

OXFORD Business English

English for Meetings

Kenneth Thomson

EXPRESS SERIES



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MultiROM

English for Meetings is accompanied by a MultiROM which
has a number of features.

Interactive exercises to practise useful phrases, vocabulary,
and communication through your computer.

Listening extracts. These are in enhanced audio format that
can be played on a conventional CD-player or through the
audio player on your computer.

If you have any problems, please check the technical support
section of the readme file on the MultiROM.



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About the book

Participating in a meeting is a real challenge for non-native speakers and can cause a certain amount of anxiety. When are you allowed to make a contribution and how do you word it properly? When is the right time to ask questions and what happens if you actually have to run the meeting? And what about writing up the minutes?

English for Meetings presents all the speaking skills that you need in order to participate in a meeting with confidence. This compact, but comprehensive course contains the expressions needed in typical everyday business meetings – from informal chats to formal meetings. **English for Meetings** presents the vocabulary and expressions in such a way that you can learn them easily and use them immediately.

English for Meetings consists of six units, which present different areas that you might come across in a meeting. Unit 1 deals with how to arrange a meeting and also includes expressions needed when postponing a meeting. Following this, other important topics are presented, for example, the use of small talk at the beginning of a meeting, how a meeting starts, how to express your opinion, and how to interrupt. **English for Meetings** includes useful expressions for people chairing the meeting, as well as for the other participants. You can also find out how to draw up an agenda and write the minutes for both formal and informal meetings.

Every unit begins with a **Starter** – this is a warmer exercise where you can discuss your personal experiences and thoughts on the unit topic. The main section of the unit consists of listening comprehension exercises, authentic materials, and exercises that enable you to practise using the language of the unit. There are speaking activities at various points throughout the units, where you can practise the relevant expressions. At the end of each unit is the **Output**, where you will find reading texts on various related topics, for example, video-conferences. The book ends with a fun **Test yourself!** crossword to recycle and consolidate the vocabulary and expressions you have learnt in the book.

You will find the answers to all exercises in the **Answer key** at the back of the book, along with the **Partner Files**, the **Transcripts** of the listening extracts, and the **A–Z word list**. The **Useful phrases and vocabulary** section includes all the essential phrases, organized thematically; you can use this to prepare for an important meeting quickly and efficiently.

The **MultiROM** contains all the **Listening** extracts from the book. These can be played through the audio player on your computer, or through a conventional CD-player. In order to give yourself extra listening practice, listen to it in your car or copy to your MP3-player. The **Interactive exercises** let you review your learning by doing **Useful phrases**, **Vocabulary**, and **Communication** exercises on your computer; this will be particularly valuable if you are using the book for self-study.

Could we meet next week?

STARTER

Work with a partner. Match the different types of meeting (1–6) with the definitions (a–f).



- a People who work in the same department have this type of meeting regularly.
- b This is a meeting of a company's most senior managers.
- c If you need new ideas, you have this type of meeting.
- d This is a meeting for a company's investors.
- e At this type of meeting, you talk about what has been accomplished on a project.
- f This type of meeting is held at the beginning of a project.

Now ask your partner the questions below and make a note of the answers. Then tell the class what you have found out.

- How often do you have meetings in English? Which of the meetings above do you attend? What other types of meeting do you have?
- Are your meetings with colleagues from your company or with contacts from other companies (customers, suppliers, clients, ...)?



1 Listen to the two telephone dialogues and complete the table.

	Dialogue 1	Dialogue 2
a What will the meeting be about?		
b When will the meeting take place?		
c How long will the meeting last?		



2 Listen again and complete the sentences from the dialogues.

Call 1

- 1 Could we _____ a time to meet next week?
- 2 How _____ Monday at nine?
- 3 Sorry, I can't _____ it then.
- 4 How _____ sometime after lunch?
- 5 Should we _____ for the whole afternoon?
- 6 Let's leave the length of the meeting _____ for now.
- 7 So, I'll _____ you on Monday at two.

Call 2

- 8 _____ we could meet and go over the details _____?
- 9 What time _____ you _____ in mind?
- 10 Would half past five _____ you?
- 11 I'm _____ I have another appointment then.
- 12 Well, I'll see you _____ Monday _____ 7.30, then.
- 13 I look _____ to meeting you then.

Which sentences (1–13) can be used:

- a to arrange a meeting? _____
- b to discuss the length of a meeting? _____
- c to arrange the time of a meeting? _____
- d to say that a suggested time for a meeting is not convenient? _____
- e to confirm the time of a meeting? _____



3 Put the words in the right order to make typical sentences for making arrangements.

- 1 let's soon meeting a sometime have
Let's have a meeting sometime soon.

- 2 like to you when meet would ?

- 3 at Thursday how 11.30 about morning ?

- 4 would for next be Tuesday you how ?

- 5 fine would yes, that be

- 6 to forward you I look then meeting

4 Work with two partners to arrange a suitable time to meet. First look at the Useful Phrases on this page. Then look at your diary and the instructions in the Partner Files.

PARTNER FILES

Partner A File 13, p. 59
 Partner B File 1, p. 56
 Partner C File 20, p. 61

USEFUL PHRASES

Asking for a meeting

Could we schedule a time to meet next week?
 I'd like to schedule a meeting as soon as possible.
 Can we meet and go over this together?
 Perhaps we could meet and go over the details in person?

