

1B Thank You for Calling – Creating a Good Impression on the Phone



Telephone skills are one of the top priorities for people who need English at work. But what makes telephoning in English so demanding? The main reason is the lack of non-verbal communication when speaking on the phone: there are no facial expressions or gestures which otherwise would soften what you are saying or give extra clues, so it is only your words and tone of voice that convey your message. Therefore some native English speakers might think that foreigners sound too direct on the telephone. For this reason, polite words and phrases such as "could", "may", "please", "thank you" and "I'm afraid" become even more important than when communicating face-to-face. It is also essential to show that you are still on the line and listening by using fillers such as "yes", "hmm" and "right". On the other hand, if you have problems with hearing or understanding, don't be afraid to ask the person to repeat what they have said. You can also ask him/her to slow down – more than once, if necessary. Please remember that even native speakers ask each other to repeat and confirm information. Above all, you should learn the appropriate expressions, as it is rude to use language that is too direct.

Mobile phones have revolutionised telephoning in many ways. However, the same rules apply to their use in a business environment as to a standard phone line. For instance, if you have an appointment or are in a meeting, focus on the people you are with and put your mobile phone on the mute setting or switch it off.

Texting has become popular when calling is not convenient or possible. The advantage of text messages is that you can contact people without disrupting meetings or other activities. Another benefit is that you can deliver information to a number of people cost-effectively and in a fraction of the time that several telephone conversations would take. Still, you should consider who you send texts to and in what kinds of situation. In some countries this technology is only starting to be adopted, or local business etiquette might prefer more traditional forms of communication. One rule of thumb is that the less you know the person, the better it is to make a phone call instead of texting. A text message is also a challenge if you want to maximise information and minimise misinterpretation, since the available space is limited. However, please be careful with space-saving emoticons and so-called "textspeak" (such as the combination of letters "C and U" instead of "see you"), which do not belong in business communication.

1

Discuss the questions.

- 1 What makes telephoning in a foreign language challenging?
- 2 How can you make yourself sound polite on the phone?
- 3 Why is it important to fill in the silence on the phone?
- 4 How can you prepare yourself to make and receive a telephone call in English?
- 5 Are there places and situations where people shouldn't use their mobile phones? If yes, give examples.
- 6 What are the benefits of using text messages?
- 7 When do you need to consider whether texting is the best way to communicate with someone?
- 8 What kinds of emoticons do you know? Do you use them? Why/why not?
- 9 Can all kinds of messages be delivered via telephone? Why/why not?
- 10 How do you think people will use mobile phones ten years from now?

2

Number the lines in the telephone conversations.**Dialogue 1**

- ____ You're welcome. Bye!
- ____ Good afternoon, Ms Richards. What can I do for you?
- ____ Thank you. Now I've got it right. We'll call you tomorrow to let you know the exact time the delivery van will arrive.
- ____ Jane Gunners.
- ____ Would you mind repeating the last part?
- ____ I'm calling about tomorrow's delivery. I'd like to make sure you have the right address. It's 13 Oxbridge Road, Manchester, M60 1SJ.
- ____ Of course. Let me spell it for you. It's...
- ____ That would suit me fine. Thank you for your help, Mrs Gunners.
- ____ Good afternoon, Mrs Gunners. This is Tina Richards of Fashion International.
- ____ Bye.

Dialogue 2

- ____ I'm afraid Sarah is out at the moment. Would you like to leave a message for her?
- ____ Sarah should be back shortly. I'll make sure she gets your message asap.
- ____ Good morning, Nelson Marketing Limited. Ed Roberts speaking.
- ____ I'm sorry to hear that. Hold on a moment, please. I'll check if she's in.
- ____ Hello, this is Zoe Sawyer calling from Combi Products. How are you?
- ____ Any time, Miss Sawyer. Bye.
- ____ I was trying to reach Sarah Johnson yesterday but couldn't get hold of her. I can't seem to get through to her today either.
- ____ Thank you very much. It was nice talking to you. Goodbye.
- ____ Yes, I would. It's about her visit to London. I need to talk with her about financing our joint project and the shareholders' opinions.
- ____ I'm fine, thank you. What can I do for you?
- ____ Thanks, it's quite urgent.

3

Rewrite the following telephone conversation to make it polite and businesslike.

Yes?

Is this Professional Services?

Yes.

I want to talk to the big sales guy immediately.

Who are you?

It's John Matthews.

John who? You're breaking up on me. I can't hear you, speak up.

I said my name is John Matthews.

Hang on. I'll get Mr Sanders for you. (A bit later:) I didn't get any answer. You'll have to speak to someone else.

That is not good enough. Tell him to give me a buzz!

What for?

It's really important. Tell your boss to call me at once on my mobile.

Okey-doke.

Cheers, mate.

4 Fill in the sentences with the words in their correct forms.

dial	speak up	get through	spell	read back
catch	call back	cut off	put through	

- 1 If you don't understand something the person you are talking to has said, you can tell him/her that you didn't _____ that.
- 2 If the line is very bad, you might get _____.
- 3 If someone talks in a very quiet voice, you can ask him/her to _____.
- 4 If you want to make sure you got a message right, you can _____ it _____.
- 5 If there is nobody by the name of Axel in the company you phoned, make sure you _____ the right number.
- 6 If you have a difficult name, be prepared to _____ it.
- 7 If your call is connected, you are _____.
- 8 If a number is engaged all the time, it's very difficult to _____.
- 9 If you don't reach the person you want to talk to, leave a message asking him/her to _____ you _____.

8 Read out the following.

- a mary.higgins@comptel.org
- b www.wsoy.fi/pp_1.pdf
- c ftp://openworld.net/server1
- d XMS-6&Q-yft
- e mewS~Kr (password)
- f your own email address

In combinations such as KrT it is common to say "big" and "small" instead of "capital" and "lower-case" letters.

9 Listen to three telephone conversations and take down the messages.

WHILE YOU WERE OUT

- from
- to
- taken down by
- time
- message

7 Match the special characters and their names.

a	.	_____	comma
b	,	_____	semicolon
c	:	_____	exclamation mark (BrE), exclamation point (AmE)
d	;	_____	dot (in email and web addresses), full stop (BrE), period (AmE)
e	!	_____	colon
f	?	_____	lower-case letters
g	-	_____	quotation mark
h	—	_____	backslash
i	~	_____	at-sign
j	'	_____	e with an acute accent
k	@	_____	dash
l	é	_____	ampersand, and-sign
m	è	_____	question mark
n	/	_____	apostrophe
o	\	_____	e with a grave accent
p	"	_____	underscore
r	()	_____	square brackets
s	[]	_____	brackets (BrE), parentheses (AmE)
t	_	_____	hash (BrE), pound/number sign (AmE)
u	#	_____	hyphen
v	ABCD	_____	capital/upper-case letters
w	abcd	_____	tilde
q	&	_____	(forward) slash

How would you describe the signs if you don't remember their names or the person you are talking to doesn't understand their names?

10 Act out the following telephone conversations with a partner. Invent any necessary details yourself.

- 1 An angry customer calls you while you are travelling by train. He/she says your company charged too much for the repair of his/her car. You don't want to disturb your fellow travellers but on the other hand you don't want to lose a customer.
- 2 You are on a business trip in Thailand and make an appointment with a local hairdresser's/barber's. Spell your name and give your telephone number in case the appointment is cancelled. When you ask for directions, the hairdresser/barber tells they have moved to new premises at Ban Pa Hiang Square, Thongcji Building. Make sure you got the address right.
- 3 You work for directory enquiries. Someone wants to know if there is a local company in Kendal manufacturing electrical supplies. Give the contact person's email address (marty.sudgen@plw.gb.com) and a website address <http://www.plw-group.gb.com>.

Telephoning

FORMAL OR NEUTRAL

INFORMAL

Answering the phone

-
-
-
-
-

- Hello?
- Hi, Ann. (when you have seen Ann's number on your mobile phone display)
- Yes?

Introducing yourself

-
-
-
-

- Hi, it's Mark from your economics seminar here.
- Hi, Gerry. It's Lisa calling. Is this a good time to talk?
- Hi, Julie. Can you talk?
- Hi, Matt. How's it going?

Asking to speak with someone

-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-

- Hello, is that Michael?
- Is Michael in?
- Is Jack there, please?
- Can I talk to your brother?
- This is he/she. (when the caller didn't recognise your voice)

Asking the caller's name

-
-
-
-
-
-

- Who's this?

FORMAL OR NEUTRAL**INFORMAL****Transferring someone**

-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-

- Just a sec. I'll get him.
- He's right here. Hang on a minute.

Not getting connected

-
-
-
-
-
-
-

- Sorry, I can't get you through.

Someone is not available

-
-
-
-
-

- Sorry, he's/she's not here right now.
- Sorry, Sammy's not in.
- Can you tell me when I could call again?

Wrong number

-
-
-

- Sorry, there's no Tanya here. I think you've got the wrong number.
- Maybe I dialled the wrong number. Sorry, my mistake.
- Sorry, wrong number.

FORMAL OR NEUTRAL

INFORMAL

Leaving and taking a message

- Give him/her my message, will you?
- Do you have a pen handy?
- Tell Bob to call me asap on my mobile. My number's 07730 857 492. It's really important.
- Do you want to leave a message?
- Could you tell Mary to give me a ring tonight?
- Tell him to give me a buzz!
- Ask him/her to call Brian when he gets in, could you?
- Okay, I've got it all down.
- I'll tell him/her you called.

