

BUSINESS ENGLISH - INGLÊS COM FOCO EM NEGÓCIOS

ENGLISH BUSINESS LESSON

01. Making Conversation

Obviously, it is impossible to tell someone how to have a conversation, but here are some things that help.

1. Ask questions.
2. Don't just answer Yes or no.
3. Try to add a comment of your own.
4. Don't let the conversation stop.
5. Show that you're interested, both words and voice.

First Meeting:

Identification

Formal: Good morning / afternoon / evening

I'm . . . I'm from . . . Hello, my name is . . .

Informal

Hi, I'm . . . from . . .

Company Information

I'm from . . .

I work for . . .

I'm with . . .

I'm in charge of . . .

I'm responsible for . .

Response to Introduction:

Initial Greeting

Formal:

How do you do?

I'm pleased to [finally*] meet you.

It's nice to [finally*] meet you

Informal:

Hi, Nice/good to meet you.

Hello, Pleased to meet you.

Follow up with the initial response from the host might include:

Formal:

Please have a seat.

Please join us at the table.

Please take a seat.

Can I get you a drink?

Informal:

Have seat.

Sit over here.

Take a seat.

Would you like a drink?

Please sit.

EXAMPLE:

1.

Situation: Ms. Anderson arrives at the Bangkok Post to meet the circulation director, Khun Suwat.

Formal Dialog:

Anderson: Good morning, I'm Janet Anderson from Jiffy Transport Company.

Suwat: How do you do? I'm pleased to finally meet you. Please have a seat.

Informal Dialog:

Anderson: Hi, I'm Janet Anderson from Jiffy Transport.

Suwat: Welcome, come have a seat.

2.

NOTE: You can easily see that less formal dialogs tend to be shorter and use ellipsis (leave out parts of the sentence). Look at the differences in the formal and informal dialogs above to note how one is different from the other. As the conversation continues . . .

Suwat: What do you do at Jiffy Transport Ms. Anderson?

Ms. Anderson: I'm the Business Manager in charge of new accounts, Khun Suwat, and your responsibilities here?

K. Suwat: I'm the Circulation Manager, I make sure our newspapers get where they need to go

Business English for first contacts

Practice the following dialog with a partner

A: Good morning, I'm [name] from Anderson Consulting.

B: I'm pleased to meet you, please take a seat.

B: What do you do at Anderson, Mr./Ms. [name]?

A: I'm the Operations Manager, I'm in charge of transportation. And you, Mr. Mize?

B: I'm Senior Sales Representative here, I supervise our sales people.

Use the chart below and practice the dialog with other students.

NAMES: Jung-Ah Hwang Bill Smith Wolfgang Zimmer Nobuo Wakanabe

COMPANY: Xerox / IBM / Volkswagen /Honda

JOB: engineer / systems analyst / purchasing manager / sales manager

DUTIES: designs photocopiers / oversees software development / buys car parts
supervises their salespeople

Now, change the dialog and ask and answer questions about the people on the chart above, similar to the dialog below:

A: Where does Jung-Ah Hwang work?

B: She works for Xerox.

A: What is her job there?

B: She is an engineer.

A: What does she do?

B: She designs photocopiers.

Now, change the dialog a bit and ask and answer questions about other students in your classroom, similar to the dialog below:

A: Where does Jung-Ah Hwang work?

B: She works for Xerox.

A: What is her job there?

B: She is an engineer.

A: What does she do?

B: She designs photocopiers.

When introducing colleagues, coworkers, customers and/or clients to each other in a business setting it is important to pass along information about their job title or function at their company. The structure of an introduction is like this:

Introduce your guest:

1. May I introduce Mr. Anthony Kim from Kookmin Bank?
2. Introduce the other person to your guest: Mr. Kim, this Janice Andersen.
3. Describe the other person's job function: She's responsible for international logistics.

Formal:

May I introduce [name] from [company]?

Informal:

I'd like you to meet [name] from [company].

Formal:

Job Function

She's + responsible for + pricing our underwriting business

He's + in charge of + negotiating our shipping rates

I'm** Informal: training our sales representatives takes care of + our purchasing department hedging our raw material costs.

02.Common interview questions and answers

1. Tell me about yourself.

Tip: Your interviewers will likely start out with a question about yourself and your background to get to know you. Start out by giving them an overview of your current position or activities, then provide the most important and relevant highlights from your background that make you most qualified for the role.

Example: “Currently, I serve as the assistant to three of the company’s five executive team members, including the CEO. From my 12 years of experience as an executive assistant, I’ve developed the ability to anticipate roadblocks and create effective alternative plans. My greatest value to any executive is my ability to work independently, freeing up their time to focus on the needs of the business.

It’s clear that you’re looking for someone who understands the nuances of managing a CEO’s busy day and can proactively tackle issues. As someone with an eye for detail and a drive to organize, I thrive on making sure every day has a clear plan and every plan is clearly communicated.”

2. How would you describe yourself?

Tip: When an interviewer asks you to talk about yourself, they’re looking for information about how your qualities and characteristics align with the skills they believe are required to succeed in the role. If possible, include quantifiable results to demonstrate how you use your best attributes to drive success.

Example: “I would say that as a security officer, I’m vigilant, proactive and committed to ensuring safe, secure, and orderly environments. In my last incident response rating, I received a 99% against the team average, which has been at around 97% over the past three years. I like to be thorough, documenting all incidents. I’m also a lifelong learner, always seeking out the latest security equipment and techniques to patrol buildings. I frequently make suggestions to management about security improvements and changes as my motivation comes from making a meaningful contribution.”

3. What makes you unique?

Tip: Employers often ask this question to identify why you might be more qualified than other candidates they’re interviewing. To answer, focus on why hiring you would benefit the employer. Since you don’t know the other applicants, it can be challenging to think about your answer in relation to them. Addressing why your background makes you a good fit will let employers know why your traits and qualifications make you well prepared.

Example: “What makes me unique is my experience of having spent four years in retail. Because I’ve had first-hand experience fielding shoppers’ questions, feedback and complaints, I know what customers want. I know what it takes to create a positive consumer experience because I’ve had that direct interaction, working directly with consumers in person.”

4. Why do you want to work here?

Tip: Interviewers often ask this question as a way to determine whether or not you took the time to research the company and to learn why you see yourself as a good fit. The best way to prepare for this question is to do your homework and learn about the products, services, mission, history and culture of this workplace. In your answer, mention the aspects of the company that appeals to you and align with your career goals. Explain why you’re looking for these things in an employer.

Example: “The company’s mission to help college grads pay off their student loan debt speaks to me. I’ve been in that situation, and I’d love the opportunity to work with a company that’s making a difference. Finding a company with a positive work environment and values that align with my own has remained a priority throughout my job search, and this company ranks at the top of the list.”

5. What interests you about this role?

Tip: Like the previous question, hiring managers often include this question to make sure you understand the role and give you an opportunity to highlight your relevant skills. In addition to thoroughly reading the job description, it can be helpful to compare the role requirements against your skills and experience. Choose a few things you particularly enjoy or excel at, and focus on those in your answer.

Example: “Making a meaningful difference in the lives of my patients and their families motivates me to strive for excellence in everything I do. I look forward to seeing their reaction when we get a positive outcome that will change their lives forever. Like the family of a young boy we treated last year—at eight years old, he had experienced rapid weight gain and signs of depression. His parents described him as a usually joyful child, but now he seemed disengaged and uninterested in his typical schedule. In the end, we determined that it was hypothyroidism, which is, of course, controllable with medication. The boy is adjusting well to the treatment and has returned to his joyful self. That’s why I became a nurse and why I’m pursuing a position in pediatrics.”

6. What motivates you?

Tip: Employers ask this question to gauge your level of self-awareness and ensure your sources of motivation align with the role. To answer, be as specific as possible, provide real-life examples and tie your answer back to the job role.

Example: “Making a true a difference in the lives of my patients and their families motivates me to strive for excellence in everything I do. I look forward to seeing my

patient's reactions when we get a positive outcome that will change their lives forever. That's why I became a nurse, and why I'm pursuing a position in pediatrics."

