Proposing solutions

COMMUNICATION

LEVEL
Intermediate

NUMBER
EN_BE_2512X

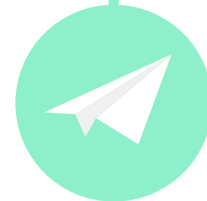**LANGUAGE**
English

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Goals

- Can use simple structures to propose solutions.

- Can propose solutions in the context of a conversation.

Why don't we all take a break now?
I'm not sure that's a good idea.
Let's learn English then instead.

Preview and warm-up

In this lesson you are going to learn **new phrases** to **propose solutions** to **problems** in English.

How about we lower the price?

Proposing solutions

Most **business meetings** have the goal of **solving a problem**. There are always lots of problems in general at work too.

To **solve a problem**, you must **propose a solution**.

Shall we have another meeting on Thursday?

Have you thought about...?

We often **propose solutions** in English by **asking a question**.

Have you thought about offering a longer deadline?

New phrases

Wouldn't it be better to...?

Wouldn't it be better to research this more?

Shall we all...?

Shall we all take a short break?

Why don't we...?

Why don't we call Martin to check?

How about we...?

How about we have a meeting all together?

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Let's...

This is a very common way to **propose a solution** without asking a question.

Let's check with Human Resources.

Maybe we could...

Using a **modal verb** like *could* is a good way to **propose a solution**.

Maybe we could rename the product.

Fill in the gaps

Fill in the gaps with the words below.

could	don't	better	about	thought

1. How _____ we call HR?
2. Maybe we _____ move the meeting to Monday?
3. Have you _____ about speaking to Martin?
4. Why _____ we take a break?
5. Wouldn't it be _____ to check the figures first?

Make a suggestion for each of these problems

Your team deleted the presentation you worked on all week

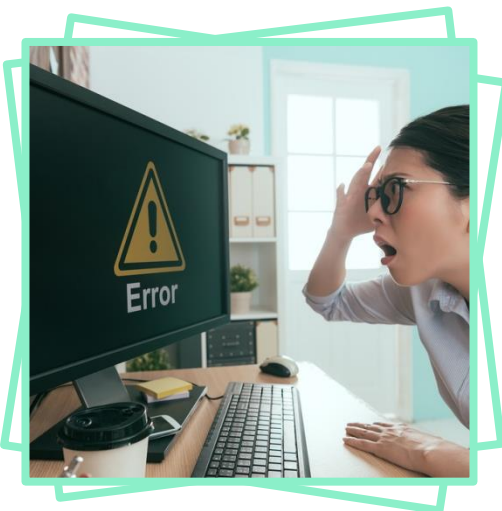You didn't order catering for your boss's important meeting

Water is coming through the ceiling in your office

Your biggest client just arrived at your office without an appointment

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Imagine what has happened. What solution would you suggest if you were there?

A

B

C

D

Responding to solutions

When someone suggests a **solution**, you need to be able to **respond** in the right way.

You should be **polite** even if you **don't agree** with the solution.

Hmm, **I'm not sure about that**.

That's a good idea

That sounds good

Both of these are **positive** ways to **respond** to **solutions**.
The phrases mean that you **agree** with the **solution**.

That's a good idea!

Ok, let's do that

This is another way to show that you **agree** with the **solution**.

Ok, let's do that!

I'm not sure about that

I'm not sure that will work

Both of these phrases are polite ways to **disagree** with a **solution** that your colleague offers.

Well, **I'm not sure about that**.

I'm not sure that will work because Jason won't be here.

I don't think that's a good idea

This is another phrase to politely **disagree** with a **solution** that your colleague offers.

I don't think that's a good idea at the moment.

Fill in the gaps in the dialogue and then practise it with a partner

Let's

The president's plane is delayed and he's going to _____ the meeting.

think

I'm not _____ that will work because the clients have travelled a long way today.

don't

I don't _____ that's a good idea. They hate wasting time.

about

That's a _____ idea.