Dealing with problems

- I can't hear you.
- Sorry, what did you say?
- What?/What was that?
- You're breaking up on me.
- Slow down, will you?

Ending a call

- Thanks. It was nice talking to you, but I should let you go now.
- Thanks for calling. Take care.
- Well, I'd better get going. Talk/speak to you soon.

VOICE MAIL

If you get calls when your phone is switched off or you are too busy to take a call, your voice mail service will help you to pick them up later.

When you record your outgoing message,

- introduce yourself or the company you work for
- explain why you cannot be reached (or you can give the hours when you will be available again)
- ask the caller to leave his/her contact information and
- finish with a promise to contact the caller soon.

"This is the voice mail of Criton Industries. Thank you for calling us. Our business hours are nine to five on weekdays. If you would like to leave a message, please wait for the tone and give your name and contact information and we'll return your call as soon as possible."

"Hello, this is Margaret Candell with sales. I am currently in a meeting. Please leave a message after the tone and I will be happy to get back to you."

When you leave a voice mail message for someone,

- introduce yourself
- state the time of day and reason for calling
- make a request or give some information
- give information on how you can be reached or say that you will call later.

"Hello, my name is April McKinnock from Superstore. It's a quarter to three on Wednesday and I'm calling to let you know that the computer components you ordered have arrived. Could you please ring me back so that we could arrange a time for you to collect the parts. My number is 01235 623189. Thanks a lot. Bye."

11 What kind of message would you record on your answering system

- if you worked in the personnel department of Lowell & Partners, are visiting a client and could not be reached before two pm?
- if you were the marketing manager of Columbus Travel Agency and were going on holiday for a week?
- if you were a switchboard operator and the company you work for was moving to new premises? Because of the move, the office would be closed on Thursday and Friday but would be open again for business on Monday.

12 What kind of message would you leave on the answering system in these situations?

- You have travelled to visit a business partner in Edinburgh. Your flight is delayed for two hours and you will arrive at dinner tonight half an hour late.
- You have fallen ill and can't come to work, although you had planned to finish writing some important documents for your colleague today.
- A friend invited you to a housewarming party, but you have to work overtime.

Your Education

The Education System in Finland

BASIC EDUCATION

Preschool develops children's learning skills.

Comprehensive school supports pupils' development and growth as individuals and ethically responsible members of society. It also promotes learning and equality.

UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION

gives general eligibility for higher education

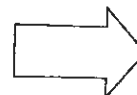
Vocational institutes & apprenticeship training

combine theoretical studies in the classroom & practical studies in workshops and at actual workplaces and give competence for a specific occupation.



vocational
qualification

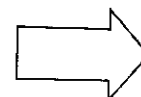
The curriculum of **general upper secondary schools** consists of a minimum of 75 courses with no specified year classes. Courses are compulsory or optional. Tuition is free of charge.



matriculation
examination

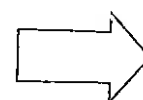
HIGHER EDUCATION

Universities of applied sciences provide education in Social Sciences, Business and Administration, Culture, Natural Sciences, Tourism, Catering and Domestic Services, Social Services, Health and Sport, Natural Resources and the Environment, Humanities and Education, Technology, Communication and Transport. Studies combine theory and practice and consist of basic, professional and optional studies; language studies; work placement and a thesis. The extent of studies is 210–270 credit units.

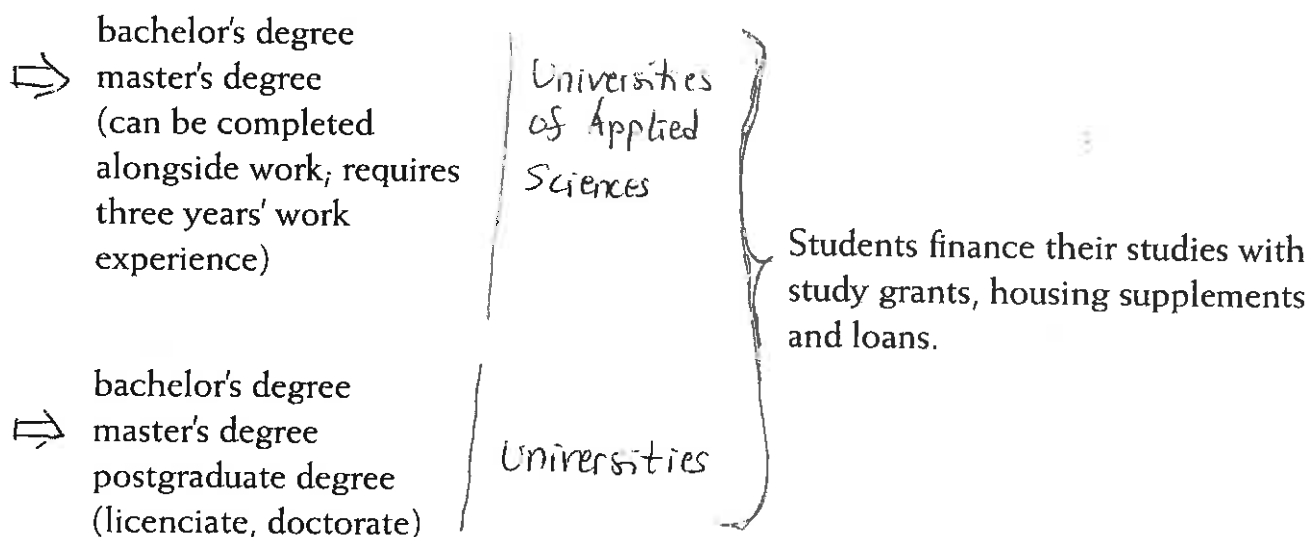


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next
page

Universities carry out research and provide education based on that research. The biggest fields of study are Science and Technology, Humanities, and Natural Sciences.



see
next
page



ADULT EDUCATION

- supports lifelong learning
- updates vocational skills
- is for fun and self-improvement
- is provided by employers, open and summer universities, vocational adult education centres and community colleges among others
- consists of lectures, groupwork, hands-on activities, e-learning etc.

Culture express

As the education systems in the UK and the USA are different from the Finnish system, the terms also vary. For example, our study guide is called a prospectus in the UK and a course catalog in the USA. In Finland and the USA university and college students take courses, whereas students in the UK talk about modules. A course at British universities and colleges takes three years; in the USA they call it a program of study. In the UK bachelor's and master's degrees include a dissertation, which is called a thesis in the Finnish and American systems.



Match the beginnings (1–10) of the sentences with the most suitable endings (a–j).

- 1 The education system in Finland is based on ____
 - 2 Finnish students are among the highest scorers worldwide ____
 - 3 After leaving comprehensive school, there is a choice ____
 - 4 The study programmes in vocational qualifications take ____
 - 5 General upper secondary school provides three years of general studies ____
 - 6 It is also possible to combine the matriculation examination with vocational studies ____
 - 7 More than half of all people in their twenties ____
 - 8 Universities of applied sciences emphasise close co-operation with business, industry and services, ____
 - 9 Universities have the longest tradition in Finnish education ____
 - 10 Most adult education students can study while they continue to work ____
- a between general upper secondary school and vocational school.
 - b a nine-year comprehensive education.
 - c continue their studies at universities or universities of applied sciences.
 - d in reading, science and mathematics.
 - e which end in the matriculation examination.
 - f so they are more practical in orientation than universities.
 - g 3 years to complete.
 - h thanks to independent study, e-learning and combined local and distance study.
 - i as the Royal Academy of Turku was established in 1640.
 - j and get two certificates at the same time.



Discuss the following questions.

- 1 What are you studying at the moment? Where?
- 2 What made you choose this particular school or college?
- 3 When will you graduate or complete your studies?
- 4 How do you finance your studies?
- 5 What schools have you attended before? Where and when?
- 6 What is/was your favourite subject? Why?
- 7 What is the subject you like/liked the least? Why?
- 8 Is education important to you? Why/why not?
- 9 Is there anything totally new you would like to learn?

3

Fill in the missing words.

entrance examination	bachelor's degree	higher education	study module
vocational qualification	international	specialist	study guide
language of instruction	work placement	knowledge	credit units
independent	problem-solving	lectures	

Universities of applied sciences are institutions of 1. _____.

The emphasis there is on expertise in working life and its development. The students have either taken a matriculation exam or they have a 2. _____.

When universities of applied sciences choose their students, they can also require an 3. _____ to see if the students are suitable for the field they have chosen.

Studies at a university of applied sciences lead to a 4. _____, which takes between 3.5 and 4 academic years to achieve. In most programmes the 5. _____ is Finnish, but some of these institutions also offer 6. _____ degree programmes, where the courses are held in English.

A degree programme consists of various courses aiming at 7. _____ jobs. A course often includes traditional work in classrooms, which means 8. _____ and exercises. Other methods of instruction include workshops and visits to companies. Students are also encouraged to do 9. _____ study.

The number of courses students may choose depends on the curriculum. Information on the courses can be found in the 10. _____. Some courses last longer than others. For this reason, they are defined as a number of 11. _____.

As the challenges in working life often require numerous skills or specialist knowledge, two or more courses may be grouped as a 12. _____.

After two or three years of study, it's time for a 13. _____.

This gives students a chance to put their theoretical knowledge into practice. Writing a thesis deepens the students' 14. _____ of their field of study and improves their skills in 15. _____.

