

EXPRESSING OPINION

Express your Opinion in a Professional Setting

Learning Objectives

Module: Expressing Opinion

Topics: Express your opinion in a professional setting

Duration: 90 minutes*

Grammar Points:

Degrees of comparison

General Expressions:

Stating our

opinion/ideas

Agree and disagree

Giving feedback

Objectives:

- Students know how to state their opinion, thoughts, or ideas in many different ways;
- Students are able to deliver their opinion, thoughts, or ideas in a meeting or discussion;
- Students are able to handle disagreements that usually occur in an everyday working environment;
- Students are able to give feedback or advice that is related to the result of any working activities;
- Students can practice expressing opinion assertively, yet politely.

**) This is the general estimation.*

The duration may differ based on the number of students.

Lesson Plan

Stage Aim	Time	Interaction	Activities and Detailed Procedure
Pre-activity	5'	Teacher - Student	Asking the students about their experience being involved in discussions or decision- making processes at the workplace.
Introduction to Expressing Opinions in English	10'	Teacher-Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teacher will ask some students to do a role-play, based on the written script;• Teacher will ask the students if they understand the conversation and to discuss what they are talking about.• Teacher will explain about the general rules when stating an opinion, or being involved in a discussion.

Lesson Plan

Stage Aim	Time	Interaction	Activities and Detailed Procedure
Grammar points: Degree of comparison	15'	Teacher Teacher - Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teacher will introduce Degree of comparison to the students, by referring to the previous conversation.• Teacher will have each student practice how to use Degree of comparison through Zoom annotation/verbal communication.
Multiple expressions of stating an Opinion, Thoughts, or Ideas	15'	Teacher Teacher - Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teacher will explain about the general rules and expressions/key phrases that the student can use when stating an opinion;• Teacher will explain multiple scenarios when being involved in a discussion or being asked for an opinion/feedback, including how to ask for an opinion.• Teacher may ask the students to read the phrases out loud, to keep them engaged.

Lesson Plan

Stage Aim	Time	Interaction	Activities and Detailed Procedure
Speaking Practice/ Role-Play	30'	Teacher - Student	Teacher will pair/group the students and ask each pair to choose a scenario (or lucky draw, for a bit of fun). Then the students will be asked to enter a breakout room and prepare the dialogue for 5-10 minutes. After that, each pair will perform, in front of the other students.
De-brief, Q&A and Quiz session	10'	Teacher - Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teacher (and students) will summarize the takeaways from today's class. Teacher may repeat some important points that need to be highlighted.• Teacher will ask the students if there are some vocabulary that is new or unfamiliar.• Teacher will open Q&A before closing the sessions.• (Optional) Teacher will give a short teaser on the focus of the next class.• Teacher will direct the students to fill out the quiz.



Expressing an Opinion

The ability to express opinions is very important because we will be involved in various meetings and discussions, focused on making decisions. How we convey our opinions, ideas and thoughts will make us more appreciated in the company. Maintaining a vocal presence will allow us to be discovered, as well as enable us to actively contribute to a decision-making process.

Our thoughts are valuable, as they could spark critical brainstorming and alternative ways of thinking that keep finding innovative and novel ways to solve problems in the workplace.

Pre-activity

- Have you had any experience speaking up during an important discussion in English?
- What drives you to speak up?
- What holds you back when stating your opinion?

Share with us how you feel!



Conversation Practice

Read a dialogue between two team members who are having a discussion related to digital product development in a company.





Practice a Conversation (During a Meeting)

Garry: Hi Sarah. Thank you for setting up the meeting. Appreciate it. I know you have a hectic week.

Sarah: That's okay, Garry. It's also part of my responsibility.

Garry: Anyways, I want to discuss how we are going to develop our platform. My team has successfully designed a fresh look at our website's interface this week. We also adjusted critical features to enable our users to access the information faster. I'd be interested in hearing your thought about this as the CPO.

