
A Brazilian Executive Tells Like It Is in the US and Elsewhere

Contributed by Isaura Daniel
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Américo Ribeiro Mendes Netto, a native of the southernmost Brazilian state of Rio Grande do Sul, has worked as an executive for companies General Electric (GE), Philco-Ford (currently named Philco), Eberle and Weg. In over 40 years in these companies, Mendes Netto travelled to 60 countries.

The experience was turned by the Brazilian into the book "Passport Secrets" (Segredos de Passaporte), launched by the Literalis publishing house, based in Porto Alegre, capital of Rio Grande do Sul, last month.

The Brazilian's experience in different countries gave birth to 26 stories for the publication. "They are 26 real stories, and each is independent from the others. I describe my contact with people," he says.

Mendes Netto also discusses his participation in events, such as trade fairs, that resulted in the creation of sales networks for the companies with which he worked abroad.

Although he travelled to dozens of different regions, the book focuses on the United States, Australia, Japan, the Philippines, Taiwan, Italy, Germany and the Emirates.

Netto worked with GE for eight years, Philco Ford for two years, Eberle for 16 years, and Weg for another 16 years. In the latter, he remained until 2002. Currently, at 71 years of age, he owns a company named Conosco do Brasil. By means of his enterprise, he provides consultancy services to other companies interested in international expansion.

"I help companies understand what people in other countries are like," he states. The executive holds a degree in Civil and Electric Engineering and another in Business Management from the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul.

Netto was born in Caxias do Sul, a municipality in the state of Rio Grande do Sul that was founded by European colonizers, and is a descendent of Italians and Portuguese. The release of his book took place in Caxias do Sul, in the month of March, and in the cities of Jaraguá do Sul, in Santa Catarina, and Porto Alegre, capital of Rio Grande do Sul, this month.

The author says that he also wants to publish his book outside of Brazil, and is already planning a second work, which should be a sequel to the first.

The Emirates became part of the author's curriculum from the 1990s until 2002, when he put an end to 10 years of travelling to and from the country to put together a local sales and services network for products by Weg, a maker of engines and electric equipment based in the state of Santa Catarina in the South of Brazil.

In the Emirates, Netto would usually travel to Dubai and Abu Dhabi, and worked in partnership with local company Aikah, which became the representative for the Santa Catarina-based company in the region.

In the book, the executive recounts his experience with everyday life in the Emirates. "The system there is quite different. Banks open very early, at 8 am, because of the heat, therefore large banking operations take place in the morning," says the executive.

Netto describes the Arabs as pleasant and helpful, but states that with them, one must assume that some waiting will be required. "They are not very punctual. In the beginning, I had problems with that. Over time, I became accustomed and would already expect some delay."

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