

The Office - Small Talk Series - Showing Interest

(C0307)

Tina: Hey Michelle, this is my friend James. He's visiting Shanghai from New York.

Michelle: Oh, hi James. Nice to meet you. So, uh. you visiting for business or pleasure?

James: Well, actually a little of both. I'm meeting some business contacts but I'm also taking some Mandarin classes too.

Michelle: That's cool! How's it going?

James: Well, I'm finding the classes pretty tough actually, but I'm having a great time in Shanghai. It's really an amazing city.

Michelle: It sure is. Are you staying for long?

James: Only two weeks unfortunately. I wish I could stay longer but.

Michelle: Well listen, if you need someone to show you the sights then just call me. I'm having a little get together at my new apartment next week so if you want to drop by then.

James: That sounds great. I'd love to! Let me take down your number Michelle.

Key Vocabulary

visit	<i>G</i>	go to someplace in a formal way
class	<i>N</i>	lesson
sight	<i>N</i>	something seen or worth seeing
get together	<i>P</i>	spend time together
pleasure	<i>N</i>	feeling of happiness
drop by	<i>V</i>	an informal visit

Supplementary Vocabulary

rendezvous	<i>N</i>	an agreement between two or more persons to meet at a certain time and place.
reunion	<i>N</i>	the act of uniting again.

The Office - Small Talk 2 (C0310)

James: So Michelle, let me introduce you to Maria. She's my colleague from Brazil. Maria, this is Michelle.

Maria: Hi Michelle. So what do you do here in Shanghai? I mean, what work do you do?

Michelle: I work in advertising right now. How about you?

Maria: I'm actually in the wine business.

Michelle: That sounds really great. I love wine myself! Is this your first time to Shanghai Maria?

Maria: No actually, I often visit. I usually come to China for business at least once a year. Also, I love the restaurants in Shanghai, so that's a good reason to come.

Michelle: Me too. Actually, there's a great Brazilian restaurant I recommend. I mean, the food is delicious but the service isn't so good. I often like to get together with friends and have a great barbecue there.

James: We should go together some time.

Michelle: Wonderful idea! I'd love that!

Key Vocabulary

recommend	<i>V</i>	say something deserves to be chosen
service	<i>N</i>	an act of help or assistance
colleague	<i>N</i>	the person who works with you together
barbecue	<i>N</i>	a framework, as a grill or a spit, or a fireplace for cooking meat or vegetables over an open fire

introduce	<i>V</i>	to present (a person) to another so as to make acquainted.
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Supplementary Vocabulary

acquaint	<i>V</i>	to become more or less familiar, aware of something
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advocate	<i>V</i>	to speak or write in favor of; support or urge by argument
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impression	<i>N</i>	a strong, favourable, or remarkable effect
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picnic	<i>N</i>	excursion or outing in which the people carry food with them and share a meal in the open air.
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The Office - Sorry I'm Late (C0311)

- Maggie Gao: Okay everyone, shall we begin?
- Bill: Sorry Maggie, but we are missing a few people. Can we hang on a sec?
- Maggie Gao: Well, I did say eleven o'clock sharp, and it's now five past so. . . .
- James: Hi everyone, I'm so sorry I'm late. It's raining cats and dogs outside and I had to wait ages for a taxi.
- Maggie Gao: Okay James, take a seat quickly please. Right, the subject of the meeting is.
- Sally: Hi guys. Please excuse me ,I was held up in traffic.
- Maggie Gao: Right, as I was saying the subject of the m. . .
- Bruno: Hi Maggie. I'm terribly sorry. The traffic is murder out there.

Maggie Gao: Sit down Bruno! Okay now, as you are aware, the topic for this meeting is 'The importance of being punctual'. Who would like to start?

Key Vocabulary

hang on a sec	<i>P</i>	hold on
wait ages	<i>V</i>	wait for a very long time
hold up	<i>V</i>	stuck
I am terribly sorry	<i>P</i>	Very sorry
please excuse me	<i>R</i>	pardon

Supplementary Vocabulary

late	<i>A</i>	occurring, coming, or being after the usual or proper time
absent	<i>A</i>	not in a certain place at a given time

excuse	<i>V</i>	to offer an apology for; seek to remove the blame of
slack	<i>A</i>	negligent; careless

The Office - Small talk 3 (C0313)

Grace: Hey Michelle! Is that you?

