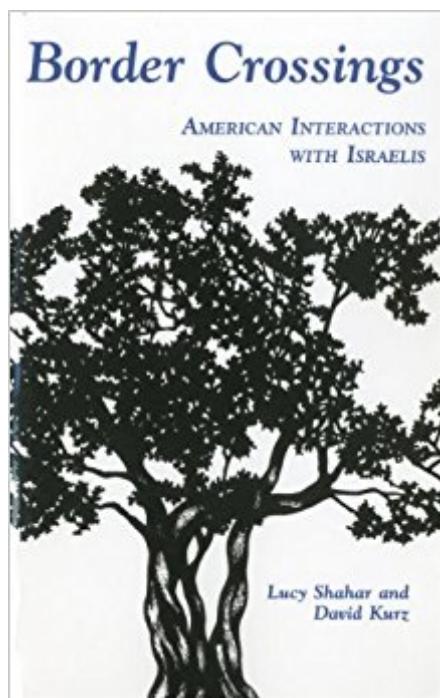


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# Border Crossings: American Interactions With Israelis



## Synopsis

Americans are often puzzled by their interactions with Israelis—the way the culture challenges authority, breaches of taboos, and their forceful self-confidence. *Border Crossings: American Interactions with Israelis* by Lucy Shahar and David Kurz, allows readers to unravel the puzzle by providing an analysis of American-Israeli cultural differences and highlighting the contrast between the two cultures through case studies, critical incidents, helpful analogies, and models. *Border Crossings* covers the fundamental aspects of Israeli society and its people, and the authors also examine direct American-Israeli interaction through real-life experiences of Americans in Israel, bringing many first-hand experiences into play, and providing unique and thought-provoking perspectives on the one-of-a-kind experience of living in or traveling to Israel. *Border Crossings* takes a practical approach to helping Americans have greater success in their dealings with Israelis in all contexts, with particular emphasis on Israeli-American workplace relationships. It's the perfect companion for North Americans who engage in ongoing communication with Israeli colleagues, clients or friends, as well as immigrants or sojourners.

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## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Lucy Shahar and David Kurz have developed a personal perspective on Israeli culture through twenty-odd years of living in Israel, undergoing the adjustment process, becoming part of an Israeli family, and gradually feeling that they belong. Shahar has been conducting cross-cultural workshops for more than fifteen years for Israelis and Americans. Kurz has worked for over fifteen years in community development with immigrant groups. Their combined experiences have given them an opportunity to understand how Americans and Israelis perceive and misperceive each other.

I've been wanting to read this book for a long time, and I was not disappointed. It provides the history behind Israel's unique culture, and gives real-life examples of how Israelis and Americans interact in professional and social contexts: everything from company negotiations to chit-chat at a ballgame to our contrasting views on what constitutes good service at the supermarket. Sometimes it made me laugh, because it was so very true to my experience. I also had a light-bulb moment on how I (as an American) had misunderstood my Israeli neighbor's repeated invitations, and the best way to meet her expectations.

Though a bit out of date in terms of examples and "contemporary" descriptions, the principles of cross-cultural (mis-)understanding still hold true, and the comparison tables and communication tools are spot on and accurate.

A real and eye opening book that highlights cultural differences.

Learned a lot from this book.

I have been meaning to go through this book for nearly a year now. As an Israeli studying in the US (3.5 years now) American social sub-text and norms continue to confuse me, even with people I refer to as close-friends. While the book is 20 years old, and is partially outdated (at least in some aspects in regards to Israeli culture), it really is a must read, if you're an Israeli in the US or an

American in Israel, or if you have friends from either country and you wish to understand their social behavior better. A small side-note to the authors: I think the book would benefit from a 21st century way of life and social interactions update; especially with how global and small the world has become with the use of Facebook, Twitter and other social media websites.

The United States and Israel are two modern industrial and hitech powers. Forms of government and political freedoms are similar. Both are innovative in industry and fast-moving in business. And Israelis speak English very well. But to go from those similarities to being able to avoid surprises at work between these two cultures you need a guide. "Border Crossings" is an impressively even-handed and accurate guide. Lucy Shahar and David Kurz start with a short history and background of the country and its people, with accurate, if minimal mentions of the Arab population, both citizens and non-citizens. The book continues with impressions and interpretations of what an American sees visiting Israel, and leads into specific scenes on the street, in stores and government offices, and finally, in the workplace. Covers Americans working and doing business in Israel, as well as Israelis representing their companies in America. No book is a substitute for actual experience, but "Border Crossings" really is the next best thing to being there.

I work in a multinational company and am in daily contact with colleagues and clients abroad. They come from r&d, marketing and sales. When I read the book, everything clicked. All of a sudden, I understood why problems dealing with contracts, managing time and solving conflicts had arisen in the past. "Border Crossings" also gave me some good ideas about how to solve intercultural conflicts. When I first started out, I needed a dictionary to understand the language. Now that I understand the language, I need a cultural interpreter to figure out what the words and behavior really mean. "Border Crossings" is my interpreter.

This is an easy read with a lot of insight. They are very good about reminding the reader that their findings are framework for building professional relationships, not meant to enable stereotypes. I would recommend this book to others doing business with Israeli's or as well as Jewish Americans as there is history that many "Americans" have not been enlightened with. An easy and quick read for the business person.

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