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SURVIVAL GUIDE for INTA first time attendees



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With minor adjustments of the number of participants, this memo is applicable not only to INTA, but also to several other conferences, not mandatory, but desirable related to intellectual property.

Based on years of our experience, newcomers, first arriving at the annual conference of INTA find themselves in some kind of awkward situation. As you know, for some reason, INTA has always been held abroad, at least, for most participants and it is now visited by several thousands of people, and these numbers are impressive.

On the one hand, INTA first time attendees understand that business trip expenses of the company should be paid off through the establishment of client relationships and for this one should get familiar with all INTA participants, or at least with a properly chosen people. On the other hand, it is almost impossible to choose the right people without talking to a number of improper (in this case "random") ones. Such problem is faced by an overwhelming majority of participants, and even if you conclude that one accidentally encountered person as "wrong"? and do not intend to become acquainted with him, this man, perhaps will consider you as a "right"? one or just want to talk to you, merely in order to make sure that you are also a "wrong"? one for him. All in all, one need to communicate, and, quite a lot, indeed.

Sometimes such understanding of "correctness"? comes after a few seconds, sometimes minutes, depending on the temperament and the English language proficiency of you and your companion. It is good if the

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understanding comes to you both at the same time - this greatly facilitates the conversation and eases the bitterness of a sudden parting.

This memo offers some of the most important expressions, which are sufficient to start, to maintain and to end up the conversation.

In general, the procedure is simple. Since this is your first visit to INTA, maybe you as of course, modest and intelligent man, at first will feel some awkwardness in front of the experienced participants of INTA and do not dare to come at once, and to introduce yourself to even a very good and handsome man. In this case, you'd better wait until someone next to you starts conversation with him and it may happen during registration of participants. Then you can quietly go to a couple or a group of people, and look into their eyes. Then of course, one of them would break down and tell you "Hi!?". This will make everything simple or otherwise you will have to interfere in other people's conversation, or to leave quietly. So it is up to you to leave unnoticed or to stand and wait until this group goes away for reasons unknown to you.

In order to set the tone for the upcoming meetings, INTA administration before the beginning of conference gives out to newcomers green ribbons showing that this is their debut ("First Time Attendee" ribbon is attached to the badge) and arranges a buffet for newcomers. Its purpose is disguised under welcoming words, however the main goal is to make the newcomers have a drink and give them a first experience of communicating with each other, so to speak "newcomer with newcomer"?. That is, in our opinion, humanely. After that, newcomers can easily talk to experienced participants. Of course, a head start is given to newcomers, after the buffet their lack of experience is compensated by emancipation, which is not possessed by other participants. However most of the experienced participants or prudent ones may also take some measures, for example, secretly or pretending to be an inexperienced participant, visit the buffet table, along with newcomers. So keep your green ribbon, it will be useful for such purposes many times.

Newcomers become experienced ones at their next conference, which is deliberately confirmed by INTA administration: badges with the words "Second Time Attendee"? or "Master Attendee"? or "Professional Attendee"? are not issued.

Do not rush to get rid of your green ribbon. When there is nothing to say, you will be a center of communication and for sure someone can ask you "Oh!" This is your first INTA? Try not to make excuses, just ask directly advice what to do next. In most cases you will be offered a drink, the least

friendly ones can show where and with whom, and will advise you to go there immediately.

So, you are ready to talk. This is the most important thing. The opinion of your possible companion is of course the thing that you should worry about, but keep in mind the duty to the company that sent you, the execution of which is usually confirmed by a bunch of business cards collected. It is the same for almost all and everyone is trying to get a business card from all. You bravely approach the nearest participant and start conversation.

- Hi, I am, for example, Yuri Bolotov! How are you? Maybe it seems too pushy, especially if you are a lady or not, Yuri Bolotov, but it will work for the start, then you can always apologize and correct yourself. However, this seems to us as an excellent start, in particular for a newcomer. Especially this good trick works on INTA parties that shall be held every evening.

Educated and polite participant will certainly reply:

- Hello! I am, for example, Voldemars Osmans. I am fine, thank you, and you? This is a test sentence and if it coincided in every detail (perhaps excluding only the words "for example"?), then in front of you a polite participant, even if he is not Waldemars Osmans. If you hear something else, or other things, it means that it is not clear who is standing next to you and quite possibly even a rude participant. In any case, one must be on his guard.

We will not go into detail about possible answers of impolite participants. Simply ask a business card from impolite participant and it is too early to ask it if you encountered a polite one.

Demonstrate that you also polite and ask: "What country are you from?" It is likely that you will get the following answer:

- I am, for example, from Latvia. Sometimes, even without the example. What country are you from?

Bingo! - You are already in touch, and no chances that you will be sent off. Although, of course, everything may happen...

If you are sufficiently energetic, strong and have a good reaction, iron will and see the world as a kind place, and even sweet, after the answer and certainly before the counter-question of interlocutor say: "O! Really?"?. If you asked this question quite loudly, enthusiastically and with special facial

techniques, you win a few seconds to prepare for a counter-question. We hardly believe that your interlocutor is quick to come up with a detailed answer to a direct question like "O! Really?"; Usually the answer is primitive but powerful "Yes", and then you will also be asked:

- And what country are you from?