Michelle: Wow, Grace! Long time no see! Where have you been?

Grace: Oh yeah. Well you see I got a promotion, so I moved to the new Pudong office last September.

Michelle: You did? Congratulations!

Grace: Thanks a lot. So how are things with you Michelle?

Michelle: Well, same old same old you know. Nothing much has changed here.

Grace: Are you still seeing Chris?

Michelle: No, actually we split up last month.

Grace: Oh dear. I'm sorry to hear that.

Michelle: But I met a really cute guy last night at a networking party so,well, let's just wait and see.....

Grace: Good for you Michelle!

Key Vocabulary

long time no see	<i>P</i>	a greeting phrase used after two friends have not
same old same old	<i>P</i>	nothing new
promotion	<i>N</i>	new position
networking	<i>N</i>	meeting new people
split	<i>V</i>	leave here

Supplementary Vocabulary

demote	<i>V</i>	to reduce to a lower grade, rank, class, or position
depart	<i>V</i>	to go away,leave

blog

N

a journal written on-line and accessible to users of the internet

The Office - Sending A Quote Via Email (C0315)

Tracy: Melanie, can you help me with something? We need to finalize the account with the Mexican Embassy and, I need some advice on phrasing this letter correctly in English.

Melanie: Sure Tracy, let me just get my laptop. all set.

Tracy: Okay, so..... toWhom It May Concern, I am writing.

Melanie: Um, Tracy? I think that's a little too formal. I know you want to be polite but you've already made contact with them, so in English you can be more relaxed inthe opening....

Tracy: Okay, more relaxed. Got it.... Hey Sally, what's up? It's Tracy here, just.

Melanie: Okay Tracy, now it's too relaxed! You've still got to show some respect. How about starting with "Dear Ms. Cooper, I'm writing to confirm...?"

Tracy: Great, okay. “Dear Miss Cooper, I’m writing to confirm the final quotation for the full page back cover color advertisement you requested for the spring issue of Voila magazine.

Melanie: That’s great. . . .

Tracy: “ The final costing, including advert design and production, comes to forty-five thousand six hundred RMB. We want payment ten working days before publication or we will cancel the ad. Thanks for. . . .”

Melanie: Woo, okay back up a second Tracy. That’s too direct. Can I suggest you say, ” please note that final payment is due two working weeks before publication? You don’t want to offend her.

Tracy: Oops okay. You are right. Then I can just end with “All the best, Tracy”

Melanie: Hmmmm, maybe, but I’d play it safe and just finish with “Yours Sincerely”. That’s more professional.

Tracy: Oh, Melanie you are a life saver, thank you!

Key Vocabulary

costing	<i>V</i>	charge, make someone pay
please note that	<i>N</i>	being informed of something
quotation	<i>N</i>	a statement of the price of an item or service
play it safe	<i>P</i>	go with the safest option
I am writing to	<i>N</i>	introduction

Supplementary Vocabulary

cargo	<i>N</i>	freight of a ship, airplane
link	<i>N</i>	a word icon, etc, on which a user may click to move to another part of or different website, document

attachment *N*

something attached, as a document added to a letter, or an picture in a email etc

etiquette *N*

conventional requirements as to social behavior; proprieties of conduct as established in any class or community or for any occasion.

The Office - First Paycheck (C0317)

Emily: Hey, Susan. Have you got a sec? I have some questions about my paycheck.

Susan: You bet, Emily. Pull up a chair.

Emily: Well, this is my first paycheck here in the States and there are a few things I don't understand. First off, what is this FICA, and SUI Y tax, and why are there deductions both for Medicare and for my health insurance plan?

Susan: OK, let's start from the top of your pay stub. This number here represents your gross pay.

Emily: Yes, that's easy enough to understand.

Susan: Then here we have a series of deductions. First off are the federal ones. FICA stands for Federal Insurance Contribution Act, or something like that. It's your federal income tax. And then there's Social Security and Medicare, which are both federal programs to help you out after you retire or if you were unable to work.

Emily: All right, I see. So the Medicare isn't actually a health insurance I can use now.

Susan: That's right. Below the federal deductions are the state deductions. There's the state income tax, and then this SUI SDItax you were asking about is paying into an unemployment and disability fund that our state has set up, but you can see it's a pretty small quantity that they take.

