

Fact checking

COMMUNICATION

LEVEL
Upper-intermediate

NUMBER
EN_BE_3405X

LANGUAGE
English

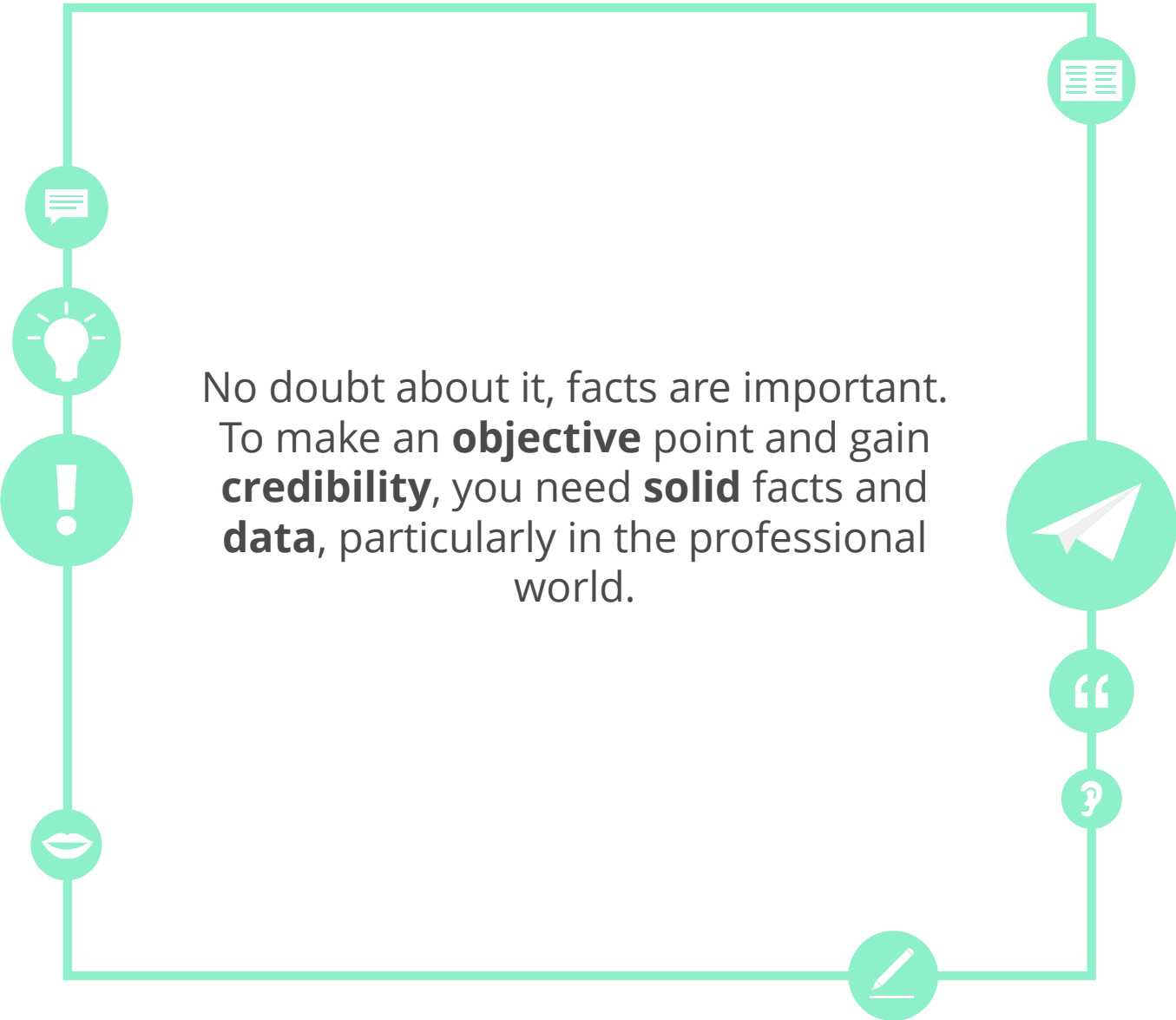




Goals

- Can understand and explain how to present facts objectively.
- Can use appropriate expressions to present arguments objectively.





