

# Preparing a business meeting

COMMUNICATION

LEVEL  
Upper-intermediate

NUMBER  
EN\_BE\_3402X

LANGUAGE  
English

lingoda






## Goals

- Can understand basic meeting and presentation preparation strategies
- Can use new terminology and understanding to clearly present my own views on different kinds of meetings





Meetings with your manager, meetings with your team, meetings with clients, preparing presentations in English: The list is endless. But, luckily, practice makes perfect!



## Types of meetings

**Here's a list of typical meetings that take place in companies.  
Which ones do you attend? How often?**



Meetings with  
managers

Team meetings

Stand-up  
meetings

Interdepartmen-  
tal meetings

Meetings with  
clients

Meetings with  
(potential)  
partners

Company-wide  
meetings

Meetings with  
the executive  
board

Anything  
missing?



## Advantages and disadvantages of meetings

**What are the advantages and disadvantages of meetings? Think of as many examples as possible.**



## Our list of the advantages and disadvantages of meetings

### Advantages

1. The chance to share and discuss information
2. Strengthens teamwork
3. Allows you to get to know colleagues and clients **face-to-face**
4. Can be more effective than e-mail and telephone

### Disadvantages

1. Can be **time-consuming** (and even a waste of time!)
2. Sometimes lack focus and clear leadership
3. Don't always **allow for** everyone to express their thoughts
4. Can lead to **micromanagement**



Do you agree with the list? Which ones do you disagree with, if any?



## Vocabulary

Take a look at the words in **bold** on the previous list. Try to explain their meaning using your own words.

What type of word is each? Noun, adjective, adverb or verb?

**face-to-face**

**micromanagement**

**to allow for**

**time-consuming**





## New words

**time-consuming**

Something that takes a lot of, or too much time.

**micromanagement**

**Micromanagement** means seeking to control every aspect of a company or job, no matter how large or small.

**to allow for**

To consider or plan to have enough of something, such as time, space, money.

**face-to-face**

Meeting with someone in person rather than over the phone, e-mail, etc.





## Vocabulary practice

Based on the definitions on the previous page, fill in the gaps below.

time-consuming

allow for

micromanagement

face-to-face

1. \_\_\_\_\_ is really a problem at Carl's company. He wishes his managers would just let him do his job!
2. Our tiny conference room does not \_\_\_\_\_ everyone to sit comfortably during meetings.
3. I personally prefer \_\_\_\_\_ meetings rather than conference calls. Body language is as important as words!
4. Our interdepartmental meetings are always very \_\_\_\_\_. We need to learn better time management skills!





## Discuss the following questions

Are meetings overly time-consuming at your job, or are they effectively run?

Do you prefer face-to-face meetings or other forms (e.g. conference calls, chat rooms, etc.)? Which form is most common at your job?

Do your meetings generally allow for everyone to share their thoughts and ideas? If not, then why?

Do you think micromanagement is a problem in the corporate world? Why or why not?



## Preparing for meetings

**Take a look at the cards below.  
How would you prepare for a  
meeting with these different  
groups or individuals? Are your  
strategies similar, or do they vary  
greatly?**

a one-to-one  
meeting with  
your manager

a meeting with  
your team

A meeting with  
clients or  
potential partners

an  
interdepartmental  
meeting

A company-  
wide meeting

**It's boss time!**



Your teacher is going to read a text about strategies for one-on-one meetings with your boss or manager. Listen to the text and summarise and discuss it afterwards.



## Meetings with your manager

Here are some additional topics that are commonly addressed in one-on-one meetings with a manager:

1. What are general updates that are relevant to your tasks?
2. What have you achieved since your last meeting?
3. What next steps are likely to be defined for the next period until your next meeting?

Are any of these relevant to your position?  
Which points are missing?





## Roleplays

**Complete two or more of the following roleplays for a meeting between a manager and an employee. Switch roles at least once, so you also get the chance to be the boss! Take a look at the next slide for some language that will help you in the task.**

A new company-wide policy has been implemented that affects your work. Discuss this with your manager to make sure you understand what is expected of you.

You are meeting with an employee to give them their annual performance report. Mention their strengths and weaknesses and listen to what they have to say.

You are meeting to discuss your team's poor performance on a recent project. Present the facts, but defend your team – explain the wider context.



## Useful vocabulary to use in the roleplay

Below you'll find a few phrases that will help you **express** your **opinion**, whether you **agree** or **disagree**, as well as **summarise information** in a polite and formal way suitable for business.

Expressing your opinion	Agreeing	Disagreeing	Summarising
<b>I think...</b>	I entirely agree with your point. (++)	I see your point, but... (+/-)	So what you're saying is...
<b>From my/our point of view...</b>	You're absolutely right! (++)	I'm sorry, but I don't quite agree. (-)	If I've understood you right,
<b>I/we feel that...</b>	Yes, that sounds right. (+)	I'm afraid I simply don't agree. (-)	...Is that what you mean?
<b>As far as I'm concerned,</b>	I agree to a certain extent, but... (+/-)	I'm sorry, but you're wrong here. (--)	Let me get this straight.
<b>In our experience,</b>	Ok, but what about...? (+/-)	No, that simply isn't true. (--)	So the point is...



