

THE PROFESSIONAL ENGLISH PHRASE BOOSTER



DEREK CALLAN
English for Professionals

Introduction

Welcome to The Professional English Phrase Booster! This comprehensive resource is designed to elevate your business communication skills with over 300 essential phrases. You'll find phrases covering crucial topics such as presentations, meetings, negotiations, emails, job interviews, project management, and more. Each section is crafted to provide you with the language tools necessary to excel in any professional setting.

This PDF is your go-to guide for mastering the art of professional communication. Whether you're leading a meeting, negotiating a deal, writing an important email, or preparing for a job interview, the phrases included in this guide will help you communicate clearly, confidently, and effectively. By familiarizing yourself with these expressions, you'll be able to convey your ideas more precisely and build stronger, more professional relationships with your colleagues and clients.

Using the Professional English Phrase Booster will give you a competitive edge in the workplace. Not only will it enhance your ability to express yourself in various business scenarios, but it will also boost your confidence and professionalism. With these phrases at your disposal, you'll be well-prepared to handle any communication challenge that comes your way. Embrace this opportunity to refine your language skills and watch as it positively impacts your career growth and success.

Have fun learning!

Derek

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Top Phrases for Professional Presentations

In this section, you'll find a carefully selected list of essential phrases to help you deliver professional and impactful presentations. These phrases are designed to assist you in every phase of your presentation, from welcoming your audience and introducing your topic to signposting key points and concluding effectively. By integrating these phrases into your presentations, you will enhance your clarity, engagement, and professionalism.

Welcoming your audience

- Good morning/afternoon/evening everybody and welcome to my presentation.
- My name is (name) and I'm a (job title) at (company name)
- The topic of my presentation is ...
- Today, I'd like to talk to you about ...

Now, this is a very standard way of introducing yourself and your topic and it's perfectly ok. However, often your audience will already know who you are and what your topic is. If you want to make your introduction a little different or more interesting, check out my popular YouTube lesson – [4 ways to make your presentation more interesting](#)

Give an overview

It can be a good idea to let your audience know what the structure of your presentation is:

- I'm going to focus on/look at/deal with 3 main points.
- I've divided my presentation into 3 main parts.
- First of all, I'll talk about
- Second, we'll look at ...
- And finally, I'll explain/show you/tell you about ...

Timing and questions

If your audience don't know how long the presentation is going to be, let them know.

- My presentation will take about (state the time)

And it can also be helpful to let them know when they can ask questions. If you have a strict time limit, and you don't want to be interrupted, you can say something like this:

- There will be plenty of time for questions at the end of my presentation.

Or

- I'd appreciate it if you could leave any questions you may have until the end of my presentation.

On the other hand, if you want to be flexible and welcome questions at any time, you could say something like this:

- If you have any questions during the presentation, feel free to interrupt at any time.

Signposting

Great, so you've made your introduction. Now it's time to start with the main part or the body of your presentation. This is where signposting phrases can be very useful.

These are phrases we use to guide our audience through the presentation - to let them know when we want to introduce a new topic, when we're finished with a topic, and when we'd like to continue to the next one.

Introducing your first point

- I'd like to begin by (followed by a gerund -ing form)
- I'd like to begin by telling you, showing you etc.
- Let's start with ...
- So, let's get started (so is a very short and simple word, but it's a very effective way to get your audience's attention).

Finishing one topic

- So that covers everything I wanted to say about ...
- That concludes my first/second point.

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And continuing with another

- Now, let's move on to my next topic which is ...
- Let's turn now to ...
- Moving on to ...

Referring to graphs and charts

If you want to show your audience some information on graphs or charts, the following phrases should be quite helpful:

- As you can see on this chart, ...
- Take a look at this chart.
- This graph clearly shows ...
- This graph highlights the importance of ...

Giving more details

Sometimes it's important to go into more detail. Let's take a look at a couple of ways to do this:

- Let me expand on this point.
- I'd like to elaborate on this point for a few minutes.

Reminding your audience about the purpose of your presentation

It's also very effective to remind your audience about the purpose of your presentation and why it's relevant and important:

- As I said at the beginning, ...
- This relates to what I was saying earlier ...
- This ties in with what I said at the start of my talk/presentation.

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Ending your presentation

Now let's think about the last part of the presentation. Here, we usually summarise the main points, give a conclusion or final message, thank the audience and invite them to ask questions:

Summarising

- So that brings me to the end of my presentation.
- We looked at 3 main points.
- First, I showed you, spoke about ...
- Then we looked at ...
- And finally, I explained/told you about ...

Concluding

- To conclude, I'd like to say ...
- Before I finish, I'd like to leave you with one final thought ...

Thanking the audience and inviting them to ask questions

- Thank you very much for your attention.
- Thank you for listening.
- If you have any questions, I'd be happy to answer them now.
- Are there any questions?

Essential Phrases for Leading a Meeting

Here I present a carefully selected list of essential phrases tailored for meeting leaders. These phrases are designed to help you navigate various aspects of leading a meeting effectively. Whether you need to set the agenda, manage discussions, or ensure a smooth flow of the meeting, these phrases will help you get the job done professionally.