7. What are you passionate about?

Tip: Much like the previous question about motivation, employers might ask what you are passionate about to better understand what drives you and what you care most deeply about. This can both help them understand whether you are a good fit for the role and if it fits into your larger goals. To answer, select something you are genuinely passionate about, explain why you're passionate about it, give examples of how you've pursued this passion and relate it back to the job.

Example: "As an experienced, service-oriented professional with more than a decade of experience working in boutique salons, I thrive on creating a welcoming environment for all clients and providing the highest quality skincare services. My specialized training and strong interpersonal skills have helped me become adept at developing long-term, trusted relationships that help to build a loyal client base. Some of my clients have been with me since the beginning—more than ten years now. These relationships are the reason I'm excited to go to work every day."

8. Why are you leaving your current job?

Tip: There are many reasons for leaving a job. Prepare a thoughtful answer that will give your interviewer confidence that you're being deliberate about this job change. Instead of focusing on the negative aspects of your current or previous role, focus on the future and what you hope to gain in your next position.

Example: "I'm looking for an opportunity that gives me the ability to build closer, long-term relationships with clients. In my current role, the sales cycle is so short that I don't spend as much time building a rapport with my customers as I'd like. Relationship-building is one of the reasons I chose a career in sales, and I look forward to working with a company where that's a top priority."/

9. What are your greatest strengths?

Tip: This question gives you an opportunity to talk about both your technical and soft skills. To answer, share qualities and personal attributes and then relate them back to the role for which you're interviewing.

Example: "I'm a natural problem-solver. I find it rewarding to dig deep and uncover solutions to challenges—it's like solving a puzzle. It's something I've always excelled at, and something I enjoy. Much of product development is about finding innovative solutions to challenging issues, which is what drew me to this career path in the first place."

10. What are your greatest weaknesses?

Tip: It can feel awkward to discuss your weaknesses in an environment where you're expected to focus on your accomplishments. However, when answered correctly, sharing your weaknesses can show that you are self-aware and want to continuously get better at your job—traits that are extremely attractive to many employers. Remember to start with the weakness and then discuss the measures you've taken to improve. This way, you're finishing your answer on a positive note.

Example: “Earlier in my career I noticed that because I was so enthusiastic about my work, I had a tendency to say ‘yes’ when I should have been saying ‘no.’ At one point I ended up so overwhelmed by my workload, taking on so many projects, that I was working evenings and weekends. It was stressful, and that stress affected my production quality. I realized this was counterproductive, so I started using workload management tools to set better expectations for myself and my teammates.”

11. What are your goals for the future?

Tip: Hiring managers often ask about your future goals to determine whether or not you're looking to stay with the company long-term. Additionally, this question is used to gauge your ambition, expectations for your career and your ability to plan ahead. The best way to handle this question is to determine your current career trajectory and how this role plays into helping you reach your ultimate goals.

Example: “I would like to continue developing my marketing expertise as well as over the next several years. One of the reasons I'm interested in working for a fast-growing startup company is that I'll have the ability to wear many hats and collaborate with many different departments. I believe this experience will serve me well in achieving my ultimate goal of someday leading a marketing department.”

12. Where do you see yourself in five years?

Tip: Understanding how you imagine your life in the future can help employers understand whether the trajectory of the role and company fits in with your personal development goals. To answer, provide general ideas about the skills you want to develop, the types of roles you would like to be in and things you would like to have accomplished.

Example: “In five years, I’d like to be an industry expert in my field, able to train and mentor students and entry-level designers alike. I would also like to gain specialized experience in user experience to be a well-rounded contributor working with design and marketing teams on large-scale projects that make a difference both in the company and the global community.”

13. Can you tell me about a difficult work situation and how you overcame it?

Tip: This question is often used to assess how well you perform under pressure as well as your problem-solving abilities. Keep in mind stories are more memorable than facts and figures, so strive to “show” instead of “tell.” This is also an excellent opportunity to show your human side and how you’re willing to go the extra mile without being asked.

Example: “It was the first day of my boss’s two-week vacation and our agency’s highest-paying client threatened to leave because he didn’t feel he was getting the personalized service he was promised. I spent my lunch hour on the phone with him, talking through his concerns. We even brainstormed ideas for his next campaign. He was so grateful for the personal attention that he signed another six-month contract before my boss even returned from her trip.”

14. What is your salary range expectation?

Tip: Interviewers ask this question to make sure your expectations are in line with the amount they’ve budgeted for the role. If you give a salary range exceedingly lower or higher than the market value of the position, it gives the impression that you don’t know your worth. Research the typical compensation range for the role on Indeed Salaries, and tend toward the higher side of your range. Be sure to let the hiring manager know if you’re flexible with your rate.

Example: “My salary expectation is between \$XX,XXX and \$XX,XXX, which is the average salary for a candidate with my level of experience in this city. However, I am flexible.”

If you’re unsure about what salary is appropriate to ask for the position you’re applying to, visit Indeed’s Salary Calculator to get a free, personalized pay range based on your location, industry and experience.

15. Why should we hire you?

Tip: While this question may seem like an intimidation tactic, interviewers generally bring this up to offer you another opportunity to explain why you're the best candidate. Your answer should address the skills and experience you offer and why you're a good culture fit.

Example: "I have a passion for application development that's grown stronger over the course of my career. The company's mission aligns with my personal values and, from my limited time in the office, I can already tell this is the sort of positive culture in which I would thrive. I want to work for a company that has the potential to reshape the industry, and I believe you're doing just that."

16. Do you have any questions?

Tip: This might be one of the most important questions asked during the interview process because it allows you to explore any subject that hasn't been addressed and shows the interviewer you're excited about the role. By this point, you'll likely have already covered most of the basics about the position and the company, so take time to ask the interviewer questions about their own experiences with the company and gain tips on how you can succeed if hired.

Example: "What do you love about working for this company?" "What would success look like in this role?" "What are some of the challenges people typically face in this position?"

17. What did you like most about your last position?

Tip: Tie your answer to this question into the company's needs and focus on explaining your proven performance at your last job. Be specific and provide an example.

Example: "What I liked most about my last position the ability to contribute in a collaborative way with other teams. Each team member was encouraged to bring new ideas to the project which were respectfully considered by all. For example, we once worked with a client who was relying on us to solve a critical issue. Our team met to discuss the situation. After I recommended a plan to resolve the issue, we took time considering the pros and the cons of the solution, building on how to make the idea better and more comprehensive. When we implemented it, it worked better and faster than everyone expected. The client was very pleased."

18. What did you like least about your last position?

Tip: Avoid saying anything negative about your former employer, managers or colleagues. Make this answer about your career growth and your enthusiasm for joining their organization.

Example: “While I enjoyed my time learning and growing in my last job, there was a lack of opportunity in the way I wanted to progress in my career. I deeply enjoy being challenged and getting better at what I do, which I understand is a top priority for managers at your organization. That’s why I’m excited to continue having conversations about this opportunity.”

Much like preparing for a test in school, the best way to succeed in your interview is to study and practice. Do research on the company and the job, and practice your talking points until you feel confident about your answers. The more you prepare, the more likely you are to leave a lasting impression and outperform fellow candidates.

19. How do you handle stress?

Tip: This isn’t a trick question to see if you get stressed at work or not. Rather, how you handle a stressful moment is an indicator of your ability to solve problems. Employers want to hire candidates who react to stress in a constructive manner, so it’s important that your answer to this question demonstrates personal growth.

Example: “I’m able to stay calm when I focus on the bigger picture and break down my projects into smaller tasks. What is the ultimate goal I’m trying to achieve? From there, I make a list of action items with reasonable deadlines. Even if the big project is due tomorrow, I ask myself, ‘What’s something I can tackle in the next 30 minutes?’ Before I know it, I’ve made significant progress and that impossible project doesn’t seem so impossible.”

20. What is your greatest accomplishment?

Tip: It’s easy to get hung up on figuring out your single most impressive accomplishment. Instead, think of a few achievements that showcase your work ethic and values. If you can, pick examples that also tie back to the job you’re applying for. The STAR method is a great tool to ensure you highlight not only your role but how you drove business results.

