

English at Work

Episode 46: Acting up

Language to use when you're in charge

- Narrator:** Welcome back to English at Work. Last time we heard Anna pitching her new plastic aubergine idea to Paul, in a lift. He was on his way to a biscuit-lovers' convention and didn't have much time. She gave the perfect elevator pitch but it's down to Paul to give her idea the go ahead – the problem is, he seems to have gone missing.
- Tom:** Denise, isn't Paul supposed to be here today?
- Denise:** Yes. He went to that biscuit lovers' convention yesterday but he said he'd be back today.
- Tom:** Maybe he's eloped with a pack of custard creams, eh?!
- Denise:** Very funny Tom. I'll give him a call now (*phone rings*) ...oh, that might be him now. (*ANSWERS*) Hello, Tip Top Trading... oh hello Paul, everything OK? ...oh no! ...oh no!
- Tom:** What Denise?
- Denise:** He choked on a biscuit at the convention and he's in hospital. (*To Paul*) Yes Paul, that was Tom... you want to speak to Anna? I'll just get her... get better soon Paul. (*To Anna*) Anna, Anna, it's Paul on the phone, he wants to speak to you – sounds important.
- Anna:** Me? Oh right, can you transfer the call please? Hello Paul, are you OK?
- Paul:** Not really. Damn Garibaldi biscuit got wedged in my throat, ended up banging my head on a table trying to get it out.
- Anna:** Oh dear, so you're not coming to work today?
- Paul:** I'm afraid not, I need to rest for a few days so I was wondering, in fact I'm asking you, could you act up?
- Anna:** I've told you before Paul, I can't act... or even sing.
- Paul:** No, no Anna. Act up, I mean do my job for a bit – be the boss – just for a day or two.
- Anna:** Me?! Be the boss?!
- Tom/Denise:** What?!
- Paul:** It's quite easy really. Just check my diary and you'll see what needs doing. And if you have any problems just... erm... just ask Denise. Thanks Anna.
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Narrator: That's great Anna. You've got all the skills to do Paul's job – maybe even more! But you need to take charge and show who's boss!

Anna: Oh right. But what should I say?

Narrator: Well, don't be too bossy, but you could say: "If anyone has any issues about their work please come and speak to me", or, "I would like to have a meeting to discuss our work", or, "If there's anything you want to ask, my door is always open". That makes you sound like a very approachable boss! Good luck.

Anna: Thanks.
Right everyone, as you know Paul has put me in charge for a while.

Tom: I'm not being funny Anna, but why you? I mean, I've been here the longest.

Anna: Tom, if you have any issues about your work, please come and speak to me.

Tom: Oh right... I will then.

Denise: Erm... Anna... congratulations on your promotion. I just wondered, now you're in charge, could I do a little less admin and a bit more selling?

Anna: Let's see Denise. I'd like to have a meeting soon to discuss all our work, so we can talk about it then. OK?

Denise: Oh yes, thanks Anna.

Anna: Right then. It's business as usual and if there's anything you want to ask, my door is always open. Right, back to work... and Tom, could I have a word in my office now please?

Narrator: Excellent work Anna. You're sounding like the boss already – just don't start eating biscuits! Being in charge means being firm but fair and keeping your cool. Here's a reminder of some of the phrases Anna used:

*If anyone has any issues about their work please come and speak to me.
I would like to have a meeting to discuss our work.
If there is anything you want to ask, my door is always open.*

Anna: Take a seat Tom. Could you please close the door?

Tom: I thought "your door was always open"?

Anna: Not this time. I need to speak to you about this message in Paul's diary.

Tom: Oh, right, I see. You need my help? What does it say?

Anna: It's for two days' time and it says, *Socrates, IPC, final*.

Tom: Oh no, that doesn't sound good.

Narrator: Oh dear, what could that mean? Could there be trouble ahead? Join us again soon to find out. Bye.

Listening Challenge:

What does Denise want to do a bit more of, now that Anna is in charge?
(Answer: A bit more selling)