

# Common U.S. Cultural Values - Tips for Success -

## Equality

U.S. Americans strive to engage with each other on an equal basis even if there may be differences, such as age or status. People are valued for who they are. Teachers open the floor for students to share their views. Unless asked otherwise, people tend to call each other by their first names even if they may be your seniors. It should not be seen as a lack of honor or disrespect.

## Time

The common phrase you will hear in the U.S. is "Time is money." Time is organized and set aside for certain purposes. Punctuality is very important. Arriving on time to class, work, and meetings is expected. If you know you will be late, inform your party in advance.

## Communication

Communication in the U.S. is considered direct. What people say is what they mean. Things that someone feels, thinks, or wants are explicitly stated through the words, without heavily relying on the nonverbal (facial expressions, body language, gestures, amount of silence, etc). Additionally, you may also find people showing eye contact as a sign for showing attentiveness. Disagreements are usually discussed directly with the people involved.

## Informality

Many international students have expressed that U.S. Americans are friendly and easy to approach. U.S. Americans tend to be informal in their dress and interactions with others. A common greeting is "hi, how are you?" There is no expectation for a detailed response. Similarly, phrases such as "See you later" are just ways of saying goodbye, and do not imply an invitation. You may also find locals introduce themselves by their first names and start causal, friendly conversations, which is referred to as small talk.