

LearnEnglish Select Upper Intermediate

6.3 Revising plans

Useful language

Discussing a problem

There's something we need to discuss ...
 Unfortunately (we're going to have to come up with a change of plan).
 I'm sorry to drop this on you ...
 I need to talk to you urgently ...
 I'm sorry to have to say that ...
 I was hoping that ... but ...

Keeping calm and rational

It's very good of you to let me know.
 I appreciate you telling me.
 I'll have to talk to ... , but I'm sure we'll be able to sort/work something out ...
 It must have been a very difficult ...
 Oh no, ...
 I'm sorry to hear that.
 Try not to worry.
 It's/That's a shame ...
 This is unfortunate.
 This isn't what I was expecting.

Euphemisms

challenging
 intimate
 affordable
 less than (impressed)
 issue
 between jobs

Grammar

Speculating with modal verbs

Modal verbs have many different functions and can be used in many ways, including making speculations. They are future speculations, or guesses, about what outcomes are thought to be possible, but aren't known yet. The modal verb is always followed by an infinitive without 'to':

*We **might** even get people wanting to join.*
*Our solution **may** be even better than the original plan.*
*I wonder if we **could** save some costs elsewhere.*

We can also use the second conditional with modals to make speculations. The 'if' clause (before the comma) uses the past simple, and in the second half of the sentence, the modal verb is always followed by an infinitive without 'to':

*If we had more money, we **could** book a bigger room.*
*If she tried hard, she **might** succeed.*

Check my progress

Are these statements true for you? If not, go back and do some activities from the unit again.

	Yes	No
I can communicate a serious and urgent problem.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I can keep calm and rational under pressure.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I can present clear ideas for dealing with a problem.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>