

MEDIA RELEASE

How to Strengthen Chinese Relationships During the Coronavirus Epidemic

Wednesday 4 March 2020



Many of our colleagues and clients have been asking us about the best action to take for their Chinese friends and stakeholders during this coronavirus epidemic, so that they can remain in contact and not make any communication errors, but, in fact, build a stronger relationship for the future. There has been anger about the Australian government's closure of borders and we need to empathise, so that we are not penalised for that policy. We need to be aware that there may be some anti-Australian feelings out there as a result of government policy, so effective and timely communication is important.

Relationships with Chinese are vital to successful business and in times of crisis the opportunity is there to step up – it can make a big difference to your business when things turn around.



We'd like to share with you the best advice we've had and our own thoughts on managing your Chinese communications during this time and we thank the contributors who have kindly made valuable suggestions on social media or by email. We are happy to share other thoughts and ideas if you want to pass them on to us.

1. Empathy is a key emotion. Think about those in your Chinese world and how they have been affected. It might be students who can't get back to their classes; tourists who had bookings with you; suppliers who can't work; or your customers who can't receive your produce at the moment. It is important to show your empathy and to alleviate their anxiety. So, first of all think about all the impacted parties and stakeholders you need to keep in contact with.
2. Send out positive messages of support to them; for example MSO (Melbourne Symphony Orchestra) has filmed a video and played part of Beethoven's 9th Symphony, Ode to Joy with key leaders speaking messages from the heart and the entire orchestra chanting 'Stay with China' in Chinese. You don't have to have an orchestra, kind emails to your contacts asking after them and their families will be greatly appreciated (see below for suggested messages). Don't stop at one message, but keep in touch.
3. If you are a retailer or brand with thousands of customers, messages on social media are likely to reach them. Helpful information about how and where to continue to get supplies,

e-commerce options if available, and advising about retail closures/reopening as well as showing solidarity and understanding are all recommended.

4. Make an offer to help. The universities are getting teaching online and offering cash payments to help students get back to study soon and alleviate some of the extra expenses; tourist sites or hotels might think about some sort of special offer to encourage the booking to be remade.
5. Show your audience how you are contributing. For example some businesses and organisations have put together emergency supplies and got them on a plane up to affected areas – it helps to show your positive actions on social media for example.
6. Many events continue to be staged locally. The local Chinese audience needs to know you are joining with them to stand together; this can be conveyed on social media and in personal interactions and by attending such events.
7. Your local Chinese community is suffering too. Many restaurants and businesses are half empty – make it a show of support to go out and eat or shop there and talk to them. Show them you care.
8. Get up to China as soon as practicable after the crisis to express your concern; dine together, enquire about family, and take some health-related gifts for families especially. Don't make it a business negotiation, but a time to enjoy their company and to share experiences.
9. We also think about China broadly and the loss of life, the courage and tireless efforts of health workers, the loss of business and economic impact. Goodwill messages for the country and its people and that we thank them for their concern over our bushfires and now want to help them are deeply appreciated.
10. Chinese New Year has been lost not just for Australian tourism and retail operators. Think about the millions of Chinese who lost their special holiday – their big festival and loved ones' get-togethers that may have been planned for years – they will be feeling this acutely. This could be an opportunity to encourage them back to your hotel, site, store and the next best window will be during the Moon Festival in October (1-8). Think about tailoring offers to help them and encourage them to rebook.

Remember: it is not about you. Focus on your Chinese friends and customers; your generosity will be warmly received.

We have also been touched by many expressions of concern for our team and our work. Thank you!

Suggested messages

Option 1: To personal friend/s

(English translation follows)

亲爱的____ (name of the receiver)

您好吗？

首先，我向您送上来自澳大利亚的问候。我知道中国正在遭受严重的疫情，面临巨大的困难，对您和家人来说，这一定非常不容易。我心里非常牵挂您和家人，在此向您表示我最深切的慰问，并送上我最美好的祝愿。如果有我能帮忙的地方，请一定告诉我。

希望疫情早日结束，祝愿您和家人平安、健康，期待早日再见。

此致
健康

XXX (Your name)

DDD (date)

Dear ____ (name of the receiver)

Greetings.

First of all, I am sending you my greetings from Australia. I know that China is suffering from a serious epidemic and is facing great difficulties. It must be very hard for you and your family. I am very concerned about you and your family. I would like to express my deepest sympathy and best wishes to you. Please let me know if there is anything I can do to help.

I hope the epidemic will end soon. I wish you and your family safety and health. I look forward to seeing you soon.

Yours sincerely

Option 2: To business associates in China

(English translation follows)

尊敬的____ (name of receiver)

正值中国面临挑战的严峻时刻，我们一直在挂念您和贵公司的各位同事，希望你们各位一切都好，业务能够尽快恢复正常。

在这个艰难的时刻，请各位注意健康。如果有我能帮忙的地方，请一定告诉我。

此致

健康

XXX (Your name)

DDD (date)

Dear ____ (name of receiver)

At a time when China is facing serious challenges, we have been thinking about you and your colleagues. I hope you are all well and your business returns to normal soon.

At this difficult time, do look after yourselves. Please let me know if there is anything I can do to help.

Yours sincerely

Option 3: To business associates in China

(English translation follows)

尊敬的____ (name of receiver)

最近还好吗？想来你们已经复工了吧？各位同事身体都好吗？公司业务都恢复了吧？

希望一切都会很快回归正轨，祝贵公司业务能够尽快恢复，并且有更多发展。

希望我们能有更多的合作。

此致

健康

Dear ____ (name of receiver)

Hope this email finds you well. Have already returned to work? Are all colleagues in good health? Has the company's business got back to normal?

I hope everything will return to normal soon. I hope your business resumes work as soon as possible and is even more prosperous.

I hope we can work together more in the future.

With best wishes

XXX (Your name)

DDD (date)

Option 4: To personal friend/s - Another message to follow up once they are getting back to work

(English translation follows)

亲爱的____(name of the receiver)

最近还好吗？想来你们已经复工了吧？家里人身体都好吗？非常挂念你们。

希望一切都会很快恢复正常，祝愿您和家人平安、健康，期待早日再见。

此致

健康

XXX (Your name)

DDD (date)

Dear ____ (name of the receiver)

Hope this email finds you well. I believe you have already returned to work. Is your family in good health? I am very concerned for you.

I hope everything will soon return to normal. I wish you and your family peace and health. I look forward to seeing you soon.

Sincerely yours,

XXX (Your name)

DDD (date)