Sarah: That is fantastic, Garry! I am pleased to hear that. So, before answering your question... What is your consideration?

Garry: Well, from my perspective, a more responsive design will be easier for our users to navigate, especially since it is designed to be SEO-friendly. We can attract more visitors to our website and increase the traffic as well. What do you think about that?

Sarah: I agree with you, Garry. Our website is one of our primary resources to attract new users and clients. My concern is that most of our visitors are accessing our platform through mobile apps. I suppose this should be taken into account as well.



Practice A Conversation (**During a Meeting**)

Garry: Hmm... I'm afraid I disagree with you on this. Mobile users don't convert as often as desktop users. About 70% of our users upload their documents through desktop because it is simply easier for them to get the files right from their desktop.

Sarah: I understand your view, but we need to be aware that our mobile users are increasing rapidly. We have to ensure that our mobile app is equally accessible just like our desktop version. We have worked very hard to gain a high rating in both Play Store and App Store, so let us do our best to ensure the quality of our mobile apps.

Garry: Very well then. I will take this note and bring it to my team for future development.

Sarah: Thanks, Garry. I appreciate it. Would you please keep me in the loop for any future updates related to our apps?

Garry: Definitely. We'll keep you updated for sure. Thank you for your feedback, Sarah.

Sarah: You're welcome Garry. I am sorry, I guess I need to leave now. I had another meeting in five minutes.

Garry: Sure things. Enjoy the rest of the day.

Sarah: You too, bye!

Conversation Practice

- What went well in the conversation?
- What do you think is important when stating your opinion?
- Can you identify the important phrases when stating an opinion during their discussion?





General Rules: **Stating Your Opinion**

Generally, you can say:

- I think...
- I believe...
- I feel...
- I suppose...
- I guess...

I think, we can show this apps at the BOD meeting next week. Let's say this is a prototype of what our learning apps will look like. We can ask for their feedback also.

That's a terrific idea!





General Rules: **Stating Your Opinion**

Or, in a formal style:

- ★ In my opinion,
- ★ In my view,
- ★ From my viewpoint,
- ★ From my perspective,
- ★ It seems to me that ...
- ★ As far as I'm concerned ...

In my opinion, we can show this apps at the BOD meeting next week. Let's say this is a prototype of what our learning apps will look like. We can ask for their feedback also.

That's a fantastic idea!





General Rules: **Asking Your Opinion**

Generally, you can say:

- What do you think of ...
- What do you think about ...
- What's your opinion about ...
- What are your views on ...
- What are your thoughts on that issue?

What do you think of showing this apps at the BOD meeting next week? Therefore we can ask for their feedback as well.

I think that's doable.



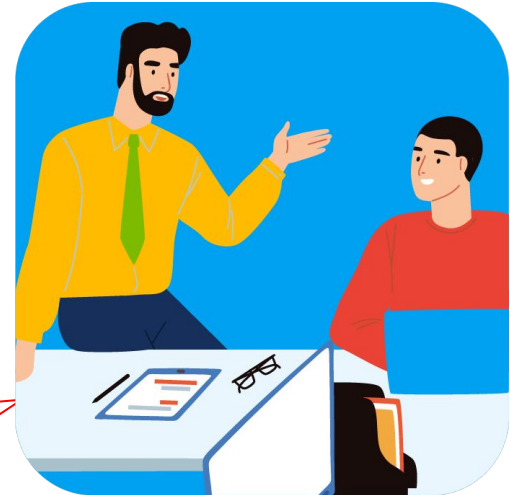


General Rules: **Responding to an Opinion**

Depends on the context, but generally you can say:

- That's a good/terrific idea!
- I like that idea.
- I think that's doable/we can do that/that's easy.
- I agree/disagree with you.
- That's true, but...

I think that's doable.



What do you think of showing this apps at the BOD meeting next week?
Therefore we can ask for their feedback as well.