## Vocabulary expansion

**Now we're going to take a look at phrasal verbs. First off, can you remember what a phrasal verb is? What are they used for in English?**



## Phrasal verb review

A phrasal verb is an **idiomatic phrase** that combines a **verb** and another element called a **particle** – such as an **adverb** or **preposition** – to create a new meaning.

Phrasal verbs are very common in English. Learning and using them is the perfect way to make you **sound more natural** and take **your English** to the **next level**.

Phrasal verbs can be **transitive** or **intransitive**. **Transitive** phrasal verbs take a **direct object**, and some of them can be **separated**. **Intransitive** phrasal verbs do not take an object, and are never separated.

I've been **looking** everywhere **for** the x-file, have you seen it?  
We all need to **think** long and hard **about** how to proceed with this project.  
John **came out** with some interesting ideas in the meeting earlier.



## Recognising phrasal verbs

**Your teacher is going to read the text on one-on-one meetings with managers again. Listen for the phrasal verbs below and see if you can understand them in context.**

to deal with

to put together

to check in with  
(someone)

to ask for

to carry out



## Match the phrasal verbs with their definitions

Match the phrasal verbs with their definitions on the cards below.  
Beware of false friends! There are 2 definitions that don't correspond to any phrasal verb.

to do something you have agreed to or been told to do

to join or compile, e.g. a list or report

**check in with (someone)**

to say something to get information or have someone do something for you

**deal with**

to talk to someone to find out new information, see how they are doing, etc.

to take action on something or solve a problem

**ask for**

to help someone or give them advice

**put together**

to argue with someone and present your point of view

**carry out**



## Practise with phrasal verbs

<div>-</div> <div>□</div> <div>×</div>
To: Angela Carter
Subject: Next team meeting
<p>Hi Angela,</p> <p>Just a quick e-mail to _____ you on the plans for our next team meeting. My colleagues and I have _____ a list of points we would like to have on the agenda. We definitely all think we need to _____ the issues surrounding the yearly report. What do you think? I would also like to _____ your feedback on the progress we have made since the last meeting. We've all worked hard to _____ the tasks you mentioned and would appreciate hearing your thoughts on our performance.</p> <p>Thanks, Phillip</p>

**Fill in the five phrasal verbs from the previous exercise into the gaps provided.**



## Meetings with your team

**Now we're going to talk about meetings with your team. Take a look at the cards below.**

**How are they important for team meetings?**



agenda

updates

common goals

structure

problems

time  
management



Now read the following text. Do you agree with the points the author makes? Why or why not?

Team meetings are an important part of business. However, to optimise your team's performance, it's crucial to consider several key questions.

**Question number one:** Who sets the **agenda**? The agenda is an important tool for **structuring** a meeting and should always be prepared in advance. The more well-thought out an agenda, the more effective the meeting will be.

**Question number two:** What has everyone achieved since the last meeting? Relevant **updates** from everyone will help your team track their progress.

**Question(s) number three:** Have your team's **common goals** been defined? How far are they from achieving these goals? What still needs to be accomplished? Finding answers to these questions will help achieve clarity.

**Question number four:** How effective is your team's **time management**? To be effective, a meeting should allow enough time to cover the agenda plus leave time at the end to address potential **problems** as well as answer any remaining questions.



## Presenting at a meeting

**How often do you have  
to present at a meeting?  
How do you prepare?  
What are the  
challenges?**



## When preparing a presentation, what should you keep in mind for the following topics?

purpose

audience

structure

logistics

style

content

data

potential problems

time management





## Preparation

**Here's our list for preparing a presentation. Do you agree with our points? Is there anything you do differently?**

**Purpose:** What is the message I want to communicate?

**Audience:** Who am I talking to? Should I adapt my language?

**Structure:** How long will I talk? How many parts do I need? What is my conclusion?

**Logistics:** Will I use a presentation? how many slides? Do I have an emergency backup?

**Style:** Did I prepare the presentation in a way that is clear and appropriate to my audience?

**Content:** Am I providing an argument with a conclusion? Am I sharing data? Will I suggest anything?

**Data:** Am I basing my point on research? Do I provide it in a clear way?

**Possible problems:** Hardware may not work. Are there any areas where my audience is likely to be sceptical?

### Time management

- If you realise that your presentation is **too short**: provide more context and details.
- If you realise that your presentation is **too long**: strategically skip unnecessary information.

## Signpost language for presentations

A great way to structure your presentation is by using **signpost language**. **Signpost language** involves **words** or **phrases** that mark the progression of a presentation.