Welcoming / thanking the participants

- First of all, I'd like to welcome everybody and thank you all for coming to today's meeting.
- I'd like to start by thanking all of you for agreeing to meet at such short notice. (Use this if the meeting has been called with very little time to prepare)
- Hello everybody and welcome.

Introducing people

- Before we get started, let me introduce ...
- I'd like you all to meet ...
- Let's go round the table and introduce ourselves.

Excusing people who are absent

- Unfortunately, George can't join us today - he sends his apologies.
- I'd like to apologise on behalf of Mr. Neary. He can't be with us today due to ...

Dealing with the minutes

- First, let's go over the minutes of our last meeting, which was held on ...
- Simon, could you please take the minutes today?

Outlining the agenda

- The purpose / aim / objective of today's meeting is ...
- The first item on the agenda is ...
- Then, we'll move on to ...
- After that, we will look at ...
- And finally, we'll discuss ...

Asking for opinions

- Monika, what are your views on this?
- Mohamed, how do you see it?
- Natalia, can you give us your feedback?
- Would anyone like to comment on this?
- Does anyone have anything else to add?

Asking for clarification/explanation

- What exactly do you mean by ...?
- Could you explain that in more detail?
- Would you mind going over that again please?
- I'm not sure everybody follows; would you mind explaining that again?

Managing the discussion

- I think we can move on to the next point.
- If nobody has anything else to add, let's move on to the next item.
- I'm afraid we don't have time to discuss that in today's meeting. Let's add it to next week's agenda.

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- I'm sorry, but I have to stop you there – we need to stick to the agenda.
- We'll have to come back to that at the end of the meeting.
- We're running out of time, so let's move on.

Delegating Tasks

- Wolfgang, can you keep everyone up to date with the latest developments?
- Rachel, could you please follow up on ...
- Pat, please get in touch with ...

Summarising

- Let me briefly summarise what we have discussed today.
- Before we finish, let me summarise the main points.
- We have decided to ...
- We have agreed that ...

Closing the meeting

- Well, I think that covers everything.
- That brings us to the end of this meeting.
- Our next meeting will be on ...
- Thanks everyone.

Key Phrases for Negotiating in English

In this section, you'll find essential phrases designed to help you navigate the complex process of negotiation with confidence and professionalism. Whether you're building rapport, stating your position, making proposals, or reaching an agreement, these phrases will guide you through each stage of the negotiation process. By mastering these expressions, you'll be able to articulate your points clearly and effectively, ensuring a smooth and productive negotiation.

Welcoming and relationship building/small-talk

- Welcome to (name of your company).
- It's great to finally meet you in person/great to put a face to the name
- I hope you had no trouble finding your way here.
- How was your trip?
- Is this your first time in ...?
- Can I get you something to drink?
- How's business?
- How's the weather in ...

Establishing the procedure – you may have already agreed on a procedure by email or over the phone but if this is not the case.

- To start with, I think we should establish a procedure.
- Perhaps we could start by outlining our position.
- After that, you could present yours.
- Then we'll discuss everything in detail and see what our options are.
- How does that sound?

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Stating your position

- As we see it, there are 4 main points we need to discuss ...
- There are three main areas we'd like to discuss ...

Expressing priorities

- Our main priority is ...
- The most important issue for us is ...

Asking for clarification

- I'm not exactly sure if I understood your position on this. Would you mind going over it again?
- Could you please clarify your position on ...?
- Could you be more specific please?

Making a proposal

- Our proposal is to ...
- We'd like to propose ...
- We propose ...
- We suggest ...

Asking questions and making counter-proposals

- How do you feel about ...?
- What are your views on ...?
- What would you say to ...?
- I'd like to propose an alternative. What if we ...?
- Wouldn't it be better to ...?

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Expressing disagreement

- I'm afraid we can't agree to that.
- I'm sorry, but we can't quite agree with you on that.
- I'm afraid we had something different in mind.
- I'm not sure that would work for us.
- I'm sorry, but I have some reservations about ... (a doubt about a plan or idea – unsure that it will work)
- That would be very difficult for us because ...

Bargaining and Compromising

- We would be prepared to ... if you could ... for example
- We would be prepared to offer a discount if you could increase your order.

When you say you “would be prepared to do something”, it means you're ready to do it – it's a strong possibility. However, when you say you “might be able to do something”, you're saying it's a possibility but it's not a strong possibility

- We might be able to ... if you could... for example
- We might be able to bring the price down if you could increase your order.
- If we were to ..., would you be willing to ...? for example
- If we were to increase our order, would you be willing to offer a discount?
- In exchange for this, would you be prepared to ...?
- Would you be willing to accept a compromise?
- Maybe we could meet halfway on this?
- We're happy to accept your offer, but there is one condition ...

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- From our point of view, an acceptable price would be ...
- I'm afraid we just can't go below this price.
- Is that the best you can do? – very informal
- I'm sorry, but that's our final offer.

Delaying

- I think we'll need more time to consider these options.
- I'm afraid I'm not in a position to make this decision myself. I'll need to discuss it with our CEO first.