Suggesting a meeting time

How about Monday at nine?
 How about sometime after lunch?
 Could we meet next week?
 Can I suggest 7.30 on Thursday evening?
 Would half past five suit you?

Saying that you aren't able to attend

Sorry, I can't make it then.
 I'm afraid I have another appointment then.
 I'm a bit tied up then. How about another time?

Saying that you can attend

Sounds good.
 Yes, that works for me.
 Yes, that would be fine.

Confirming the day and time

See you on Monday at seven.
 So, I look forward to seeing you on Tuesday at four.

5 Read these two emails confirming meetings. Which email is formal and which is informal?

Icons: Delete, Reply, Reply All, Forward, Print

To: ian.sweeney@dbd.com
 From: mark.peters@dbd.com
 Subject: Meeting to discuss contract changes

Attachments: May23_Points_to_Discuss.doc

Hi Ian,

It was nice to speak to you today. Thanks for agreeing to meet with me. Just to confirm the date and time of our meeting: Monday 23 May at 2 p.m. My PA will let you know which meeting room we'll be using later in the week.

I'm attaching a list of points to discuss. Give me a call if you have any questions before the meeting.

Looking forward to seeing you on Monday.

Regards,

Mark

Icons: Delete, Reply, Reply All, Forward, Print

To: armitage@fisher-grp.co.uk
 From: caroline@rainbow-search.com
 Subject: Meeting

Dear Mr Armitage

It was a pleasure to speak to you today. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank you for agreeing to meet with me next week.

I would also like to confirm the date and time of our meeting: 7.30 p.m. on Monday, 8 September in Rainbow Executive Search's offices at 11 Great Russell Street, London WC1.

Should you have any questions in advance of our meeting, please do not hesitate to get in touch with me.

I very much look forward to meeting you next Monday.

Yours sincerely

Caroline Jones

T: +44 (0)30 4454 3683
 F: +44 (0)30 4454 3680
 email: caroline@rainbow-search.co.uk
www.rainbow-search.co.uk

We can often say the same thing in either a formal or less formal way.
Complete the table with sentences from the emails on the previous page.

Formal	Informal
1 <u>It was a pleasure to speak to you today.</u> I'd like to take this opportunity to thank you for agreeing to meet with me ...	It was nice to speak to you today. 2 _____
3 _____	Just to confirm the date and time of our meeting: 4 _____
I very much look forward to meeting you ...	Give me a call if you have any questions before the meeting. 5 _____
Yours sincerely	6 _____

GETTING EMAILS RIGHT

Unlike most written business communication in English, email offers the chance of communicating using an informal, friendly style of written English.

You can greet someone in an informal email using phrases like: *Hi Martha Hello Paula Dear Jim*

Very informal emails can be closed with phrases such as: *All the best Cheers*

When an email needs to be formal – for instance, when it's to a business contact who you don't know well – then a formal greeting should be used:

Dear Mr Simpson

Closing phrases should also be more polite:

Best regards (neutral)

Yours sincerely (very formal)

It's common to add a friendly phrase before the close:

Looking forward to seeing you soon. (informal)

I look forward to our meeting on Monday. (formal)

The first letter of an email after the greeting always has a capital letter:

Hello Robert,

Just to let you know ...

- 6 Write an email confirming the date and time of a meeting using one of the notes below. Think about whether the email should be formal or informal.**

Remember!
Send email to David:
confirm meeting (to discuss problems with cleaning contract)
• Wednesday, 29th June
• 10.20 a.m.
• in my office

To do
Email Mrs Franks: confirm meeting
talk about our new service package
• Friday, 12 September
• 3.00 p.m.
• @ their head office in Bristol



7 Caroline Jones is phoning Charles Armitage. Listen to their conversation. Why is she calling him? What do they decide? Then listen again and complete the sentences from the dialogue.

I'm _____¹ sorry.
I'm _____² I have to ask you
if we can _____³ our meeting next
week. Something has _____⁴ up.
Unfortunately I can't get
_____⁵ of it.

Do you have another
time in _____⁶?

Could we _____⁷
the meeting until Wednesday
at the same time? Would that
_____⁸ you?

Sorry to _____⁹
you. It couldn't be
_____¹⁰. I'm
afraid.

8 Match sentences from exercise 7 with the sentences below that have a similar meaning.

- a Would it be possible to put the meeting back and meet on Wednesday at 7.30?

Could we postpone the meeting until Wednesday at the same time?

- b It's unavoidable, unfortunately.

- c Sorry to have to trouble you.

- d I really must apologize.

- e Would you like to suggest another time?

- f I have to attend to something else.

USING FIRST NAMES

The use of first names in English-speaking business environments is common. Though it is not the practice everywhere, even senior managers are addressed by junior staff using their first names in some offices.

On first meeting someone it's best to address them by their surname:

*It's a pleasure to meet you, Ms Carmichael.
Pleased to meet you, Mr Freeman.*

After that, the changeover to first names is usually made quite quickly, either later during the first meeting or at the second meeting. If your relationship with your business partner is friendly and relaxed, you can switch to their first name without asking their permission.

You may, however, wish to ask someone's permission before using their first name with phrases like:

Do you mind if I call you Caroline?

This question can be answered with phrases such as:

No, not at all. Please do.