**Let's start by talking about** the financial well-being of the company.



**To sum up**, money will continue to gain importance in the years to come.



## Signpost language for presentations

**What phrases do you know in English for the following stages of a presentation?**

introducing the topic

explaining structure of the presentation

starting a section

signalling the end of the presentation

progressing to a new section



## Signpost language

This morning we're  
going to be taking a  
look at...

To sum up...

I'm going to divide  
this presentation  
into two parts.

Firstly...

The subject/topic of  
my presentation is...

Let's move on to...

I'll start with...

In conclusion...

I'd now like to  
discuss...



## Categorising signpost language

Put the words and phrases on the previous page into the right category. Two more phrases have been added below.



I'd like now to  
recap.



I'm going to  
cover three  
points.



Introducing  
the topic

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Explaining  
presentation  
structure

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Starting a  
section

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Progressing  
to a new  
section

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Signalling the  
end

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## Over to you

Take a few minutes to prepare a short presentation on any topic. Make sure you include **signpost language** to help create a clear structure.





## 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!





## Answer key

### Exercise p. 29

**Introducing the topic:** This morning we're going to be taking a look at... The subject/topic of my presentation is...

**Explaining presentation structure:** I'm going to divide this presentation into two parts, I'm going to cover three points.

**Starting a section:** Firstly..., I'll start with...

**Progressing to a new section:** Let's move on to..., I'd now like to discuss...  
**Signalling the end:** To sum up..., In conclusion..., I'd now like to recap.

### Exercise p. 9

1. Micromanagement, 2. Allow for, 3. face-to-face, 4. time-consuming

### Exercise p. 19

**ask for** = to say something to get information or have someone do something for you

**carry out** = to do something you have agreed to or been told to do

**check in with (someone)** = to talk to someone to find out new information, see how they are doing, etc.

**deal with** = to take action on something or solve a problem

**put together** = to join or compile, e.g. a list or report

### Exercise p. 20

check in with, put together, deal with, ask for, carry out





## Transcription

### Exercises p. 12 and 18

One-on-one meetings with the boss. Many employees often have to **deal with** these meetings, and they're not usually anyone's idea of fun. But how can you make these meetings more effective for both parties involved? We've **put together** a list with some ideas you might find helpful.

1. Don't just use these meetings as an opportunity to **check in with** your manager. See them as a chance to further develop ideas as well as your relationship.
2. Finish your status reporting within 5 minutes or less. That way you'll still have time to talk about other topics which might be more important.
3. Brainstorm ideas for your next team meeting and **carry** those ideas **out** when the time comes.

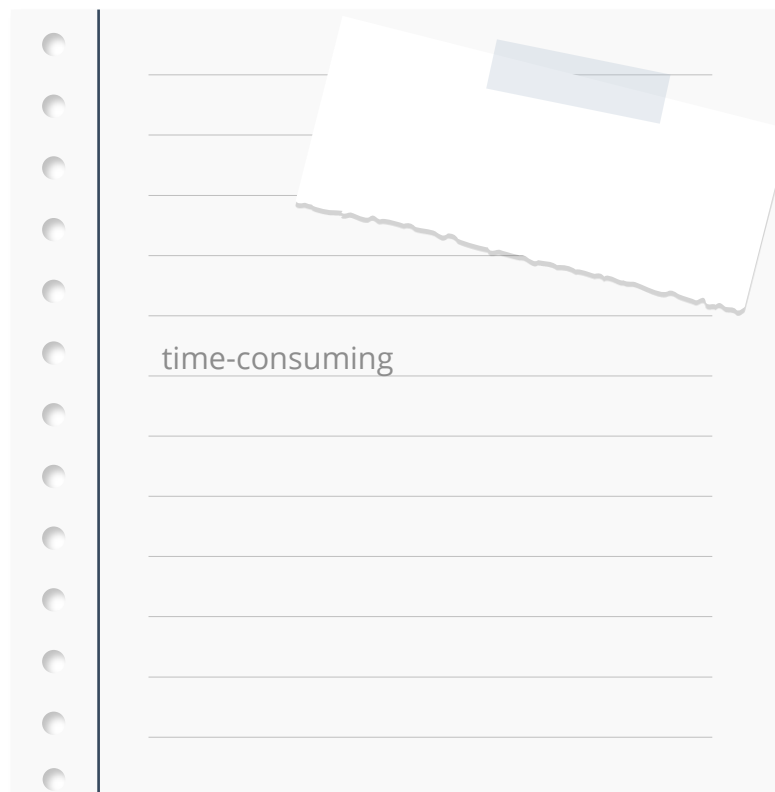
4. If there's time, **ask for** feedback. However, don't be vague. Ask specific questions, like *do you have any tips on how I might improve my time management skills?* or *what are your thoughts on how we ran the Anderson account?*, and be sure to consider any advice they give you to help improve your performance and foster your development.





## New vocabulary

**Update your list of favourite words or phrases from this lesson.**





## Homework writing activity

**Write a short text about how to better structure team meetings. You can use information from the lesson as well as your own experience.**

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○	Firstly,....
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