Key Phrases

To be able to deliver your opinion effectively, you need to remember some **key phrases** or sentences often used in various types of business settings.

If you want to be fluent in English quickly, you need to practice using these key phrases outside of the classroom with your classmates.





Key Phrases

Agree / Disagree

AGREE

- I'm absolutely convinced that...
- I'm sure that...
- I strongly believe that...
- I have no doubt that...
- It seems to me that...

AGREE/ DISAGREE

- I see your point, but...
- You make a good point, but ...
- I agree with you to an extent, but ...
- That seems like a good idea, but...

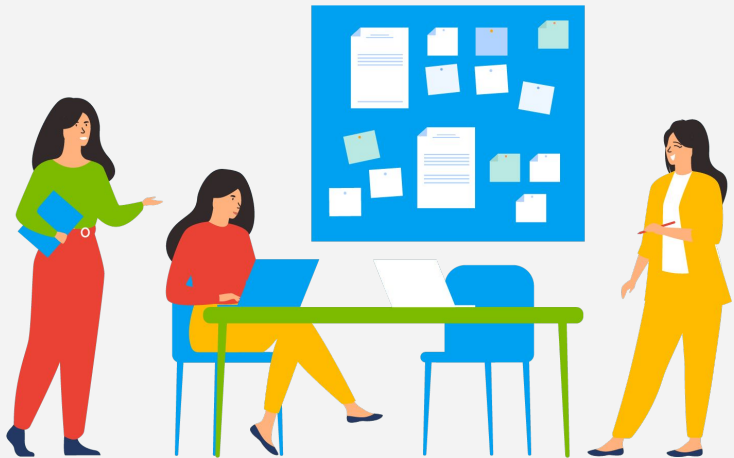
DISAGREE

- I'm afraid I disagree with you on this ...
- I don't agree with you/I disagree with you...
- That's not the way I see it ...
- I don't think so/ I don't feel the same.

Overcoming the Fear of Speaking **Your Opinion**

It's common that we may feel nervous to speak up during a very important meeting. It is also normal to be hesitant to speak up to someone from a higher level, or to someone we just met. We don't want to sound awkward or opinionated, or say inappropriate things.

This is something we can tackle by practicing the right framework when stating our opinion.





General Rules: **The FSA Framework**

FACTS

Things we can see, hear or observe.
The reason that underlines our opinion.

STORY

Our perspective.
How the facts connect with our situation/context.

ASK

Open-ended question.
To invite engagement from other parties.



Example of Applying **The "FSA" Framework**

I attended an international Learning and Development summit two weeks ago, and one of the speakers from Harvard University presented her latest research. According to her latest findings, more than 70% of the Learning Management System users spend less than an hour learning from the apps/website every day, while less than 30% of them keep using it after six months since their onboarding to the platform.

I was thinking about it, and I feel that the fact relates to many of our managers' struggle to find time to learn outside of their working schedule. As a matter of fact, I am among that group too. Therefore, I thought of setting up an automatic notification feature on our platform to remind everyone to learn.

Is this something that can be added to our work pipeline?

How can we collaborate with the Learning & Development Team to introduce this?





Example of Applying The "FSA" Framework

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ASK

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How can we collaborate with the Learning & Development Team to introduce this?