You can invite someone to use your first name with phrases like:

*Please, call me Carl.
By the way, it's Paula.*



9 Listen to Mark Peters' dictaphone message and use it to complete the email he writes later to his assistant.

To: anna.evans@dbd.com
 From: mark.peters@dbd.com
 Subject: Arrangements for meeting with sales team

Hi Anna,

I've just arranged a meeting with Ian Sweeney in sales for Monday at 2 p.m. Can you take care of the preparation, please?

Could you ¹ a meeting room and ² Ian and me the room number? Also, can you ³ the agenda to Ian and the consultants? And we'll need AV – can you ⁴ a data projector and an overhead projector for us? Don't forget to ⁵ some coffee and biscuits.

Finally, can you ⁶ the meeting, please? The discussion is important so I'll need you to ⁷ the minutes.

Thanks for your help.

Best,

Mark

10 Work with a partner and choose one of the 'to do' lists below. Your partner is your executive assistant. Talk about the planned meeting and what you would like your assistant to do. Then switch roles and do the same with the other list.

Meeting to discuss autumn
 production schedules - Wednesday,
 4th August, 3.45 p.m.

Ask Sara to arrange:

Meeting room
 Data projector
 Tea and biscuits
 Minutes

Meeting to plan this year's stand
 at ARKA trade fair - my office -
 Monday, 9th Feb 10 a.m.

Get David to arrange:

Overhead projector
 Minutes
 Coffee and sandwiches
 Copies of designer's drawings to
 Mike Conrad and Sally Major

- 11** Find six verbs often used with *a meeting* to make useful phrases. Look from left to right as well as up and down. Write the verbs into the spaces below. The first example is done for you.

D	E	⁴ P	K	Y	E	S	F	B	A
C	¹ H	O	L	³ D	X	X	N	W	T
F	C	S	J	W	N	C	W	D	C
K	D	T	G	Q	E	E	K	A	C
U	R	P	N	A	⁵ C	H	⁶ A	I	R
A	I	O	X	G	E	B	T	C	N
² C	A	N	C	E	L	M	T	N	H
Q	K	E	S	N	Y	K	E	H	W
L	R	S	V	G	D	L	N	T	R
² A	R	R	A	N	G	E	D	D	F

- 1 to hold
- 2 to _____
- 3 to _____
- 4 to _____
- 5 to _____
- 6 to _____
- } a meeting

Match the verbs (1–6) with the phrases (a–f).

- a ☐ to hold a meeting at a later time or date than originally planned
- b ☒ 1 to have a meeting
- c ☐ to organize a meeting
- d ☐ to lead a meeting
- e ☐ to decide not to hold a meeting and to tell people this
- f ☐ to go to a meeting



Now use the verbs (1–6) to complete the sentences.

- If Peter can't get here by five, couldn't we just _____ our meeting and have it early next week instead?
- Could you _____ a team meeting for next Wednesday at 4 p.m.? Ask Neil Cross if he can attend and book one of the large meeting rooms.
- We've decided to _____ the meeting. Instead, could you just email me your comments?
- I have to _____ a lot of meetings and spend a lot of time talking about work. Unfortunately, I often don't have enough time to actually get on with my work.
- It's important that the team knows about these changes. Let's _____ a meeting and give everyone the details.
- I'm going to _____ our meeting this morning so I'll be making sure that we stick to the agenda and that we finish on time.

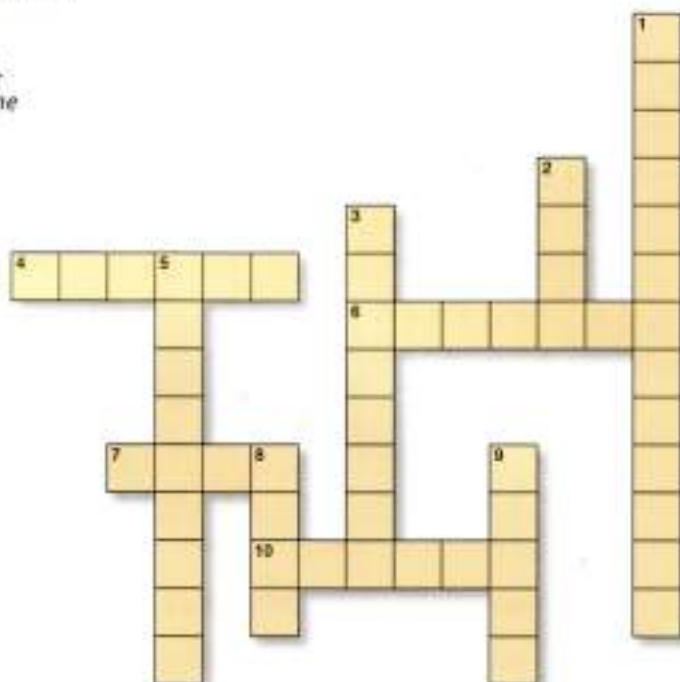
12 Use the clues to complete the crossword.

Across

- 4 She's ill so we have to ... the meeting.
6 Could I ... that we meet and go over the details?
7 Would next Tuesday at four ... you?
10 The list of topics in a meeting.