Example: “In my last role, I managed all social media content. I noticed other brands were experimenting with videos and seeing great engagement from their customers, so I asked my boss if we could do a low-budget test. She agreed, so I produced a video cheaply in-house that drove double the engagement we normally saw on our social channels. It also drove conversions, with 30% of viewers visiting to our website within a week of seeing the video.”

21. What is your teaching philosophy?

Tip: This isn't a question solely for those applying to teaching positions. Employers may ask this of anyone who might be leading or teaching others. A good answer will concisely identify what you think teaching should achieve and include concrete examples to illustrate your ideas.

Example: “When it comes to managing people, my teaching philosophy is to start by asking questions that hopefully get the person to come to a new conclusion on their own. This way, they feel ownership over the learning rather than feeling micro-managed. For example, in my last role, I was editing an article written by a copywriter I managed. The story didn't have a clear focus or hook. In a one-on-one meeting, I asked her what she thought was the main point of the article if she had to sum it up in a sentence. From there, I asked if she thought the focus was clear in the article. She didn't think it was clear and instead thought she should rework her introduction and conclusion. As a result, the article improved and my direct report learned a valuable writing lesson that she carried into her future work.”

22. What does customer service mean to you?

Tip: If you're applying for a public-facing role, an employer may ask this question to see how you think customers should be treated. A good answer will align with the company's values, which you can glean through researching their customer service policy, understanding their products and clientele, and reflecting on your own experiences as a customer. Your answer can either come from the perspective of a customer or a customer service provider.

Example: “In my experience, good customer service involves taking responsibility when something goes wrong and doing what you can to make it right. For example, on a recent

flight, I had pre-ordered my meal only to discover they didn't stock enough of my dish. Instead of simply stating the facts, the flight attendant apologized sincerely and offered me a free drink or premium snack. To me, this apology went a long way in smoothing things over. The freebie was an added bonus that made me feel valued as a customer and choose the same airline for my next flight."

Additional list of interview questions

Here are more questions to use as practice for your next interview:

Basic interview questions

1. Tell me about your work experience.
2. How do you define success?
3. How do you work under pressure?
4. What is your dream job?
5. What can you bring to the company?
6. How do you handle conflict at work?
7. Why are you interested in this position
8. What skills would you bring to the job?
9. Can you explain these gaps in your resume?
10. Are you willing to travel?
11. Are you overqualified for this role?
12. Would you be willing to work nights and weekends?
13. What qualities make a good leader?
14. What is the name of our CEO?
15. What questions haven't I asked you?
16. What do you know about our company?
17. Why are you changing careers?
18. Can you walk us through your resume?
19. Why is our company interesting to you?
20. Who was your favorite manager and why?
21. Who are our competitors?
22. Why are you the right person for this job?
23. What is your greatest personal achievement?
24. Where do you see yourself in 10 years?
25. What do you know about our industry?

Behavioral interview questions

1. Describe a time when your boss was wrong. How did you handle the situation?
2. How would you feel about reporting to a person younger than you?
3. Describe a time you went above and beyond at work.
4. Tell me about the last mistake you made.
5. What do you want to accomplish in the first 30 days of this job?
6. Describe a time you got angry at work.
7. Describe a time when you had to give a person difficult feedback.
8. Describe a time when you disagreed with your boss.
9. Would you ever lie for a company?
10. Tell me about how you dealt with a difficult challenge in the workplace.
11. What do you really think about your previous boss?
12. What has been the most rewarding experience of your career thus far?
13. How would you deal with an angry or irate customer?
14. Describe a time you chose to not help a teammate.
15. Describe a time you went out of your way to help somebody.
16. Describe a time when your work was criticized?
17. What do you want to accomplish in the first 90 days of this job?
18. Do you think you could have done better in your last job?
19. How would you fire someone?

Questions about salary

1. Can you discuss your salary history?
2. How much do you expect to be earning in five years?

Questions about you

1. What makes you uncomfortable?
2. What is your ideal working environment?
3. What commonly accepted view do you disagree with and why?
4. What are some positive things your last boss would say about you?
5. What differentiates you from our other candidates?
6. Are you a morning person?
7. How would a good friend describe you?

8. Are you more of a leader or a follower?
9. Do you have a personal mission statement?
10. What do you like most about yourself?
11. How long do you expect to work for this company?
12. How do you keep yourself organized?
13. What character traits would your friends use to describe you?
14. What is your favorite movie of all time and why?
15. What are three skills or traits you wish you had?
16. Describe your perfect company.
17. Do you prefer to work alone or on a team?
18. What is your proudest achievement?
19. How do you want to improve yourself in the upcoming year?
20. Who are your heroes?
21. What is your favorite memory from childhood?
22. What is your favorite website?
23. When were you most satisfied in a previous job?
24. What's the last book you read?
25. What is the best job you ever had?
26. What is your greatest fear?
27. What was your greatest failure, and what did you learn from it?
28. What's the biggest lesson you've learned from a mistake you've made?
29. If you won a \$10 million lottery, would you still work?
30. What was the last project you led and what was the outcome?
31. How many hours per week do you normally work?
32. Do you ever take your work home with you?
33. What three things are most important to you in your job?
34. What is one negative thing your last boss said about you?
35. What will you miss about your previous job?
36. Describe your work style.
37. What is your management style?
38. Who has impacted you most in your career?
39. What is your least favorite thing about yourself?
40. What is your biggest regret and why?
41. What are your coworker pet peeves?

42. Why did you choose your major?
43. What is your ideal company size?
44. What is a book that everyone needs to read and why?
45. Do you prefer working alone or in a team environment?
46. Do you find it difficult to adapt to new situations?
47. Do you have a mentor?
48. Explain why you've had so many jobs?
49. What do you do in your spare time?
50. Describe your top three technical skills?
51. What causes are you passionate about?

Brainteasers

1. If you suddenly gained the ability to time travel, what's the first thing you'd do?
2. If you could get rid of any US state, which would you choose and why?
3. Which is more important, creativity or efficiency?
4. Is it better to be good and on time or perfect and late with your work?
5. How many times per day do a clock's hands overlap?
6. How many stacked pennies would equal the height of the Empire State Building?

How to answer "What work experience do you have?"

Before your interview, review your list of talking points to improve your ability to recall them while responding. Use the following tips to provide a comprehensive yet succinct answer to the question.

1. **Use simple, active statements.** It's best to use clear statements with strong verbs to effectively outline your skills and abilities. Shorter, simpler sentences can help you sound polished and conversational, and active statements demonstrate confidence and proactivity.
2. **Provide only necessary details.** You will likely answer many other questions after this one. Only discuss the details needed to adequately describe what you can do, what you have accomplished and how you plan to succeed in this new role. This will help ensure you have new information to share throughout the interview without having to repeat yourself.
3. **Quantify your experience.** If applicable, use data to add proven value to your accomplishments. For example, you can discuss your annual performance review numbers or the increasing percentage of quality work output. This strategy can serve as evidence of your professional achievements.
4. **Illustrate the connections.** This is when you can take material directly from your list tasks similar to those required in the new role. In your answer, you can clearly state your familiarity with specific responsibilities and even discuss the ways you have

refined those processes in your previous experiences. Consider discussing your abilities in terms of situations you anticipate in this new role.

5. **End with a goal statement.** A goal statement is what you've determined you want to achieve in this position. You can effectively finish your answer by stating what contributions you aim to make to the company.

Example answers

Use the following short example answers to help you craft your own effective response.

Administrative assistant

Example: "I have spent five years as an executive assistant with Wiler, Inc. in administrative support roles. As the current executive assistant to the CFO, I frequently collaborate with other administrative assistants to perform calendar management, coordinate international travel and assemble research reports for the financial specialists in our six offices around the world. At the beginning of last year, I optimized our email filtering system to improve office communication and reduce the amount of missed messages by 28%. I understand that your company depends a lot on email communication, so I want to use my organizational abilities to achieve faster communication processes in this office."

Social media specialist

Example: "My experience includes a variety of marketing and advertising opportunities. In college, I was the ad intern at the local radio station, where I designed event posters for local concerts and music festivals. Then I worked as a market research assistant, analyzing consumer data and drafting reports for the marketing director. My other positions allowed me to practice applying research to writing ad copy, social media posts and a few radio commercial scripts. As your social media specialist, I would want to continue sharing my research insights and improving my ability to transform consumer data into actionable, engaging content."