How _____ we postpone the meeting?

good

Hm, OK. Why _____ we take the clients out for lunch and then have the meeting later?

miss

_____ ask the vice president if he can come to the meeting instead.

sure

Writing

Think of a problem you had in your workplace recently. With a partner, write a short dialogue like the one on the previous page.

Why don't we...?

I'm not sure...

Speaking

Perform the dialogue with your partner.

Common problems

On the next few pages, you will see some **phrases** which describe **common problems**.

You've **made a mistake**.

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to go wrong

to not go right

If something is **not correct**, we can say it *goes wrong* or it *doesn't go right*.

Something has **gone wrong**.

accidentally

Accidentally means that you did **not plan** or **intend** to do something.

I **accidentally** called the boss by the wrong name.

to forget to do something

to lose something

If you **forget to do something**, you do **not remember** to do it.
If you **lose something**, you do **not know where** it is.

I **forgot** to order lunch for our meeting.

We have **lost** all of the files.

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I **accidentally** knocked over a glass of water onto my computer.

I've **lost** the company mobile phone!

I **forgot** to book a flight for the boss – he's waiting at the airport now!

The presentation **didn't go right** – someone even fell asleep!

Speaking

Answer the questions with your classmates.

1 Have you ever forgotten to do something important for your boss?

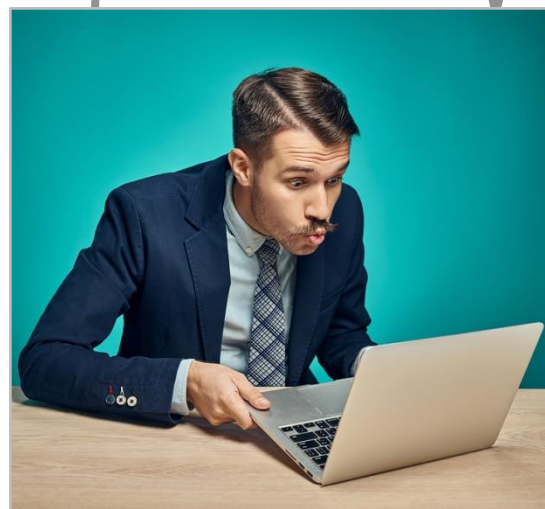**2** When was the last time you lost something at work?

3 Has anything gone wrong for you at work this week?

Imagine

Think of a situation at work when something has gone wrong, or you lost or forgot something.

■ Try to remember (or imagine) some details.

Role play

Now role play a conversation between you and a colleague about what's gone wrong. Your colleague should propose solutions for your problem.

I've forgotten...

How about we...?

Student A: Something has gone wrong!

Student B: You have a solution!

Reflect on the goals

Go back to the second slide of the lesson and check
if you have achieved all the goals of the lesson.

yes

no

Reflect on this lesson

Think about everything you have seen in this lesson.
What were the most difficult activities or words? The easiest?