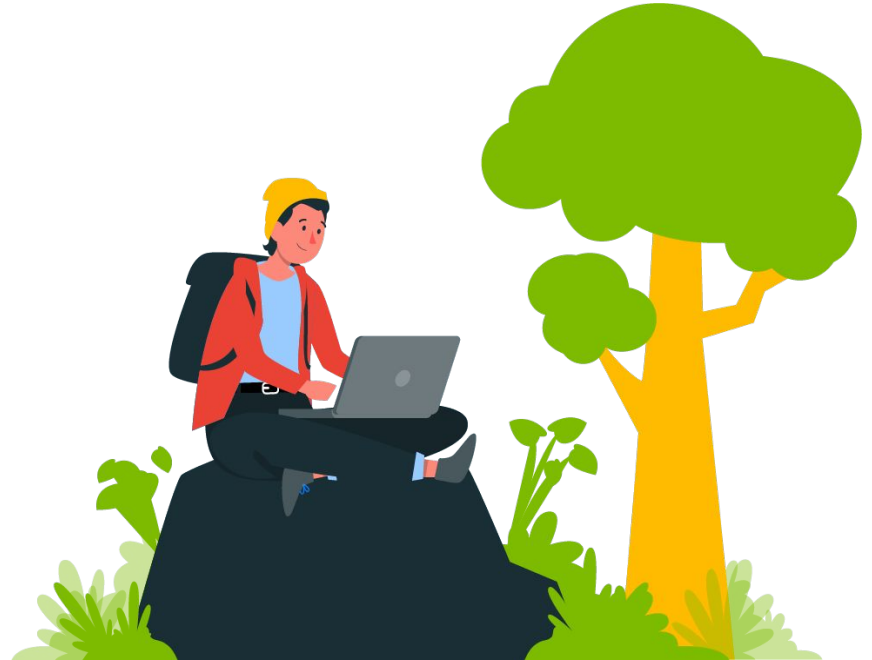




Short Practice

Asking & Giving an Opinion

What's your opinion about
working from anywhere?



Grammar **Points**

Degrees Of Comparison

During a conversation, when we give an opinion, we usually compare one thing to another. In English, we called this the **degrees of comparison.**

It is a formula that uses adjectives to compare something with another.

We believe that having this feature will allow for a **faster** and **better** user experience.
If we can launch this app **sooner...**

The **most challenging** part of developing this platform is balancing the current app performance and device memory constraints

Garry,
the Chief Technology Officer
of LND company.



Grammar Points

Degree of Comparison

Lula is as tall as Ryan

as + (adjective) + as



POSITIVE

Lula is taller than Mia
Mia is shorter than Lula

to be + (adjective)er or
more (adjective) + than
less (adjective) + than



COMPARATIVE

Arkaf is the tallest
among the UI/UX team.

the + (adjective)est or
most (adjective) or
least (adjective)



SUPERLATIVE

Grammar Points

Degree of Comparison

Degree	Explanation	Example of sentences
POSITIVE	The positive degree is used to tell about the existence of a quality. This offers <u>no comparison</u> .	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ardian is just as thoughtful as Kiki.• Learning a programming language is just as important as learning how to work in a team.
COMPARATIVE	The comparative degree is used to <u>compare two things</u> to show which has the lesser or greater degree of the quality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We are recruiting more junior developers than we did last year.• It is safer to store the data in the Cloud than our computer device.
SUPERLATIVE	The superlative degree is used to compare <u>more than two things</u> to show which has the least or greatest degree of the quality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I think algorithm is the most difficult subject in computer science.• The simplest way to do this is to hire an experienced SEO writer.

Grammar Points

Degree of Comparison: Rules of Adjective

Type of adjective	Example in Positive Degree	How to Form in Comparative Degree	How to Form in Superlative Degree
One syllable	Strong	Stronger (add -er)	the + Strongest (add -est)
One syllable ending vowel consonant	Thin	Thinner (double consonant and add -er)	the + Strongest (add -est)
More than one syllable	Famous	More famous/ Less famous (add more or less)	the + Most famous/ Least famous. (add most or least)
More than one syllable ending "y"	Pretty	Prettier/ Less Pretty (change "y" --> "i" add -er , or add less)	the + Prettiest/ Least Pretty (change "y" --> "i" add -est , or add least)
Irregular (No rules)	Good Bad Many	Better Worse More	the + Best Worst Most