7 Look at the website of a college or university in an English-speaking country that your school has a student exchange programme with. Find out the following information.

- Where is the college/university located?
- How many students study there?
- What subject(s) could you study there?
- How much does it cost for international students to study there per year?
- Is there any advice for international students on finding a place to live?
- Is any support available for students who need extra help with English?

8 Choose any country and find out about their educational system. What are the similarities and differences compared to Finland? Present your findings in a small group.

VOCABULARY EXPRESS

competence	['kɒmpɪt(ə)ns]	the state of having the necessary skills and knowledge to perform a task
an occupation	[ɒkju'peɪʃ(ə)n]	a person's usual work or business for earning a living
apprenticeship	[ə'prentɪʃɪp]	a person works for another in order to learn a trade
compulsory	[kəm'pʌlsəri]	required by rule; necessary
optional	['ɒpʃən(ə)l]	possible but not necessary; left to personal choice
equality	[ɪ'kwɒləti]	a situation in which people have the same opportunities
a curriculum	[kə'rɪkjʊləm]	the courses of study given in a school, college or university
eligibility	[elɪdʒə'bɪləti]	meeting the requirements so that somebody is suitable to be chosen
a credit unit	['kredɪt 'ju:nɪt]	the way of measuring how much work a student is expected to do on a course
research	['ri:ʒɪ:tʃ]	the process of studying something in order to find out more about it
a bachelor's degree [bætʃələrs dɪ'ɡri:]		a diploma which a student gets after completing his/her studies at a university or a university of applied sciences
a work placement [wɜ:k 'pleɪsmənt]		a period of time which a student spends in a company learning a job
a thesis	['θi:sis]	a long report or essay which is written at the end of someone's studies
a vocational qualification [vəu'keɪʃən(ə)l kwɒlɪfɪ'keɪʃ(ə)n]		a diploma which a student gets after completing basic work-related studies
a matriculation examination [mætrɪkjʊ'leɪʃ(ə)n ɪgzæmɪ'neɪʃ(ə)n]		one of several exams in different subjects taken by students at the end of their studies at a general upper secondary school in order to receive a certificate
tuition	[tju:'ɪʃ(ə)n]	teaching

Social Skills: Mix and Mingle

Our ability to act appropriately with other people is called our social competence. To network successfully in private and business life, we need to communicate in a skilful and constructive manner with our neighbours, friends, colleagues and business partners. One important
 5 aspect in social competence is small talk. Basically, the words refer to harmless and rather superficial conversation that can be kept going in almost any place and situation. In the business world, chatting is one of the tools that can make everyone feel at ease and pave the way for co-operation.

10 Spontaneous small talk might often be a little more than just saying hello and asking "*How are you?*". Common topics might be the current weather, recent news, the journey that your visitor has made and the schedule of the visit. Show interest in whatever the person you are talking to says, and show that you are listening by
 15 commenting, nodding and asking follow-up questions. However, some topics should be avoided. They include religion, sex, personal issues, political opinions and other strong personal views.

Social competence is also about phrasing your message in the right way. For instance, your studies have made you realise the importance
 20 of polite words and phrases in English, such as using *please* in requests. In addition, intonation is often more crucial than many learners of English might think. Even if you choose your expressions carefully, an unintentionally harsh tone of voice might change the content of your message.

25 What we often fail to realise is that social competence goes beyond words. Along with small talk skills, non-verbal communication creates an impression of you as a representative of the business you work for and the group of people you belong to. According to many researchers, more than half of our message is put across by our body
 30 language. Things like facial expressions, posture and gestures, even our clothes are signals which our discussion partner will pick up and interpret. Even a simple gesture like a handshake might reveal a surprising amount about you. Think about it the next time you shake hands, and also try to analyse the other person's non-verbal message
 35 in the situation.

2

Discuss the following in small groups.

- 1 In what kinds of situations do you make small talk?
- 2 What differences do you think there are between Finnish small talk and small talk in other cultures? What do you think are the reasons for the differences?
- 3 Do you think small talk in Finland has changed over the last few years?
If yes, how? *or in your own country*
- 4 What do you think are the three most common small talk phrases in English?
- 5 In your opinion, is it possible to improve one's skills in social competence?
If yes, how?

3

Find a word or an expression in the text on pp. 26–27 which means

- 1 a skill
- 2 a person you work with
- 3 someone you do business with
- 4 not very deep or thorough
- 5 a talk, a discussion
- 6 working together with other people, companies and organisations
- 7 something that happened just a short time ago
- 8 very important
- 9 a person who is typical of a particular group
- 10 to make something known

4

Combine the following small talk phrases and answers. Which of them is not polite? How would you change it?

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 Would you like a cup of tea? ____ | a Thank you. We really enjoy living here. |
| 2 Would you mind if I smoked? ____ | b Absolutely. And so warm! |
| 3 Beautiful weather, isn't it? ____ | c I'd love to, but unfortunately I'm busy then. |
| 4 How was your flight? ____ | d Oh, yes, please. That would be nice. |
| 5 I'm so thirsty. Give me juice. ____ | e It was very pleasant, and we even arrived 10 minutes early. |
| 6 Thank you for a lovely evening. ____ | f You can get some yourself. |
| 7 I'm afraid I have to leave now. ____ | g No, not at all, go ahead. |
| 8 How about dinner tomorrow? ____ | h Oh, so soon? What a pity. |
| 9 Oh, what a nice house you have! ____ | i You, too, Stephen! How are you? |
| 10 Peter, it's great to see you! ____ | j It was my pleasure. Hope to see you again sometime soon. |

5

Listen to the tape and react to what you hear.

Telling about yourself

- I'm Finnish. / I come from Finland.
- I live with my parents / wife / husband / partner / flatmate / by myself / in a studio / in a two-bedroom flat/apartment / in a detached/family house / in a terraced house / in a row house / in the city centre / in the countryside.
- I work as an import manager / a personal assistant / a software developer.
- I work in customer service / the export department / research and development.
- My hobbies are ... / In my free time / spare time / leisure time I like to ... / I'm interested in ... / I'm keen on ...

Showing interest in other people

- What about you, Tina? Where do you live?
- Really? That sounds interesting.
And what do you think about ...?
- Great/Fantastic! Could you tell me more about it?
- Oh, that's terrible. Maybe things will go better next time.
- I can't believe it. How could that happen?
- Oh no! That is really strange.
How did it happen?

Culture express

The minimum requirement for having a conversation is listening actively and saying a few words such as "great", "that's interesting", "really" and so on.

Invitations and suggestions

- Would you like to come along to the cinema tonight? – I'd love to! / That would be nice.
- I'd like to invite you to dinner next Saturday. – I'd love to, but I'm afraid I can't. / It's very kind of you, but I've already made other arrangements. Maybe some other time. / Thanks, but I'm not free then. What about some other time?
- How about lunch tomorrow? – Sounds good. What time?
- What about going to ...?
- Would you like another cup of coffee? – Yes, please. / No, thank you

Congratulating and expressing wishes

- Congratulations on your new job! – Thanks. I'm really excited.
- Happy birthday! – Thank you very much!
- Merry Christmas! – Merry Christmas to you, too!
- Good luck in the exam/meeting! – Thanks, I think I'll need it!
- Well done! / Good job! – Thanks a lot!
- All the best in your new venture!

Socialising

NEUTRAL	FORMAL
Making a new contact	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hello, you must be Katya Aronson, our new account manager. • It's Marty, isn't it? • Mr Green? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • •
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hi, my name is Lisa. – Nice to meet you, Lisa. I'm John. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roger, I'd like you to meet Harry. Harry, this is Roger. – Nice to meet you, Roger! – You too, Harry! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jack, I don't think you've met my colleague. This is Ann. – Hi, Ann, good to meet you. I'm Jack. 	
Greeting	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hi, Cindy! How are you doing? – Hello, Kim! I'm fine, thanks. And how are you? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hello, Mark! Good to see you, it's been a while. How are things? – Hi, Jonathan. Nice to see you, too! I'm doing great. How about you? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hey, Linda! How's it going? – Oh hello, Matt, I'm all right, thanks. How about you? 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hi, Rick! How's life? – Hi, Henry. Not so great. I've just missed a big deadline. – Oh no, sorry to hear that. Is there any chance you can make it up? 	

NEUTRAL	FORMAL
Thanking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thanks! – No problem! • Thank you! – You're (very) welcome! • Thank you for your help! / Thanks for helping me out! – Don't mention it. • Oh, you shouldn't have . . . Thank you so much! – My pleasure! I was glad to help. • Thanks for the information! I appreciate it. – That's OK. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •
Apologising <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I'm (so) sorry. • Sorry (about that). – Oh, it's all right. It happens all the time. • I'm really/awfully sorry. I didn't mean to . . . – Don't worry about it. It's OK. • Oh, how thoughtless/clumsy of me! – Never mind. • Bad news, I'm afraid I can't make it tonight. • Oh, look at the time! I'm very sorry, but I really must go now. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • •
Sending regards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Say hello/hi to Linda for me! • Give my love to Sandra, will you. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • •
Saying goodbye <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was nice to meet you. Bye-bye! • It was great meeting you. Goodbye! • See you (later/soon/tomorrow / next week)! Bye! • Take care – hope to see you soon! • Let's keep in touch. • Look me up the next time you come here. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •

3B Business Visits



When planning to visit a company overseas, the golden rule is that appointments should be made well in advance. They should also be confirmed upon arrival in the country. Cold calling is not recommended. It is common sense to avoid scheduling business visits during the local holiday season. Besides the summer months and Easter, Christmas and New Year, national holidays may catch the unwary visitor out, as many Western companies close their offices then. The working week usually follows the religious calendar of the particular region, so when travelling to a country you do not know well, it is advisable to check the situation beforehand. The easiest times of day to arrange an appointment abroad also vary from country to country.