Expressing agreement

- We can agree to that.
- That sounds reasonable.
- I think that would be acceptable.
- I think we can go along with that.
- It looks like we have a deal.

Concluding

- Let's sum up everything we've agreed on today.
- So, we just need to finalise ..., but I think that can wait until we meet again next week. Do you agree?
- There are still a few minor details to work out here, but I think we can do that tomorrow.
- I hope I haven't missed anything.
- Let's just confirm the details.

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- Great! Let's get this in writing.
- Excellent. Well, it's been a pleasure doing business with you.
- Here's to a successful long-term relationship!
- And if you couldn't reach a deal:
- I suggest we meet again next week once we've had time to consider everything we discussed here today.

Top Phrases for Formal Business Emails

Here you'll find a comprehensive list of phrases for writing formal business emails. These phrases cover various aspects of email communication, from greetings and introductions to making requests and addressing complaints. By incorporating these phrases into your emails, you will enhance your professionalism and ensure clear and effective communication with your colleagues and clients.

Greetings

- Dear Mr/Ms Jones

Always use Ms and not Mrs when writing to a woman in a professional context.

In formal emails we always use the surname, so if the person's name is Mary Franklin, don't write Dear Ms. Mary or Dear Ms. Mary Franklin, write Dear Ms. Franklin.

Sometimes you don't know the name of the person you're writing to because the email address is info@ or office@. In this case, write:

- Dear Sir/Madam

Introducing yourself – name, job title and company

- My name is Susan Whitby and I am the Head of Marketing at HMU.

Friendly opening – this all depends on your relationship with the person. If you know someone a little better, but still have a formal relationship it might be nice to use a phrase like this at the beginning of your mails:

- I hope everything is going well.
- I hope you had a nice Christmas.

Referring to the last contact between you

- It was lovely meeting you at ...
- It was lovely meeting you at the sales conference last week.
- It was nice talking to you on the phone earlier.

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- Thank you for your mail last week.

Reason for writing

- I am writing in connection with the order we placed last week.
- I am writing with regard to the order we placed last week.
- I am writing to update you on the progress of the Masterson project.
- As discussed, I am writing/sending ...

Giving information

- I would like to inform you about
- I would like to inform you about the results of our customer survey.

Mentioning attachments

- I have attached
- I have attached a pdf with the most relevant information.

Making a request

- Could you please let me know if ...
- Could you please let me know if you received the ...
- I would appreciate it if you could ...
- I would appreciate it if you could send me the documents this week.
- Would it be possible to ...
- Would it be possible to deliver the goods one week earlier?

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Making arrangements

- I was wondering if you ...
- I was wondering if you would be available for a meeting next week.
- Would 10am be a suitable time?
- I am afraid I am not available on Wednesday. Would Thursday work?

Confirming

- I would like to confirm ...
- I would like to confirm our meeting for 3pm on Wednesday the 11th.

Answering questions

- In answer to your first/ second/ third/ last question...
- To answer your question about...

Asking for clarification

- Would you mind clarifying the following points:
- Could you please clarify whether the offer you sent includes delivery?
- Could you please explain what you mean by additional costs?

Highlighting important information

- Please pay particular attention to the first 2 pages of the attachment.
- Please note that our opening hours have recently changed.

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Requesting further details

- Could you please send me further information on your sales training courses?
- I would be grateful if you could send further details about the technical requirements.

Replying to requests

- As requested, I have attached a document with all the necessary details.
- We are glad to inform you that the item you requested is available.
- We are pleased to inform you that your request has been accepted.
- Unfortunately, we are unable to fulfil your request at this time.
- We regret to inform you that we cannot fulfil your request at the moment.
- I am afraid that we do not have the necessary resources to fulfil your request.
- We are sorry to inform you that the requested item is currently out of stock.

Complaining

- I am writing to complain about the delivery we received earlier today.
- Despite stating clearly in my email that we urgently needed 100 pieces, we only received 75.
- We are extremely dissatisfied with the service from your company.
- If this matter is not resolved to our satisfaction, we will have to look for another supplier.

Apologising

- Thank you for bringing this issue / matter to our attention.
- We sincerely apologise for the inconvenience caused.
- I will look into this immediately and get back to you promptly.

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- I can assure you that this will not happen again.

Closing line offering more communication

- If you need/require any further information, please feel free / do not hesitate to contact me.

Closing line referring to the next meeting

- I look forward to seeing you ...
- I look forward to meeting you ...

Closing

- Best regards,
(name)
- With kind regards,
(name)

Derek's Top Interview Tips

In this section, you'll find key tips to help you ace your next job interview. These tips are designed to ensure you are well-prepared, confident, and able to effectively communicate your strengths and qualifications. From researching the company and preparing for common questions to mastering non-verbal communication and following up after the interview, these strategies will help you make a lasting impression.