Grammar Points

Degree of Comparison: Rules of Adverbs

Type of adjective	Example in Positive Degree	How to Form in Comparative Degree	How to Form in Superlative Degree
One syllable	Fast	Faster (add -er)	the + Fastest (add -est)
More than one syllable	Carefully	More carefully/ Less carefully (add more or less)	the + Most carefully/ Least carefully (add most or least)
Irregular (No rules)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">WellBadly	<ul style="list-style-type: none">BetterWorse	the + <ul style="list-style-type: none">BestWorst

Grammar Points

Common Mistakes

 Wrong	 Correct	Reason
She is more faster when doing administrative tasks.	She is faster when doing administrative tasks than conceptual assignments.	You should not put double comparative or double superlative.
Of the two, he is the most suitable candidate.	Of the two, he is the more suitable candidate.	You should not use superlative to compare two things.
Their product prototype is the most unique among the others.	Their product prototype is unique among the others.	The word "unique" itself already show that it has the "most" distinctive quality.

Grammar Practice

Degree of Comparison

Fill in the blank with the suitable modal verb by choosing from the options written in the sentences.

1. Before you learn looping statement, you need to understand arithmetic operators **(better/best)** than you learn function statement.
2. I don't think he can fit into our working culture. He is the **(less determined/least determined)** candidate from all the candidates at the interview today.
3. Our company's website page authority score is rising. I think this is the **(higher/highest)** score we've gotten so far.
4. We are on a very tight budget this year. We need to cut unnecessary spending and make our development process **(efficient/more efficient)** than before.
5. This is the **(more complex/most complex)** project, among the many projects I have previously led in the past 5 years of my career.
6. The document with many images inside is **(heavier/more heavy)** to open than the one with fewer images.
7. Working from home occasionally is **(tireder/less tiring)** than having to commute to work every day.
8. I don't understand why we need to add **(more/most)** words to the article. It has met the SEO requirements.

Grammar Practice

Degree of Comparison

Fill in the blank with the suitable modal verb by choosing from the options written in the sentences.

1. Before you learn looping statement, you need to understand arithmetic operators **better** than you learn function statement.
2. I don't think he can fit into our working culture. He is the **least determined** candidate from all the candidates at the interview today.
3. Our company's website page authority score is rising. I think this is the **highest** score we've gotten so far.
4. We are on a very tight budget this year. We need to cut unnecessary spending and make our development process **more efficient** than before.
5. This is the **most complex** project, among the many projects I have previously led in the past 5 years of my career.
6. The document with many images inside is **heavier** to open than the one with fewer images.
7. Working from home occasionally is **less tiring** than having to commute to work every day.
8. I don't understand why we need to add **more** words to the article. It has met the SEO requirements.



Grammar Points

COMMON MEETING DYNAMICS



Key Phrases

Common Meeting Dynamics: Checking Understanding

To avoid any misunderstanding that may possibly occur during a discussion, you are encouraged to do a quick "understanding-check" occasionally. For example:

So you're saying that...

- Am I right in thinking that what you mean is...
- Can I just check that everyone understands...
- Am I correct in assuming that...

Am I correct in assuming that, due to the budget constraints, we would allocate most of our resources for finding the best candidate?

That's correct, Mia. I think manpower is the critical factor for this project.





Key Phrases

Common Meeting Dynamics: Interruption

Most of the time, we need to avoid interrupting others if possible; however, if you really have to interrupt during a conversation, make sure you do it politely. For example:

- Sorry for interrupting, but...
- Can I just say something here?
- Could I add some points before we get too far?
- Sorry to pause you there for a bit, I need to share this urgent information to you.

Hold on, Andi. Sorry to cut you there. How come we only allocate 3 weeks to develop the apps?
Does it seem realistic to you?