+
_____
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+
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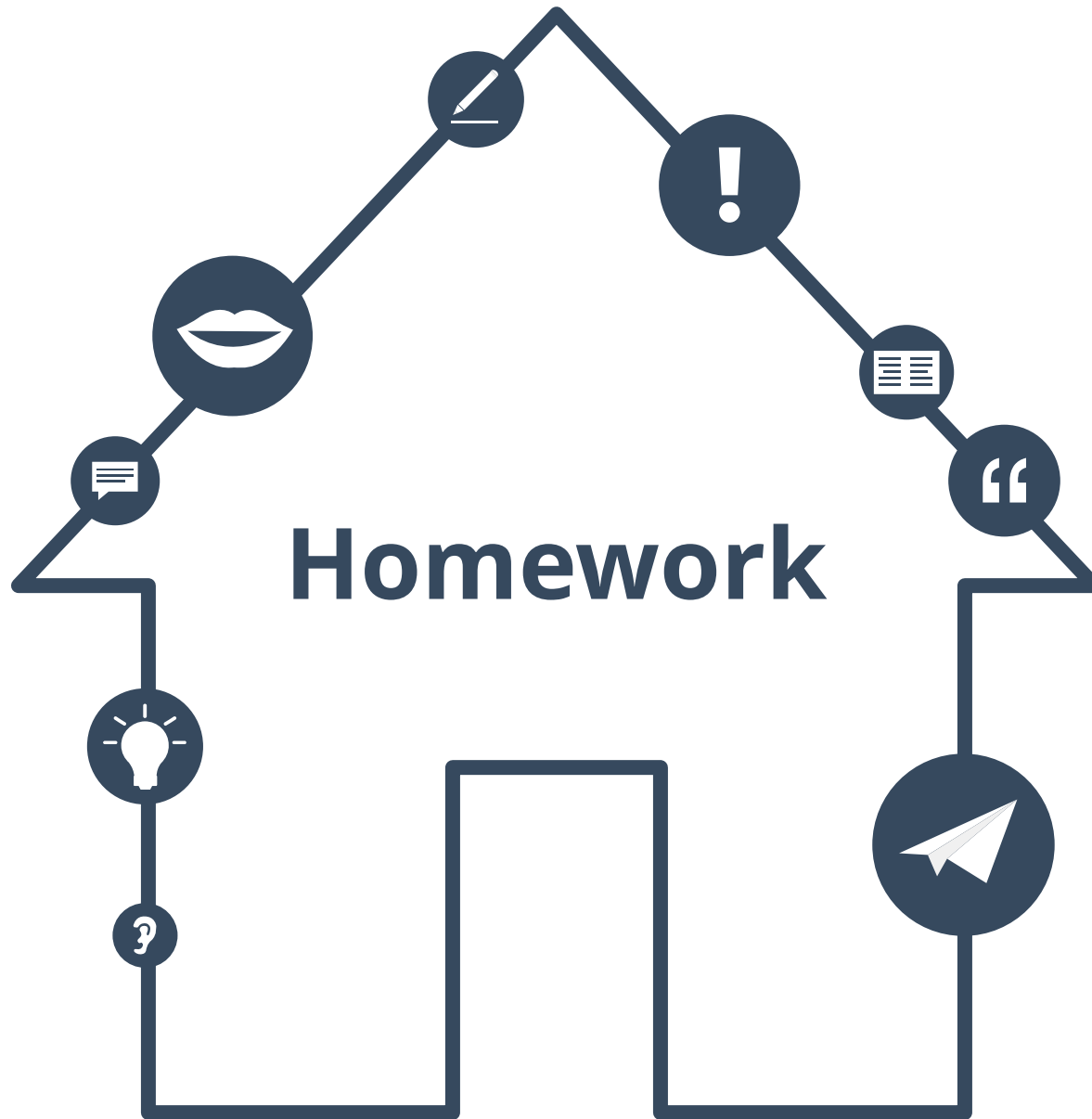If you have time, go over
the most difficult slides again

Answer key

Exercise p. 18

miss, about, sure, don't, think, let's, good

Exercise p. 10

1. about, 2. could, 3. thought, 4. don't, 5. better

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Homework

Fill in the gaps to complete the phrases.

1. Wouldn't it _____ better to wait until the manager arrives?

2. _____ we all get some lunch?

3. I'm not _____ that will work.

4. I _____ to buy John's plane tickets.

5. Something's _____ wrong!

Writing

Write another dialogue for a problem you have had at work using the model on p. 18 to help you.

Why don't we...?

How about...?

Let's...

I'm not sure...

I don't think...

I accidentally...

Exercise p. 32

1. Wouldn't it be better to wait until the manager arrives? 2. Shall we all get some lunch? 3. I'm not sure that will work. 4. I forgot to buy John's plane tickets. 5. Something's gone wrong!

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