

Useful phrases and vocabulary

TALKING ABOUT YOUR JOB

Describing your company/department

I work in the sales/purchasing department of a small/
medium-sized/large company called ...
We develop/make/produce/sell/...
Our department is divided into ...
We need to liaise/work closely with ...
We also are more actively involved in ...
My team/group makes sure that ...

Describing your responsibilities

My team is responsible for ...
I am in charge of ...
My main responsibility is ...
A lot of our/my work involves ...
We have to/need to ...
I spend a lot of time ...
My job also includes ...

BEING POLITE

Asking indirect questions

Can I ask which company you are with?
Doesn't your company have an office here?
Don't you work at HT Electronics?

Using would/could

Could you tell me your name (again), please?
Could you give me your business card / contact
information?
Would you like to look at our new catalogue?
Would you be interested in meeting next week?
I could come to your office next week.

TELEPHONING LANGUAGE

Saying who you are

This is Adam Brown from XYZ Ltd.
It's David Dietrich from purchasing here.
Hi Sarah. It's Frank here.

Getting through to the right person

Could you put me through to your purchasing
department, please?
Could/Can I speak to John Murphy, please?
I'd like to speak to Jill, please.
I'd like to speak to somebody in your sales/purchasing
department, please.
Is Michelle there at the moment?

ESTABLISHING CONTACT AT A TRADE FAIR

Greetings and introductions

Good morning/afternoon.
Hello. My name is ...
Please call me ...
May/Can I introduce myself?
Nice/Pleased to meet you (too).

Moving on to business

How did you like the presentation?
What do you think of ...?
Have you found anything of interest?
What line of business are you in?
Let me give you/Here's my (business) card.

Arranging to follow-up

Would it be possible to arrange/fix/set up a meeting?
Could I come to see you?
Could I call you in the next few days?
Perhaps I could send you some information.
Would you be interested in meeting after the fair?
Could you send me your price lists?
I'll send you an email/give you a call next week.

SMALL TALK

Starting a conversation

Is this your first time here/in Belgium?
What do you think of Brussels/the fair?
Are you interested in football/films/winter sports?
The weather here has just been fantastic/horrible.

Keeping the conversation going

Are you interested in any particular sport?
– Yes, I'm really into snowboarding. How about you?
Have you been to Liverpool before?
– Yes, I've been there many times, actually. I really like
the atmosphere, and the people are friendly.

Moving on to business

So, are you looking for suppliers?
Right, should we get down to business?

EMAILS

Salutations and closes

Dear Mr, Mrs, Ms	Regards/Sincerely
Dear Bob	Best wishes/Kind regards
Hello/Hi Bob	All the best/Best

Opening sentence

It was nice to meet you at the conference last week.
I'm writing to tell/ask you about ... / Just wanted to get in touch to ...
Hope you had a nice weekend.
How are things going?

Requesting information

Could you send me some details about ...?
I would also like to take the opportunity to find out more about ...
Would you mind answering the following questions to help us with our preparation?
We would like to hear more about ...

Making or confirming an appointment

How about Thursday at 4 p.m?
Would 3 April at 11 a.m. at our offices be convenient for you?
I would like to confirm the meeting for 3 April at 11 a.m.

Concluding

Please feel free to contact me again.
I look forward to seeing you in London.
Looking forward to seeing you on 3 April.

ACTIVE LISTENING

Back-channeling – showing that you are really listening

Mmmh, good.
Yeah, OK.
Ah ah, I see.
Right.

Prompting – asking for more information

Interesting. Could you tell me more about that?
Yes, could you give me some more details?
Would you be able to provide more specific information?

Paraphrasing – making sure you have understood correctly

So you'd like ..., but only if Is that right?
So, if I understand you correctly, you need ...
Sorry, did you say ...

Confirming – saying that you have understood

That's correct, yes.
That's right.
Yes, I see your point.
So, you'll get back to me on that.

AGREEING AND DISAGREEING

Agreeing

I share your views completely.
We could go along with that.
Yes, I'm absolutely in favour of that option.
I agree.

Disagreeing

I see it a little differently.
That may well be right, but ...
Up to a point we could accept that, but ...
I really can't agree with that.
Normally we could accept that, but in this case ...
Unfortunately, I can't agree with you there.