Key Phrases

Common Meeting Dynamics: Reaching a Consensus

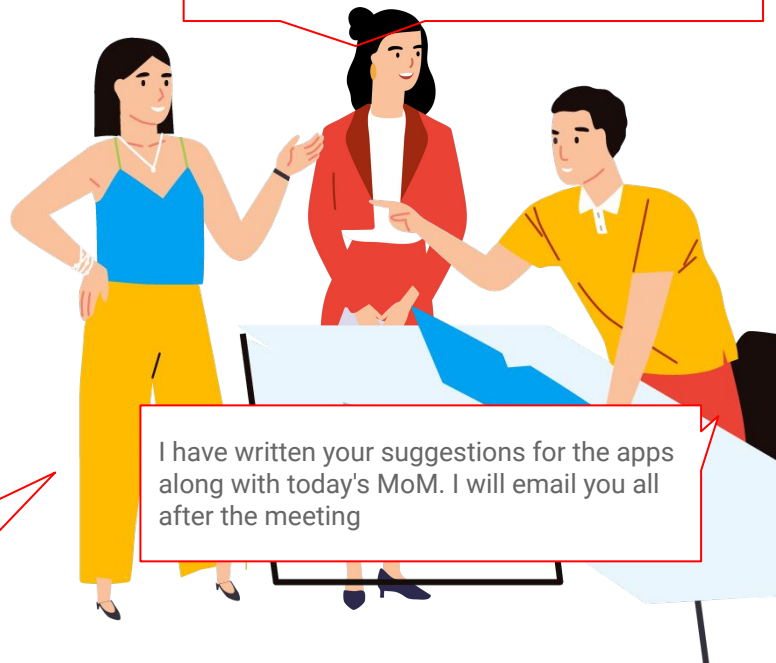
A productive meeting should result in a consensus or decision. You can use these phrases to sum up the discussion:

- Can we agree on the team's roles and timeline?
- Let's summarize what's been agreed...
- Ok, we seem to have some sort of consensus that...
- Here are our action points...

Yes. I will schedule a meeting with Ms. Linda from XYZ agency next week and my team members will prepare the deck

Ok, so now we have agreed that we are going to collaborate with our partners for this project. Before closing the meeting, can we agree on the team's roles and timeline?

I have written your suggestions for the apps along with today's MoM. I will email you all after the meeting





Key Phrases

Asking for Feedback

Feedback is a great way to evaluate which areas you can fix or do better, particularly on how well we are expressing our opinion. If you want to ask for feedback, make sure to be mindful of the following:

- **Ask for specific feedback.** Asking "*what is my feedback?*" can make other people confused about what to say to you. They may just give you a simple answer.
- **Refrain from asking a leading question** such as:
"Am I doing well during the presentation?"
- **Avoid asking a close-ended question** such as: "*Do you have feedback for me?*"
- **Say thank you** to express gratitude to the other person for their time and thoughts.



Key Phrases

Asking for Feedback

Example:

Prita: How did the pitching go?

Bryan: We did great, Prita. I think Jody nailed it!

Jodi: You think so? I was shaking the whole time. It's my first time pitching in front of international boards. That's why I hid my hand in my pocket. Hopefully, they didn't notice it.

In your opinion, what could I change about my presentation skills to deliver a more powerful presentation next time?"

Bryan: Hmm..it seems to me that you're fine. Your English is understandable. Perhaps, if you can change some words to sound **more professional** than casual, that would be perfect.

Jodi: Ah, yes... I need to learn about that. Thank you, Bryan!





Key Phrases

Giving Feedback/Advice

If you were asked to give advice/feedback, there are some things you need to make sure of:

- Focus on the behavior, not the person.
- Be honest, but don't put the other person down. Even though criticism may hurt, it is possible to deliver it compassionately.
- Using more "I", or "we", NOT "you" in a conversation, to avoid sounding too judgemental. Be specific on your choice of words.
- Remember to provide context such as: *"during the meeting this afternoon.."*
- Refrain from using many adjectives such as: *"This deck should have a better-looking design."* Conclude with a positive comments.





Key Phrases

Giving Feedback/Advice

Example of lousy feedback/advice



Jodi: What things do I need to adjust in my presentation deck to appeals to the VCs?

Prita: I don't think the design looks good. You should not use so many typefaces because it seems messy.