Down

- 1 We need some new ideas. Let's have a ... meeting.
2 I'll ... the minutes in today's meeting.
3 To change a meeting to a later date.
5 Please ... the agenda to the other team members.
8 Let's call a ... meeting for everyone in the department.
9 To take the leading role in a meeting.



13 Put the words in the right order to make sentences with expressions from this unit.

- 1 time meet could week a schedule we to next ?
2 meet go details person and over perhaps could we in the ?
3 meeting then forward to I you look
4 questions call if meeting give a me before any have you the
5 appointment time I'm have that afraid another at I

QUICK MEETING

You are invited to a brainstorming session to decide on a new single-sentence mission statement for your company. Work alone, then in small groups, in order to arrive at the perfect solution. In the second part of the meeting, decide on a rough design for a poster that will illustrate your mission statement.



OUTPUT

Read the article and say whether you agree that meetings are more effective if they have a more formal structure.

Old is New: The New Old-Fashioned Meeting



If you think that agendas, minutes, and chairpeople in meetings are out, think again. As companies seek to make more effective use of their staff's time, 'old-fashioned' and formal features are making a big comeback in the meeting room, reports **Janine Adler**.

In the past, companies tried to encourage the creativity of their staff through flexible, informal meeting formats. You know the kind of thing: no agendas, no chairpeople,

and people entered and left meetings as it suited them. This trend was probably most popular back in the late 1990s. But when the global slowdown in economic performance came, most companies had to start thinking more about their costs.

'It was really quite common for meetings to go on for hours and then for everyone to get up and leave without really knowing what had been decided,' says Aaron Blumfeld, a lecturer in business administration.

'A company's staff is one of its major costs, and staff meetings are very expensive for a company. There is now a trend among large companies to reintroduce structure into meetings to make better use of time,' adds Blumfeld.

Some CEOs see the task of making meetings more efficient as so important that they are taking personal responsibility for making sure that the job gets done.

Lynn Rossmann is CEO of Luxes AG, a subsidiary of Hamilton-Luxes Corp. She spent time looking at ways of making meetings more focused. In the end, she decided that the good old-fashioned meeting format with a chairperson and an agenda was the right one for her company.

'If you want to hold a meeting at Luxes, you have to have a chairperson and an agenda. It's not that I like bureaucracy – I'm just getting people to use their time more effectively,' states Rossmann.

OVER TO YOU

- Are the meetings you attend formal or informal?
- What other ways are there to make a meeting more effective?
- The article mentions some possible advantages and disadvantages of formal and informal meetings. What other advantages can you think of? What disadvantages?

2

Can we make a start now?

STARTER

Read the list of statements about the chairperson's role and decide whether you agree or disagree. Then discuss your answers with your partner.

A chairperson should:

Agree

Disagree

- | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 finish the meeting on time, even if a decision hasn't been reached. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 encourage everyone to contribute to the discussion, even if some participants don't want to. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3 let the most confident people dominate the meeting because they probably have the best ideas. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4 follow the agenda and not allow the discussion to go in different directions. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5 stop participants from interrupting each other. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6 allow an antagonistic atmosphere to develop because it makes participants think more clearly and creatively. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |



AUDIO



1 Colleagues from across Europe are attending a kick-off meeting. Listen to the three dialogues. What is the relationship between the people below?

- | | |
|---|--|
| a They have never met before. | |
| b They have met before but probably do not know each other very well. | |
| c They probably know each other quite well. | |
| 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Steve and George | 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Paula and Steve |
| 2 <input type="checkbox"/> George and Paula | 5 <input type="checkbox"/> Andre and Steve |
| 3 <input type="checkbox"/> George and Juliet | |



2 Complete the sentences from the dialogues. Listen again to check your answers.
Work with a partner to take turns reading out the completed sentences.

- 1 Nice to _____ you again. _____ are you?
- 2 _____, thanks. And you?
- 3 I'm _____, thank you.
- 4 _____ you _____ my colleague, Juliet Strauss?
- 5 Hello, I'm George Frank. _____ to meet you.
- 6 Pleased to _____ you _____.
- 7 _____ me _____ my colleague, Andre Jacob.
- 8 How _____ do?



3 Now listen to the three dialogues again. Tick ☒ which topics are discussed.

	work	sport	religion	cinema	politics	family	holidays	hobbies	weather
Dialogue 1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dialogue 2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dialogue 3	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Work with your partner to discuss which subjects on the list are not appropriate topics at business meetings. Can you add any other topics that are good to discuss?

SMALL TALK

Small talk is used to break the ice and create a relaxed atmosphere before the real business begins. However, making small talk can be difficult, particularly when you meet people for the first time.

One problem is that small talk can be about many different topics and you probably won't be sure of all the vocabulary. One solution is to prepare topics that you would like to talk about. If you're going to have a meeting with people from another country, research topics relating to that country. For instance, being prepared to chat with French people about the Côte d'Azur or Danes about Copenhagen will make you feel more relaxed and mean that you can start conversations confidently.

Of course, making small talk is not just about talking – it's also about listening, and the more actively the better. There are a number of commonly used phrases which show other people that you're interested in what they're saying:

I see. Oh, really? Interesting. That's absolutely fascinating!