No doubt about it, facts are important.
To make an **objective** point and gain
credibility, you need **solid** facts and
data, particularly in the professional
world.



Facts vs opinions

**What is the
difference between a
fact and an opinion?**

fact

A **fact** is something that is **known** or **proven to be true**.



Fact: Scientists have proven smoking is bad for your health.

opinion

An **opinion** is an expression of a person's **thoughts** and **feelings**. It **cannot** be **proven**.



Fact: Actively using a foreign language significantly improves a learner's ability and level of retention.



Opinion: My English is terrible!



How to present facts

In a minute, your teacher is going to read a text where a manager from HR presents facts about the company. Take a look at the topics she will present below. What do you think she'll say about them?



high turnover

flexi-time
scheduling

work-life
balance

feedback



Listen



Now listen while your teacher reads the beginning of the presentation.
Take notes so that you can summarise what you've heard when your teacher is finished.



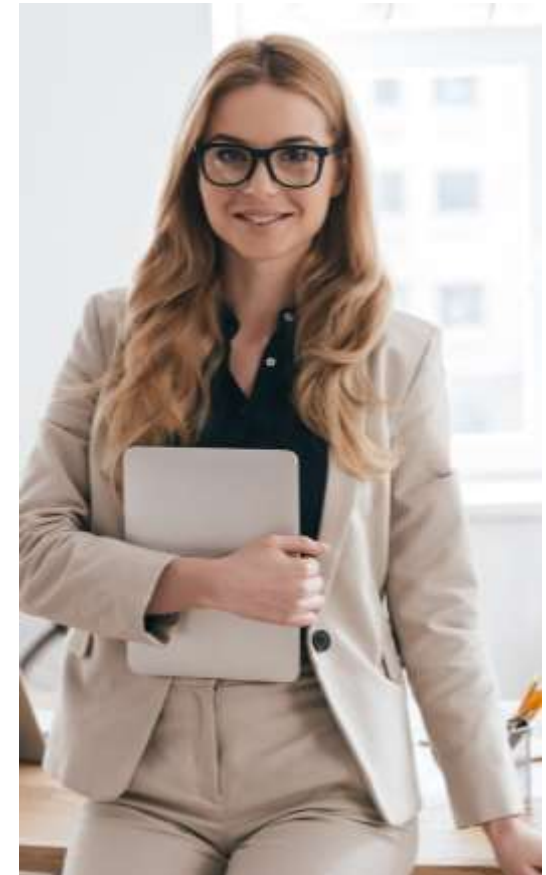
Read

Now read the next part of the presentation below.

Now, if we turn to our data about flexi-time scheduling, you'll see most employees would like to decide when to start and finish their workday, not be forced to do a traditional 9 to 5.

As you can see, 38% of our employees have children, which is a reason they prefer this model. **If we take a closer look at this point,** we'll see this affects work-life balance as well.

For this, **please take note of these particular findings over here.** They also help explain the need for more feedback, as expressed by our employees. **At this point, I'd like to call your attention to the fact that....**





Question

What function do the phrases placed in bold in the presentation serve?

Now, if we turn to...

As you can see...

If we take a closer look at this point...

Please take note...

At this point, I'd like to call your attention to the fact that...



Presenting facts

- **Answer:** These phrases can help you present facts in a clear, logical and objective way.

useful phrases for presenting facts

As you can see...

Now, if we turn to...

If we take a closer look at this point...

Please take note of these particular findings over here.

At this point, I'd like to call your attention to the fact that...