Senior financial consultant

Example: "I have 10 years of experience in personal finance management, and I have assisted 45 repeat clients in increasing their capital by an average of 15% every year. As a financial analyst, I utilized visual growth charts to show my clients how each saving plan option can impact their goals. When I became a senior financial analyst, I supervised other analysts and trained them in providing the most helpful experience to our customers. As your senior financial consultant, I aim to integrate my individualized approach to helping clients build the retirement fund they will depend on."

03. How to Answer the Phone Professionally at Your Business

Telephone English Phrases

There are different types of phones:

- cell phones or mobile phones

(a cell phone with more advanced capabilities is called a smartphone)

- pay phones or public phones
- the regular telephone you have in your house is called a landline – to differentiate it from a cell phone.
- This type of phone is called a cordless phone because it is not connected by a cord.

When someone calls you, the phone makes a sound – we say the phone is **ringing**. If you're available, you **pick up** the telephone or **answer** the telephone, in order to talk to the person.

If there's nobody to answer the phone, then the caller will have to leave a message on an answering machine or voicemail. Later, you can call back or return the call.

.When you want to make a phone call, you start by dialing the number. Let's imagine that you call your friend, but she's already on the phone with someone else. You'll hear a busy signal – a beeping sound that tells you the other person is currently using the phone. Sometimes, when you call a company, they put you on hold. This is when you wait for your call to be answered – usually while listening to music.

Finally, when you're finished with the conversation, you hang up.

Now you know the basic telephone vocabulary. In the next part of the lesson, you're going to hear some conversations to learn some useful English phrases for talking on the phone.

1 – FORMAL TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

Helen: Midtown Computer Solutions, Helen speaking. How can I help you?

Ryan: Hello, this is Ryan Bardos. May I speak with Natalie Jones, please?

Helen: One moment please – I'll put you through.

Helen: Mr. Bardos? I'm sorry, Natalie's in a meeting at the moment. Would you like to leave a message?

Ryan: Yes, could you ask her to call me back as soon as possible? It's pretty urgent.

Helen: Of course. Does she have your number?

Ryan: She has my office number, but let me also give you my cell – it's 472-555-8901.

Helen: Let me read that back to you – 472-555-8901.

Ryan: That's right.

Helen: And could you spell your last name for me?

Ryan: B as in Boston – A – R – D as in dog – O – S as in September

Helen: Okay, Mr. Bardos. I'll give her the message.

Ryan: Thanks a lot. Bye.

2.

Ryan: Hello?

Natalie: Hi, Ryan, this is Natalie returning your call.

Ryan: Hi Natalie, thanks for getting back to me. I was calling about the shipment of keyboards for our office – we haven't gotten them yet.

Natalie: Oh, that's not good – they were supposed to be delivered three days ago.

Ryan: Exactly, and we have a new group of employees starting on Monday, so we really need those keyboards as soon as possible.

Natalie: Okay, I'll look into it right away – if necessary, we can send you an emergency overnight shipment.

Ryan: Thanks, Natalie, I appreciate it.

Natalie: No problem, Ryan. I'll call you back a little later, as soon as I have more information.

Ryan: Sounds good – talk to you soon.

Natalie: Bye.

TELEPHONE ENGLISH PHRASES – FORMAL CONVERSATION

From these conversations, we can learn phrases for beginning a phone call, taking and leaving messages, checking and clarifying information, and finishing a phone call.

BEGINNING A CALL

When Helen answers the phone, she says, "Midtown Computer Solutions, Helen speaking. How can I help you?" This is a common way for a receptionist at a company or organization to answer the phone. Here are a couple alternatives:

- "Thank you for calling Midtown Computer Solutions. How may I direct your call?"
- "Midtown Computer Solutions – good afternoon."

To introduce yourself, you can say: "Hello, this is..." and if you want, you can add your company name:

- "Hello, this is Ryan Bardos."
- "Hello, this is Ryan Bardos from Paramount Publishing."

Then, ask to speak to somebody by using the phrases:

- "May I speak with...?"
- "Could I speak with...?"

You can also add the phrase "I'm calling about..." or "I'm calling to..." in order to give a reason for your call. Use "I'm calling about..." to introduce a topic, and "I'm calling to..." to introduce an action:

- "I'm calling about the job opening I saw in the newspaper."
- "I'm calling to register for the upcoming conference."

To connect or transfer the call, the receptionist says, “One moment please – I’ll put you through.” A few other phrases for transferring a call are:

- “Please hold.”
- “I’ll transfer you.”
- “May I ask who’s calling?” / “Who’s calling, please?”

If you forgot to identify yourself at the beginning of the call, the receptionist will sometimes use this phrase to ask for your name.

TAKING / LEAVING MESSAGES

Unfortunately the person Ryan wants to speak to is not available, and the receptionist says “I’m sorry, Natalie’s in a meeting at the moment.” Here are some additional phrases to use when another person can’t answer a telephone call:

- “I’m sorry, she’s on another call.”
- “I’m sorry, Natalie has left for the day.”
- “I’m sorry, Natalie’s not in her office right now.”
- “I’m sorry, she’s out of town at the moment.”
- “I’m sorry, she’s not available at the moment.”

Then, there are two common phrases that are used for offering to take a message:

- “Would you like to leave a message?”
- “Can I take a message?”

If you don’t want to leave a message, you can say: “No thanks, I’ll call back later.”

There are two polite ways to leave a message. You can make a statement starting with “Please” or a question starting with “Could you...” – usually followed by the verbs ask, tell, or remind and then “him” (if the message is for a man) or “her” (if the message is for a woman).

- “Could you ask her to call me back?”
- “Please ask him to call me back.”
- “Please tell him/her that the documents are ready.”
- “Please remind him/her that he/she has a dentist appointment tomorrow.”

CLARIFYING/CONFIRMING INFORMATION

While taking the message, the receptionist used two phrases for checking and confirming information:

- “Let me read that back to you.”
- “Could you spell your last name for me?”

The verb “spell” means to say the letters of the word. Ryan replies:

- “B as in Boston – A – R – D as in dog – O – S as in September.”

It's common to use phrases like "B as in Boston" and "S as in September" with letters that can be frequently confused with others, such as B and D, S and F, or M and N.

FINISHING A CALL

When you want to finish the conversation, you can use "signal phrases" – these are

- "Well, it was nice talking with you."
- "Thanks for calling."
- "Anyway... I should let you go / I should get going."

If you want to promise future contact, you can use one of the phrases from the second conversation:

- "I'll get in touch in a couple of days."
(*get in touch = contact you*)
- "I'll call you back a little later"
- "Talk to you soon."

Then you can finish the conversation with one of these "final phrases":

- "Bye."
- "Take care."
- "Have a nice day."

Response: "You too. Bye."

INFORMAL TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

1.

Linda: Hello?

Ryan: Hi Linda, it's Ryan. How's it going?

Linda: Pretty good, thanks. How about you?

Ryan: I'm fine. Sure glad it's Friday. Hey, is Peter there?

Linda: Yeah, hold on, I'll get him. Peter! Ryan's on the phone.

Peter: Hey Ryan, what's up?

Ryan: Not much. Are you up for going fishing this weekend?

Peter: What? There's a lot of background noise – I can barely hear you.

Ryan: Sorry about that – I'm at the train station. I was wondering if you wanted to go fishing this weekend. I'm heading up to Mountain Lake with some friends early tomorrow morning.

Peter: Uh, hang on a sec, let me just check with my wife to make sure we have no other plans.

Ryan: Sure.

Peter: Okay, she's given me the green light!

Ryan: Sweet! We'll pick you up at 6 tomorrow morning, is that OK?

Peter: Yup. Do you need directions to my place?

Ryan: Uh, you still living on Willow Street, near the community center?

Peter: Yeah, that's right. The yellow house, number 30.

Ryan: Gotcha. I know how to get there.

Peter: All right – see you tomorrow, then.

Ryan: Take care.

Peter: Bye.

