

## **UNIT 1**

### **SOCIO-PROFESSIONAL CONTACTS, RELATIONSHIP BUILDING AND SPHERES OF INTEREST**

#### **1.1 Establishing social and professional contacts**

Communication in English-speaking work environments is characterized by key sets of language expressions and patterns that ensure effective initiation and maintenance of socio-professional contacts and interaction. Awareness of differences in formality levels, mostly explained by culture-bound or rank-bound practices, as well as of word-for-word translations of mother-tongue-originating phrases, commonly perceived as meaningless, offensive or unprofessional by native speakers, is essential in order to speak appropriately and physically relaxed. The topic-oriented sets reproduced below feature such language phrases/patterns and provide, where needed, additional comments regarding their correct use or form.



**Greetings, Goodbyes, Introductions**

Hello ....

Hello, how are things?

Hello, how's life?

Hi .....

Good morning!

Good afternoon!

Good evening!

It's good/Good to see you again.

It's nice/Nice to see you again.

How are you?

I haven't seen you for ages. How are you?

What have you been doing lately?

How's life?

How's the family?

Goodbye!

So long!

See you later!

See you tomorrow!

See you around!

See you soon!

See you on the 10<sup>th</sup> of March.

I look forward to seeing you in ...

(formal)

I'm looking forward to meeting you in ...

(less formal)

Have a nice day!

Have a pleasant evening!

Have a safe trip back.

Have a good flight back!

I really must leave/go now.

I must be off.

It was nice meeting you again.

May/Can I introduce myself?

My name is ...? / I'm ....

I don't think we have met. My name is...

Hello, you must be ... Welcome on board!

Let me introduce you to a good collaborator  
of our company ...

I wish to introduce you to ...

Allow me to introduce you to ...

☺ Pleased/nice to meet you.

☺ Pleased/nice to meet you, too.

☺ How do you do?

☺ How do you do?

It was very nice meeting you.

I'm very pleased to work with your team.

### **Remarks**

*Good night* is used when we leave someone and means “*Noapte bună!*”; it shouldn't be confused with “*Bună seara!*” rendered as “*Good evening!*”.

Pay attention to the use of “*Good day!*”; it is used to end a conversation or even a relation ( e.g. when dismissing someone, obviously the intonation makes the difference). The Romanian “*Bună ziua!*” shouldn't be rendered as “*Good day!*”.

There is a strong tendency to replace the highly formal phrase *How do you do?* with *Pleased/nice to meet you*.



### **Welcoming a visitor, breaking the conversation ice**

Good to see you again!

Welcome to (Timisoara)!

Let me show you to your desk/office.

Is this your first visit to (Timisoara)?

How does (Timisoara) seem to you?

What do you think of (Timisoara)?

How was your flight?

How was your journey?

Did you have a good journey?

Were there any delays?

What was the weather like?

How did you get here?

Did you have any problems finding us?

Did you have time for sightseeing?

Did you have time for shopping?

Are you here on (business)?

How long will you be staying here?

How long are you here for?

The flight was very comfortable.

Everything went smoothly. No particular problems.

Extremely long and tiring, unfortunately.

Jetlag, backaches, airsickness, etc...

Very pleasant, thanks.

Well, actually it was very ...

The connections are fine.

The airport shuttle was late / delayed.

### ***Remark***

Safe conversation topics include weather, journey details, first impressions, news, current affairs, economic and political issues, work-related issues, interests, free time, hobbies, your country/city, your visitor's country/city, therefore, it would be wise to assimilate key phrases that enable genuinely relaxed conversations on these topics. Notice the phrases given below:

What do you do?

What does your job involve?  
What are your main responsibilities as  
(*Software Testing Team Leader*)?  
What are your current projects?  
What are you working on currently?  
Who are your main business  
partners/customers?  
Do you have any expansion plans?  
What is your market share?  
Do you have niche products?  
What are the current threats for your  
business?  
Is there any news about the changes in  
the (*software release*)?

What's the latest news (*on beta-version  
availability*)?  
What do you do at weekends?  
Are you keen on (*fishing*)?  
Are you into (*jogging*)?  
Do you play (tennis)?  
Do you often go out in the evening?  
Do you travel a lot?  
Where are you going to spend your  
(*holiday*)?  
How will you travel?  
Did you enjoy your holiday in (Turkey)?  
Did you have a pleasant (holiday)?



### **Giving a guided tour around the company**

Our company is one of the largest/second  
largest/leader in the market  
We produce/offer/make ... for overseas  
customers.  
Our Head Office is located ...  
Our headquarters are based in ...  
The company has subsidiaries spread  
throughout ...

Some production units have been relocated  
in ...  
We operate in over/more than .... countries  
The company has ..... employees.  
Our main products/services/ include ...  
Our most important markets are ...  
Our top clients are ....  
Our main competitors are ...

Shall we get started?

If you are ready we can begin the tour...

First we'll head down to the crash test lab  
and then I'll show you the paint shop...

If you follow me we can start the tour

Please walk this way

This area/floor is ...

At the end of the corridor there is a side  
exit to the warehouse ...

On the left side

On our right you can see

Just ahead of us

Below us/above us

Here on the right you can see

Is everything clear?

Do you have any other questions before we  
continue ...

Let me know if you need further details...

Fell free to ask any questions ...

If you are interested I can show you ...

That's the end of the tour.

We have covered ...

That's about it ...

Maybe you'd like to freshen up before we  
go to lunch

The following video illustrates the usefulness of mastering the above-mentioned sets of phrases in a real life situation, namely, an employee's first day at work. Watch the recording and note how smoothly the newly-hired employee immerses in the workplace.  
(video link <http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/youre-hired/episode-10>)

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL [learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/youre-hired/episode-10](http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/youre-hired/episode-10). The page features the British Council logo and a navigation menu with options like Home, Listen & Watch, Grammar & Vocabulary, Fun & Games, Business & Work, IELTS, Community, and English for the games. Below the menu, there's a breadcrumb trail: Home > Business & Work > You're hired >. The main content area is titled 'Episode 10' and displays a video player with a thumbnail image of three business professionals (two women and one man) shaking hands. To the right of the video player, there are several sidebar sections: 'Search' with a search bar and button; 'Tags for teachers' with the text 'No terms applicable.'; 'Navigation' with links for 'Why register?', 'How do I register?', and 'House Rules'; and 'User login' with a field for 'Username or e-mail: \*'.