

# 5 Faithful Five



## Navigating Business During Ramadan

Ramadan is the sacred month in Islam; Muslims fast commemorating the first revelation of the Quran to Prophet Mohamed and fulfilling one of the five pillars in Islam. For foreign firms, navigating the business environment during this holy month can be tricky – but demonstrations of support are well appreciated. Our five tips highlight changes in the professional atmosphere and how you can adapt.

### Religion Over Business

During Ramadan, prayer and observance are the highest priorities. What can the foreign business leader do to mark the holy month? Send clients and friends Ramadan greetings and the traditional gift of dates -- or consider fasting for a day (or a half day!).



### Night Becomes Day

Fasting starts at sunrise and breaks at sunset. People are up all night and tired all day. Workdays shorten by at least two hours. Plan to lose about 40 work hours that month.



### Enthusiasm Slumps—Temporarily

Work enthusiasm understandably slumps. People are tired, hungry and thirsty – not to mention coping with nicotine and caffeine withdrawal. Keep focused on your top priorities this month; the rest should wait until regular schedules resume.



### Social Life Ramps Up

Three main types of gatherings occur during Ramadan: Suhoor (early morning meal before fasting); Iftar (meal to break the fast); and, group prayers. The meals become work events where everyone is welcome. Host a company Iftar or Suhoor and attend those you can: you will build relationships and can effectively talk business.



### Watch Your P's & Q's

Your friends and colleagues will appreciate thoughtful gestures. For women, the dress code becomes more modest, wear longer skirts or pants and cover your arms. Avoid early morning meetings. During fasting hours, decline drinks if offered.