Jodi: Ok, noted. Anything else?

Prita: About the copy-writing, your words are very casual, and there are many typos. You can not use this deck to present in front of a very important person for our company.

Jodi: All right. I'll change it immediately.

Example of a good feedback/advice



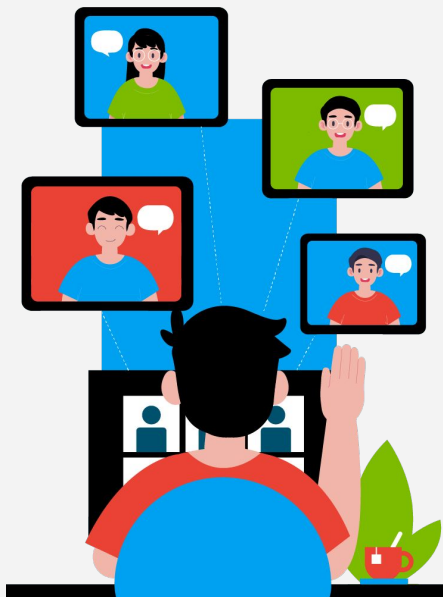
Jodi: What things do I need to adjust in my presentation deck to appeals to the VCs?

Prita: When I look at the design, I feel it is difficult to understand each slide's main points. There are many different typefaces, and my mind was wondering if I missed something when reading through the copywriting.

Jodi: I understand. I will use only two typefaces then.

Prita: That's better. Let's simplify it because the VC may have come from many meetings before us. Also, when you send this deck back to me, can you please make sure it's proofread and formatted correctly?

Jodi: Will do, Prita. Thanks for your feedback.



Let's Practice!

At this point, you have learned how to express your opinion, understand different ways to be involved and engaged in a discussion, as well as some important key phrases. You have also learned how to use comparison to add value to your opinion.

Now, let's do a group practice!

Speaking practice - **Expressing Opinion Role-Play**

Scenario 1:

This is a discussion about Product Development in a startup, between cross-functional representatives. **You may discuss specifically what type of product will be launched along with the stages, timeline, and launching strategy.**

Fika: You are a Product Development Manager of an XYZ start-up. You gather your team to discuss the best way to launch the product to the customers. You have invited Nancy the Marketing Head, Arbi the Full-Stack Developer, and Yohan the Data Scientist.

Nancy: You are the Marketing Head of an XYZ start-up. You want to clarify the list of influencers who are going to be among the first 10 users for your marketing campaign.

Arbi: You are the Full-Stack Developer of an XYZ start-up.

You are supporting your team with the technicalities of the product.

Yohan: You are the Data Scientist who presents the forecast analysis in the upcoming future. You are representing Clara, the Department Head, who is unable to attend the meeting.

Speaking practice - **Expressing Opinion Role-Play**

Scenario 2:

Firman: You are a new Software Developer at ABC Company.

You have been working for two years, and you want to know in which areas you can develop your strength. You want to contribute better to the company. **Thus, you ask Kania, your supervisor, for advice/feedback.**

Kania: You are the Head of Software Development at ABC Company.

You liked Firman from the very first time working with him. You acknowledge his capability of handling many projects simultaneously and his ability to exceed the expectation of the clients; however, you realize that, lately, Firman has been working too hard and maybe experiencing burn-out. **You might want to give some advice or feedback on overcoming his problem.**

Speaking practice - **Expressing Opinion Role-Play**

Scenario 3:

Create your own scenario!

You may create a hypothetical scenario about two or three people having a discussion on who is going to be involved in a project, how to achieve a certain target, solving a technical problem, or any other scenario that you see fit.

Don't forget to use important key phrases & grammar that we have learned, so you can practice and remember.



What Have You Learned Today?

- What are the general rules when giving feedback to someone?
- Which aspect do you find to be the most challenging part of expressing an opinion?
- Are there any questions?

Thank You

See you in the next class