

BUSINESS ENGLISH – GRAMMAR

REFERENCE STATIVE VERBS - LESSON 17

4º BIMESTRE

DOMINAR AS FERRAMENTAS DE PRODUÇÃO DE TEXTOS EM QUALQUER CONTEXTO, AMPLIFICAR A INTERDISCIPLINARIEDADE, PERMITINDO COMPARAÇÃO, REFLEXÃO E ANÁLISE CRÍTICA

ORGANIZADOR: PROF. RONALDO PERICINOTTI

PARA O ALUNO (TRABALHANDO SEM O PROFESSOR)

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Obrigado

Ronaldo Pericinotti

ESL Teacher – Londontti School of English

<https://londonenglish.com.br/>

55 + 11 98598-9176

e-mail: ronaldopericinotti@prof.educacao.sp.gov.br

Lattes: <http://lattes.cnpq.br/0974326543838020>

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English Phrases For Meetings PT.03

Let's begin with a few vocabulary words. The verbs typically used with "meeting" are "have" and "hold":

- We're going to **have** another department meeting on Friday.
- Let's **hold** a meeting to discuss the policy changes.

You can also use "schedule," "arrange" or "organize" to talk about having a meeting in the future.

When you participate in a meeting, you "attend" the meeting (formal) or "go to" the meeting.

- Did you **go to** the project team meeting?
- Several people did not **attend** the development meeting.

A well-organized meeting will have an **agenda** – that's a list of topics (often called items) that will be discussed. In some meetings, one person keeps notes that will be the official record of the meeting – these are called the meeting **minutes**.

Why hold a meeting? There are many different reasons. One is to **brainstorm**. "Brainstorming" is creating a lot of different ideas, so that they can later be analyzed, evaluated, and the best ones can be selected.

Brainstorming is often done as a first step in a project, before there is a definite plan.

Another reason to hold a meeting is to develop a **strategy** and **allocate tasks**. A strategy is a plan for completing a project, and to "allocate tasks" means to assign specific items of work to specific people.

Meetings are also held to **collaborate** (work together) on projects and give **updates** – reports of progress and current status. Finally, meetings are held to **make decisions**.

Some meetings use a formal system of **voting**, in which a decision is made if it receives the majority (more than 50%) of the votes. Other meetings use a less formal system of decision-making, aiming for the group to come to a **consensus** (a general agreement).

BEGINNING A MEETING

To start the meeting, the meeting leader (who is called the **chairperson** or **chair**) may use one of these phrases:

- Hello, everyone. Thank you for coming today.
- Since everyone is here, let's get started.
- First, I'd like to welcome you all.

If there are new people in the meeting, or people from different departments who might not know each other, the chairperson may introduce them:

- **I'd like to take a moment to introduce... [name + description]**
I'd like to take a moment to introduce Carla, from the public relations department.
- **Please join me in welcoming [name + description]**
Please join me in welcoming Jim, a consultant who will be helping us with project management.
- **Sheila, would you like to introduce yourself?**

Finally, it's good to state the specific topic or objective of the meeting, in order to focus the discussion:

- **As you can see from the agenda, we'll be talking about... [topic]**
- **I've called this meeting in order to ... [goal]**
- **Our main goal today is to ... [goal]**

Our main goal today is to determine the budget for 2013.

ASKING FOR OPINIONS

Meetings often begin with the presentation of some information and then a request for opinions. To ask people for their opinions, you can say:

- **What does everyone think about...?**
- **I'd like to get your feedback on...**
- **What are your thoughts about... ?**
- **What are your views on... ?**

After one person has expressed his or her opinion, you can say "Thanks," to acknowledge the opinion, then use these phrases to ask for more people to respond:

- **What does everyone else think?**
- **Are there any other comments?**

If there's a specific person who you would like to hear from, you can ask him or her directly by using these phrases:

- **Susan, can we get your input?**
- **Would you like to add anything, Susan?**

GIVING YOUR OPINION

Now let's learn some phrases for giving your opinion – with some detail in order to give you some flexibility in the way you express your opinion:

Strong

- **I strongly believe that...**
- **I'm positive that...**
- **I'm convinced that...**
- **I have no doubt whatsoever that...**
- **There's no question that...**

(strongest)

Normal

- **I think / believe / feel that...**
- **From my point of view...**
- **In my experience... / I find that...**

(use these phrases to base your opinion on your experience)

- **I'd say that...**
- **If you want my honest opinion, I think that... / To be honest...**

- *(use these phrases when you want to express a negative or critical opinion. The word "honest" is a diplomatic way to signal that you are going to say something negative or unpopular)*

Weak

- **It seems to me that...**
- **It's possible that...**
- **I tend to think that...**

• **My initial reaction is...**

(use this phrase to show that this is an opinion you haven't thought very deeply about)

AGREEING / DISAGREEING

Once other people in the meeting have expressed their opinions, you can react by agreeing or disagreeing. Here are some appropriate phrases for this purpose – again, based on degree of strength.

Strong agreement:

- I completely agree.
- I couldn't agree more.
- You're absolutely right.

Normal agreement:

- Exactly!
- That's just how I see it.
- I'm with Peter on this.

(you can use this phrase to refer to another colleague's opinion)

Partial agreement:

- Well, it depends.
- I agree with you up to a point, but...

(this means that you agree with some of the opinion, but not all of it)

- I agree with you in principle, but...

(this means you agree with the opinion in theory, but not in practice)

Normal Disagreement:

In English, saying "I disagree" can be a little too direct, and may be considered impolite. Use one of these phrases instead, to disagree diplomatically:

- I'm afraid I disagree.
- I'm not so sure about that.
- I see it differently.
- Yes, but...
- Not necessarily.

Strong disagreement:

Finally, here are some phrases for disagreeing strongly. The words "I'm sorry" make the phrase more polite.

- I'm sorry, but I completely disagree.
- I'm sorry, but I don't agree with that at all.

Settling a disagreement:

What do you do if you're in charge of a meeting and people are arguing? Use one of these phrases to settle the disagreement and continue the meeting:

- We don't seem to be getting anywhere with this, so maybe we could discuss it further at another time.
- Let's move on. I think we're going to have to agree to disagree.

SUGGESTIONS

If you'd like to make a suggestion or recommendation, you can use these phrases. The "weaker" phrases introduce an option as a possibility. The "stronger" phrases give more emphasis to your belief that it is a good idea.

Weak:

- We could...
- Why don't you/we....?
- How about...?
- What about...?

Strong:

- I suggest...
- I recommend...
- We should...
- Let's...

Note:

We could / Why don't we / We should / Let's are followed by the base form of the verb:

- We could invest in new technology.
How about / What about / I suggest / I recommend are followed by the -ING form:
- How about investing in new technology?

INTERRUPTING

At times, you might want to interrupt the discussion to add a point. Here are three polite ways to do that:

- May I have a word?
- Could I just say one thing?
- Excuse me – sorry for interrupting, but...

CONTROLLING THE MEETING

If you're controlling the meeting, you'll need these phrases to move the discussion to the next item on the agenda:

- I think we've spent enough time on this topic. Moving on...
- If nobody has anything else to add, let's move on to the next item.
- We're running short on time, so let's move on.

- I'd like to skip item 2 and go directly to item 3.

(This means you want to go from item 1 directly to item 3)

If you'd like to give control of the discussion to another person, you can say this:

- I'd like to hand it over to Brian, who is going to lead the next point.
- Next, Brian is going to tell us about...

Finally, it's common for discussions to go off topic – however, you can bring the discussion back to the main point by using one of these phrases:

- I'm afraid that's outside the scope of this meeting.
- I think we're getting a bit off topic.
- We'd better save that for another meeting.
- Let's get back on track, OK?
- Getting back to... [topic]

CLOSING

At the end of the meeting, use one of these phrases to close it:

- It looks like we've covered the main items on the agenda.
- That will be all for today.
- If no one has anything else to add, then I think we'll wrap this up.

You can also use a phrase similar to the ones used at the end of presentations, such as "Let me quickly summarize the main points."