Study the following emails about making an appointment.

From: geena.gregory@sports4you.co.uk
To: mikko.sipila@sportti.fi
Subject: Business proposal

Dear Mr Sipilä

We met at the Cool Sport trade fair in Vienna last autumn and had a very interesting conversation. You told me about your plans to expand your operations into sports clothing and to possibly stock our FitMaxx brand in your shops. I promised to contact you as soon as we had a new collection coming up. I would be delighted if I could pay you a visit and present our new products to you. We are now about to launch our spring collection, and our new catalogue is already available. We are looking for a retailer in Finland and believe our brand might be suitable for your company. If you're interested, I'd be happy to send you a copy of our catalogue. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours sincerely
Geena Gregory

Geena Gregory
Marketing Director
Sports for You
49 Northampton Way
Corby
NN30 7RJ
mobile +44 (0) 7710 941 625

From: mikko.sipila@sportti.fi
To: geena.gregory@sports4you.co.uk
Subject/Ref: Visit to Finland

Dear Ms Gregory

Thank you for your email. It was a pleasure to meet you at the workshop. I was really impressed by the clothing you were displaying in Vienna. We're still thinking about expanding our product range, and I'd be happy to meet you here and talk about establishing a supplier relationship. It's going to be interesting to see your latest products. When would you be coming to Finland? I'm going to be away on my winter holiday next week, but otherwise any date in the near future should be fine. How about the first week of March? Let me know about your schedule! And please do send me your latest catalogue.

Best regards
Mikko

Mikko Sipilä
Sales Manager
Sportti Oy
Havutie 16
07520 VÄINÖLÄ
mobile +358 44 1189 2233

From: geena.gregory@sports4you.co.uk
 To: mikko.sipila@sportti.fi
 Subject/Ref: Meeting on 2 March

Dear Mikko

Thank you for your prompt reply. I'm glad to hear that you are still interested in FitMaxx. Monday 2 March would suit my schedule. I will ask my secretary to make all the necessary bookings and will get back to you soon. I attach our catalogue and price list as pdf files, please let me know if they don't arrive safely.

Best wishes
 Geena

Geena Gregory
 Marketing Director
 Sports for You
 49 Northampton Way
 Corby
 NN30 7RJ
 mobile +44 (0) 7710 941 625

1 Read the email messages and decide whether the statements are true or false. Correct the false ones.

- | | T | F |
|---|---|---|
| 1 Ms Gregory contacted Mr Sipilä because a mutual friend had introduced them at a trade fair the previous year. | 1 | |
| 2 At the trade fair they discussed selling FitMaxx products in Sportti Oy's shops. | | 2 |
| 3 According to Ms Gregory, Sports for You will be bringing their new products onto the market very soon. | | 3 |
| 4 Mr Sipilä suggests a meeting in Finland the following week. | | 4 |
| 5 Ms Gregory promises that her secretary will confirm the date of the meeting. | | 5 |
| 6 The catalogue and price list can be downloaded from a website. | | 6 |

2 How would you express the following in an email? Find the phrases in the messages on pp. 176-177. 21-22

- 1 You would be very happy if you could visit the other person and his/her company.
- 2 You end a message by welcoming a reply.
- 3 You start a message by referring to a previous message.
- 4 You enjoyed seeing the person you are writing to.
- 5 You want to say that you haven't lost your interest in making the selection of goods you sell wider.
- 6 Your timetable is quite flexible in the next month or so.
- 7 You are happy that the other person answered your message without any delay.
- 8 You want the other person to tell you if the information about your products and prices was unreadable.

3 Fill in the gaps with the Vocabulary Express words in their correct form.

Dear Mr Marriot

Our sales representative for the Texas region told me he had a long conversation with you at 1. _____ in Dallas last week, which you attended with your sales manager. I was pleased to hear that you are interested in our 2. _____ which covers everything from household appliances to tools and equipment for catering businesses. As you surely are aware, we have just 3. _____ a new series of products, which we hope will become the leading European 4. _____ in kitchenware.

I would like to meet you in person in mid-June during my visit to the States and talk about the advantages which a close 5. _____ would bring to both companies. Please let me know if you have time for 6. _____ with me then. I 7. _____ our company brochure, which tells you more about our 8. _____.

I look forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely

Kim Wusters
Marketing Manager

VOCABULARY EXPRESS

an appointment	[ə'pɔɪntmənt]	a meeting set for a specific time or place
to confirm	[kən'fɜ:m]	to say that something is definitely true
cold calling	[kəʊld 'kɔ:lɪŋ]	making a telephone call or going on a business visit without an appointment
to schedule	[fɛdʒu:l]	to arrange; to plan for a certain date
a trade fair	[treɪd feə*]	a business exhibition for buying and selling goods
to expand	[ɪk'spænd]	to increase or make larger
operations	[ɒpə'reɪʃənz]	the activities of a company
to stock	[stɒk]	to have something available for sale or use
a brand	[brænd]	a name of a product which is made by a certain company
a collection	[kə'lekʃ(ə)n]	a group of products which are made for one season
to launch	['lɔ:ntʃ]	to bring a product onto the market, usually with some publicity
a retailer	[ri:'teɪlə*]	a business which sells directly to consumers
to display	[dɪ'spleɪ]	to show products to customers
a product range	[prɒdʌkt 'reɪndʒ]	all the products that are available or made by a company
a supplier	[sə'plaɪə*]	a person or company that sells products or services to another company
a relationship	[rɪ'leɪʃənʃɪp]	a situation in which two or more people, companies etc have a connection with each other
latest	['leɪtɪst]	most recent; current
a booking	['bʊkɪŋ]	a reservation
to attach	[ə'tætʃ]	to send along with an email

Making an Appointment

Contacting a company

- We met at the Cool Sport workshop in Vienna last autumn.
- I received your business card from my colleague.
- We spoke briefly on the phone on 1 March.
- Mr Lennox, who has been doing business with you for years, suggested I should contact you.
- I visited your website and learned about your new products.

Suggesting a meeting

- I would be delighted to meet you and present our product range to you.
- Would it be possible for you to visit our office on Monday morning?
- How about going out for lunch to discuss the details?
- Why don't we meet tomorrow – let's say at 2 pm?
- How about the first week of March / Monday 3 March in the afternoon / today at 4 pm?
- I'll be travelling on Tuesday, but would Wednesday suit you?
- I was wondering if it would be possible to make an appointment with you.
- If I might make a suggestion?... Could we meet today at 4 pm?

Confirming a meeting

- I would just like to confirm our meeting on 21 June.
- I am calling to make sure everything is okay for your visit to our company on Wednesday.
- I just wanted to check about tomorrow. Are you still able to come?
- Thank you for your reply. This is just to confirm our meeting on Monday 9 March at 3.00 pm in your conference room.
- Excellent/Great! So, see you tonight / next week / at noon then!
- I'm pleased to accept your invitation to meet with your marketing team.
- I look forward to having this opportunity to meet you in person.

Postponing or cancelling a meeting

- I'm afraid I have to postpone our meeting.
- I'm really sorry, but something has come up. Could we postpone our meeting?
- I'm very sorry, but unfortunately I can't make it today. What's your schedule like tomorrow?
- Would you mind if we changed the date/time of the meeting?
- Perhaps we can arrange to meet later / set up a new date for our meeting. How about some time next week?
- Thank you for making the time to meet up with me at such short notice, but I'm afraid I have to cancel our appointment.
- I'm sorry to have to tell you I won't be able to keep my appointment with Mr Ling.
- I'm sorry, but I'm afraid I have to call off our meeting on 3 March.
- I'm awfully sorry, but I have to cancel our meeting. Something unexpected has happened at our factory / with our deliveries.
- Unfortunately I won't be able to come due to some unforeseen circumstances.
- I apologise for any inconvenience the cancellation causes.

5 Fill in the gaps.

formal	pronounce	businesspeople	conduct
punctuality	decision-making	disrespectful	promptly
overstays	discreetly	greeting	

To make the most of a business visit abroad, it's important to create a positive impression from the very start. In most countries, 1. _____ is appreciated by businesspeople. If a visitor knows there will be a delay, it is polite to let the host's company know about it. On the other hand, arriving too 2. _____ for a social event outside of office hours is not advisable in many cultures. In any case, a considerate businessperson never 3. _____ his or her welcome.

Sometimes it can be embarrassing not to know how to 4. _____ a difficult foreign name correctly. But it is probably less embarrassing to ask 5. _____ about the correct pronunciation than to keep saying someone's name wrong. It is also essential that visitors use the right title or form of address when speaking to their host. Nowadays it is perfectly common in English-speaking countries for 6. _____ to address each other by their first names straight away. In some other places such as Germany or Japan, however, it is safer to use a more formal title with a person's surname to avoid appearing 7. _____ or too familiar.