My Top Tips

- Do your research and know the company you are applying to. Don't just look for facts and figures, try to find out about big successes they've had, what do their employees say about the company, and what they post on their social media channels.
- Be very well-prepared, especially for key questions such as "Tell me about yourself", "Why do you want to work for us?" and "Why should we hire you?"
- Always support what you say by giving specific examples. If you don't have a specific example, say what you would do if you were in that position.
- Never end an answer with "...and yes" – this can give the impression that you are not confident about your answer.
- Try not to memorise answers to questions word for word – they won't sound natural when they come out.
- Ask Insightful Questions: Towards the end of the interview, candidates often get the chance to ask questions. I recommend preparing thoughtful questions about the company's culture, future plans, or specific aspects of the job you're applying for. This shows interest and engagement, and also gives you a better understanding of the company.
- Practice Non-Verbal Communication: Non-verbal cues like eye contact, a firm handshake, and confident body language are just as important as verbal responses. Be aware of your body language, as it can convey confidence and enthusiasm. Practicing in front of a mirror or with a friend can be helpful.

- Follow-up After the Interview: Send a thank-you email within 24 hours of the interview. This shows appreciation for the opportunity and keeps you in the interviewer's mind. It's also a chance to reiterate your interest in the position and to briefly mention any key points you feel were not adequately covered during the interview.

Answering Common Questions

Question 1: Tell me about yourself

This is a really important one, so I'm going to go into a lot of detail here.

Here's a sample structure for answering this very important question:

- Introduce yourself
- Talk about your current role
- Talk about previous experience
- Talk about your key achievements and skills
- Talk about your educational background
- Share reasons for your interest in the position/company

Introduce yourself

- My name is ... and I come from ...

Your current role

- Currently, I am working as [Your Job Title] at [Your Company], where I am responsible for [Key Responsibilities]. This role has enabled me to develop [specific skills or experiences] and has given me extensive experience in [specific area of work].
- As a [Your Job Title] with [Your Company], my main responsibilities include [Key Responsibilities]. This position has allowed me to master [specific skills] and contribute significantly towards [a specific project or goal].

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Previous Experience

- Prior to this, I was employed as [Previous Job Title] at [Previous Company], where I [describe a key responsibility or achievement]. This experience was instrumental in honing my skills in [specific skills or area].
- Before my current role, I worked as [Previous Job Title] at [Previous Company], handling [Key Responsibilities]. Here, I developed a strong foundation in [specific skills or area].

Key Achievements and Skills

- One of my key achievements includes [describe a significant achievement or project], which significantly [describe the impact or result]. My experience in [specific skill or field] has been particularly valuable in this regard.
- A highlight of my career was when I [describe another achievement or project], leading to [outcome or result]. This experience emphasized my strengths in [specific skills or areas].

Educational Background

- I hold a [Your Degree] from [Your University], with a focus on [Your Major or Specialization]. My education has provided me with a strong foundation in [relevant skills or knowledge area].
- I graduated from [Your University] with a degree in [Your Major], where I gained extensive knowledge in [relevant area]. This education has been pivotal in shaping my approach to [specific skills or work area].

Reason for Interest in the Position/Company

- I am particularly excited about the opportunity to work at [Company Name] because [give a reason related to the company's values, mission, or projects]. I believe my background in [your key skills or experiences] aligns well with the needs of your team, and I'm eager to bring my [specific skills or attributes] to contribute to your success.
- What draws me to [Company Name] is its commitment to [mention a company value or objective]. Given my background in [your field or specialty], I am

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enthusiastic about the chance to contribute to [a specific company goal or project] and collaborate with your dynamic team.

Other useful phrases

- I am very interested in pursuing a career as a ..., and when I heard about this position, I was immediately attracted to it.
- I am convinced that my theoretical knowledge and practical skills combined with my (mention key strengths again) make me an excellent candidate for this position.
- I've always had a passion for ...
- This role strongly appeals to me because ...
- I strongly believe that my ... (key strengths) combined with my academic background and varied skill set would make me a valuable asset to your team.
- I'm confident that I will be able to succeed in this role.
- I'm confident that I'm a good fit for the role and that I can become an asset to the business.

Question 2: Why do you want to work for us?

Tip: Don't make empty statements – give specific examples and show that you've done your research

- I've known the company for a long time and I'm really impressed by ...
- The prospect of working for a company which has such an excellent reputation for ... is very exciting to me.
- In the job posting it says that you're looking for someone who ... (give specific reasons why you are the right person)
- One of the main reasons I want to work here is ...
- What excites me about this position is the opportunity to
- I believe that I could bring real value to your team because ...
- Your company is an important player in the industry and ...
- During my research, I also found out that the company is involved in This is something that I also feel very strongly about because ...

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Question 3: How do you handle stress and pressure?

- When I am in a stressful situation, I stop and try to figure out my priorities. I make a list of the tasks I have to do and decide which ones need to be completed more urgently. Then I go through the list step by step and complete each task. For example ...

Other examples:

- When I'm under a lot of pressure, I always look for the positives in each situation. Instead of concentrating too much on the things I couldn't get done on a particular day, I try to focus on the progress I have made on other tasks. For example, ...
- I find that this helps me to keep myself motivated even when things are very stressful.
- I believe that a little bit of stress can be positive. I like challenges and find that a little bit of pressure can actually motivate me to work harder and get results faster. For example ...

Question 4: What is your greatest strength?

