



English does work - level 10

"I would like to..." / "Me gustaría..."



How to Switch Topics in English - Tips for Changing the Subject and Topic Shifts

Changing the subject in English communication is an art. And this is something that native English speakers also need to learn, as it does not come that naturally to most people.

You might have a million reasons to change the subject. Maybe it's off-topic, maybe it's raising a sensitive issue, maybe it's inappropriate, or maybe it's simply irrelevant and a waste of time to discuss.

I am sharing a few ways to switch the topic.

So if you're ready, let's get straight to it.

That reminds me

Do you remember when we closed the deal with Company X?

This phrasing is good when the people you're speaking with have the same shared experience or memory.

You can also phrase it this way, however:

That reminds me of the time we created that 90-day marketing plan.

This phrasing is used when you are sharing a memory or memorable experience with people who are hearing it for the first time.

Circling Back to

I really like this one because it's very visual. Circling back to earlier.

You can voice this as well as use it in email, by the way.

But as the topic of this lesson states, we're using this phrase to change topics.

So you can say: Circling back to what [name] said earlier..

Using the name of the person who originally brought this topic up is a great way to remind the other people in the conversation of who said it first and also to give them some credit and recognition. Think of it as a nice little pat on the back.

So when you circle back to a previous point or topic in the conversation, you intend to elaborate on it. So be sure when you use this phrasing that you have prepared some follow up questions or clarification. Basically, you're using this topic shift as a way to further explore a previous concept that you feel deserves more attention.

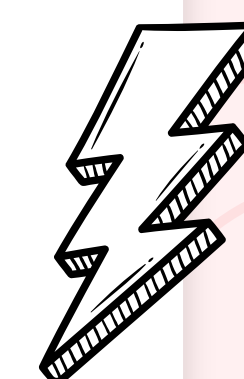
Now that I think about it

This is a good one for on the fly, fast thinking, "quick change the subject" moments.

It can be used like this:

Let's say you're talking about tennis and suddenly the other person has launched into a complaint about something entirely unrelated. You could politely let them finish their thought and then quickly say "Now that I think about it, I am planning on doing doubles this year in the tennis league.

Would you be interested in being doubles tennis partners?" And this way, you've managed to change the topic and talk about something more enjoyable.





By the way, I've been meaning to ask you/ By the way, do you know anything about?

This is a great one because it's putting the ball in the listeners court and encourages them to change the topic by talking about the new subject you've selected.

For example, the speaker might be rambling on about something uninteresting and then you can pop in and say "By the way, I've been meaning to ask" and then add on something about one of their interests. For example, if you know they are into time-restricted feeding a type of daily fasting, you can ask them to talk about that. So this looks something like this:

"By the way, I've been meaning to ask. Do you practice time-restricted feeding?"

This gets them to keep talking. But this time you've changed the subject to something that also interests you. And they'll be happy because they're still talking and even better they are talking about something of interest.

On a separate note

This one is great because right away you lead in with "Look, I'm changing the topic" without having to be so blunt and say that.

Saying "On a separate note" alerts the listener that you're switching gears.

You can use this in writing just as well.

When you use it in conversation with the purpose of switching topics, you follow it with whatever you would like to discuss next.

And the best part is it does not have to relate to anything that's been previously discussed.

So, for example, your friend could be blabbering about wedding planning and maybe you don't want to talk about that because that seems to be all she talks about these days.

That's when you pull out "On a separate note."

"On a separate note, have you seen the new space movie? If not, let's go together. We could have dinner beforehand and then see a 7 pm showing!"

And now, instead of your friend droning on about wedding planning, you're planning a fun outing with your friend!

You can use these phrases in casual conversations and in business meetings. And some of them can even be used in writing when you are switching topics and changing paragraphs.

Alright, advanced English learners, that's it for today.

After you use them let me know how it goes in the comments down below.

See you in the next one!

Keep on advancing your English.

Advanced English with Mary Daphne. (2021). How to Switch Topics in English (Tips for Changing the Subject and Topic Shifts) [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GKO4BpbyB3Y&t=23s>