4 Match the two parts to make small talk questions.

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| 1 Which hotel | a did you fly into? |
| 2 How long | b are you staying at? |
| 3 Which airport | c my colleague, Yvonne Jamieson? |
| 4 Did you | d the first time you've come here for a meeting? |
| 5 Is this | e a colleague of Jim Robertson's? |
| 6 Are you | f come here by plane? |
| 7 Do you know | g have you worked for your company? |

6

Now match these answers to the questions.

- A Not really. He works in marketing and I'm in customer service.
 B No, we came by car.
 C Almost fourteen years.
 D London Stansted.
 E No, I don't think we've met.
 F No, it isn't. I was here in June for the kick-off meeting.
 G The Carlton International, off Shaftesbury Avenue.



5 Work with a partner to practise making introductions and small talk.

Partner A

Say hello and introduce yourself.

Ask about B's journey to the meeting.

Respond. Ask if this is B's first meeting at the head office.

Respond.

Partner B

Say hello and introduce yourself.

Respond. Ask about A's hotel.

Respond. Ask how long A has worked for the company.



6 Listen to a chairperson talking at the beginning of a meeting and say whether the sentences below are true ☒ or false ☒. Correct the false sentences.

- 1 Nigel is the last person to arrive at the meeting. ☐
- 2 Tim McCarthy is from the marketing department. ☐
- 3 Sally Jones will come to the meeting late. ☐
- 4 The aim of the meeting is to discuss strategies for increasing sales. ☐
- 5 John Lawson will present an overview of what the competitors are doing. ☐
- 6 Alison King will present the new sales strategy. ☐

Now listen again and complete the sentences.

- a It's _____ to see _____.
- b Before we _____, can I _____ Tim McCarthy to you all.
- c Sally Jones has _____ her _____.
- d Pierre Kaufmann can't _____ either.
- e As I said in the _____ I emailed last week, we'll be _____ our strategies for increasing sales.
- f Let's get down to _____.

7 Put sentences (a–f) from exercise 6 under the correct heading in the table.

Welcoming participants	Introducing someone	Reporting apologies	Stating the aims	Starting the meeting
a,			1,	

Now add these sentences to the table.

- 1 We're meeting today to talk about the sales conference next month.
- 2 I have apologies from Cathy Roberts and Stuart Johnson.
- 3 I'm glad you could all make it today.
- 4 This is Edward Lincoln, one of our management consultants.
- 5 It's great to see everybody.
- 6 Does everybody know Mario Maleta?
- 7 Our objective today is to look at the new advertising campaign.
- 8 Can we get started?
- 9 Unfortunately, June Wright wasn't able to make it today.
- 10 So, let's begin.



8 Match the two parts to make sentences for introducing yourself or someone else. Listen to the dialogue to check your answers.

- | | |
|---|-------------------------|
| 1 Does everyone | a for two years. |
| 2 Peter, why don't you introduce | b about yourself. |
| 3 Tell us a bit | c as our head of PR. |
| 4 I've been with Brent Jones | d know Peter Thomson? |
| 5 I was the business development manager for the West | e since 2002. |
| 6 Frank joined us two months ago | f yourself to everyone. |

9 Match the verbs on the left with phrasal verbs on the right that have the same meaning.

- | | |
|------------|----------------|
| 1 discuss | a go back over |
| 2 review | b think about |
| 3 finalize | c look at |
| 4 examine | d talk about |
| 5 consider | e finish off |

Now complete the sentences using the correct form of the phrasal verbs (a–e) above.

- Right. This morning we'll be _____ at ways of cutting our costs and also talking _____ next year's budget.
- The annual conference is next week, so we'll be _____ off our final preparations this morning.
- We need some new ideas about how to increase our sales, so we'll be _____ about a new marketing strategy this afternoon.
- OK. There have been three accidents in the factory in the last month. This morning we'll be _____ back _____ our health and safety guidelines and thinking _____ what we can do to improve our safety record.
- We'll also be looking _____ the numbers from accounting and talking _____ ways that we can improve upon them.



- 10** Use one of the sets of notes to prepare and give the introduction to a meeting. Remember to use phrases to welcome participants and to start the meeting.

A

Notes for meeting

- aim of meeting: review our last advertising campaign
- remember to introduce Margaret Hart
- apologies: Jim Hendry (ill)

B

Important reminders

- objectives of meeting: finalize plans for next year's sales conference
- introduce Harry Finch from our event management agency
- apologies: Jill Cooper (holiday) and Bob Culbert (training course)

- 11** Match the descriptions with the items on the formal meeting agenda.

- a This is when issues which are not on the agenda can be discussed. It stands for *any other business*.
- b These are the main points for discussion at the meeting.
- c This is when the notes of the last meeting are checked for accuracy.
- d This is the point in the meeting when the chairperson reports who is not able to attend.
- e This is when any issues relating to the last meeting are discussed.

Agenda

Board meeting –
Wednesday, 13th November

- | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 Apologies | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 Minutes of the last meeting | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3 Matters arising from the minutes | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4 Review of IPO action plan | } <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5 Redesign of corporate image | |
| 6 Post-IPO investment proposals | |
| 7 AOB | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Now listen and match the extracts from the meeting (A–E) with the items on the formal agenda.

- A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐



12 Listen to two colleagues discussing a sales meeting. Complete the missing information in the memo below.

Hi everyone,

As you all know, we're having the regional sales meeting next week instead of the week after.

Here are the points we'll be talking about. As usual, I've indicated who will be leading the discussion. If you have any questions, can you let me know what they are before the meeting, please?