- I believe one of my greatest strengths is For example, last semester I managed to ...
- My ability to adapt to different challenges and roles is something that I'm proud of. For example, during my internship at ... last year I ...
- I would say my greatest strength is my ability to ...
- This has helped to build my confidence and strengthen my ... skills. For example, ...

Examples of strengths could be

- Excellent problem-solving skills
- Positive attitude and the ability to motivate myself and others around me
- Enthusiasm and determination
- Go the extra mile and exceed expectations

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Question 5: What is your greatest weakness?

Don't say I'm a perfectionist or I work too hard, think carefully about this and talk about a real weakness that you have been working on that you have managed to improve.

- One of my weaknesses is that I sometimes (mention weakness)
- I noticed that...
- Therefore, I started ...
- Since I started ... I have noticed that I have ...
- I'm still working on it, but I'm confident that I will be able to ... much better in the future.

Other examples:

- I sometimes find it hard to ...
- I realised this during ...
- I'm very conscious of this weakness and am trying hard to improve. For example, ...

Examples of weaknesses could be:

- Trying to do too many things at once
- Not being good at prioritizing tasks
- Too proud to ask for help
- Too critical of other people's work

Question 6: Why should we hire you?

- I think you should hire me because of my excellent ... skills.
- During my time at university these skills enabled me to ...
- I was able to hone these skills during my 2 internships/in my first two positions when I ...
- I want to develop these skills further and believe that this role and your company is the ideal place to do that.

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Other ideas

- I may not have a great deal of experience, but I compensate for that with my ability to adapt and learn new things quickly, especially when I'm passionate about something. I was very interested in the job before the interview, and after finding out more about the role today, I know it's something I can be passionate about.
- I am confident that I can make a significant contribution to your team and help the company.
- I believe I have the skills and attitude to excel in this position.
- I developed ... and ...skills while working on ... at ...
- I'm convinced that these skills and my work ethic would help me to be successful in this role.

Important

What you see in this section are examples – they are not complete answers. I'm sure they will help you but you need to think carefully about your strengths, skills and specific examples of what you can do and what you've achieved. This goes for all of the other examples you see in this section on job interviews.

If you don't have a lot of experience or specific examples to refer to, try to sell your personality, your willingness to learn and if it's a job and company you really like, try to get that passion and enthusiasm across.

Professional Vocabulary & Phrases for Projects

Here you'll find essential vocabulary and phrases specifically tailored for project management. These terms and expressions will help you effectively communicate various aspects of project planning, execution, and evaluation. Understanding and using these phrases will enhance your ability to discuss project details, deadlines, budgets, and stakeholder interactions with clarity and professionalism.

Project Sponsor – one level above the project leader. Makes sure the resources are in place, promotes the project, and has overall responsibility for the project's success.

- The project sponsor met with other senior managers to give them an update on the progress of the project.

Deliverables - a product, service or other outcome that a *project* produces for its customer, client, or *project* sponsor

There are many different types of deliverables. Here are some examples:

- a finished object – product, building, document etc.
- a service or an improved process
- All project deliverables have to be achievable and well-defined.

Scope - Project scope is the part of project planning that defines what the overall goal of the project is. It includes a list of specific project goals, deliverables, tasks, costs and deadlines.

- The scope of this project is the construction of a new production facility.

Constraint – something that limits what you can do – a constraint can have a negative effect on the project or stop the project from progressing.

- We have to cancel the project because of budget constraints.

Stakeholders – any person with an interest in the *project's* outcome, including *project* managers, team members, customers, and any other key individuals.

- Representatives of all of the stakeholders were at the kick off meeting

Useful phrases for talking about deadlines:

Set a deadline - decide on a date when something must be finished

- Have we already set a deadline for the test phase?

Meet a deadline - finish something by a deadline (on or before)

- The whole team is working around the clock to make sure we meet the deadline.

Miss a deadline - fail to finish something by a deadline

- They missed the deadline because two project members became ill.

Extend a deadline - make the date or time later than it was before

- Our suppliers are having problems delivering at the moment so we will have to extend the deadline.

Useful phrases for talking about project schedules:

On schedule - on time; as planned or expected

- We are very happy to say that we completed the project on schedule and under budget.

Behind schedule – later than planned or expected

- We are about 6 weeks behind schedule and the project sponsor isn't happy.

Ahead of schedule – before planned or expected

- If we continue to work so effectively, we could finish the project ahead of schedule.

Useful phrases for talking about project budgets:

Over budget – using more money than planned

- The project went over budget because of an unexpected increase in costs.

Under budget – using less money than planned

- We are very happy to say that we completed the project on schedule and under budget.

On/within budget – not using more money than planned

- Everyone has worked extremely hard to keep the project on budget.

Derek's Top 20 Phrasal Verbs for Business

Understanding and mastering phrasal verbs is a crucial aspect of achieving fluency and confidence in high-level English communication, particularly in professional settings. Phrasal verbs are an integral part of the language, and proficient speakers use them all the time.

I have carefully selected 20 phrasal verbs - some of the most common phrasal verbs used in business, giving you have a good foundation in this essential aspect of business English vocabulary.