TELEPHONE ENGLISH PHRASES – INFORMAL CONVERSATION

Let's learn some of the different phrases used in an informal telephone conversation. In informal phone calls, most people answer the phone by saying "Hello?" and the introduction is also different:

- **Formal:** "Hello, this is _____."
- **Informal:** "Hi / Hey _____, it's _____."

We see two different greetings in this conversation: "How's it going?" and "What's up?" These greetings require different answers. You can answer "How's it going?" (or the similar question "How are you doing?") with:

- "Great!"
- "Pretty good, thanks."
- "Not so good."

And the typical answers to "What's up?" are:

- "Not much."
- "Nothing much."

The phrase "How about you?" is used to ask the same question to the other person. Notice that it is spoken like this: *"Howbout you?"*

In the formal conversation, Ryan used the phrase "May I speak with..." – but in an informal conversation, you can use these phrases:

- "Is Peter there?"
- "Is Peter around?"
- "Can I talk to Peter?"

If the person is not available, some informal responses are:

- "Sorry – he's not home right now."
- "He's not here."
- "He's still at work."
- "He's at the gym."

This conversation also contains some expressions for asking someone to wait:

- “Hold on.”
- “Hang on a sec.”
- “Just a minute” / “Just a sec”

The formal equivalent of these phrases would be “One moment please” or “Please hold.”

At one point, Peter can't hear or understand Ryan. Here are some phrases to use if you're having difficulty hearing the other person on the phone.

- **“There's a lot of background noise – I can barely hear you.”**
 - **“You're breaking up. Could you call me back?”**
(*breaking up = you can only hear parts of what the other person is saying*)
 - **“We have a bad connection.”**
 - **“Sorry – I didn't catch what you just said.”**
 - **“Could you speak a little louder?”**
(*say this if the person is speaking too quietly*)
 - **“Could you speak a little more slowly?”**
(*say this if the person is speaking too fast*)
 - **“What did you say?”** (informal)
 - **“Could you repeat that?” / “Could you say that again?”** (more formal)
- If the bad connection causes the call to fail, you can call the other person back and say this:
- **“Hi, it's Ryan again. Apparently **we got cut off.**”**
“Cut off” is a phrasal verb that means the call failed or disconnected.

Towards the end of the conversation, Ryan uses the phrase **“Gotcha”** – this is a very informal phrase that means “I understand.” Another option is **“Got it.”** or **“Right.”**
Now, take the quiz to test your memory of the telephone phrases from this lesson.

How to Answer the Phone Tips

1. Answer all incoming phone calls before the third ring.
2. When you answer the phone, be warm, enthusiastic, and professional. Your voice on the phone is sometimes the only impression of your company a caller will get.
3. When answering the phone, welcome callers courteously and identify yourself and your organization immediately. Say, for instance, "Good morning. Cypress Technologies. Susan speaking. How may I help you?" Don't just say "Hello". No one should ever have to ask if they've reached such and such a business.
4. Enunciate clearly, keep your voice volume moderate, and speak slowly and clearly when answering the phone so your caller can understand you easily.
5. Control your language when answering the phone. Don't use slang or buzzwords. Instead of saying, "OK", or "No problem", for instance, say "Certainly", "Very well", or "All right". If you're a person who uses fillers when you speak, such as "uh huh", "um", or phrases such as "like" or "you know", train yourself carefully not to use these when you speak on the phone. (Learn more about the speech problem of using fillers and how to solve the problem.)

6. Train your voice and vocabulary to be positive when phone answering, even on a "down" day. A positive vocabulary is one that focuses on helping the customer. For example, rather than saying, "I don't know", say, "Let me find out about that for you."
7. When you answer the phone, take phone messages completely and accurately. If there's something you don't understand or can't spell, such as a person's surname, ask the caller to repeat it or spell it for you. Then make sure the message gets to the intended recipient.
8. If people have had to leave you messages, answer all your phone calls within one business day. I can't emphasize this one enough. Remember the early bird? The early caller can get the contract, the sale, the problem solved... and reinforce the favorable impression of your business that you want to circulate. Few things annoy callers trying to reach your business more than unreturned calls.
9. Always ask the caller if it's all right to put her on hold when answering the phone, and don't leave people on hold. Provide callers on hold with progress reports every 30 to 45 seconds. Offer them choices if possible, such as "That line is still busy. Will you continue to hold or should I have _____ call you back?"
10. Don't use a speaker phone unless absolutely necessary. Speaker phones give the caller the impression that you're not fully concentrating on his call, and make him think that his call isn't private. The only time to use a speaker phone is when you need more than one person to be in on the conversation at your end. Ask the caller if you may put them on speaker phone before you do it.
11. If you use voice mail or an answering machine to answer calls when you can't, make sure that you have a professional message recorded, that does the same thing as tip #3, and gives callers any other pertinent information before it records their messages. Update your voice mail message as needed. For instance, if your business is going to be closed for a holiday, update your voice mail message to say so and to say when your business will reopen.
12. Train everyone else who may answer the phone to answer the same way, including other family members if you're running a home-based business. Check on how your business's phone is being answered by calling in and seeing if the phone is being answered in a professional manner. If they don't pass the test, go over this "how to answer the phone" list with them to make sure that everyone at your business knows how to answer phone calls properly

Answering the Phone

Formal

- Hello. This is Susan. (Personal)
- Hello, thank you for calling [name of company]. This is Susan – how can I help you? (Professional)
- Good morning (good afternoon), this is Susan. How can I help you? (Professional)

Informal

- Hello.
- Susan speaking.

Greeting and Introducing Yourself

Formal

- This is Laure from [company name].
- Hello. This is Laure. I am calling about... (your advertisement, information about your services, to make a reservation, etc.)

Informal

- Hi. It's Laure.
- Hi – it's me. (Use this when the other person will recognize your voice. For example, your mother, your best friend, or your brother.)

Asking to Speak to Someone

Formal

- Is _____ available? (Example: Is Çim available?)
- May I speak to _____? (Example: May I speak to the doctor?)
- I'd like to talk with _____. (Example: I'd like to talk with Mr. Adams.)

Informal

- Is _____ free? (Example: Is Çim free?)
- Can I talk to _____? (Example: Can I talk to mom?)

Putting Someone on Hold

Formal

- Can I put you on hold for a moment, please?
- Would you mind holding for just a moment?
- If it is ok with you, I am going to put you on hold for a moment. I will see if she is available.

Tip: These expressions can also be used when you are not ready to speak in English on the phone. You can use this moment to calm yourself and prepare yourself to speak English.

Informal

- Hold on a sec. (Note: "Sec" is short for "second" and is another way to say "Hold on a moment.")
- Just a sec.

- Just a moment.

Clarifying and Asking for Repetition

Formal

- I'm sorry – I didn't catch that. Could you please repeat yourself?
- I'm sorry – do you mean to say [identify what you understand]?
- Just to clarify, you said... (Example: Just to clarify, you said you were calling from RTR Industries?)
- Would you mind spelling that for me?
- Would you mind slowing down?
- Would you mind speaking a little more slowly?

Informal

- I'm sorry. Could you repeat that?
- Can you spell that?

Taking a Message for Someone

Formal

- I'm sorry. She isn't available at the moment. Can I take a message for her?
- If you leave a message, I will be sure to get it to him as soon as he is available.
- She is away at the moment. May I ask who is calling?
- Would you like me to connect you to his voicemail?

Informal

- I'll let him/her know that you called.
- Who's calling, please?

Leaving a Message for Someone

Formal

- Yes. Thank you. Please tell her Selma called. Ask her to call me back at 430.444.4444.
- Could you have her return my call tomorrow?
- Please tell him I'll be available on Thursday at 9:00.
- Yes, please put me through to her voicemail. Thank you.

Informal

- No thanks. I'll call back later.
- Yeah, tell him Selma called.

Ending Your Call

Formal

- Thank you for calling. I will make sure to give him the message.
- Thanks for calling – I have another phone call so I will need to let you go.
- Thanks for calling and have a great day.

Informal

- I need to let you go.
- I have a meeting soon so I have to run. (Americans would also say: "I have a meeting soon so I **gotta** run. "Gotta" is short for "got to" or "have to.")
- It was great to chat. I'll talk to you again soon.

