

TOP 10 TIPS TO PARTNER SUCCESSFULLY WITH POLAND

1. Punctuality is expected and failure to plan for delays does not go down well.
2. Questions can be very direct because Polish business people like clarity as it prevents problems later on. They will not be offended by you being direct.
3. Work closely with Embassy Commercial Officers and other organisations interested in promoting Polish/UK trade such as the British Polish Chamber of Commerce. They are a great source of leads and can provide a wealth of historical information (as well as current information) to help you enter the market, optimise sales opportunities and develop new ranges.
4. VAT – expect conflicting advice from the UK VAT people. Seek advice from your accountant, your bank, your international trade advisor and others – then to reduce problems later on write to your UK VAT office telling them:

“Our understanding is Please can you confirm this by xx/xx/xxxx at the very latest?”
5. Bank accounts – you don’t need a euro account, nor a US dollar account nor a host nation account. You don’t need a Polish bank account either. Most UK banks have a presence in Poland and will provide you with international online payment at no or little cost. If your product is **very** sensitive to currency fluctuations a Euro account in a UK bank is not a bad idea.
6. People from Poland we found were very proud of their nation – learn a bit about their background (which is fascinating) and talk at appropriate moments about it.
7. The language is a bit of a tongue twister. That shouldn’t put you off – a few words or phrases go down well and they don’t mind seeing you have difficulty pronouncing a word or phrase.
8. Smiles tend to be reserved for friends and until Polish business people get to know you, all contact will probably be very formal **for a longer period of time than in the UK**. Don’t overdo gestures, don’t use meaningless phrases and don’t appear upset if your attempts to smile are not reciprocated. It is not a sign that this meeting is going nowhere.
9. The communist regime was overthrown in 1989. There is a generation of people who are parents to 20 year olds and our experience is that this age group are the ones who don’t go through level layers of management to gain approvals. They often are the decision maker.
10. Make sure your product – goods and or services fit the Polish market (not the other way around). Expect to change it or work completely different (if you want to succeed).