Set up - to organise or plan something such as a meeting or event.

- Can you set up a meeting for Thursday afternoon please?
- We've set up a series of workshops to train staff on how to use the new software.

Follow up - to take action to make sure a task or request has been completed, such as making further contact with a customer to check if they are satisfied with a product or service.

- I'll follow up with the customer next week to see if they're satisfied with the results of our project.
- I sent the client an email yesterday, so I should follow up tomorrow to make sure they received it.

Deal with something - to take action to do something, especially to solve a problem.

- I had to deal with a lot of customer complaints last week.
- We've had some technical problems with the new website, but we're dealing with them.

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Figure something out - to finally understand something or find the solution to a problem after a lot of thought .

- I took me a few days to figure out how to use the new software.
- He's checked the machine three times, but he can't figure out why it's not working.

Look into something- to try to find out more information or facts about something.

- The customer didn't accept our new offer. We're not sure why, so the boss has asked me to look into it.
- I'm very sorry about the delay. I'll look into it immediately and get back to you within the next two hours.

Get back to someone - to talk to someone or call them again in order to give them information that you couldn't give them earlier .

- I'm sorry I don't have that information right now, but I will get back to you by the end of the day. Would that be okay?
- Boris: Did Simon contact you about the offer?
Jill: No. He said he'd get back to me today, but I still haven't heard from him.

Come up - to happen, usually unexpectedly.

- A lot of problems came up in the first week of the project, but now things are running more smoothly.
- I'm sorry, but something has just come up and I need to deal with it immediately.

This is a great phrasal verb to use if you need to cancel something but don't want to give a reason why.

Catch up on - to do something you didn't have time to do earlier.

- Susan is working late to catch up on some project work.

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- Ana: Are you joining us for a drink later?
Alex: I'd love to but I have a lot to catch up on. Maybe next time.

Get something across - to manage to make someone understand or believe something.

- The message we want to get across to our customers is that we will stop at nothing to provide the best service.
- His English isn't perfect but he still got his point across.

Run through - to quickly review or rehearse.

- Let's run through the presentation one more time before the meeting.
- We should run through the checklist to confirm that all the necessary tasks are completed before the project deadline.

Take on - to accept a task or responsibility.

- The manager took on the responsibility of training the new employees.
- Our team is ready to take on the challenge of increasing sales by 8% this quarter.

Fill in for somebody - to do another person's job for a short period of time because they are not there or are unable to do it.

- Susan is on holiday this week so I'm filling in for her.
- The boss asked me to fill in for him next week, because he has to go to an important conference.

Pitch in - to join others and help with an activity or task.

- We should be able to finish on schedule if everyone pitches in.
- Charlie always pitches in if we're having trouble getting something finished on time – he's such a great colleague.

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Lay off - to stop employing somebody because there is not enough work for them to do.

- Due to a decline in sales, the company had to lay off several employees last month.
- Unfortunately, we've had to lay off workers across various departments to cut costs.

Fall through - to fail to happen or be completed.

- Unfortunately, the deal fell through at the last minute.
- The merger negotiations fell through because the two companies couldn't agree on the terms.

Add up - to increase by small amounts until there is a large total.

- We need to buy a lot of different things for our new offices, but we also need to be careful about our spending because it all adds up.
- Paul: What went wrong with the business?
Andy: Well, we just had one small problem after another and they all eventually added up to several very big problems that we just couldn't solve.

Hold off - to delay doing something.

- We're holding off on the order until the price comes down.
- I'm not sure that this is the right time for this investment. Let's hold off for now and see how things develop.

Run over - to take more time than was planned.

- The meetings in our department always run over.
- Sorry everyone, but it looks like we're going to run over today. I hope you can all stick around for another little while.

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Bring up - to start discussing a topic.

- That's a very interesting point - I'm glad you brought it up.
- I'm sorry, but I don't think we have time for that. Maybe you should bring it up at the next meeting.

Point something out- to tell someone something that they did not already know or had not thought about.

- That's completely new to me! Thanks for pointing it out.
- I'd just like to point out that these results are from last year, not this year.

50 Essential Business English Expressions

In this section, you'll find 50 essential business expressions that are crucial for effective communication in a professional environment. These phrases cover various verbs and contexts, helping you articulate your thoughts clearly and professionally in different business scenarios. Whether you're leading a team, managing projects, negotiating deals, or handling everyday office interactions, these expressions will enhance your ability to communicate effectively.

Expressions with “Take”

Take the initiative - to be proactive and take the first step in a task without being told.

- If you want to succeed in this role, you need to take the initiative.
- She always takes the initiative in team meetings.

Take into account - to consider or include certain factors when making a decision.

- We need to take the market into account trends before launching the new product.
- The board took the employee feedback into account when revising the policy.

Take advantage of - to make good use of an opportunity.

- We should take advantage of the low-interest rates to finance our expansion.
- The company took advantage of the new technology to improve efficiency.

Take it from there - to continue from a certain point onward.

- Finish the initial report, and I'll take it from there.
- Let's review the budget and take it from there.

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Take charge - to assume control or responsibility.