TALKING ABOUT A PRODUCT

Asking if your partner is interested

Would you be interested in trying our ...?
Perhaps I can tempt you to sample our ...?
Do you think your company might be interested in ...?
Do you think this may be of interest to you and your clients?

Showing interest

That sounds interesting.
That would certainly be of interest to us.
That might be exactly what we are looking for.
Could you send me a sample/give me some more information?

Being cautious

Well, maybe. But I would need to know more about ...
I'm not so sure.
I don't think that's really what we're looking for.
That (really) depends on your conditions/price.

Saying you are not interested

I'm sorry but ...
Unfortunately we're not looking for that at the moment.
Thanks, but we already have a supplier for that product.
No, thanks. We're not interested in that at this stage.

NEGOTIATING

Starting the conversation

We're very happy to be meeting you today.
We hope to come to an acceptable solution for both/all of us.
I'd like to discuss some of the details in the offer.
We'd like to hear your proposals before we tell you what we can offer.

Concluding your arguments

We are sure that you will see the benefits for your company if you take up our offer.
There you have our proposal. I'm afraid that's as far as we can go.
So that wraps it up.
That sums up our side then.

Finishing the conversation

That may be a possibility but I have to discuss it with my boss.
Let me get back to you.
I'm happy we've found a solution. I'll send you an email tomorrow summarizing our agreement.

HANDLING ORDERS

Placing orders

We would like to order/have ...

We're ready to make our first order under the frame contract.

We'd like to place a call-off order for ...

We would appreciate delivery by Friday. Can you manage it/that?

Taking orders

I'll just take/write down the details.

Let me just write this down/type in your order.

So, how many do you need exactly?

Was there anything else you'd like to order today?

Checking and confirming information

Let me just check/repeat that.

Let me make sure I've got everything down right.

Yes, that's right/correct.

Sorry, David. Did you say ...?

Could you say that again/repeat that, please?

COMPLAINING

I'm afraid (that) there is a problem with ...

There appears/seems to be a mistake/mix-up ...

Unfortunately, we have a slight problem with ...

COMPLAINT MANAGEMENT WITH CASH

Confirming you have understood the client's situation

I'm sorry to hear that. / I understand your situation.

I realize this must be frustrating for you.

Asking for the details of the problem

Could you tell me exactly which item was damaged?

May I ask if you've tried to use the tracking facility on our website?

Serving your client by suggesting solutions

You will get the missing shipment within 24 hours.

I'll get back to you first thing tomorrow morning about compensation.

Helping your client by confirming your commitments

I'll see to it immediately and personally make sure you get compensation.

Are we agreed that you'll fax me a copy of the invoice and I'll send you the missing items today?

LETTERS OF COMPLAINT AND APOLOGY

Making complaints

I'm writing to you to complain about ...

I am writing in reference to the above order.

Unfortunately, ...

Talking about consequences

We expect you to cover these costs.

We expect compensation for the inconvenience caused.

We cannot accept this and will have to cancel our contract if it happens again.

If you do not comply with the delivery terms as agreed in our frame contract, we will be forced to contact our lawyers.

Offering apologies

Please accept my apologies for ...

Please be assured that we are doing everything ...

I (very much) regret the inconvenience we have caused.

Referring to future action

We will, of course, cover the extra costs/reimburse you/arrange for a new shipment ...

As a sign of goodwill, I would like to offer ...

USEFUL VERBS (IN CONTEXT)

		Translation
to build a relationship	It is vital to build a good relationship with those you do business with.	
to convince	I will need some more information before you can convince me to buy.	
to file/submit a tender	The closing date for filing the tender is Friday.	
to fulfil	I'm afraid your product doesn't seem to fulfil our requirements.	
to handle a complaint	It is important to handle complaints well if we want to keep our clients.	
to make sure	We must always make sure we listen to our clients' needs.	
to negotiate	I am sure we will be able to negotiate terms that are beneficial to us both/all of us.	
to place an order	I placed an order last month and it's still not arrived.	
to present	Today I want to present our latest product to you.	
to reimburse	We would like to reimburse you for the cost of replacing the faulty product.	
to set up a meeting	We should set up a meeting to discuss your product further.	