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BUSINESS CONNECTOR · QUEBEC ↔ MEXICO

FREE GUIDE · BEFORE YOU ENTER

The 7 cultural codes of the *Mexican* market

What quietly derails (or wins) a market entry in Mexico, and that no one explains to you before you sign.

WHY THIS GUIDE

In Mexico, it's almost never the product that blocks you. It's everything around it that no one says out loud.

Most Quebec companies arrive in Mexico with a strong offer, a fair price and a solid plan. And yet many leave confused: the meetings went well, the signals seemed positive, then nothing.

It isn't about luck. It's about cultural codes. In Mexico, trust, time, hierarchy and even the word "yes" don't work the way they do in Quebec. When you can't read them, you misread signals that are perfectly clear to the people across the table.

I've spent eighteen years between these two worlds. Here are the seven codes I see block or unlock an entry, again and again. Read them before your first meeting, not after.

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CODE 01

The relationship comes before the transaction

In Quebec, you build trust by delivering. In Mexico, you deliver once trust is built. Wanting to "get straight to the point" in a first meeting often reads as cold, even suspicious.

Do this: invest in the first conversations with no visible agenda. The shared meal isn't lost time, it's where the contract begins.

CODE 02

Time is relational, not only linear

A meeting that starts late or a decision that takes weeks isn't a lack of seriousness. Time adapts to relationships and context. Confusing slowness with disinterest makes people walk away from deals that were on track.

Do this: plan for longer cycles and follow up with warmth, never pressure. Consistency beats speed.

CODE 03

Hierarchy and titles are respected

Knowing who really decides, and addressing that person with the right regard, changes everything. Skipping a level of hierarchy or getting familiar too fast can quietly close doors.

Do this: identify the real decision-maker early, use titles (licenciado, ingeniero, doctora) and let the other person set the pace of familiarity.

"Yes" doesn't always mean yes

Out of courtesy, a direct "no" is often avoided. A "yes, we'll see" or "that could be interesting" may be a polite way of saying no. Reading these nuances keeps you from building on foundations that aren't there.

Do this: look for a concrete commitment (a date, a next step, a name) rather than verbal agreement. And learn to hear the polite no.

CODE 05

Trust (confianza) is personal, not corporate

You don't do business with a company, you do business with a person. Confianza transfers through people, not logos. A good introduction from the right person is worth more than the best pitch deck.

Do this: enter through a trusted introduction, not a cold email. The right human bridge speeds up everything.

CODE 06

Physical presence matters

Managing Mexico from a distance, over video calls, sends an unintended message: this market is secondary to you. Showing up, shaking hands, being there, demonstrates a commitment that turns into opportunities.

Do this: plan at least one on-the-ground presence early in the process. What you learn there never shows up on a screen.

CODE 07

Form and courtesy open doors

Formality, politeness and care for the relationship aren't empty protocol. They signal respect. A tone that's too direct or too casual can be read as a lack of consideration.

Do this: take care with greetings, thanks and follow-ups. Warmth and rigor don't compete, they go together.

BONUS

Are you ready to enter? *Your checklist*

Seven questions to ask yourself honestly before investing in Mexico. If you check fewer than five boxes, the ground deserves to be validated first.

- My offer is adapted, not just translated**
The message, price and positioning account for the Mexican context.
- I know who really decides**
I've identified the real decision-maker and the right level of hierarchy.
- I have a trusted human bridge**
Someone on the ground can introduce me to the right people.
- I've validated real demand, not assumed demand**
Mexican contacts in my sector have confirmed the interest.
- I've planned for a longer decision cycle**
My plan and budget account for relational time.
- I can be present on the ground**
A physical presence is possible early in the process.
- I know how to read a polite "yes"**
I look for concrete commitments, not courtesy agreements.

Checking fewer than five boxes?

That's exactly the role of the Field Lab: testing your offer with real Mexican experts from your sector, before you invest. Let's talk about your project on a free 30-minute call, with no commitment.

Book your call → evarodriguez.ca