Let's talk like people

May 29, 2007

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On Mark Rosenfelder's Zompist web site I found a series of cultural guides named How to tell if you're ‹*nationality*›. All of the entries are simultaneously funny and insightful, such as this one from Turkey:

> A company can fire just about anybody it wants. But it will also hire anybody.

For some reason, my favorite is this one from the Polish entry:

> When you negotiate, you are polite, of course, but it's only good business to 'play hardball'. You don't say what you mean, you pretend not to know many things, but you surely never lie. You know the other side does the same thing, and they know you know. Many people are tired of it, so they start talking normally. You say ''let's talk like people'' then.

I like how the Poles understand that it's all an act, and they have a code for saying, "This is stupid."

While you're there, you should also check out The Zompist Phrasebook, the absolutely worst phrasebook you'll ever find that's still hilarious.

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