1. Call Center Departments

Hello and thank you for calling, [Company Name], where [state your short company slogan]. If you know the extension of the party you are trying to reach, you may dial it at any time.

- *To speak with a Sales representative, press 1.*
- *To reach a Customer Support agent, press 2.*
- *To reach our Billing department, press 3.*
- *If you would like to know our regular business hours and location, press 4.*
- *If you would like to speak with an Operator, press 0, or press 9 to repeat the available options.*

2. Basic Customer Inquiry

Thank you for calling [Company Name]. If you know your party's extension, please dial it at any time.

- *To reach our company directory, press 1.*
- *For more information about [Company Name], press 2.*
- *If you are an existing customer, please press 3.*
- *For billing questions, press 4.*
- *To repeat menu options, press 9.*
- *For all other inquiries, press 0.*

3. Language Options

Hello, you have reached [Company Name]. To continue in English, press 1, for Spanish, press 2. (Wait for customer to enter an option.)

- *You've reached the main menu. To reach a staff member by name, please press 1.*

- *For sales inquiries, press 2.*
- *For technical support, press 3.*
- *To place a purchase order, press 4.*
- *For accounting, press 5.*
- *To find a store location near you, please press 6.*
- *Press 0 to speak with a representative.*

4. Product-Focused

Thanks for calling [Company Name]. For more information about our products, press 1.

- *If you have troubleshooting questions, press 2.*
- *For billing questions, press 3.*
- *For a Dial by Name directory, press 4.*
- *For our regular business hours, press 5.*
- *If you know your party's extension, please dial it now.*
- *For all other inquiries, please stay on the line, and a representative will be happy to assist you.*

5. Offering the Operator First

You've reached [Company Name], the [company's slogan]. Please choose from the following menu options:

- *To speak with the operator, press 0.*
- *For customer support, press 1.*
- *For troubleshooting questions, press 2.*
- *For accounting questions, press 3.*
- *For a list of our staff members, press 4.*
- *To leave us a message, press 5.*
- *To repeat these options, press 6.*

After-Hours Greetings

A separate after-hours attendant menu can inform callers that your office is closed, state your business' operating hours, and provide options that callers can immediately act upon. For example, you can direct them to your website for FAQs. If your business provides an account login page, remind your customers that they can login at any time to get general account information. In this situation, be proactive.

6. After-Hour Options

Thanks for calling [Company Name]. Our offices are currently closed. Our business hours are from Monday to Friday 9 AM to 8 PM Eastern Time, and Saturday 9 AM to 12 PM Eastern.

- *If you would like to leave a message in our general voice mailbox, press 1. A representative will contact you the following business day.*
- *To reach our company directory, press 2.*
- *For business hours and directions to our office, press 3.*
- *You may also email us at [company email].*

- *For more information about our products and services, please visit us at [website].*
- *To repeat this message, press the * key.*

7. Direct Customers to Your Account Login Page

Thank you for calling [Company Name]. Our offices are currently closed for the day. Standard office hours are Monday to Friday, 8 AM to 8 PM Eastern Time.

- *Did you know that you can check your account status with us 24 hours a day / 7 days a week by visiting [account login webpage]? Here you can view information about your account, as well as answers to general questions you may have.*
- *Otherwise, please call back during standard office hours, and we will be happy to assist you. To repeat this message, press the # key.*

Holiday Greetings

Auto-attendants with a customized holiday greeting can be a festive way to mark the occasion. If you have a retail business, create a holiday greeting to inform customers of any limited-time sales you are offering. If your office is closed for the holiday, be sure you state this in your message.

8. Advertise Holiday Sales

Thank you for calling [Company Name]. To celebrate the holiday season, we are offering limited-time discounts on all purchases. Please ask your account representative about them today!

- *To place an order, press 1.*
- *To follow up on an existing order, press 2.*
- *To speak with a representative about our products, press 3.*
- *If you have a billing question, press 4.*
- *To repeat the menu options, please press the * key.*

9. Holiday Closures

Thank you for calling [Company Name]; we are currently closed in observance of [holiday name]. We will return on [Date] at 8 AM Eastern Time.

- *If you would like to reach our Dial by Name Directory, please press 1.*
- *To leave a voicemail, please press 2. A representative will contact you upon our return.*
- *To repeat this menu, please press the # key.*
- *[If no response after a few seconds] Goodbye.*

Voicemail Greeting

Many companies offer an escape option so that if a caller ends up in a staff member's voice mailbox, he or she can "escape" out of the mailbox and go back to the attendant menu. Use a customized auto-attendant for this situation.

10. Escape the Voicemail Box Option

You have reached the voicemail of [person's name].

- *If you would like to leave a voicemail, please press 1 and leave your name, number, and a brief message.*
- *If you would like to return to the main menu, please press the # key.*

Here are the essential components of a warm, welcoming phone greeting:

- Greet the caller with “Hi” or “Hello”
- Thank the caller
- Recite the name of the business
- State your name
- Ask how you can help

Example greeting:

Hi, thank you for calling [INSERT BUSINESS NAME.] My name is [INSERT NAME]. How can I help you today?

Encourage your receptionists to put their own spin on the greeting — as long as they cover the points above.

Remember: Callers dialed you to get specific information, so your greeting should be short and sweet and centered on answering their questions quickly and efficiently.

2. Transferring Calls

Nothing is more frustrating to callers than being transferred across multiple departments before they get help. Avoid a poor user experience by taking the time to fully understand their needs and identifying the best person to assist. Let the caller know where you're transferring them and why to confirm you've correctly identified their issue.

Here's an example:

Thank you for your call today. Based on what I've heard, [INSERT NAME] from [INSERT DEPARTMENT] would be the best person to help you with [INSERT ISSUE]. I can transfer you now if you'd like.

3. Putting Callers on Hold

Consumers call to get quick answers or solutions. They expect interactions to be fast, and few will wait on hold.

In fact, 32% of customer service callers aren't willing to wait on hold, and 27% of callers will wait up to 1 minute.

The best phone etiquette is to avoid putting callers on hold, but that's not always possible.

When you can't avoid the hold button, follow these rules of engagement:

- **Be upfront.** Tell callers why you're putting them on hold.
- **Always ask permission.** Answering the phone with "hold please" is a terrible experience. If you have to put the caller on hold, be sure to ask if they mind being placed on a brief hold.
- **Estimate their hold time.** Will it be 1 minute or 10? Provide an estimate so callers aren't thrown off guard.

4. Taking Messages

When receptionists leave out critical details in a message, the caller has to repeat information they've already relayed to your business. Gathering enough information will also help your team members prioritize follow-ups and assist callers faster.

Here are some essential details to capture on the call:

- First and last name
- Customer status (existing or potential)
- Reason for calling
- Who they need to speak with
- Urgency level
- When they prefer to be reached

5. Answering a Question You Don't Know

Receptionists should be problem solvers, even when they don't have the answers. Simply saying, "I don't know," won't cut it with a caller. Here's a more delicate way to approach answering questions you don't know:

I'm not sure about [RELAY QUESTION] and wouldn't want to give you inaccurate information. [INSERT NAME] would be the best person to answer that for you. Would you mind briefly holding while I transfer you?

10 Ways to Ask How Someone Is

1. How are you?
2. How's it going?
3. How ya doin'?
4. How are things?
5. How's life?
6. How have you been?
7. How's your family?
8. What's up?
9. What's new?
10. What have you been up to lately?

10 Ways to Say How You Are

1. I'm fine, thanks. How about you?
2. Pretty good.
3. Not bad.
4. Great!
5. Couldn't be better!
6. Can't complain.
7. I've been busy.
8. Same as always.
9. Not so great.
10. Could be better.

Note: The way to respond to “What’s up?” and “What’s new?” is typically “Not much.”

