The doors are swinging wide open to increased business opportunities with China, especially after China's entry into the World Trade Organization and Beijing's successful bid for the 2008 Summer Olympic Games. A potential “Gold Rush” era—between China and America, especially—is imminent. But the Western and Eastern worlds could not be more different. How can businesses capitalize on these opportunities?

Beyond the obvious language barriers are more delicate cultural differences that can make or break a deal. Readers will benefit from author Charles Lee's lifetime experience as a thoroughly bicultural Chinese-American conducting business in both China and the United States. From his unique perspective, Dr. Lee unlocks the secrets behind successful East-West business.

In more than 20 informative and entertaining chapters, readers will find a thoughtful survey of historical, social, political, and economic factors affecting China's business climate. Lively narrative compares differences in East and West on a wide range of topics—profit, competition, contracts, conflict of interest, and organizational structures, among many others.

Readers will also find:

- Why an advertising tagline like “Just do it” would never fly in China.
- Insights to avoid negotiating traps.
- Guidelines for establishing trust, winning confidence, and reaching agreements.
- How to avoid deal-busting traps.

*Cowboys and Dragons* also includes a brief appendix with quick tips for many common daily activities in China—dress codes, dining and foods, traveling, and many more areas—that will steer a novice from committing clumsy social gaffes.

Many Western companies have already missed or botched opportunities in China simply because they did not understand the nuances of the Chinese business world. Readers ready to pursue this fertile market will find *Cowboys and Dragons* an indispensable reference.
WHAT ARE COWBOYS AND DRAGONS?

Adapted from the text: Americans regard cowboys as good guys, forgetting they can also be bandits and cattle rustlers. The Chinese perceive American Cowboy behavior in both these senses, but more in the second, particularly because Americans participated in the 19th-century invasions of their country.

For the Chinese, the Dragon possesses mythical properties and can ascend and descend from Heaven to the nether regions of earth. Because a dragon brought the first emperor down from Heaven to the Middle Kingdom, it became the national symbol and the badge of the Imperial family. The Chinese see themselves as either sons or daughters of the Dragon.

Warning that behaviors as seemingly innocuous as telling jokes, making (or avoiding) eye contact or eating rapidly can cause deals to go awry, Lee advises those on both sides of an East-West business deal to consider the history behind each point of conduct. Delve into why Chinese food is served in bite-sized pieces, chopsticks have only one prong, the Chinese finish eating and get up immediately, and you’ll gain a greater understanding of who the Chinese people are. Conversely, the Chinese can debunk their own stereotypes of the impatient, child-like, culturally shallow Cowboy by learning the reasons and history behind Western behavior.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Charles Lee is the founder of the venture capital firm Charles Lee Enterprise. He grew up on mainland China and Taiwan and has lived in the United States since 1963. After earning two master’s degrees and a doctorate, Lee became a naturalized American citizen, founded three venture capital firms, and assisted China, Taiwan, and Singapore in developing their own venture capital institutions. Dr. Lee’s bicultural understanding has put him in the center of numerous Asian-American business deals.

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