

Tyga Golden

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Topic #2

### French Consumers and the McDo

France's culture is much different than that of the U. S. They prioritize a good work-life balance and value leisure and social experiences. Unlike Americans, French consumers usually prefer smaller, more specialized shops because they want quality rather than quantity. This can especially be seen in their eating habits. French consumers prioritize fresh, local ingredients and like to sit down and eat with their peers when they go out for food. All in all, French consumers are most concerned about the quality and craftsmanship of the products they buy. This culture is ingrained within France, as they have highly valued skilled artisans and craftsmen throughout its history. This idea of quality over quantity echoes all throughout France and has a large impact on foreign companies that are trying to do business in the country.

A large example of how French culture affects business partnerships was McDonald's expansion into France. They first opened in France in 1979 and were met with opposition from locals wanting to protect the reputation of French cuisine. It wasn't until 2001 that McDonald's France decided to embrace French culture and start to remodel their brand to fit into it. Since then, McDonald's France has introduced many new products exclusive to France such as Le McBaguette and the Croque McDo which cater towards the French consumer. They also started using more locally sourced ingredients

that, as mentioned before, are prioritized by French consumers. Changes like this were made because McDonald's Denis Hennequin, who was made president of McDonald's France in 1996, was French and knew about French culture and what consumers in France wanted. The biggest lesson I learned from this example is how important it is to understand the culture of a market when trying to sell to its consumers.

When approaching a potential business partnership with a French native, it is important to keep in mind the cultural differences between yourself and a French person. For example French business culture is more formal than American business culture. According to *Business Communication: A Problem-Solving Approach*, "What is considered appropriate will vary among situations, industries, and countries. An example of this is how French business culture is different is their prioritization of a good work-life balance. Because of this, you should avoid scheduling meetings during regular lunch hours, and you should refrain from talking about work related issues outside of the workplace. By keeping this and other cultural differences in mind, it will be much easier to have a good working relationship with French natives.

In conclusion, France has many cultural differences compared to America that are deeply rooted in their history. In order to successfully find business partnerships with French nationals, it is very important to know these differences and make sure not to have proper business etiquette depending on who you are talking to rather than where you are from. When it comes to operating a business in another culture, it is also important to understand the same cultural values in order to know what the consumers in that particular market would want compared to others. As seen by McDonald's, if a company cannot adapt and remodel itself to fit the culture, it cannot succeed.

## **How McDonald's Saved Itself From Flopping in France**

<https://thetakeout.com/how-mcdonalds-france-won-over-french-customers-history-1850378834>

## **French vs US Business**

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/french-vs-us-business-ellen-van-duijn#:~:text=French%20companies%20tend%20to%20be,from%20employees%20in%20decision%2Dmaking.>

Business Communication: A Problem-Solving Approach