- I am, for example, from Kazakhstan. Make a pause, as range of feelings in the face of your interlocutor shall (i) appear, (ii) reflect in full and (iii) go away (it is better to wait for this moment), and give him time to exclaim "O! Really?"; and the grandeur of the scene will play, most likely in your favor. Do not believe into the brave look of your companion that reflects understanding. It is better to clarify that:

- Kazakhstan is strategically located, has lots of natural resources but no sea-port, Borat Sagdiev has never been to there and McDonald's has not yet came to this place, or
- Latvia is strategically located, has no natural resources but has lots of sea-ports, Borat Sagdiev has never been to there but McDonald's has already came to this place?.

In general, take the initiative and do not forget to pause to give opportunity for laughing. Help him in this, starting to laugh first anywhere in your monologue. For many participants all countries except Europe, Africa and Iraq are Kazakhstan, so say you Bolotov from Kazakhstan, and they will believe you. If not, apologize and say that you were mistaken, and that you are Kulzhambekova. Just it sounds the same, that is way many are confused.

Attention! Despite the fact that now it was the turn of your interlocutor to ask you "O! Really?". This may not happen. At this point, the initiative to talk may pass to him, which could lead to the termination of conversation and his escape, so we recommend not to wait, and if despite your efforts, luck turned against you and the question was asked. Use the drama of the situation and immediately ask:

- How did you come to here? By Lufthansa? If it is difficult to pronounce for you, you can ask the same about the KLM.

If you will be offered brochures, do not mind! On the contrary, ask one for your colleague who is about to come up. When you get three of them, you can leave them unnoticed or forgotten on one of the tables. Your interlocutor will be happy and maybe will send you a couple of copies by

mail with a thank-you letter. He will remember you.

Here are some questions that can be asked in random order, but make sure to pause between them. Do not forget that, in response you will be asked the same questions, and that each response of your interlocutor must be accompanied by an exclamation "O! Really?" You should ALWAYS do it! Perhaps, except, the first question when you ask about the interlocutor's name. However, when he voiced the wrong name, which is not written on his badge, then you should cry out the same "O! Really?" It is true that communicating with other people considered as an art, so it is up to you to cry out or not. In our opinion, it is better to shout out, even if not appropriately, instead of showing himself as impolite participant. Avoid one word answers to the mirrored questions, for example as "Yes"? or "No"?

- Are you doing patents or trademarks?
- How long was your flight to here?
- What is the time difference of this place with your country?
- When did you arrive?
- How long are you going to stay here?

By asking them do not forget to smile and nod, and show your interest in conversation by other means - think carefully about them and do not share with anyone! Let it be your personal secret system of demonstration of friendliness and attention.

Generally, these questions are quite enough in order to understand the level of companion and his interest in you; between any of these questions it is possible (and sometimes is urgent) to request a business card, though, the greatest pleasure you get when you take it before departing. More complex and, therefore optional is the following.

- What does it mean? or, "What do you mean?"?. If you ask the above out of context, for example, after a pause, the pause can be used for asking a business card, and then almost immediately you can go away or drink one more glass of wine and leave.

The same effect, but certainly at the end of the conversation, makes the question "Do you speak English?" It is a great idea to ask it from an Englishman, as the British, in our experience, are more emotionally

respond to such question, and for sure in the English language.

As we have said many times the result and the apotheosis of your communication is getting a business card. Write down on it the contents of your conversation. If the space on it is not sufficient, attach to it a few pages of writing paper of format not exceeding A4. Not everyone enjoys when one writes on his business cards so try to make it without attracting much attention, preferably in a nearby bar or the toilet.

Carefully read all that is written on the business card, preferably loud, do not forget to exclaim "O! Really?" Find out how to properly pronounce the name or write it in other languages. For example, in the case of "Voldemars"? you can ask, whether when writing the name in Cyrillic it is necessary to put a soft sign after the "l"? or hard after the "c", and in case of "Yuri"- is it male or female name. Most of the people find it difficult to answer such questions; however you demonstrate a sincere interest and your smartness.

Now let's talk about the art of conversation at INTA. "Tell me something about your country!?" This phrase demonstrates your gained experience and will come in handy if you are not in a hurry, or you gave away all your business cards. Now you can hide your green ribbon, just leaving your name and country, and to the same counter-question you can just nod and say something like: "O! It's great! It's like the South of Russia?". You can now shake your head slowly and thoughtfully, and to go away.

If you have already discussed these topics and due to absence of your business card were able to palm off someone's else, it is really better to leave. Experienced participants usually refer to an appointment or need to "go around"? and look for friends. You as a newcomer can use only first explanation because you know almost anyone here. It is not a good idea to say that you are going to have a lunch as one may join you despite of your desire.

If you go, follow representatives of the competitors, usually they can be any of your compatriots, who also came to INTA and want to collect all the cards you have not received. Unlike you, they know where one can find tasty food and where you can get the best orders. Do not get in their way, and, most importantly, do not let them quietly follow you, otherwise you and they will be hungry, and with nothing. It is better to be honest and to meet them face to face and follow other compatriots.

Over time, repeated participation in discussions at INTA and acquisition of such communication skills shall make this process automatic and during

the conversation you will be able to divert your attention and to think about something pleasant. Automatism is convenient, but in the end you might be re-acquainted with familiar participants, will give your business cards aimlessly and in vain and will receive duplicate business cards. This situation can be somewhat corrected by then distributing these duplicates instead of your own. Good tip is picking up the forgotten business cards on tables in the "meeting halls" but this should be done in silence, in any case without reading aloud the contents of these cards and shouting "O! Really?"?

The last but not least one. In fact, if you see that some of your questions cause confusion or difficulty, let the other person calmly read this Guide and later on your conversation will be remarkably successful. Good luck!

[Yuri Bolotov](#)