Regional sales meeting agenda
February 13th, 9.30
Room 338

- s _____¹ targets for next
t _____² months (Francie)
- team m _____³ responsible for
k _____⁴ accounts (Michael)
- f _____⁵ from marketing (Ralf)
- competitor c _____⁶ (Ralf)

Best,
Polly



FORMAL AND INFORMAL AGENDAS

These days, most agendas for meetings in English-speaking business contexts are informal. The majority are sent as emails and consist of the time, date, and place of the meeting, and an overview of the topics that will be discussed.

The style of writing is brief and note-like, for example:

Update on construction status

Discussion of proposed budget

This brief, note-like English is also used in formal agendas. The real difference between formal and informal agendas is that, in the former, each part of the agenda is clearly numbered and other elements are included.

Formal agendas are usually reserved for the most important meetings within a company – for instance, a board meeting – or meetings which businesses are required by company law to hold, such as the Annual General Meeting (AGM).

- 13** The formal agenda in exercise 11 is for a board meeting. Which of the following types of meeting are, in your experience, more likely to have formal or informal agendas?



- 14** Work in groups of four to practise the beginning of a meeting. First look at the Useful Phrases on this page. Then look at the instructions in the Partner Files.

PARTNER FILES

Partner A File 3, p. 56
 Partner B File 14, p. 59
 Partner C File 7, p. 57
 Partner D File 8, p. 57

USEFUL PHRASES

Welcoming participants

It's nice to see everyone.
 Thanks for being here today.

Stating objectives

We'll be discussing ...
 Joaquin will be examining ...

Asking participants to introduce themselves

Why don't you introduce yourself to everyone.
 Tell us a bit about yourself.
 Could you tell us all who you are and say something about yourself?

Introducing yourself

I'm the business development manager.
 I've been with Ofitech SA since 2002.
 I've worked for the company for four years.
 I'm based in the Valencia office.
 I work at our Bilbao branch.

- 15** Put the words in the right order to make sentences with expressions from this unit.

- 1 my let introduce me colleague
- 2 you've first this meeting come for is here the a time ?
- 3 Smith know everyone Margaret does Ms ?
- 4 pleasant had I journey you hope a
- 5 about tell bit yourself a us
- 6 down business to get let's
- 7 nice it's meet to you person in
- 8 be can't Sally us today with

QUICK MEETING

Your company has been left \$50,000 in the will of a former employee. The will states that the money should be spent 'on improving the lives of present employees'. Call a meeting to discuss how to spend it. Explain the point of the meeting and then try and come to a conclusion.

OUTPUT

Read this advice for chairpeople about running meetings effectively. Which piece of advice do you think is the most important?

Five golden rules for chairpeople

- Time is god in meetings. Don't let a discussion run on unnecessarily. If an issue can't be resolved in this meeting, cut the discussion off and continue it in a later meeting. But if you and your colleagues have to reach a decision today, be honest and tell them that they'll have to sit there until the job is done.
- Don't call meetings outside office hours. You want participants to be enthusiastic about being at your meeting, so never schedule meetings for evenings or weekends.
- Meetings are for business, not socializing. A certain amount of small talk at the beginning and end of a meeting definitely helps to create a friendly atmosphere and build team spirit. But time is money. Make sure that participants get down to business after a few minutes of pleasantries. Also make sure that business is concluded before someone changes the subject to football again.
- Give people enough time to prepare for a meeting. It's surprising how many chairpeople call meetings at short notice and then complain that the participants haven't prepared properly. With advance notice, participants will come to your meeting having thought about your agenda, read through the background papers, prepared presentations, and come up with solutions to problems.
- Meetings should be democratic in approach and spirit. The only point in bringing people together for a meeting is to let them discuss an issue. If you want to announce decisions that have been made, don't do it in a meeting but find another way of communicating it. Your meetings should have a creative and open atmosphere so that your people can make interesting contributions to the discussion.



OVER TO YOU

- Do you agree with the advice given here?
- In which order of importance would you put the five golden rules?
- What other pieces of advice can you give to chairpeople?

3

Can I make a point here?

STARTER

Complete the questionnaire by ticking ☒ either a or b.

1 You want to make a point in a meeting. Do you:

Do you:

- a ☐ wait until someone else invites you to speak?
b ☐ make your point immediately?

2 Someone is speaking in a meeting and you want to say something. Do you:

- a ☐ wait until they have finished speaking?
b ☐ interrupt them with your own point?

3 Someone wants to make a point while you are speaking. Would you:

- a ☐ prefer that they wait until you have finished speaking?
b ☐ prefer that they interrupt you to make their point?

4 Someone is talking nonsense. Do you:

- a ☐ stop them?
b ☐ let them go on?

5 There's a long silence in a meeting. Do you:

- a ☐ say something (anything!) to end the silence?
b ☐ relax and wait for someone else to speak up?

6 Someone is not being clear. Do you:

- a ☐ interrupt and ask them to explain?
b ☐ let them finish and hope that you will understand them by the end?

7 Nobody wants to listen to you. Do you:

- a ☐ stay calm and continue talking?
b ☐ get angry and stop talking?

Turn to page 66 to find out your score.