The most common way of 8. _____ a business associate is to shake hands, but cultural differences do occur from one country to another. In general, the less a visitor knows his or her host, the more 9. _____ language and behaviour are expected. Inappropriate language and conduct show a lack of respect for the host and his or her company and culture. Businesspeople who do their homework and are able to adapt their 10. _____ to the expectations of their hosts – whether it concerns how to dress appropriately or learning the local way of 11. _____ – are likely to achieve good results from their business meetings.

6 Discuss the following.

- 1 Have you ever visited a company? If yes, did it go well? Why/why not?
- 2 In your opinion, who is responsible for making a business visitor feel welcome when he or she arrives at a company?
- 3 What other ways of greeting are there besides handshakes? Where are they common?
- 4 What kind of language should you avoid when you visit a company?
- 5 Which everyday phrases should a business traveller know in the official language of the country, even if he or she doesn't speak that language very well?
- 6 Which national and religious holidays should a business traveller take into consideration when making appointments in your country or abroad?

- 4 Act out the following situation in pairs. Create the details.**
Remember to use appropriate business style.
Look at Communication Express for suitable words and phrases.

- 1 You bump into Mr Jameson, who is the managing director of a company providing translation services. You met him at a trade fair last month. Now you would like to make an appointment with him because you need to have your company brochure translated into German and Swedish.
- 2 You are calling Mrs Henderson, who owns a chain of bookshops, because you would like to double-check that she will be able to have lunch with you in the afternoon as agreed. You are going to discuss the website your company will build for her chain to sell books online.
- 3 You are calling Ms Hutchins at Steel Inc. to inform her that you are stuck in a traffic jam and will be late for your meeting to discuss their spare part deliveries.
- 4 You are calling Mr Johnson at Miracle Marketing because you have to postpone your meeting tomorrow. The reason is that you couldn't find a babysitter for your 2-year-old daughter.

On a Business Visit

Talking with the front office staff

- * My name is Jack Saunders. I've got an appointment with Mr Lyndon, your sales manager.
- * I'm Lisbeth Karlsson and I'm here to see Janet Myers. Could you tell her I'm here, please?
- * Is Mrs Walker available/in, please?
- * Good morning. I believe Mr Westlake is expecting me.

Asking for assistance

- * I was wondering if you have a place where I could put my luggage?
- * Would it be possible to charge my mobile phone / laptop?
- * Could I check my email on a computer while I'm waiting?
- * Could you do me a favour? I need to inform the hotel that I'll be arriving late.
- * Ms Stone is expecting me at 12 o'clock. Could you please tell her that my flight was delayed so I'll be there half an hour later.

Asking for directions

- * Excuse me, where is Mr Lyndon's office?
- * Where can I find Ms Harrison?
- * How do I get to the managing director's office, please?
- * Could you please tell me where I can find the sales department?
- * I'm afraid I'm a bit lost. Could you show me the way to the Albion Hotel, please?
- * I didn't quite catch that. Did you say...?
- * Was it...?
- * I'm sorry, I couldn't find my way to the marketing manager's office. Could you please take me there?
- * You'll find the personnel department in the second office on the left.
- * The export manager's office is next to the lift/elevator on the third floor.
- * Just walk down the corridor. Then turn right.
- * You can see the conference room on your left.
- * The Gents/Ladies/restroom is behind the stairs.
- * Turn right at the traffic lights/crossroads.
- * Carry on for three miles after the roundabout/junction.
- * Our office/factory is located on the industrial estate / opposite the car park / at the end of the road.

Thanking

- Thank you for your assistance.
- Thank you, you've been very helpful / really kind.
- That's very kind of you.
- I appreciate your help.
- Thank you, but I'm fine like this. I had a cup of coffee on the plane.
- Thanks, I think I'll find it.

Meeting your host

- You must be Mr Smith. Nice to meet you. – Nice to meet you too, Ms Chang.
- Excuse me, are you Mr Smith?
- I'm pleased/delighted to meet you.
- I've been looking forward to meeting you.
- It was kind of you to make some time to meet me. – Not at all. I'm glad you could come.
- Hello, good/nice/fantastic/excellent to see you again. – You too.
- I hope you had a pleasant journey. – Yes, I did. Everything went just fine.
- Is this your first visit to Finland? – Yes, it is. What a beautiful country you have!
- I'm sorry you had to wait. I was with another client and it took longer than expected. – That's all right. I got a chance to read my emails / make a couple of phone calls.

Getting down to business

- Right. Let's get down to business, shall we?
- I see everyone is here now, so let's get started.
- So, how's business?
- What can I do for you today?
- So, what have you got to show me today?

9 What would you say as the host in the following situations? How would your visitor react? Roleplay the situations in pairs. Take turns and change roles.

- 1 You meet your guest for the first time. You tell your visitor how delighted you are to finally meet him/her.
- 2 You notice that your visitor's coat is wet. You enquire about the current weather in your visitor's home town/country.
- 3 Make some small talk about your visitor finding his/her way to your premises.
- 4 You lead your visitor to your office. Your mobile phone starts ringing when the visitor steps into your office.
- 5 As a polite host, you want to offer your visitor something to drink.
- 6 As you and your guest are getting down to business, your colleague steps into your office and wants to talk to you urgently.
- 7 You and your guest have been discussing for a couple of hours and you notice that he/she seems a bit tired. Suggest you could have lunch/dinner.
- 8 It's time to call it a day. You want to make sure your guest finds his/her way to the hotel. He/she has a map but is a bit uncertain.
- 9 You say goodbye to your guest and say you are eager to meet him/her again the next day.

8 Listen to a conversation about a businessperson arriving for a business visit. Write down the phrases the people use which mean the same as the following:

A The person at the reception desk says:

1 Unfortunately Mr Johnson's previous visitor hasn't left yet.

2 He will certainly be free very soon.

3 Please put this name tag on your jacket.

4 Could I get you some tea or coffee?

B The host and guest are making small talk:

5 Mr Johnson is happy that Ms Smith has arrived.

6 Mr Johnson says he hasn't seen his guest for some time.

7 Things are just as they used to be.

8 Ms Smith didn't have any problems during the trip.

9 The company has been located in the new building for half a year.

10 The company premises have improved.

11 You can see for miles from the office windows.

C The host and guest are getting down to business:

12 The company is selling a lot of products.

7 You are the purchasing manager of Simple Solutions. Write an email to Mr Brian Donnell, the sales manager of Ace Production and suggest a meeting with him. Create the following details and include them in your email:

the source of information on Ace Production

a short description of your company

the products/services of Ace Production you are interested in

the time and place of the meeting

a request for a reply and further information

3C Travelling on Business



Although various real-time communication solutions make interaction easier, they have not completely replaced traditional face-to-face communication. International business requires travel, and business travel is booming thanks to reduced fares, increased connections and tailor-made services. Businesspeople frequently attend trade fairs besides participating in conferences and meetings with customers. Many companies also have offices in several countries. For these reasons some employees are on the road for a considerable number of days each month. Businesspeople also travel for pleasure as incentive travel is one way of rewarding employees for their performance.

Business Travel

At the travel agency

- What's the quickest way to travel to Amsterdam with as few changes/stopovers as possible?
- Are there many regular services to Brighton on weekdays?
- A business class / an economy class flight to Oslo on 20 January, please.
- A one-way flight / a return flight to Singapore on 1 December, please.
- Do I have to confirm my flight in advance?

At the coach/railway station

- A single ticket / one-way trip / return ticket / round trip to Helsinki, please.
- When does the train to Bristol leave?
- What platform/track does the train to Victoria Station leave from?
- How much is the fare?
- Are there any discount fares available this afternoon?
- Is there a restaurant car / a sleeper car / a power point for my computer / wireless net access on the train?

At the airport

- I'd like to have a window seat / an aisle seat, please.
- How much luggage am I allowed to take on the flight?
- When does check-in/boarding begin?
- Do I need to show my passport / boarding pass / ticket at the passport control / security control / customs / duty-free shop?
- Excuse me, where can I check in for flight AY6711 to Copenhagen?
- Which gate does the American Airlines flight to New York leave from?

At the hotel

- Do you have any vacancies, please?
- I'd like to book a single room / double room / twin room / an en-suite double room / a non-smoking single room for three nights, please.
- I'd like to make a reservation for two people from Thursday 22 May until Friday 23 May.
- I've got a reservation under the name of Micro Electronics.
- How much is a standard room per night?
- Is breakfast included in the room rate?
- Do you have special room rates during the conference?
- Is early/late check-out possible?
- Can I order a wake-up call at 5 am, please?
- I'd like to order room service, please.
- Do you serve special meals to guests with restricted diets?
- Can you send the bill/invoice to my company?
- Can I please upgrade my room / extend my stay / pay with a credit card?

Problem situations

- I missed my bus/train. When is the next service to London, please?
 - I didn't make my connection because of bad weather / a strike at the airport. Where can I contact the airline representative? I'd like to know if it's possible for me to get to my destination today.
 - There must be something wrong with my booking. Could you please phone my travel agent so that we can sort it out?
 - I'm sorry, but this is not the price that was mentioned in your brochure.
 - I'm sorry, but I'm not satisfied with my room / your services. I'd like to speak to the manager, please.
 - I hate to complain, but the noise from the traffic / air conditioning / lift / nightclub is disturbing me. Could you please do something about it?
 - Excuse me, I think I'm a bit lost. Could you tell me the way to the harbour?
 - I've lost my passport/visa/ticket/room keys/luggage.
 - Stop thief! Somebody's just stolen my briefcase.
-

1 Discuss the following.

- 1 Have you ever travelled on business? Where? What did you do there?
- 2 In what sorts of jobs do people have to travel a lot?
- 3 What do you think are the good and bad points of business travel?
- 4 Would you like to have a job that requires a lot of travelling? Why/Why not?
- 5 What kind of incentive travel would you find rewarding?

