

10 Chinese Business Banquet Etiquette

I LEARNING GOAL:

Gain appreciation of the etiquettes of seating arrangement and toasts making at Chinese business banquets.

II LANGUAGE POINTS:

1. 您请这边座。
2. 别这么客气，您先请。
3. 味道真好。
4. 干杯！
5. 感谢您的款待。

III SCRIPT:

Tingting: Hello and welcome to “Everything about Business Chinese”. I’m Tingting.

Colin: I’m Colin.

Tingting: Colin, I heard that you are planning your business trip to China.

Colin: Yes, I am looking forward to it. We will have several meetings, business tours, and a banquet, so I want to know more about Chinese business banquet etiquette.

Tingting: I am more than happy to help.

Colin: I heard that Chinese pay special attention to the arrangement of seating in formal occasions. How do I know where I am supposed to sit?

Tingting: Usually it is the host who decides the order of sitting according to Chinese custom. When the host invites you to the table, he will say, “Nin qing zhebian zuo” which means “please sit here”. “Zhebian” means “here”.

Colin: “Zhebian”, got it. What should I say?

Tingting: You may say, “Bie zheme keqi. Nin xian qing”, namely “You are so kind. Please take a seat first yourself.” “Bie” means “do not” in Chinese.

Colin: Bie zheme keqi. Nin xian qing. If I want to tell the host the food is great. What should I say?

Tingting: You can say “Weidao zhen hao”, which means “The flavors are wonderful”. “Weidao” means “flavor”, “zhen” means “really”, and “hao” means “good” or “wonderful”.

Colin: Good to know it. I will practice saying them again and again. Would you please give me some tips about making toasts?

Tingting: Usually the host will start the first round of toast and then you will also be expected to make a toast after the host.

Colin: Oh, really? What is the appropriate way to do it?

Tingting: You can make a toast to the prosperity of the business that brings you together by saying, “Wei women de chenggong ganbei!” which means “let’s toast to our success!”

Colin: So “ganbei” means “bottoms up”, right?

Tingting: Exactly! “Chenggong” means “success”.

Colin: “Chenggong” is “success”. Got it. What if I do not drink?

Tingting: That is not a problem. You can have tea or some other beverage instead of wine.

Colin: What shall I say by the end of the banquet to express my gratitude to the hospitality of the host?

Tingting: You can say, “xiexie nin de reqing kuandai” means “thank you for your hospitality”. “Kuandai” means “hospitality”. “Kuan” means “generous” and “dai” means “reception”.

Colin: Great! I cannot wait to start my trip to China.

Thank you for listening. Today’s question is “what is the Chinese equivalent of ‘bottoms up’”? Please email your answer to CIB@Chinamericaradio.com, we will post the first

answer on our twitter account @Confuciusbiz. You can download today's transcript for free at chinamericaradio.com, and email your questions at CIB@Chinamericaradio.com . See you next week!