

COMMUNICATION

Presenting and discussing facts

LEVEL

Upper-Intermediate
(B2)

NUMBER

EN_B2_3021X

LANGUAGE

English

Learning outcomes

- I can explain how to present facts objectively.
- I can use appropriate expressions when making an argument.



Warm-up

You're going to read a text where a manager from HR presents some facts about the company. **Look at the topics** she will present below. What do you think she'll say about them?

**Staff
turnover**

**Flexi-time
scheduling**

**Work-life
balance**

**Company-
wide survey**





Reading (1)

Read the text of the presentation below. **Answer** the questions.

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 introduce 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.

1. What is the presentation about?
2. What were the findings of the company-wide survey?



Reading (2)

Read the next excerpt from the presentation below. **Answer** the questions.

Now, if we turn to our data about flexi-time scheduling, you'll see most employees would like the option to choose their working hours, rather than having to do the traditional 9 to 5.

As you can see, 38% of our employees have children, which is one reason why they prefer this model.

If we take a closer look at this point, we'll see it affects work-life balance as well. Please take note of these particular findings over here. They also help explain the need for more feedback that has been expressed by our employees.

1. Would employees prefer to stick to traditional working hours?
2. Do many employees at the company have children?



Categorise the phrases

Categorise the phrases below.

1

Now, if we turn to...

2

This has led us to
the conclusion
that...

3

The facts speak for
themselves...

4

If we take a closer
look at...

5

This doesn't
necessarily mean...

6

That seems like a
gross
generalisation...

7

I'm afraid I don't
agree...

8

As you can see...

9

It may seem
counterintuitive,
but we must
conclude that...

10

I'd like to call your
attention to...

Presenting facts

Drawing conclusions

**Disagreeing and
defending**



Multiple choice

- 1 So, if we take a closer _____ at this figure here, we see that only 10% of those surveyed said that this issue isn't important.
- a. gaze b. look c. note d. think
- 2 The facts _____ for themselves. It's very clear that we need to change our thinking on this.
- a. say b. said c. speak d. spoke
- 3 That seems like a gross _____. I don't believe that everybody feels that way.
- a. fact b. decision c. generalisation d. conclusion
- 4 It may seem _____, but we must conclude that giving workers more holidays actually improves productivity in the workplace.
- a. counterintuitive b. inconclusive c. to lead d. contraband



The facts speak for themselves.

Can facts “speak” for themselves? What do you think is meant by this?

How certain would you need to be of the facts to use this phrase?



Reading (3)

Read the short text. **Answer** the questions.

If you feel strong disagreement with what somebody else is saying, it is always best to be prepared so that you can explain your perspective.

Be careful that the expression you use reflects the level to which you disagree with what has been said. It's good to know some useful phrases for disagreeing or debating facts or interpretations.



1. Is it important to be prepared to explain your perspective when strongly disagreeing with someone?
2. Why might you need to be careful about the kind of expressions you use when disagreeing?

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'm afraid I don't agree**. I think you need to give more arguments to be able to say so.



But Steve, everyone loves to swim...

Excuse me, but **that is a gross generalisation**. I, for one, hate to swim! And where are the facts? I don't see any data on this!



**I'm afraid I don't agree
with you...**

**That's a gross
generalisation...**

In the first phrase, how does the speaker
introduce their disagreement? Why do
they do this?

When might you use the second phrase?





Categorise

Categorise the following statements.

1

What you're saying is simply not true.

2

I think you need to give more arguments to be able to say so.

3

I don't know that this data allows for such an interpretation.

4

That's a gross generalisation.

5

I really think your statement requires further explanation.

Strong disagreement

Mild disagreement

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



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

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 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



Things are heating up

Read back over the phrases for responding to criticism on the previous page.
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?





Preparation for roleplay

Read the scenario below. **Brainstorm** ideas to support **both** arguments, which you'll use during the roleplay.

(Option: you can complete this activity **in breakout rooms**).

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

1. Extensive planning is too time-consuming. You want to get started straight away.

2. Good planning now will save time later and lead to higher quality output.

I didn't think about it that way...

Even if it may seem counterintuitive...

I think you need to give more arguments...



Roleplay

Roleplay the discussion with a classmate, using the phrases you have learned in the lesson.
Can you come to an agreement?



Colleague 1

Let's get started straight away!

I didn't think about it that way...

Even if it may seem counterintuitive...



Colleague 2

Let's make a solid plan before we do anything!