- 1 Listen to a meeting of the management team at a conference-organizing company, and tick ☒ the correct boxes in the table.

	very good	good	acceptable	poor	very poor
1 Overall sales	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 Telecom sales	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 Pharmaceutical sales	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 Finance sales	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 IT sales	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



2 Match the two parts of the sentences. Listen again to check your answers.

- | | | |
|--|--------------------------|---|
| 1 I think this was due | <input type="checkbox"/> | a result of some bad planning on our part. |
| 2 The market is still a bit depressed because | <input type="checkbox"/> | b of debt and lower share prices. |
| 3 Sales were up here for the reason | <input type="checkbox"/> | c being that we made some mistakes in our market research. |
| 4 I think this was as a | <input type="checkbox"/> | d that the telecoms team performed extremely well. |
| 5 The IT sector performed poorly, the reason | <input type="checkbox"/> | e to excellent work by our production team. |

Now use the words in bold to complete these sentences.

- As a _____ of some aggressive cost-cutting, our pre-tax profits are better than expected.
- The board postponed the IPO _____ of the current lack of stock market confidence.
- Mr Allman has left his job, the reason _____ that we were unhappy with his performance.
- We're looking for a new PR agency for the _____ that our current agency has run out of interesting ideas.
- The project failed _____ to a lack of interest among EKIP's senior management.



3 Put the words in the right order to make the sentences which George Finch uses to structure what he is saying.

- the quick here's situation overview of a

- at first let's telecoms look

- now pharmaceuticals to let's turn

- on to I'll finance move the now sector

- IT about now, what ?

REPORTING PROGRESS

We use the past simple to talk about developments in finished time frames:

Our customer base **increased** in size ... – last year. – two years ago. – in June.
– between 2004 and 2008.

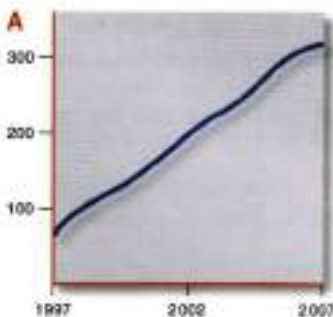
We use the present perfect to talk about developments in unfinished time frames:

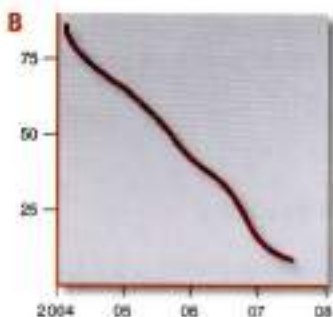
Our sales **have increased** ... – during the current quarter. – for the last two years.
– since last year. – recently.

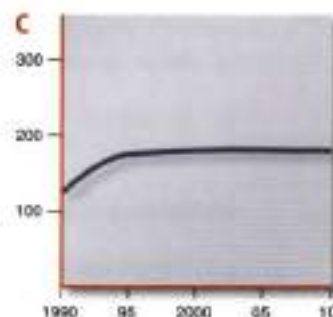
4 Put the verbs in brackets into the past simple or the present perfect to complete the sentences.

- Dualsoft's market share _____ (decrease) in size in the last quarter of 2004.
- The number of profit warnings issued by major companies _____ (go up) in the current quarter.
- The time we spend on customer acquisition _____ (go down) this year.
- The size of Euclipse's workforce _____ (increase) two years ago.
- Pharmaprop's capital investment spending _____ (level off) since last year.
- Complaints _____ (decline) dramatically since 2004.
- The rate of unemployment _____ (reach a high) in 2007.
- The number of franchisers in Europe _____ (rise) steadily between 2004 and 2008.
- Since 1994, our staff size _____ (remain stable).
- In 2004 and 2005, the cost of parts _____ (fall) significantly.

Now write the verbs from the sentences above under the correct graph.









5 Listen to George Finch's presentation again and complete the sentences.

- Overall, our sales performed _____ in the last quarter.
- Sales were up here, for the reason that the telecoms team performed _____.
- Pharmaceuticals was at the other end of the scale. Sales performed _____ here.
- The guys on the finance team performed _____, as ever.
- The IT sector performed _____.

Now write the phrases with *performed* on the scale. The first one has been done for you.

<u>performed</u>	<u>performed</u>	<u>performed</u>	<u>performed</u>
_____	_____	<u>well</u>	_____

6 Match the two parts to make sentences and questions.

- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| 1 Are you saying that we | a a point here? |
| 2 Can we come back | b about that point? |
| 3 Could I just | c promise we'll come right back to you. |
| 4 Could I make | d interrupt you there? |
| 5 Do you think that | e should cancel our stand at the trade fair? |
| 6 Hold on a moment, | f to make a point here? |
| 7 If I understand correctly, | g to your point in a minute? |
| 8 Just a moment, please. I | h we should increase our marketing budget? |
| 9 What do you think | i please. We'll come back to you soon. |
| 10 Would you like | j you're saying that we should end the contract. |

Which sentences (1–10) can be used ...

- to interrupt someone to make a point? _____
- to ask for other people's opinions? _____
- to stop someone from interrupting? _____
- to clarify someone's point? _____



7 Listen to five managers at a European construction company meeting to discuss problems with a project. There are several interruptions. How are they different?



Listen again and complete the sentences from the dialogue.