You can also set a date for the next meeting:

- Our next meeting will be... / Let's get together...
on January 29th.

- on the first Monday of next month.
- two weeks from today.

If the date of the next meeting is not yet scheduled, then you can say, "I'll let you know the date of our next meeting."

Stative verbs

Do you know how to use stative verbs like *think*, *love*, *smell* and *have*?

Look at these examples to see how stative verbs are used.

I think that's a good idea.

I love this song!

That coffee smells good.

Do you have a pen?

Try this exercise to test your grammar.

Stative verbs describe a state rather than an action. They aren't usually used in the present continuous form.

I don't know the answer. ~~I'm not knowing the answer.~~

She really likes you. ~~She's really liking you.~~

He seems happy at the moment. ~~He's seeming happy at the moment.~~

Stative verbs often relate to:

- thoughts and opinions: *agree, believe, doubt, guess, imagine, know, mean, recognise, remember, suspect, think, understand*
- feelings and emotions: *dislike, hate, like, love, prefer, want, wish*

- senses and perceptions: *appear, be, feel, hear, look, see, seem, smell, taste*
- possession and measurement: *belong, have, measure, own, possess, weigh.*

Verbs that are sometimes stative

A number of verbs can refer to states or actions, depending on the context.

I think it's a good idea.

Wait a moment! I'm thinking.

The first sentence expresses an opinion. It is a mental state, so we use present simple. In the second example the speaker is actively processing thoughts about something. It is an action in progress, so we use present continuous.

Some other examples are:

have

I have an old car. (state – possession)

I'm having a quick break. (action – having a break is an activity)

see

Do you see any problems with that? (state – opinion)

We're seeing Tadanari tomorrow afternoon. (action – we're meeting him)

be

He's so interesting! (state – his permanent quality)

He's being very unhelpful. (action – he is temporarily behaving this way)

taste

This coffee tastes delicious. (state – our perception of the coffee)
Look! The chef is tasting the soup. (action – tasting the soup is an activity)

Other verbs like this

include: *agree, appear, doubt, feel, guess, hear, imagine, look, measure, remember, smell, weigh, wish.*

Reflexive pronouns

Do you know how to use reflexive pronouns like *myself, yourself* or *themselves*?

She looked at herself in the mirror.
I'm trying to teach myself Italian with an app.
Our children walk to school by themselves.
Try this exercise to test your grammar.

Reflexive pronouns are words like *myself, yourself, himself, herself, itself, ourselves, yourselves* and *themselves*. They refer back to a person or thing.

We often use reflexive pronouns when the subject and the object of a verb are the same.

*I cut **myself** when I was making dinner last night.*
*I hope **you** enjoy **yourselves** at the party tonight!*
*My phone isn't working properly. **It** turns **itself** off for no reason.*
***We** need to believe in **ourselves** more.*

Adding emphasis

We can add a reflexive pronoun for emphasis when it's unusual or different.

*He wants to pass his driving test so that **he** can drive **himself** to work.*

*She broke her arm, so **she** couldn't wash **herself** very easily.*

We can use reflexive pronouns to emphasise that someone does it personally, not anybody else.

*The door was definitely locked. **I** locked it **myself**.*

*Are **you** redecorating your flat **yourselves**?*

We can also use a reflexive pronoun together with the noun it refers to in order to emphasise it.

*We talked to the **manager herself**, and she agreed to give us our money back.*

***Parents themselves** need to take more responsibility for their children's learning.*

By + reflexive pronoun

We can use *by* + reflexive pronoun to mean *alone*.

***He** usually goes on holiday **by himself**.*

*Do **you** enjoy being **by yourself**?*

Reciprocal pronouns

Notice the difference between plural reflexive pronouns and reciprocal pronouns (*each other*, *one another*).

***They're** buying **themselves** a new television.*

***They're** buying **each other** small gifts.*

***We** looked at **ourselves** in the mirror.*

***We** looked at **each other** in surprise.*

With reciprocal pronouns (e.g. *each other*), each person does the action to the other person/people but not to themselves.

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