2 Which words or phrases in *Business Travel* refer to:



- 1 a bus or train that goes to a particular destination at fixed intervals
- 2 a low-priced type of travel, especially on an aeroplane
- 3 the price of travelling in a bus, train, aeroplane or other vehicle
- 4 selling a ticket at a reduced price
- 5 showing one's ticket to or registering with an authorised agent, as in an airport or hotel
- 6 to enter an aeroplane
- 7 the government agency that collects taxes on goods brought into a country
- 8 the hotel is not fully booked
- 9 a room with a private bathroom
- 10 the price of a hotel room
- 11 people can't eat certain kinds of foods
- 12 a document listing the goods or services a business traveller has bought
- 13 to get a more spacious room than was originally booked
- 14 to increase the number of days you spend at a hotel
- 15 the place to which a person or thing travels or is sent
- 16 to have something negative to say
- 17 an official document which allows the bearer to travel to a particular country
- 18 suitcases, bags, briefcases etc.

3 A secretary is calling a travel agency to make reservations. Listen to the telephone call. Complete the itinerary and answer the questions.




Itinerary for Ms/Mr _____	
Visit to _____	
Monday _____	flight: _____
	time and place of departure: _____
	time and place of arrival: _____
	_____ : hotel _____
	address: Mannerheimintie 2
Wednesday _____	flight: _____
	time and place of departure: _____
	time and place of arrival: _____

- 1 How much were the air fare and the room rate?
- 2 What was the problem with the first hotel?
- 3 How did the travel agent describe the second hotel?

5 Act out the following situations in pairs. Create the details.

- 1 You arrive at a hotel and tell the receptionist you have reserved a room for three nights. He/she is unable to find your reservation on the computer. Spell your name and give details about when the reservation was made and so on.
- 2 You complain to the hotel reception about not having received a wake-up call even though you had ordered one. You missed your flight and an important meeting because of this.
- 3 Your suitcase with important documents such as a sales contract went missing at the coach station. You enquire if it is possible to make an announcement to check if anybody has seen it. Remember to describe what your suitcase looks like.
- 4 Your company is having a meeting on a cruise ship. You contact the crew members to make sure they will prepare right kind of meals for people on a special diet.
- 5 You want to change the date of your train ticket at the railway station. The ticket you bought was discounted. To your disappointment, the lady in the ticket office tells you that discounted tickets cannot be exchanged.
- 6 You are going to travel by train. You learn at the ticket office that there might be a strike on the railways. The staff member suggests you take an alternative means of travel.

6 Listen to the following announcements and fill in the grid below.

	Transport/ vehicle	Destination	Reason for announcement
Announcement 1			
Announcement 2			
Announcement 3			
Announcement 4			
Announcement 5			

7 Fill in the right prepositions to complete the expressions.

- 1 The trade fair takes place _____ March.
- 2 The lunch meeting starts _____ noon.
- 3 The conference will be held _____ 29 September _____ 3 October.
- 4 The meeting will be held _____ Thursday.
- 5 Mr Hamilton will return home from his business trip _____ 21 July.
- 6 The flight leaves _____ 5.37 local time.
- 7 I have to catch a flight early _____ the morning.
- 8 The club is open _____ 4 o'clock.
- 9 Some people prefer travelling _____ night.
- 10 Many hotels are fully booked _____ summer.
- 11 The restaurant was established _____ the 1980s.
- 12 What are the opening hours of the ticket office _____ weekdays?
- 13 The last service to Kingston leaves at 10 _____ weekends.
- 14 It's best to call the railway company _____ their business hours.
- 15 The discount airline started their operations _____ 2006.
- 16 Some people don't like travelling _____ train.
- 17 The train to Oulu departs _____ platform 6.
- 18 The managing director's flight arrives _____ New York tomorrow morning.
- 19 Would you like a non-stop flight or travel _____ Paris?
- 20 "I heard Mrs Strutt is leaving _____ Helsinki the day after tomorrow."
– "Did they say how she would get there?"

3D Hosting and Toasting



An important part of showing hospitality to your foreign guests is to accompany them outside the meeting room as well. After a long day of meetings and negotiations, the evening should be relaxing for your guests. Very often a business trip also includes a day or half-day
 5 off, which gives you an opportunity to show your guests something typical of your hometown and country. An ideal solution is to book a sightseeing tour with a professional guide, which can often be tailored to your guests' interests.

Another good idea might be to take your guests to the theatre or
 10 a concert – just make sure that the language of the performance does not take away the pleasure from the experience. Instrumental music and dance performances, or other non-verbal cultural events such as art exhibitions, are usually safer choices.

Culture-specific activities can also be recommended when
 15 entertaining foreign guests. Maybe they would like to try a traditional Finnish sauna or explore the unique Finnish countryside, for example by going canoeing, hiking or walking on a frozen lake in wintertime. A word of warning, though: do not force your guests into doing something, even if you are thrilled by the magnificence of your plans.
 20 Bear in mind that your guests might be tired from jet lag or not very fit. Safety is an important consideration, too – you don't want your guests to fall into the ice-cold water of a frozen lake just because no one checked if the ice was thick enough to walk on!

Wining and dining are an essential part of business entertainment.
 25 Taking your guests out for dinner is an excellent way of getting to know each other better. During dinner you will have time to make small talk with your guests and maybe even to talk business as well. Before going to a restaurant, enquire about any wishes your guests might have and also remember any cultural aspects related to food.
 30 When hosting somebody, try to fulfil your visitor's expectations, be flexible and prepared to change plans even at short notice.

Culture express

In many cultures it is common to give gifts during business visits to show appreciation. When you as a host receive a gift, your guest might expect a gift in return. For this reason, learn about the gift giving etiquette of the country your guest comes from.

2 Fill in the gaps with words from 'Hosting and Toasting' in their correct form.

1. _____ business visitors has become big business. The possibilities are no longer limited to just 2. _____ in restaurants or going 3. _____ at a historical site. New companies which specialise in providing 4. _____ to business visitors are set up almost every day. They offer a full range of services which they 5. _____ to your guests' individual requirements. These companies' success is based on how well they meet their customers' 6. _____. For instance, if you don't have time to pick up your visitors at the airport, they will do it for you. In fact, they can 7. _____ guests outside your office for their entire visit. However, that isn't the idea of 8. _____ because spending time with your guests is an excellent way of networking.

3 Write a suitable heading for each paragraph in the text Hosting and Toasting.

4 Discuss the following.

- 1 What places and cities in your ^{country} would you take a foreign visitor to? Why?
- 2 Which sights would you show a foreign business visitor in your hometown?
- 3 Which cultural events would you take a foreign guest to
 - a in your hometown?
 - b in your country?
- 4 What kinds of typical activities would you take a foreign visitor to try? Why?
- 5 Can you think of some groups of people who might have special requests for their meals and/or the programme because of their cultural background? Give some examples.
- 6 Would you take a foreign guest to a restaurant which served local dishes? Why/why not?
- 7 What kind of typical souvenir would you give to a foreign friend? Why?

Wining and Dining

Making a reservation

- I'd like to reserve a table for two for 7 pm tonight.
- Is it possible to book a table / make a table reservation for five people for tomorrow at noon?
- Do you have any non-smoking tables / tables by the window / tables on the terrace / tables away from the door?
- I have a reservation/booking under the name Galant.

Ordering

- Could I have/see the menu / the wine list, please?
- Do you have any English-language menus available?
- As a starter / as an appetiser, I'd like to have the bruschetta / the onion soup / a green salad, please.
- For the main course, can I please have the pepper steak? I'd like to have it rare/ medium/well-done, please.
- Could I have the chocolate ice cream / strawberry gâteau/cake for dessert, please?
- Do you have any vegetarian food on your menu?
- Excuse me, could you please tell me if the sirloin is served with salad/chips?

Making conversation at the table

- Enjoy your meal! / Bon appétit!
- How do you like your meal?
- It's delicious/excellent/fantastic.
- Would you like to have some more water/coffee? Let me pour some for you.
- The wine is very fruity/dry and goes well with the pasta, don't you think?
- Could you pass me the salt, please?
- I'm glad we came here / you've brought me here. It's very cosy/elegant/smart/intimate.
- Do you come here often? The restaurant seems to be very popular among businesspeople.

Toasting & thanking

- Cheers! / (Here's) to John!
 - I'd like to make a toast to our future success.
 - I'd like to make a toast and thank you for the lovely time I've spent here. It's been great / very enjoyable.
 - Thank you so much for your hospitality. I've really enjoyed my stay. / You've made me feel very welcome.
 - Thank you for having me here. Everything has been so well arranged.
 - Thank you. I'm glad you've liked your stay.
 - You're (very) welcome. It's been a pleasure to have you here as our guest.
 - My pleasure. I'm looking forward to seeing you here again.
-

Problems & special orders

- There must be a misunderstanding. I made a reservation/booking yesterday.
- I'm allergic to nuts / dairy products. Could you please make sure that my food doesn't contain any?
- I'm sorry, but we've been waiting for someone to take our order / for our meals for half an hour. Could you please send someone to our table / to see to it?
- Excuse me, I ordered mineral/sparkling water, but unfortunately got still water.
- I ordered my steak well-done, but this one is rare.
- This must be someone else's meal/plate. I asked for fish, but this is meat.
- Could I have a larger / a smaller / an extra portion of Caesar salad, please?
- Could we have some more wine/ice/potatoes, please?
- I'm sorry, but this is too spicy/salty/cold. Could you change it, please?