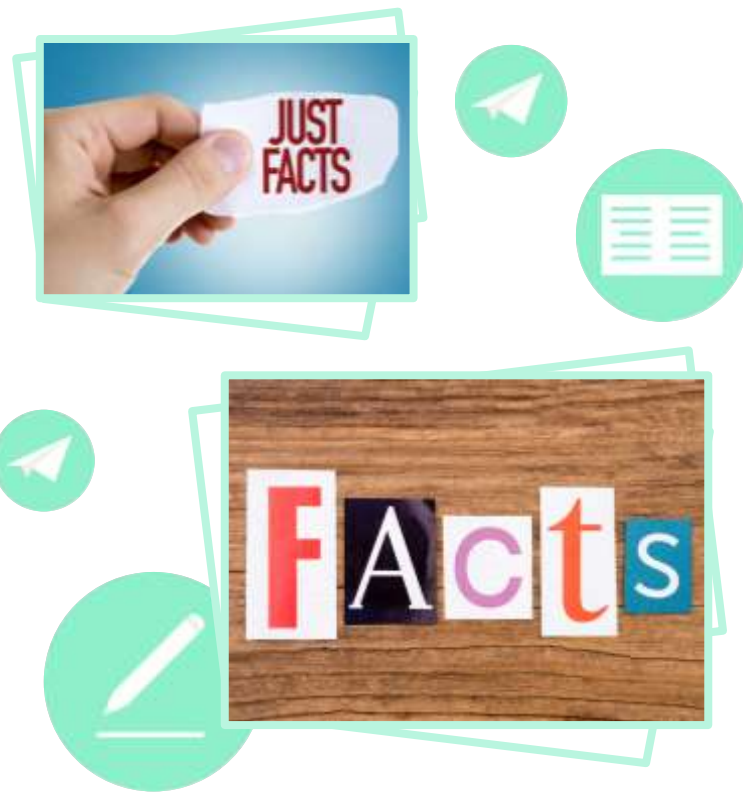




Presenting facts

In a minute, you're going to present a series of facts. First, jot down what facts you would like to present on the page below. Aim for 4 to 5 facts on the topic of your choosing.

A blank sheet of lined paper with a spiral binding on the left side, intended for writing facts.





Presenting facts

Now present the facts using the phrases you've learned.



At this point, I'd like to call your attention to the fact that...

Now, if we turn to...

As you can see...

If we take a closer look at this point...

Please take note of these particular findings over here.



Making conclusions

Take a look at the phrases used by the different people below. How are they different to the ones you just used?



And now let's take a look at how I interpret this data. This dip in numbers shows that we really need to take action – fast!



Taking all of this into consideration, I can say that, surprisingly, our numbers are up from last year!



For the reasons mentioned, I can conclude that it is best that we abolish the 80-20 rule in favour of a more detailed, quality-orientated approach.



Even if it may seem counterintuitive, the conclusion must be that the public trend of dieting is beginning to decline.



Making a conclusion

The phrases included in the dialogue above are useful for **presenting an interpretation** or **making a conclusion**.

Can you think of any other examples?



Over to you



Now use the facts you came up with in the previous exercise and present your interpretation or conclusion using the phrases you've just learned.



Disagreeing with the facts presented

- Now let's take a look at language you can use in a professional setting when you **disagree** with the facts presented.
- Read the following dialogue out loud. Pay extra attention to what **Sceptical Steve** has to say.



I'm sorry, but I simply don't agree!



Disagreeing with a point



In conclusion, I can say that this proves all employees are in favour of installing a swimming pool on the roof.

I'm sorry Brian, but **I simply don't agree** with your perspective. I think you need to give more arguments to be able to say so.



But Steve, everyone loves to swim. **The facts speak for themselves.**

Excuse me, but that is a **gross generalisation**. I, for one, hate to swim!





Phrases for disagreeing and debating

The phrases Sceptical Steve uses are useful for disagreeing or debating facts or interpretations.

Do you know any other phrases in English that serve this purpose?



Disagreeing or debating facts and interpretations

- If you feel **strong disagreement** with what somebody else is saying, it is always best to be prepared so that you can best **explain** your **perspective**.
- Be careful that the expression you use **reflects the level to which you disagree** with what has been said.
- Below is a list of useful phrases for **disagreeing** or **debating** facts or interpretations. Which of the phrases would you use for **stronger disagreement**, and which phrases would you use for **milder disagreement**?

- I'm sorry, but I simply don't agree with your interpretation.
- I think you need to give more arguments to be able to say so.
- I don't think this data allows for such interpretation.
- That's a (gross) generalisation.
- I really think your statement requires further explanation.
- What you're saying is simply not true.