Emily: Yeah, I don't mind giving them a dollar fifty for that. So there are two separate income taxes – one at a state level and one at a federal level?

Susan: That's right. Not all states have an income tax. Some use higher property taxes or sales taxes instead.

Emily: I see. All right, well I think everything else I can figure out on my own. The deductions for health insurance and my 401(K) are pretty self-explanatory. Thanks for your help, Susan.

Susan: No problem! All those deductions do add up, and nobody's net pay is as high as they'd like. I can understand why you'd want some explanation.

Emily: Yeah, I guess it's the same in the UK, I just never paid much attention. See you later!

Key Vocabulary

stub	<i>N</i>	for keeping a record of the content of the part filled out and torn away.
federal	<i>A</i>	of or relating to a form of government or a country in which power is divided between one central and several regional governments
income	<i>N</i>	amount of money that you receive
fund	<i>N</i>	a sum of money or other resources whose principal or interest is set aside for a specific objective

self-explanatory	<i>A</i>	needing no explanation, obvious
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Supplementary Vocabulary

basic	<i>A</i>	elementary or simple
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jargon	<i>N</i>	language peculiar to a particular trade, profession, or group
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welfare	<i>N</i>	financial or other assistance to an individual or family from a city, state, or national government
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deposit	<i>V</i>	to place for safekeeping or in trust
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tax	<i>N</i>	a sum of money demanded by a government for its support or for specific facilities or services
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The Office - Small Talk 6 - Talking About Yourself

(C0322)

Michelle: Excuse me, is this seat taken?

Stranger: No, please feel free.

Michelle: Thanks a lot.

Stranger: Do you work in Shanghai?

Michelle: Yes I do. How about you?

Stranger: No, I'm a tourist. This place is amazing! It's much bigger than I imagined, and much more exciting! There's so much to see here.

Michelle: You can say that again! It's much more modern than people imagine. Where are you from?

Stranger: Um, well let's see.....I'm from Kansas originally. A much quieter and more peaceful place than here, that's for sure!

Michelle: Uh huh....

Stranger: But I'm living in Paris right now.

Michelle: Oh Paris! Wonderful, I'd love to visit some time!

Key Vocabulary

tourist	<i>N</i>	a person who is traveling
amazing	<i>A</i>	causing wonder or astonishment
modern	<i>A</i>	high-tech
originally	<i>R</i>	originally
peaceful	<i>A</i>	calm or tranquil
imagine	<i>V</i>	to form a mental image of
exciting	<i>A</i>	excite

Supplementary Vocabulary

ego	<i>N</i>	self-importance
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vain	<i>A</i>	excessively proud of or concerned about one's own appearance, qualities, achievements
historic	<i>A</i>	well-known or important in history
seclude	<i>A</i>	sheltered or screened from general activity
off the beaten track	<i>P</i>	out of the way

The Office - Small Talk 7 - Talking About A Trip (C0325)

Jim: Hey Michelle. Good to see you. Are you at lunch?

Michelle: Oh hi Jim. No I just got back. I thought you were on vacation now.

Jim: No, I wish I was! I just got back from Spain actually.

Michelle: Oh wonderful! Have you been there before or was it your first time?

Jim: My first time. I've traveled around Europe a lot, but this was my first time to Spain. It was amazing, and the weather was just beautiful! No rain, and just sun, sun, sun....

Michelle: I'm so jealous of you. I've never been anywhere in Europe. I've always dreamed of traveling around and seeing the sights.

Jim: Well, I really recommend Spain. You really should go. Anyway, it's been great to catch up, but I must be going, this is my floor. Speak again soon I hope.

Michelle: For sure. Take care.

Key Vocabulary

vacation	<i>P</i>	have holidays
jealous	<i>A</i>	feeling resentment against someone because of that person's rivalry, success, or advantages
catch up	<i>P</i>	meet each other
floor	<i>N</i>	one of the many levels of a building
take care	<i>V</i>	deal with
for sure	<i>P</i>	phrase of agreement

Supplementary Vocabulary

envy	<i>N</i>	a feeling of discontent with regard to another's advantages, success, possessions
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tourist	<i>N</i>	a person who is traveling
rat race	<i>P</i>	endless pursuit with little reward or purpose such as job.
mid life crisis	<i>P</i>	period of dramatic self-doubt that is felt by some individuals in the "middle years" or middle age of life

The Office - Small Talk 8 - Talking About Work (C0328)

Mr. Campbell: Ah Michelle hi. I was hoping to see you. How have you been? How's the family?