- When the manager fell ill, Tom had to take charge of the project.
- It's time to take charge and steer the company towards success.

Take a step back - to pause and reconsider or re-evaluate a situation.

- We need to take a step back and assess our strategy before moving forward.
- Sometimes it's good to take a step back to see the bigger picture.

Expressions with “Let”

Let something slip - to accidentally tell someone something when you wanted to keep it a secret

- I was just talking to Sara and I let it slip that Marina got the promotion.
- Tara let it slip that she was looking for a better job.

Let's face it – we usually say this just before we say something that is unpleasant but true – something that is not good but that we have to accept

- Let's face it, the company isn't making enough money and if something doesn't change soon, we'll have to close down.
- Let's face it, the last project was a disaster!

Let something go - to not punish or criticize someone for something they have done wrong

- Josh was late for work again today but the boss let it go.
- That's the second time you've made the same mistake this week. I'll let it go this time but please try to concentrate more next time.

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Let off steam – to get rid of strong emotions or energy by doing some kind of enjoyable or relaxing activity.

- Susan usually goes jogging to let off steam.
- Things in the office have been really stressful lately, so I think we should have a night out and let off some steam.

Let somebody go – to officially end someone's employment – to tell someone they have to leave their job

- Business has been bad this year so we've had to let some employees go.
- I was let go from my last job because of the coronavirus.

Let somebody in on something – to tell something that is secret or only known by a few people

- I'm going to let you in on something – Pinar is thinking of leaving the company.
- What are you all talking about? Come on, let me in on it.

Let someone down – to not do something that someone trusts or expects you to do - to disappoint someone

- I made some big mistakes in the office recently and I feel like I've let a lot of people down.
- I can't believe the boss let us down again! He told us he would consider our ideas but he didn't even listen to us!

Let sleeping dogs lie - said to warn someone that they should not talk about a bad situation that most people have forgotten about

- I don't think you should talk about that during tomorrow's meeting – it's better to let sleeping dogs lie.
- Everyone was in a much better mood this morning so I decided to let sleeping dogs lie.

Expressions with “Give”

Would give your right arm for/to do something - you want to have or do something very much. (British English)

- He'd give his right arm for a company car.
- I'd give my right arm to work for such a great company

Give someone an earful – to tell someone how angry you are about something they have done (British English)

- The boss gave me an earful after I was late for the third day in a row
-

Give my regards to (name) - we use this phrase in a formal situation when we are asking someone to tell a different person that we said hello – something that you might say at the end of a meeting or conversation

- Please give my regards to Mr Costa.

Give someone a hard time – to make things difficult or unpleasant for someone

- I complained to my boss because one of my colleagues was giving me a hard time.
- Why does he always give me a hard time?!

Give your notice – to tell your employer that you will be leaving the company soon

- What did your boss say when you gave your notice?

Note: This phrase also works the other way around - to tell an employee that they must leave their job.

- I was completely shocked when the boss gave me my notice.

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Give it a rest - when you want someone to stop talking about or doing something that is annoying you (informal).

- One of my colleagues always speaks so loudly on the phone – I wish he'd just give it a rest!
- Can you please give it a rest! I'm trying to concentrate!

Give someone a hand – to help someone

- I'm not sure how to write this email – could you give me a hand?
- These boxes are pretty heavy – can you give me a hand?

Give in – to decide to do what someone else wants

- After asking my boss for a pay rise many times, he finally gave in.
- The negotiations were tough, but the company eventually gave in and accepted the terms of the deal.

Give something a boost – to improve or increase something

- Our bright new offices have completely changed the atmosphere and given the company a boost.
- The government's investment in infrastructure is expected to give the economy a significant boost.

Give or take – approximately - possibly a little more or less than the amount or time mentioned

- There were about 10 people at the meeting, give or take.
- The presentations should take 2 hours, give or take.

Expressions with “Know”

I know for a fact - if you know something for a fact, you are absolutely sure or convinced that it's true

- I know for a fact that the company is losing money.
- I know for a fact that Marco is getting the job.

In the know - if you're in the know, you have access to information or knowledge that most other people do not have

- People in the know say that interest rates are going to rise again soon.
- I'm afraid I don't know anything about the takeover plans, but ask Kevin – he's in the know.

Don't know whether you're coming or going – to be confused about what you are doing, because you are doing too many things at the same time

- The last couple of weeks have been extremely stressful – I don't know whether I'm coming or going, to be honest.
- Fiona had to learn so many new things in the first few days that she didn't know whether she was coming or going

Know something like the back of your hand/know something inside out - to know something completely

- We should ask Tina about this – she knows this software like the back of her hand.
- Ahmed knows the business inside out.

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Know someone to see - if you know someone to see, you can recognize them when you see them, but you don't actually know them.

- Sara: Do you know Pablo from accounts?
Johnny: I know him to see but I've never actually spoken to him.
- Wolfgang: Do you know those two guys over there?
Betty: The one on the left is Klaus Steiner – he works for Siemens. I know the other guy to see but I don't know his name.