Over to you

Why do you think it's important to use these kinds of phrases when debating or disagreeing with someone?



Debate and disagreement

- These kinds of phrases are important to ensure a debate or disagreement remains **neutral** and **objective**.
- In English, more **direct language** can sound **overly aggressive**, which could cause the discussion to become too heated and emotional for a professional context.



Too direct: None of this makes any sense to me!
More objective: I really think your statement requires further explanation.



Responding to criticism

Now read through the following dialogue, paying special attention to Brian's response.



Excuse me, but that is a gross generalisation. I, for one, hate to swim!

I think you've misunderstood me. The findings I presented are founded on conclusive data from a survey we conducted earlier this quarter.



But I still hate to swim!

Steve, I think you're focusing too much on your own personal preferences and not on the actual data at hand.





Phrases for responding to criticism

Here are some phrases useful for responding to criticism. Place them in the correct category and then use them for the next activity.

I didn't think about it that way. I take back what I said.

What you're saying is a common misconception.

What you're saying simply doesn't make sense.

I'm sorry, but you're wrong about that.

No, that's simply not true.

Let me reformulate my idea.

The findings I presented are founded on conclusive data.

OK, actually you're right. Sorry about that!

I think you've misunderstood me.

How can you argue against solid facts?

Where's the logic in it?

No, that's not what I'm saying. What I'm saying is...

restating your position

admitting a mistake

arguing with someone's logic or understanding



Things are heating up

Read back over the phrases for responding to criticism on the previous page and answer the following questions.



1

Which three phrases indicate the debate has heated up a little? (hint: there are three in total)

2

In what kind of situations would you use expressions like this? Would you use them often?

3

Have you ever been in a situation where you have argued strongly for something, only to realise you were mistaken? How did you handle the situation?



Debate and disagreement

- Although things have heated up a bit, please note that each phrase is still **respectful** and **appropriate** for a professional setting.

- Saying something as direct as **no, you're wrong** can sound aggressive and therefore very rude in English!
- This is important to keep in mind if you come from a culture where **directness** is more common.





Roleplay

Now build your own dialogue around the following situation using the phrases you've learned.

There is time pressure attached to a project your team is working on. You and another colleague have very different ideas about what kind of approach should be taken to get everything done.

We're under serious pressure here. Planning is time-consuming and there's none to waste!



You believe the best way to get everything done in time is to take immediate action and sort out any mistakes when you have time later. It's more important to get something done than spend a long time planning.



That seems like false logic to me! What I think is...

You strongly believe that there is no point in doing any work at all unless it is high quality. You think it will save time in the long run to spend time planning and getting organised.



Reflect on the lesson

Take a moment to review any new **vocabulary, phrases, language structures** or **grammar points** you have come across for the first time in this lesson.

Review them with your teacher one more time to make sure you don't forget!





Transcription

Exercise p. 8

Good morning everyone. I'm going to talk to you today about our strategy for talent retention at our company. As you know, our **rate of staff turnover** has gone up by 10% in the past three years. To find out why, we've conducted a **company-wide survey**. What we discovered is this: it is important to offer **flexi-time scheduling**, offer our employees more one-on-one feedback sessions with management, and improve the overall facilitation of **work-life balance** within the company. We will make these factors a priority.



Answer key

Exercise p. 24

Restating your position:

No, that's not what I'm saying. What I'm saying is...
Let me reformulate my idea.
The findings I presented are founded on conclusive data.

Admitting a mistake:

I didn't think about it that way. I take back what I said.
OK, actually you're right. Sorry about that!