- Present facts
- Draw conclusions
- Disagree politely
- Respond to criticism



End of the lesson

Idiom

To call someone's bluff

Meaning: to challenge someone to do what they say they're going to do

Example: We called her bluff and it seems that she never had any intention of selling the house.



Additional practice



Presenting facts

Read the phrases from the text again. **Answer** the questions.

Now, if we
turn to...

You'll see
that...

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...

As you can
see...

1. What function do the phrases from the presentation serve?
2. Why is it useful to use these phrases in a presentation?



Drawing conclusions

Read these phrases for drawing conclusions. Can you think of any others to add?

1



This has led us to the conclusion that we really need to take action – fast!

2



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

3



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.

4



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



Multiple choice

- 1 This has _____ us to the conclusion that we need to provide more public transport services to those living in remote villages.
- a. taken b. led c. found d. seen
- 2 Taking all of this _____ consideration, I can say that we're in a pretty good position going into the next quarter.
- a. out of b. in c. into d. with
- 3 For the _____ mentioned, I can conclude that our customer base is changing and we need to change accordingly.
- a. reasons b. things c. facts d. result
- 4 Even if it may seem _____, the conclusion must be that our employees are more productive during a four day week than a five day week.
- a. counterintuitive b. facts c. to lead d. found



Fill in the gaps

Complete the phrases using the words in the red box.

- 1 Now, if we _____ to our data about...
- 2 Please _____ note of these findings, which show a correlation between...
- 3 At this point, I'd like to _____ your attention to the fact that...
- 4 This has _____ us to the conclusion that...
- 5 I don't know that this data _____ for such an interpretation...

to take
to draw
to allow
to turn
to lead



Discuss

Read the statement and **answer** the questions.

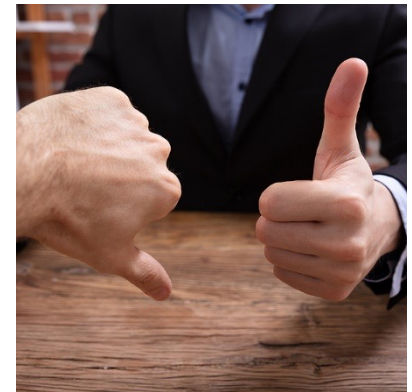
“

Let's agree to disagree!

Have you ever heard or used this phrase before? Do you think it's a good way to end an argument?

Are you usually comfortable expressing disagreement? What are some factors that might influence this?

Have you ever wanted to disagree strongly but decided not to?





Discuss

When was the last time you had to use facts to back up your point?

What was the topic? Did you have to deal with any disagreements?





Answer key

P.6: Presenting facts: 1, 3, 4, 10
Drawing conclusions: 2, 8, 9
Disagreeing and defending: 5, 6, 7

P.7: 1. b 2. c 3. c 4. a

P.12: Strong disagreement: 1, 4, 5
Mild disagreement: 2, 3

P.15: Restating your position: I didn't think about it..., Let me reformulate..., I think you've misunderstood...
Admitting a mistake: OK, actually...,
Arguing with someone's logic: What you're saying is..., What you're saying simply...,
I'm sorry but you're wrong..., No, that's simply not true, The findings are founded...,
How can you argue...Where's the logic...

P.24: 1. (b) 2. (c) 3. (a) 4. (a)

P.25: 1. turn 2. take 3. draw 4. led 5. allows



Summary

Phrases for presenting an argument:

- *Now if we turn to...; If we take a closer look at...; As you can see...*
- *Now If we turn to page seven, you'll see a diagram explaining this.*
- *If we take a closer look at the figures, they begin to reveal more.*

Phrases for drawing conclusions:

- *This has led us to the conclusion that...; The facts speak for themselves...; **It may seem counterintuitive, but we must conclude that...; this proves***
- *This has led us to the conclusion that imports must be halted for the time being.*
- *This proves that work-life balance is more important than promotion for some employees.*

Phrases for disagreeing and defending:

- *This doesn't necessarily mean...; That seems like a gross generalisation...; I'm afraid I don't agree...; I think you've misunderstood me.; I think you're focusing too much on...; What you're saying is a common misconception.*
- *I take back what I said.; Let me reformulate my idea.*



Vocabulary

This has led us to the conclusion that...

The facts speak for themselves...

That seems like a gross generalisation...

I'm afraid I don't agree...

It may seem counterintuitive, but...

I'd like to call your attention to...

this proves...

I think you've misunderstood me.

I think you're focusing too much on...

I take back what I said.

What you're saying is a common misconception.

Let me reformulate my idea.