Dying to know (something) - very eager and excited about knowing something – you really want to know about it

- Have you heard anything from Lucy? I'm dying to know if she got the job!
- Have you spoken to anyone from the marketing department? I'm dying to know what happened in that meeting earlier today.

Not know the first thing about something - if you don't know the first thing about something, you know absolutely nothing about it

- I don't know why the boss has given me this job – I don't know the first thing about spreadsheets!
- A: Can you help me with this for a moment?
B: I'll try, but I don't know the first thing about PowerPoint.

Not know what hit you - if you don't know what hit you, it means you feel extremely surprised or shocked

- Wendy didn't know what hit her when the boss told her she got the promotion.
- The competition won't know what hit them when they see our new product range.

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What do you know! - often used when you're angry or irritated by what someone says. By saying what do you know, you're basically saying that the other person doesn't know enough about the topic or that they are not in a position to comment on it. It's quite direct and not very friendly.

- Anna: I really don't think that's a good idea.
Boris: What do you know! You've only been in the company a few months!
- Mo: Gerry thinks we should change the software.
Kay: Does he? I wouldn't listen to him if I were you. What does he know about IT?

I'll have you know - used to emphasize something that you are telling someone – often when you are annoyed or angry

- Andrea: I'm not sure that she should be working on this project.
Simon: I'm sorry, but I totally disagree. Francesca is one of our best employees, I'll have you know.
- Roland: Maybe Tom could help you with this – he has a lot of knowledge in this area.
Henry: I'll have you know that I'm the most qualified person in the department.

Expressions with “Say”

Having said that -this is used to say that something is true in spite of what you have just said – so we use it to show contrast

- He did a good job on his first project. Having said that, he still has a lot to learn.
- The merger has increased our market share significantly. Having said that, we must be cautious about potential integration challenges.

To say the least - used to show that something is worse or more serious than you are actually saying

- The negotiations were tough, to say the least. (So, they were extremely tough or difficult.)
- The client's feedback was critical, to say the least.

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Say the word - used to tell someone that you will do what they want at the time they ask you - so to tell someone you will be ready to help, support or give them what they need (often used with just)

- Just say the word and we'll be ready to support you.
- If there's anything you need to ensure the event's success, just say the word and we'll make it happen.

Say something to somebody's face - to criticize someone or say something unpleasant directly to them instead of saying it to someone else

- Paul doesn't think I'm experienced enough to lead the project, but he'd never say it to my face.
- John thinks Gary's marketing strategy isn't as good as it should be, but he's too polite to say it to his face.

It goes without saying - this phrase is used by native speakers all the time and it's used to say that something is so clearly true that it does not need to be said

- It goes without saying that we want satisfied customers.
- It goes without saying that employee satisfaction leads to higher productivity.

Easier said than done - used to say that something would be very difficult to do

- Finding the right person for the job is easier said than done.
- Implementing a new software system across all departments is easier said than done.

Enough said - something you say to tell someone that you understand what they have said and that there is no need to say any more

- Andy: Somebody has to talk to talk to Sophia about her performance.
Berta: Enough said.

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- Lata: We need to tighten our budget for the next quarter.
Francis: Enough said.

Say a lot about someone/something - to show that someone or something has a lot of a particular quality

- The fact that so many people want to work there says a lot about the company.
- The way she handled the crisis says a lot about her leadership skills.

Expressions with “Drop“

Drop everything - When you drop everything, you immediately stop what you're doing so you can do something else – often used for emergencies

- When our best client made such a big complaint, the CEO dropped everything and paid them a visit.
- When the production line halted due to a malfunction, the plant manager dropped everything to address the problem immediately.

Drop an idea/drop a plan – decide not to continue with an idea or plan

- We didn't have enough resources for the project so the idea was dropped.
- The company has dropped its plan to build a new factory.

Drop it/drop the subject – to stop talking about something, especially because it's annoying

- Will you just drop it! I don't want to talk about it anymore!
- We can't agree on this, so maybe we should drop the subject.

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Drop a hint – to suggest something without saying it directly

- The boss didn't tell me directly that I could lead the next project, but he did drop a few hints.
- In her email, she dropped a hint that there could be budget cuts in the next fiscal year.

Drop a bombshell - to suddenly tell someone a shocking piece of news

- At the start of the meeting the CEO dropped a bombshell; he told us that he was leaving the company.
- Just before the product launch, the lead developer dropped a bombshell, informing the team about a critical bug in the software.

Drop somebody in it - to say or do something that gets someone else into trouble

- Why did you tell the boss about that mistake I made? You really dropped me in it!
- She dropped the entire team in it by admitting they missed the client's deadline during the conference call.

Drop in business – when a company's turnover decreases; when they sell less products or services than usual

- A lot of companies have had a drop in business due to the recession.
- The retail store reported a drop in business following the negative reviews on social media.

Drop prices – to reduce or lower prices

- The competition is dropping their prices so we have to do something.
- To stay competitive, the car dealership dropped prices on several models of their new cars.

What's next?

I hope you've found The Professional English Phrase Booster helpful!

If you want to learn more, I've organised all of my "short lessons for busy people" on YouTube into playlists.

Just click on the topic that is most important for you right now, and continue your learning!

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