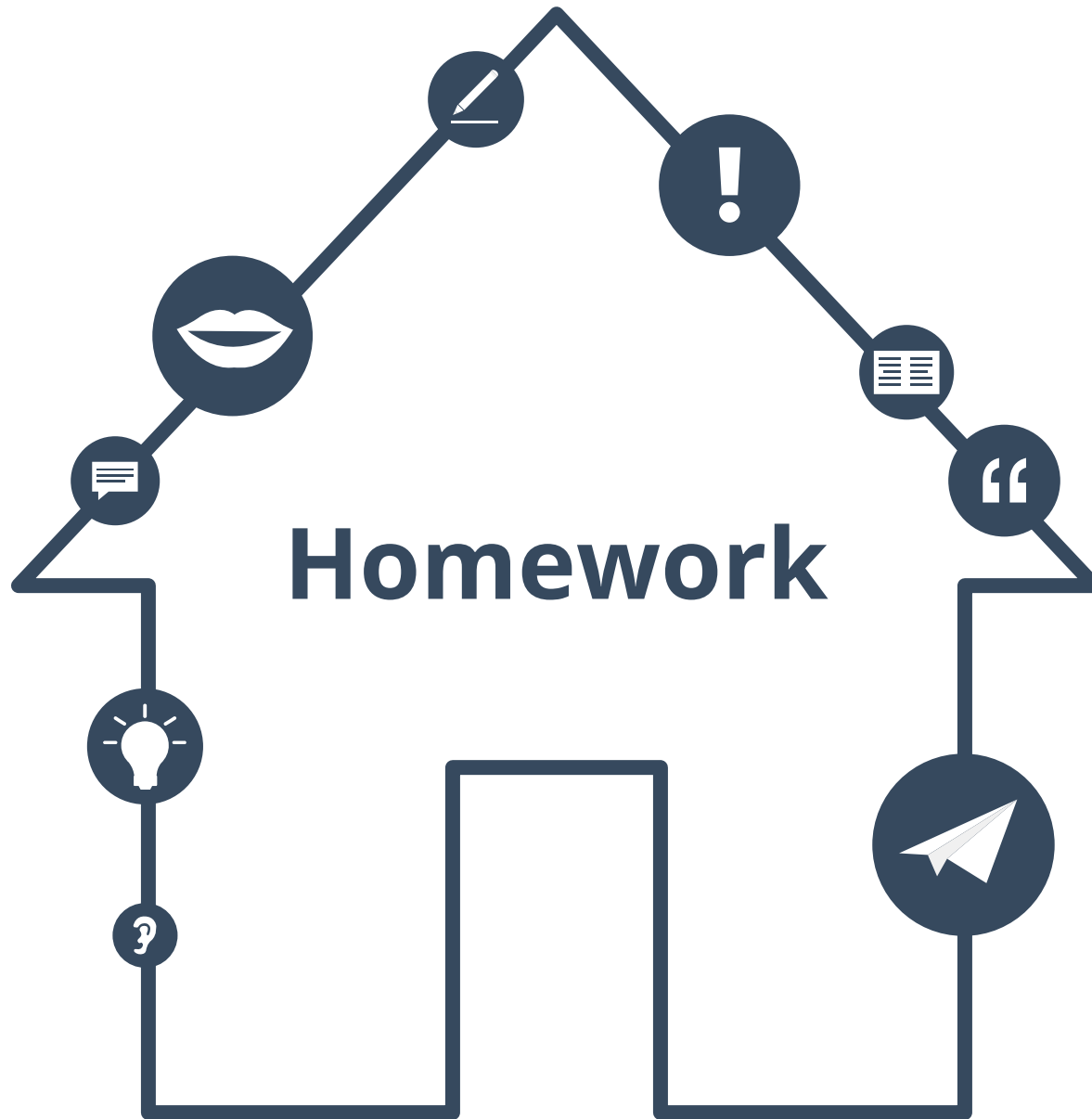
Arguing with someone's logic or understanding:

What you're saying is a common misconception.
I think you've misunderstood me.
What you're saying simply doesn't make sense.
I'm sorry, but you're wrong about that.
No, that's simply not true.
How can you argue against solid facts?
Where's the logic in it?

Exercise p. 25

The phrases that show the debate has heated up a little are:

What you're saying simply doesn't make sense; I'm sorry, but you're wrong on that;
No, that's simply not true.





Complete the table with the phrases you've learned

Go back through the lesson and pick out your three favourite phrases for each of the categories below.

presenting data and facts

making your point and
drawing conclusions
from data

responding to criticism



health hazards

scientific
findings

employee
motivation

own topic

environmental
issues

business health

lingoda



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