manners to be of much value. We look at them as something plastic or surface. Not so to the Mexicans. To them the first five minutes of "wasted conversation" are of extreme importance. In Mexico you can deeply offend a person by not doing a simple thing such as shaking his hand when you enter or leave a room. For these reasons we have made a short guide of proper manners to use with your friends in Mexico. The importance of this material cannot be stressed enough, as many times it will determine how well you will get along with the Mexican people.

#### General Guidelines:

1. Chit-chat is extremely important. Spend time with the people. Make conversation. Share about family, show pictures, etc.
2. Always shake hands with everyone. When someone comes in late, shake hands.
3. The abrazo (hug) is for special occasions and is not a bear hug (normally this is reserved for close relationships only).
4. To speak English in front of Mexican people is mal educado (bad manners). They can misinterpret this as though you were speaking about them.
5. Greet (saludar) people when you arrive or leave.
6. Try everything that you are offered to eat.
7. Manners are important. Guys, remember things like opening doors for ladies.
8. Women should be invited to have the seats and be first in line for meals, etc.
9. When treats are passed out, everyone must share in eating it.
10. You do not buy a child's attention with candy or toys. You share with him. You do not use it as a "come on" or a gimmick. You also do not give things away to buy the people's time or attention.
13. Be very careful to maintain a very high moral standard in front of them. They do not appreciate poor manners, or an over show of affection among couples.
14. Mexicans generally look up to Americans and feel inferior to them. Show LOVE constantly to these people.

15. Do not take a lot of pictures without the people's permission. It makes you look like a tourist instead of a worker who is interested in them. Do not take pictures the first few days. Wait until you have developed relationships with them and they will be deeply honored.

16. When older people are present, offer them your seat, let them go first in line, do whatever would be appropriate to show them respect. Older people are highly respected in Mexico.

17. When greeting older people, be sure to stand up if you happen to be seated. To greet them sitting down is a sign of disrespect.

18. Do not be loud and boisterous in church. Church is highly esteemed and often people will come early to kneel and pray at the altar. If there is excessive noise it will be looked down on.