Michelle: Oh hello Mr. Campbell. I'm fine and Jack's doing well. How are you?

Mr. Campbell: I'm fine thanks. I got your report this morning. Thank's for that. Are you joining the conference today?

Michelle: Yes, I'm leaving at four pm.

Mr Campbell: Good, well we can discuss this more then, but I think the figures are looking very good for this quarter.

Michelle: Yes, me too.

Mr Campbell: I'm planning to discuss the advertising budget at the conference. I don't think we should continue with the TV advertising.

Michelle: No, me neither. It's far too expensive.

Mr. Campbell: Well, let's discuss this more at the conference. Maybe we can share a taxi there.

Michelle: Yes, sure.

Key Vocabulary

conference	<i>N</i>	a formal meeting where many people talk about ideas
report	<i>N</i>	written document that provides information about something
discuss	<i>V</i>	talk about
quarter	<i>N</i>	one fourth of a calendar or fiscal year
budget	<i>N</i>	money available to spend
advertise	<i>V</i>	to announce or praise in order to raise awareness in a product or service

Supplementary Vocabulary

marketing	<i>N</i>	act of buying or selling in a market
publish	<i>V</i>	to issue publicly the work of
segment	<i>N</i>	a different group
graph	<i>N</i>	a diagram representing a system of connections or interrelations among two or more things

The Office - Small Talk 9 - Talking About The Weather

(C0331)

Melissa: Hey Michelle, jump in quick. It's pouring out there!

Michelle: Oh hi Melissa. Are you going to the conference too? I was planning to pick up Mr. Campbell.

Melissa: Yes, he told me. We need to pick him up at his hotel and then go to the conference.

Michelle: Oh I see, okay. So I heard you got married. Congratulations!

Melissa: Ah thank you! I'm very excited. We were going to get married next year, but then we decided to get married on holiday instead. It was wonderful.

Michelle: That sounds so romantic! Jack and I were hoping to get married in Europe next year, but we had to postpone our plans. We just don't have the money!

Melissa: I know what you mean. I think Shanghai is getting more and more expensive, don't you?

Michelle: I sure do. In my opinion it's actually becoming more expensive than back home.

Melissa: Definitely. Oh there's Mr. Campbell. Driver can you stop here please?

Key Vocabulary

pouring	<i>V</i>	flowing or falling, as from one container to another, or into, over, or on something
romantic	<i>A</i>	relating to a feeling of love between a couple
postpone	<i>V</i>	decide to do something at a later time
definitely	<i>R</i>	certainly
in my opinion	<i>P</i>	way to express your opinion

Supplementary Vocabulary

raincheck	<i>N</i>	an offered or requested postponement of an invitation until a more convenient
cute	<i>A</i>	pleasingly pretty
drizzle	<i>V</i>	to rain gently and steadily in fine drops
cancel	<i>V</i>	to decide or announce that a planned event will not take place

The Office - Small Talk 10 - General Talk (C0334)

Mr. Campbell: Hi ladies. Thanks for picking me up. It's awful weather out there!

Michelle: Absolutely. It's been raining for hours.

Mr. Campbell: How are you Melissa? Are you okay?

Melissa: I'm great thanks, Mr. Campbell.

Michelle: Do you have any business trips planned soon Mr. Campbell?

Mr. Campbell: Of course. I'm always travelling! I will leave for London next Monday, and then I'll fly to Boston from there. It's going to be a busy month. How about you Michelle? Any vacation plans?

Michelle: Yes. Mike and I will travel to Beijing to see Mikes parents for Spring festival, and hopefully next year we will visit London. I hear it's a wonderful city.

Mr. Campbell: I couldn't agree more. London is really fantastic. It's my favorite city. I'm sure you'll have a great time.

Key Vocabulary

vacation	<i>N</i>	holiday
absolutely	<i>R</i>	to a complete degree
awful	<i>A</i>	really bad
plan	<i>V</i>	To have something set to do in the future.
festival	<i>N</i>	a day or time of religious or other celebration

Supplementary Vocabulary

random	<i>A</i>	without definite aim, purpose, method
terrible	<i>A</i>	extremely bad; horrible
parade	<i>N</i>	a large public procession

unsure

A

without sure knowl-
edge; uncertain