10 Ways to Say Thank You

1. Thanks.
2. Thanks a lot.
3. Thank you so much.
4. Thanks a million!
5. Thanks for your help. / Thanks for helping me.
6. I really appreciate it.
7. I’m really grateful.
8. That’s so kind of you.
9. I can’t thank you enough. (for extremely important things)
10. I owe you one. (this means you want/need to do a favor for the other person in the future)

10 Ways to Respond to “Thank You”

1. You’re welcome.
2. No problem.
3. No worries.
4. Don’t mention it.
5. My pleasure.
6. Anytime.
7. It was the least I could do.
8. Glad to help.
9. Sure!
10. Thank you. (use this when you ALSO have something to thank the other person for)

5 Phrases for Apologizing

1. I’m sorry that... [ex. I was so rude yesterday]
2. It’s my fault. (= I am taking responsibility for the problem)
3. Oops, sorry. (for very small problems)
4. I should have... [ex. called you and told you I’d be late]

5. (formal) I apologize for... [ex. the delay]

5 Ways to Respond to an Apology

1. That's OK.
2. It happens.
3. No problem.
4. Don't worry about it.
5. I forgive you. (for serious problems)

10 Phrases for Introductions

1. I just wanted to introduce myself. I'm... [your name]
2. I don't think we've met before. My name's... [your name]
3. This is...
4. I'd like you to meet...
5. Have you met... ?
6. I'd like to introduce you to...
7. Nice to meet you.
8. It's a pleasure to meet you.
9. Likewise.
10. And you. #1 and #2 are used to introduce yourself; #3-#6 are used to introduce someone else. #9 and #10 can be used as a response to #7 and #8.

6 Ways to Show Interest

1. Really?
2. That's interesting.
3. Uh-huh.
4. Right.
5. Gotcha.
6. Sure.

5 Ways to End a Conversation Politely

1. It was nice chatting with you.

2. Well, it's getting late.
3. Anyway, I should get going.
4. (formal) Sorry, but I'm afraid I need to...
5. I'm sorry to cut you off, but I actually gotta run. (cut you off = interrupt you)

10 Phrases for Telephone Calls

1. Hi, this is Jane.
2. (formal) May I speak with John Smith?
3. (informal) Is John there?
4. I'm calling about...
5. I'm returning your call.
6. (formal) One moment, please.
7. (informal) Hang on a sec.
8. He's not here. Would you like to leave a message?
9. Could you ask him to call me back?
10. Thanks for calling.

10 Phrases for Asking for Information

1. Can you tell me...?
2. Could you tell me...?
3. I'd like to know...
4. Do you know...
5. Do you have any idea...?
6. Could anyone tell me...? (use this phrase when asking a group of people)
7. Would you happen to know...?
8. I don't suppose you (would) know...?
9. I was wondering...
10. I'm calling to find out... (use this phrase on the telephone) Use #4, #5, #7, and #8 when you're not sure if the other person has the information.

5 Ways to Say "I don't know"

1. I have no idea/clue.

2. I can't help you there.
3. (informal) Beats me.
4. I'm not really sure.
5. I've been wondering that, too.

10 Phrases for Asking for Someone's Opinion & Giving Your Opinion

1. What do you think about...?
2. How do you feel about...?
3. What's your opinion of...?
4. What are your views on...?
5. In my opinion...
6. I'd say...
7. Personally, I think/believe...
8. If you ask me...
9. The way I see it...
10. From my point of view...

5 Phrases for Not Having an Opinion

1. I've never given it much thought.
2. I don't have strong feelings either way.
3. It doesn't make any difference to me.
4. I have no opinion on the matter.
5. (very informal) Whatever.

10 Phrases for Agreeing

1. Exactly.
2. Absolutely.
3. That's so true.
4. That's for sure.
5. I agree 100%
6. I couldn't agree with you more.

7. That's exactly what I think. / That's exactly how I feel.

8. (informal) Tell me about it! / You're telling me!

9. (informal) I'll say!

10. I suppose so. (use this phrase for weak agreement – you agree, but reluctantly) Note: Avoid the common error of saying "I'm agree" – the correct phrase is "I agree" or "I'm in agreement" – the second one is more formal.

10 Phrases for Disagreeing

1. I don't think so.

2. I beg to differ.

3. I'm afraid I don't agree.

4. I'm not so sure about that.

5. That's not how I see it.

6. Not necessarily.

7. Yes, but... [say your opinion]

8. On the contrary.

9. (very informal) No way!

10. (very strong) I totally disagree.

5 Phrases for Responding to Good News

1. Congratulations!

2. That's great!

3. How wonderful!

4. Awesome!

5. I'm so happy for you!

5 Phrases for Responding to Bad News

1. Oh no...

2. That's terrible.

3. Poor you. (Use this to respond to bad situations that are not too serious)

4. I'm so sorry to hear that.

5. I'm sorry for your loss. (Use this only if someone has died)

10 Phrases for Invitations

1. Are you free... [Saturday night?]
2. Are you doing anything... [Saturday night?]
3. Let me check my calendar.
4. (informal) Do you wanna... [see a movie?]
5. (formal) Would you like to... [join me for dinner?]
6. I'd love to!
7. Sounds great!
8. I'd love to, but I have another commitment.
9. I don't think I can.
10. Maybe another time.

5 Ways to Make & Respond to an Offer

1. (more formal) Would you like a drink?
2. (informal) Do you want some water?
3. Can I get you something to eat?
4. That'd be great, thanks. (= yes)
5. No, thanks. I'm OK. (= no)

6 Phrases for Talking About Future Plans

1. I'm going to...
2. I'm planning to...
3. I hope to...
4. I'd like to...
5. I might... / I may...
6. I'm thinking about...

15 Phrases for Certainty & Probability

1. I'm absolutely sure.
2. I'm positive that...
3. I have no doubt that...
4. I'm a hundred percent certain.

5. I'm convinced that...
6. Chances are that... (= this will probably happen)
7. Odds are that... (= this will probably happen)
8. I seriously doubt it.
9. I don't think so.
10. Probably not.
11. It's not very likely.
12. There's not much chance of that.
13. I'd be very surprised if that happened.
14. I wouldn't bet on it. (= there's a small chance it could happen... but it probably won't happen)
15. That'll never happen.

10 Phrases for Decisions

1. I'm debating between... [option A and option B]
2. I can't make up my mind.
3. I'm on the fence. (= I'm in the middle, I don't know what to decide)
4. I'll take that into consideration.
5. On the other hand...
6. I'm having second thoughts. (= I'm reconsidering my decision)
7. I changed my mind.
8. He convinced/persuaded me to...
9. Looking back, I know it was the right decision.
10. It's up to you. (= You can decide)

10 Phrases for Telling Someone to Wait

1. Could you give me a minute?
2. (informal) Hang on a sec / Just a sec.
3. Hold on...
4. Let me see/think...
5. I'll be right with you.
6. Bear with me.
7. That'll have to wait.

8. Be patient.

9. Not so fast!

10. Hold your horses!

#9 and #10 are used for cautioning someone to wait and not make a bad decision or take reckless action.

04.BEGINNING (início da apresentação, reunião...):

Ok, everyone is here. Shall we start? (Ok, todos estão aqui. Vamos começar?)

Welcome to this meeting/call/presentation. (Bem-vindo a essa reunião/call/apresentação.)

Thank you for attending this meeting/call/presentation. (Obrigada por participar nessa reunião/ligação/apresentação – troque pela palavra apropriada.)

Thank you for being here today. (Obrigado por estar aqui hoje.)

In case of external meetings, or meetings with people you don't know: (No caso de reuniões externas, ou com pessoas que você não conhece)

For those who don't know me, let me introduce myself. (Para aqueles que não me conhecem, deixe-me me apresentar.)

My name is and I am the creator of Business Fluency, a Business English online platform. (Meu nome é Ho Mien Mien e sou a criadora do Business Fluency, uma plataforma online de Business English.)

My name is and I am Apple's finance director.

My name is and I am the sales manager of Unilever.

INTRODUCING THE PURPOSE (Apresentando o propósito)

Our main purpose/objective/goal today is to discuss the marketing initiatives for next year. (Nosso principal propósito/objetivo/meta hoje é discutir as iniciativas de marketing para o ano que vem. – troque conforme apropriado.)

