

# Diversity Awareness & Understanding

## CHINA

### Macomb County Defining Business + Life

#### Many Cultures, One Home

#### Map of China



#### Geography

China is the world's fourth largest country with a total area of 3,695,500 sq mi (Compared to Macomb County 482 sq mi). China's vast territory encompasses a great diversity of landscapes including pristine rural lands and vibrant urban epicenters. Beijing, located in the north, is China's capital and its cultural, economic, and communications center.

#### Introduction

The People's Republic of China is a nation with a rich history of some of the world's most advanced civilizations and influential figures. From the days of dynastic rule to modern day society, China and its people have significantly impacted humankind. Today, with a population of over 1.3 billion people China is the most populous country in the world and continues to be a prominent international player. Undergoing a series of economic and cultural reforms throughout the past half-century, China has successfully modernized and expanded its economy and society despite being recognized internationally as a developing nation. Industrial activity surrounding manufacturing, mining, and construction has contributed greatly to the nation's physical and economic growth. With the continued growth of China's economy and population the influence of Chinese society and culture will rise across the globe.

#### Macomb County Profile: Persons of Chinese Descent

Total population .....	2,414
Male.....	1,292
Female.....	1,122
Under 18 years old.....	487
18 to 64 years.....	1,760
65 years and over.....	167
Speak a language other than English at home (population 5 years and over).....	1,932



China's Flag

#### Languages

Throughout China there are regional linguistic differences, with 55 national minorities speaking countless regional dialects. Although the Chinese language takes on many different forms most Chinese people, 70 percent of the population, speak Putonghua, a Mandarin dialect. While regional dialects create linguistic differences China's many languages have shared a common written form, which consists of characters that represent syllables or words, for thousands of years. Other minority languages include Mongolian, Tibetan, Miao, Yi, Uygur, and Kazakh.

#### Society, Culture & Religion

With one-fifth of the world's population residing in China, the nation's society and culture is highly diverse with numerous cultural and ethnic groups. However, amongst this diversity there are a number of overarching characteristics, which are prevalent throughout China. China's governmental structure is a socialistic dictatorship of the working class led by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), which dominates policy making and day-to-day political activity by championing political stability through the use of patriotism and order. Confucianism has an immense impact on Chinese society highlighting family as the basic unit of society. Confucianism stresses the preservation of harmony through reciprocal responsibilities between ruler and subjects highlighting rank and age alongside the virtues of kindness, propriety, righteousness, intelligence, and faithfulness. In 1982 the Chinese Communist Party approved the freedom of religious beliefs. Traditional Chinese religions are Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism. Islam, Christianity, and a number of other territorial and cultural religious sects also are practiced in China.

#### Etiquette & Customs

- Introductions tend to be formal with courtesy because the Chinese are very sensitive to status and titles. The Chinese nod or bow slightly when greeting another person.
- The best way to speak is softly and with one's head slightly bowed.
- Avoid making exaggerated gestures or using dramatic facial expressions.
- The Chinese do not like to be touched by people they do not know. This is important to remember when dealing with the elderly and individuals in an important position.
- Do not put your hands in your mouth because it is considered disrespectful.
- Never begin to eat or drink before your host does.
- If you are the guest always arrive on time or even a little early.

#### General Business Practices

- Patience is the most important skill needed to do business in China.
- Punctuality is very important in Chinese business and social settings. Lateness or cancellation is considered disrespectful.
- China is a hierarchical society where age is highly respected.
- Unless educated in western universities, the Chinese are generally cautious toward outside sources of information and process data through a subjective perspective.
- Be sure to establish contacts in China before you invest in a trip.
- Interpreters are commonplace in order to help understand the nuances of discussions. Also avoid using jargon and slang in business conversations.
- Never exaggerate your ability to deliver, because the Chinese believe in humility and will investigate your claims.
- Use only black type on white background with visual aids, as certain colors may cause offense.
- When entering a business meeting, the highest-ranking member of your group should lead the way.
- The Chinese expect business conversation to be conducted by senior officials with subordinates speaking only when asked to provide corroborating data or comments.
- For business, men should wear conservative suits, shirts, and ties. Women should also wear conservative suits with relatively high-necked blouses and low heels.



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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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2. Encarta – [www.encyclopedia.msn.com/text/761573055\\_0/China.html](http://www.encyclopedia.msn.com/text/761573055_0/China.html)
3. Morrison, T. and Conaway, W.A. (2006). *Kiss, Bow, or Shake Hands* (2nd ed). Adams Media: Avon, Massachusetts
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