Paying

- Could I have the bill/check, please?
- I/we'd like to pay, please.
- Do you accept/take credit cards?
- Is service included?
- Is it possible for you to charge the company directly?

5 What words or phrases in *Winning and Dining* mean.

- 1 you have booked a table for yourself or someone else
- 2 the list of food available in a restaurant
- 3 small amount of food eaten at the beginning of a meal
- 4 the main dish in a meal
- 5 a piece of meat that has been cooked for a very short time
- 6 something sweet served after a meal
- 7 the words you say when you start a meal
- 8 when someone's glass is empty, you take the bottle or jug and say...
- 9 raising a glass to drink to someone
- 10 containing a lot of chilli, pepper, garlic, etc
- 11 the piece of paper telling you how much the restaurant charged you for your meal



- 6 Listen to a conversation between two businesspeople in a restaurant. Fill in the missing information on the orders and answer the questions below.**

drinks	
starters	
main courses	
desserts	

1 What kind of table did the customers get?

2 Why did the host make a toast?

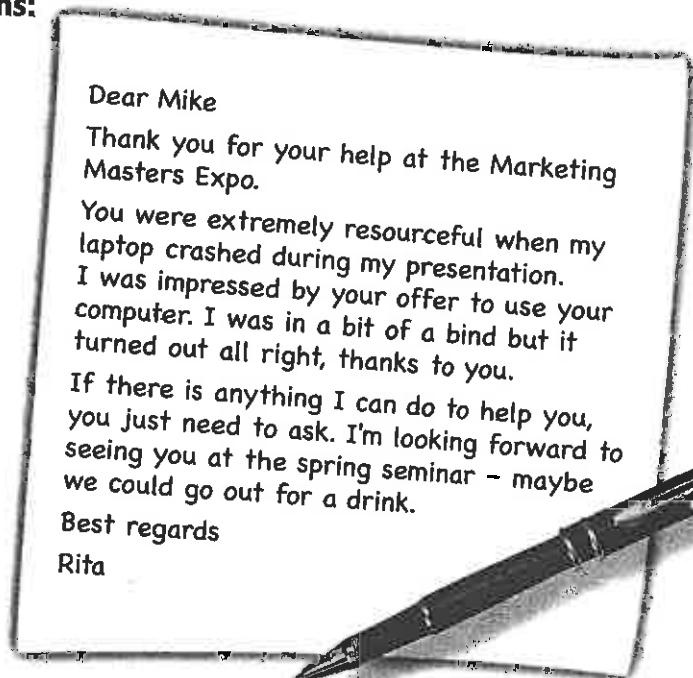
3 What did the guest thank the host for?

4 How was the payment made?

- 7 You are Albert Cohen and have returned home from your business trip. Write an email to your host Peter Darcy to thank him for his hospitality. Divide your message into three sections:**

- in the first part you express general gratitude
- in the second part you describe your appreciation in more detail
- in the third section you refer to returning a favour to him.

Take a look at the sample message which follows the above rules. These instructions apply also to giving a thank-you speech.



Communication styles

- 1 When you are communicating in English, you do not always use the same kind of language. The choice of language depends on the medium (telephone, email, business meeting) and the recipient. If you are contacting a friend or a colleague you know well, you can
 3 be more informal, whereas when writing an important business email or letter, you have to be formal and polite. An incorrect use of style can be considered offensive or even result in losing a significant business partner, and is thus something which should be taken into account when communicating especially with people
 10 from different countries. These rules also apply to writing emails although emails tend to be less formal in style than traditional letters. Notice also that speaking is usually more informal than writing.

15 It is possible to identify three different writing styles in English:

Formal style

- is used when contacting people you do not know.
- is common in business letters and academic writing.
- is accurate in the use of grammar, spelling and punctuation.
- 20 • contains long words and expressions, which can often be of Latinate origin (*facilitate, consequences*).
- is impersonal and avoids the use of the pronoun "you" (*The problem is being studied*).
- is serious in tone meaning that humor or emotions are not
 25 used.
- avoids contracted forms (*doesn't, that's why*) and slang, as well as so called run-on expressions (*systems, equipment etc.*).
- contains passive structures instead of active voice (*The process is controlled automatically*).

Standard style

- is common in work emails between colleagues who know each other.
- contains simple words (*get, things*) and short sentences.
- 5 • contains contractions (*I'm, shouldn't*).
- is more personal in style, which means that direct questions and the use of the pronoun "you" are common (*Can you send me the details?*).

Informal style

- 10 • is the most common style between friends.
- contains features of spoken language (*well, you know*).
- contains everyday words and slang expressions (*that's not ok; drop me a line*).
- is not accurate in the use of grammar or spelling errors.

**An example of an informal email**

To:
Cc:
Bcc:
Subject:
Date:

Hey Joe-Joe!

What's up Big Guy? Long time, no hear. Are you dissing me you crazy monkey?
(Ha-ha) Seriously, Let's get together this weekend and get caught up. I have a few things I need to discuss. Drop me a line when you have some time and we'll get a date and time fixed.

Later,
Chico

**An example of a standard style email**

To:
Cc:
Bcc:
Subject:
Date:

Hello Joe!

How have you been doing? I haven't heard from you for a long time and that's why I decided to write to you. I thought it would be nice to meet you this weekend if you don't have any plans yet. I actually have some work-related things I'd like to discuss at the same time.

I hope that you'll write back as soon as you can, so that we can then arrange a time and place for the meeting/get-together.

Regards
Jack

**An example of a formal email**

To:
Cc:
Bcc:
Subject:
Date:

Dear Mr Lewisy

I am contacting you regarding a business meeting that we were discussing last week via email. I have studied the material that you sent me and would like to ask some questions to clarify the process.

Would next week suit you? I have a business trip from Monday to Tuesday, but I will be available from Wednesday on. Please contact me as soon as possible so that we can arrange a time and a place for the meeting.

Yours sincerely

John Taylor
Production Manager
Company X

EMAILS

Sending email is a flexible and time-saving way of communication. When writing an email for business purposes, pay attention to the advice on pp. 70–71 and in Communication Express on pp. 73–74, and the following email etiquette:

- The subject line should clearly indicate the topic of the message. If the subject field is empty or the heading is vague, the email may be ignored.
- The email usually needs an opening greeting and a closing, which are often more informal than in a traditional business letter (e.g. Dear Leslie / Hi Sandra and Best wishes).
- The language in emails can be quite informal, but if you don't know the recipient well, it is better to keep to the usual conventions of formal business writing.
- The ideal total length for an email is one page printed, or the length of the computer screen before scrolling.
- Writing whole words or sentences in capitals should be avoided. It is equivalent to shouting.
- Abbreviations and emoticons are generally not appropriate in business emails.
- Some topics are too sensitive or confidential to discuss in email because forwarding the messages by accident could have serious consequences.
- When sending an attachment, give it a descriptive title. Don't fill up the recipient's mailbox with large attached files.
- At the end there is a signature block with the sender's full name and contact information such as a postal mailing address, an email address and a telephone number.



5 Listen to a telephone conversation and complete the email message based on it.

From: jane.gibbons@smithandjohnson.com
 To: tony.hamilton@smithandjohnson.com
 Subject:
 message:

6 Rewrite the next sloppy email to make it a polite business message.

From: mike.swindon@buildingservices.com
 To: ken.thomas@better-builders.com
 Subject: hello!!!

Thnx 4 calling. Personally I feel u r exaggerating your problems. Don't worry about the spare parts. A day or two won't hurt you and your firm. If you need someone to blame it's our SUPPLIER who has sold out his stock!!! 'Course I will call you when the goods get here and I can send them to you ☺. Maybe next week.
 thnx & rgds

Mikey

7 Write emails based on the following information.

- 1 You are going to attend a conference in Milan and would like to know if your colleague at another branch office has planned to go there too.
- 2 Your computer starts up very slowly. You believe you have got a virus and contact the helpdesk staff.

1 Discuss the questions.

- 1 Are all messages that a company writes equally important? Why/why not?
- 2 What do you have to take into account when you write a business message?
- 3 Which of the guidelines for effective letter writing have been ignored in the following examples?
 - a "Our boss said that if we have to give unpleasant information, we can write an unpleasant letter."
 - b "Our CEO told us we always have to write letters in the same style."
 - c "My colleague told me I shouldn't leave out any information. The more detailed the information, the better."
 - d "My supervisor said I sound like an expert when I use really difficult, uncommon words."
 - e "Our sales manager told us we already have so many customers that we can put the letters from new companies straight into the bin."
 - f "The managing director's secretary said she uses as many passive forms as possible because they give her letters a highly professional tone."
 - g "Our marketing manager gave me a tip: if you really want to make your customer interested in what you say, make him work like a detective."

VERBS IN FORMAL AND STANDARD STYLE

English often has more than one choice for expressing an action with a verb. The two possibilities are usually a more standard style phrasal or prepositional verb and a more formal single verb with a Latinate origin. The choice between these verbs is one of the most distinctive stylistic features of informal and formal language.