Our main objective today is to... - discuss the 5-year budget. (discutir o orçamento de 5 anos)

learn about the results of the employee engagement survey and define the next steps. (saber dos resultados da pesquisa de satisfação dos funcionários e definir os próximos passos)

define the implementation plan for the Global Lean Six Sigma initiative. (definir o plano de implementação para a iniciativa global de Lean Six Sigma) - plan the launch of our new website. (planejar o lançamento do nosso novo website)

The purpose of this meeting is to talk about XXXX. (O propósito dessa reunião é falar sobre XXXX.)

I'm very excited to share the results of the XYZ project with you. (Estou muito empolgada em compartilhar os resultados do projeto XYZ com vocês.)

SETTING SOME GROUND RULES: (estabelecendo algumas regras)

I encourage everyone's participation, I want to hear from all of you. (Encorajo a participação de todos, quero ouvir de todos vocês.)

Feel free to ask, there's no such thing as a stupid question. (Fique à vontade para fazer perguntas, não existe pergunta idiota.)

Please put your mobile in the silent mode. (Por favor deixe seu celular no modo silencioso.)

Please be honest about your opinion. (Por favor seja honesto sobre a sua opinião.)

There will be a Q&A session at the end, please keep your questions for that moment. (Haverá uma sessão de Perguntas e Respostas no final, por favor deixe suas perguntas para esse momento.)

Clarifying something you didn't understand: (Esclarecendo algo que você não entendeu)

NÃO FALE: "I have a DOUBT."

Prefira: "I Have a question."

Ou simplesmente faça a pergunta direto.

Do you mean xxx (rephrase what the person said)?

(Você quer dizer xxx (fale o que a pessoa disse com suas palavras)?)

Excuse me, what do you mean by xxx? (Com licença, o que você quer dizer com xxx?)

Let me see if I understood this clearly, you are saying that xxx. (Deixa eu ver se entendi isso claramente, você está dizendo que xxx.)

I'm not sure I understood what you said, can you explain this part again? (Não tenho certeza se entendi o que você disse, você pode explicar essa parte de novo?)

Could you explain this part again? I'm afraid I didn't understand it. (Você poderia explicar essa parte novamente? Temo que não a tenha entendido.)

Could you elaborate on xxx? (Você poderia elaborar (no sentido de dar mais informações) em relação a xxx?)

Agreeing (Concordando)

Great. This is an excellent idea. We should definitely invest more money in digital marketing. (Ótimo. Essa é uma excelente idéia. Nós devemos definitivamente investir mais dinheiro em marketing digital.)

What you're saying makes total sense. I agree we should review all our telecommunications contracts. (O que você está dizendo faz total sentido. Concordo que devemos revisar todos os nossos contratos de telecomunicação.)

This is exactly what I think we should do. (Isso é exatamente o que acho que deveríamos fazer.)

I agree with Sam. (Eu concordo com Sam.)

Absolutely. (Com certeza.)

You're right. This is what we need. (Você está certa. É disso que precisamos.)

Great point. Let's do this. (Ótimo ponto. Vamos fazer isso.)

Disagreeing (discordando)

I don't think we should do this, because xxx. (Não acho que devemos fazer isso, pois xxx.)

I disagree, I think we could try another option instead. For example, we could xxx. (Eu discordo, acho que poderíamos tentar outra opção em vez disso. Por exemplo, poderíamos xxx.)

This is not a very good idea, because xxxx. (Essa não é uma ideia muito boa, porque xxx)

It would be more effective if we XXX. (Seria mais efetivo se nós xxx.)

I don't think so. This is not the best way to tackle this problem, perhaps it is better to xxx. (Eu não acho. Essa não é a melhor maneira de atacar esse problema, talvez seja melhor xxx.)

I'm not sure this is the right way to go. It may be risky xxx. (Não tenho certeza que esse seja o melhor caminho. Pode ser arriscado xxx.)

When the person is right (quando a pessoa está certa)

Exactly. (Exatamente)

Spot on. (Exatamente)

That's it. (Isso mesmo)

That's the point. (Essa é a idéia)

Yes, you're right. (Sim, você está certa.)

You're right. (Você está certo.)

When the person is wrong (quando a pessoa está errada)

Regarding xxx, actually this is what happened. (Sobre xxx, na verdade isso foi o que aconteceu.)

These numbers look strange, could you double check them? (Esses números parecem estranhos, você poderia verifica-los novamente?)

No, I don't think so. Because xxx. (Não, eu acho que não. Porque xxx.)

IMPORTANT: Let the other person save face.

“Attack” the facts, NEVER the person. Adjust the tone to the company/person’s culture. Read between the lines. Observe the behavior and body language.

When someone is deviating from the subject (Quando alguém está desviando do assunto) :

Why don’t we discuss this in a separate forum/another call/meeting? (Por que não discutimos isso num ambiente diferente/ em outra ligação/reunião?)

Thank you for raising this point, but this is not the right time and place to discuss it. Shall we meet next week do talk about it? (Obrigado por levantar esse ponto, mas esse não é o momento e local apropriado para discuti-lo. Vamos nos encontrar na semana que vem para falar sobre isso?)

Let’s focus on the meeting subject. (Vamos focar no tema da reunião.)

Asking for opinions, suggestions (Pedindo por opiniões, sugestões)

What is your opinion about this? (Qual a sua opinião sobre isso?)

How do you feel about this? (Como você se sente em relação a isso?)

What do you think / suggest? (O que você acha/sugere?)

What do you think we should do in this case? (O que você acha que deveríamos fazer nesse caso?)

What other ideas do you have? (Quais outras idéias você tem?)

Giving suggestions/recommendations (Dando sugestões/recomendações)

What if we asked our customers about their opinion? (E se a gente perguntasse para nossos clientes sobre suas opiniões?)

My suggestion is that we try another approach. (Minha sugestão é que a gente tente outra abordagem.)

I suggest investing in digital marketing. (Sugiro investir em marketing digital.)

Perhaps we could negotiate a longer payment term. (Talvez a gente possa negociar um prazo de pagamento mais longo.)

I think we should partner up with XYZ as there is a lot of synergy between our companies. (Eu acho que nós deveríamos fazer uma parceria com a XYZ pois há muita sinergia entre nossas empresas.)

Why don't we do this now, analyse the results for 2 weeks and then decide whether to adjust the copy? (Por que não fazemos isso agora, analisa os resultados por 2 semanas e depois decidimos se ajustamos a copy?)

Based on these arguments, I think we should sell all the non-core businesses. (Baseado nesses argumentos, acho que deveríamos vender todos os negócios que não são centrais.)

Our recommendation is to implement this initiative in all branches. (Nossa recomendação é implementar essa iniciativa em todas as unidades.) After a thorough analysis, we suggest modernizing the entire IT infrastructure. (Depois de uma análise minuciosa, nós sugerimos modernizar toda a infraestrutura de TI.)

Handling questions (Lidando com perguntas):

Does anyone have any questions? (Alguém tem alguma pergunta?)

Great question Maria. In this case, we should XXXX. (Ótima pergunta, Maria. Nesse caso, nós deveríamos XXXX.)

I'm glad you asked this. It is indeed important to watch what the competition is doing, and we are keeping our eyes open. (Estou feliz que você tenha perguntado isso. É realmente importante olhar o que a competição está fazendo e nós estamos de olhos abertos.)

That's an excellent question, but I don't have these numbers off the top of my head. Let me look into that, and I will get back to you as soon as possible. (Essa é uma ótima pergunta, mas não tenho esses números de cabeça. Deixe-me pesquisar mais sobre isso e te retornarei o mais breve possível.)

Wrapping up (Encerrando):

Ok, let's recap what we've agreed. (Ok, vamos recapitular o que concordamos.)

So we've agreed on the following action points. (Então nós concordamos nos pontos a seguir.)

Does anyone have any other comment? (Alguém tem mais algum outro comentário?)

Thank you very much for your participation. (Muito obrigada pela sua participação.)

Paul will send you the meeting minutes by Friday. (O Paulo enviará para vocês a ata da reunião até sexta-feira.)

CRÉDITOS

BUSINESS FLUENCY

ESPRESSO ENGLISH

INDEED CAREER GUIDE

SMALL BUSINESS

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REFERÊNCIAS

BUSINESS FLUENCY, Ho Mien Mien <https://businessfluency.com.br>

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