3.1 Identify the features (words, structures and style) which make the three previous emails either formal, standard or informal.

3.2 Below you have sentences with phrasal or prepositional verbs. Replace the verbs in *italics* with the appropriate formal verb from the box. You may have to make some changes to the sentences. First make sure that you know the meaning of the verbs in the box.

- | | |
|--|-------------|
| a) A new process for <i>getting rid of</i> nitrogen oxides found in diesel exhaust engines is presented. | establish |
| b) During the past decade, the company <i>has made</i> the automobile's exhaust system <i>better</i> . | eliminate |
| c) The emission levels <i>have been going up and down</i> . | increase |
| d) The issue <i>was brought up</i> during the meeting. | improve |
| e) Designers <i>have been looking into</i> this problem for years. | fluctuate |
| f) Engineers can <i>come up with</i> better designs by using a computer program called CAD. | raise |
| g) Building expenditures <i>have gone up</i> by \$100 million. | create |
| h) Production schedules <i>lead to</i> the arrival of all the necessary components on time. | investigate |
| i) The factory <i>was set up</i> to supply spare parts for the wholesalers. | ensure |

The key principles of effective business writing :

Keep it short. Do not waste your reader's valuable time. Focus on the information that supports your main aim.

Keep it simple. Plain English is clear English. Forget outdated and complicated language. Active verbs make messages not only simpler but also more precise than sentences with the passive voice.

Keep it strong. A good business message gets to the point in the first few lines and keeps to the subject. The content of the message is divided logically into paragraphs. The sentences and sections are glued together with connecting words and phrases.

Keep it sincere. A good business message is always polite, honest and respectful. Even if the content is negative, tailoring a message to the recipient's circumstances will make him/her accept it. A tactful attitude is a winning attitude.

Written business messages – both internal and external – deserve the writer's undivided attention. As they are often kept for future reference, the messages build up a company's image and create trust in its operations for longer than just the moment they are received.

- 2 Compare the following two messages. Find the equivalent words and phrases in message B that is written in a more appropriate business style.

Message A sent to a colleague inside the company:

Hello Charles

The computers crashed in our office again. Do you think you could do something so that we can get rid of these problems asap? We'd like to keep on doing our job without any unwanted breaks. Now it's impossible as we can't use the databases, printers etc. Where's the logic of using the support services of an outside company instead of hiring our own people for that? When the managers talked about buying these services, we said we liked the idea of hiring some helpdesk personnel better than buying the service from another company. If you ask me, we shouldn't renew the deal!

Regards

Michael

Message B sent to a business partner:

Dear Ms Thornton

I am writing about the continual computer problems in our London office. The problems still exist despite your promise to eliminate them as soon as possible. Please take the appropriate action so that the office staff can continue their work without disruption.

When the possibility of purchasing your services was discussed as part of our IT solutions, the strict condition was that the outsourcing would cause minimal downtime. At the time, we preferred to enter a contract with you for this reason but unfortunately we will have to consider renewing it very carefully if these problems continue.

Yours sincerely

Charles Burnton

Vice Managing Director

Conversational style (message A)

- 1 the computers crashed again
- 2 do something
- 3 get rid of
- 4 asap
- 5 keep on
- 6 unwanted breaks
- 7 computers, databases, printers etc
- 8 to use the support services of an outside company instead of hiring people for that
- 9 talked about
- 10 liked better
- 11 We shouldn't renew the deal!

Business style (message B)

- 1 the continual computer problems
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10
- 11

3 In which of the items 1–11 above does message B:

- use a more concise expression instead of a longer one?
- have a polite tone even when giving negative information?
- use more formal words to create a professional tone?

A Standard Business Message

Date

12 December 200x (BrE)
December 12, 200x (AmE)

To avoid misunderstanding, the date should always be written in full.

Inside address

Mr George Knight
Marketing Manager
Luxury Products Ltd
21 Windsor Street
Birmingham
B2 5JT
United Kingdom

Give the recipient's full name and title, company name, full address and postal code. Include the name of the country if the message is sent abroad.

Opening greeting

Dear Sir or Madam

Dear Ms Kendal

Dear Charles

Choose the appropriate opening greeting:

- Use this greeting only if you don't know the name of the person you are writing to.
- If you wrote the recipient's name in the inside address, this is the proper greeting.
- If you know the recipient very well, the greeting may be personal.

Culture express

Men use the title **Mr** while most businesswomen choose **Ms** instead of **Miss** or **Mrs**. Write the full name if you don't know whether you are writing to a man or a woman (Dear Sukhon Saunders).

In American English a colon is usually used after the greeting (Dear Sir/Dear Madam: / Dear Mr Knight:)

Introduction

Thank you for your letter of 13 May / your telephone call.

Start a message by connecting with the reader.

Body

Our offer is as follows: ...
We suggest that ...

Please send your reply by 15 January.

This is the main part of a business message. State your reason for writing the message and give the recipient the information he/she needs.
Refer to an action you expect the recipient to take based on the arguments and details you give in the message.

Conclusion

I look forward to hearing from you soon / seeing you at the conference.

Please let me know if you need any further information.

End the message in a positive tone.

This is one of the most common ways to end a business message.

Another typical way of ending a business message is to promise assistance.

Closing

Yours faithfully

Yours sincerely

Best regards

At the very end use a phrase which matches the opening greeting:

- the recipient's name is unknown
- you know the recipient's name
- the message is personal.

"Best wishes" is a very personal greeting at the end of a letter.
Americans often end a letter with "Yours truly" (even a formal one).

Signature block

Mary Johnson

Mary Johnson (Ms)

Purchasing Manager

Write your signature and your job title with initial capitals. Add a title (Mr/Ms) as it might be difficult for the recipient to know if your first name refers to a man or woman. The company name is not repeated below the writer's name.

Enclosures

ENC/Enc

ENCs/Encs

Use these letter combinations after the signature block to let the recipient know you have attached some extra documentation to your message.

4 Choose the best connecting word or phrase.

Dear staff members

Next week our company will receive some visitors from China.

Similarly/However/For this reason, I would like all staff to pay attention to the following points. **As a consequence/First of all/Further**, the dress code is businesslike all week, **since/even though/while** we usually have casual Friday. **Instead/In contrast/Secondly**, I trust the offices will be tidy **and/as/yet** they also reflect our company image. **Finally/Similarly/In spite of this**, the empty mugs in the break room are to be put into the dishwasher and the tables cleaned. **Due to the visit/On the other hand/Thirdly**, the guests will arrive at 8.30 on Wednesday, so I would appreciate it if everyone could be present in the lobby before that time and then join our guests for breakfast.

The competition between companies on the Asian market is tough. **Alternatively/Also/Therefore** everyone's contribution counts when decisions are made.

Best regards

Bill Hancock

Sales Manager

OTHER TYPES OF BUSINESS CORRESPONDENCE

Companies also write letters and other business messages to build and maintain relationships. They may be sent to

- welcome visitors
- thank a business associate
- congratulate people on achievements, promotions, anniversaries, etc
- extend seasonal or holiday greetings
- tell about changes in business organisation, business partnerships and representatives
- express sympathy or condolences
- apologise for poor service, cancellation of an appointment, etc.

Culture express

People from different religions or cultural backgrounds do not necessarily share your festivals and holidays. For this reason, write Season's Greetings instead of Merry Christmas on messages in December.

Many business messages are form letters, where the same information is sent to a number of companies or individuals. However, adding unique elements such as greetings and addresses make the letters personalised.

8 Read the following business messages and answer the questions.

- 1 For what purpose have the following business messages been written?
- 2 Which of the messages are form letters?

Message 1:

Dear James

Twenty years have passed since you started working for our company. We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your excellent work and loyal service.

Our company would not exist without capable and creative staff members such as you. We are delighted to reward your services with a golden pin which will be presented to you at the managing director's reception on Friday 13 September.

We hope that you will remain with us for many years to come.

Yours sincerely

Message 2:

Dear Ms Jameson

I am sorry that I had to cancel our meeting at such short notice. An urgent matter came up at the production plant and we had to deal with it immediately.

I hope we can arrange to meet in the very near future. My secretary will contact you to make the arrangements.

Yours sincerely

Message 3:

Dear Mr Chung:

Thank you for your letter of February 2. We were very happy to receive a copy of an article introducing our products in the January issue of Trade News and your translation of it.

We are very grateful for your efforts in promoting our product line and achieving publicity for our company.

We look forward to continuing our mutual partnership and meeting you in April.

Yours truly,

Message 4:

Dear Ms Daniels

I am pleased to announce that we have moved to new premises in Kensington. As our business has grown steadily, this central location with excellent transport facilities will guarantee that we can provide our customers with outstanding service.

We welcome you to visit our new offices and to learn what kind of changes we have implemented to process your orders efficiently.

Best regards

Message 5:

Dear Mrs Anderson

I was saddened to hear of the sudden death of your father.

I had the privilege of working with your father on the board of directors of Swan Ltd. With his untimely passing, the company has lost a leader who will be greatly missed.

I would like to extend my sincere sympathy on your loss. If there is any way I can be of help, please let me know.

Yours sincerely

Message 6:

Businessworld plc
have pleasure in inviting
Mr and Mrs Hideki Takaki
to attend a dinner in the Main Lodge on 3 May at 8 pm.
RSVP 012-235 4893