- _____ on a _____, please, Harry.
- We'll _____ right _____ to you.
- _____ I possibly _____ a point here?
- Can I _____ here, Norman?
- Sorry to _____ you, but can I make a _____ here?
- _____, go _____.

INTERRUPTING POLITELY

In English-language business environments, interrupting is generally seen as acceptable. However, it's important to make interruptions politely. Making your point loudly over what someone else is saying can be regarded as rude.

You can begin an interruption by saying:

*Sorry to interrupt you or (more formally)
I apologize for interrupting but ...*

This can be followed by a quick question to the speaker to give them the chance to accept or reject the interruption. Use questions such as:

*Could I come in here?
Could I make a point here?
Could I just comment on that?*

There are also ways to interrupt without words. For example, clearing your throat or coughing helps you to get someone's attention before you interrupt them to make a point or ask a question.



8

Listen to extracts from two meetings and say whether the following statements are true ☒ or false ☒.

- 1 Meeting 1 is about outsourcing the logistics and IT departments. ☐
- 2 Ralph doesn't want to use Buxton Services because he thinks they can handle things in-house better. ☐
- 3 Jill interrupts because she doesn't hear what Stephen says. ☐
- 4 Meeting 2 is about a takeover offer. ☐
- 5 Robert is worried about the shareholders. ☐
- 6 Sue wants Gordon to explain something. ☐



Now listen again and complete the sentences from the dialogues. Which sentences are used to deal with interruptions and which are used to ask for clarification?

Stephen Hold on, hold on. Can I make a point here?

Ralph Sorry, but I haven't _____¹ what I was saying.

Jill Sorry to interrupt but I'm afraid I don't really follow your _____².

Stephen Could I _____³ finish?

Robert That should ...

Gordon Robert. We've already agreed that we ...

Robert If I could just _____⁴, please.

Sue Can I say something here? I'm afraid that I don't _____⁵.

Gordon Just a _____⁶. You'll get a _____⁷ to speak soon.

Beth No, wait, let's hear what Sue _____
_____⁸, Sue?

ASKING FOR CLARIFICATION

If you don't understand what someone is saying, you can, of course, tell them with a sentence such as:
I'm afraid I don't understand your point here.

You can use the following phrases in **bold** to begin sentences asking someone to clarify their opinion:

Are you saying that we should have invested in new project management software?

Do you mean that it was a mistake to lower our prices?

Is your point that we need to start production earlier than planned?

It's also possible to seek clarification by using positive statements instead of questions. For example:

If I understand you correctly, you need more time to finish the report.

You can clarify what you were saying with phrases such as:

What I meant to say is ...

I was trying to say that ...

9 Unscramble the words to make questions that ask for clarification.

- a that/saying/more/are/we/staff/should/you/hire/?

Are you saying that we should hire more staff?

- b another meeting/think that/we should/do you/have/?

- c the training budget/is/that/we/your point/should increase/?

- d upgrade/saying that/are you/our IT system/we should/?

- e his customers/point that/is your/spend more/time with/he should/?

- f you feel/conference next year/we should increase/do/the length/of the/?

Now match the questions above with these statements.

- 1 ☒ f The annual conference was not successful because it was too short.
- 2 ☐ Our computer system is too old and slow.
- 3 ☐ He spends too much time in the office.
- 4 ☐ The finance team is too small.
- 5 ☐ We don't invest enough money in staff training.
- 6 ☐ We need more time to talk about this.



'He spends too much time in the office.'

10 Work in groups of four to practise giving opinions, making interruptions, and asking for clarification. Look at the Useful Phrases before going to the Partner Files.

PARTNER FILES

Partner A File 15, p. 59
 Partner B File 9, p. 58
 Partner C File 5, p. 57
 Partner D File 19, p. 60

USEFUL PHRASES

Giving your opinion

I think ...
 We should ...
 I'm convinced that we should ...
 I tend to think that it's ...
 It seems to me that ...

Interrupting

Sorry, but ...
 Sorry to interrupt, but I feel that ...
 Could I come in here?
 I'd like to make a point here if I could.
 Can I just say something about that?

Asking for clarification

I'm not sure I understand what you're saying.
 Do you mean that ...?
 Are you saying that ...?
 If I understand you correctly, you think that ...

Dealing with interruptions

Hold on, please.
 We'll come back to you in a moment.
 Just a second, please. I promise we'll come right back to you.

11 Put the words in the right order to make sentences with expressions from this unit.

- there could just you I interrupt ?
- that you what point about think do ?
- moment come promise back you I in right to a we'll
- something add you like would to here ?
- I saying sure you're understand I'm what not
- upgrade like I correctly like you you understand if would to
- you saying the we that increase are should budget ?
- I'm don't I really afraid follow argument your

QUICK MEETING

Your company has decided to appoint an English language teacher. Call a meeting and discuss the requirements for this post. When you have decided on the job description, design an advert to attract good candidates.

OUTPUT

Read the article about video conferencing. Do you agree that having a video conference is more difficult than having a face-to-face meeting?

Digital meetings: The growth in video conferencing

An increasing number of companies are turning to video conferencing to bring people together for meetings. Experts predict that in the next 10 years, video conferences will replace as much as 20% of business travel. So why has there been such growth in digital meetings?

'The key driver behind our use of video conferencing is cost,' says Martin Pile, Director of Corporate Communications with a multinational engineering company. 'The technology means that we can save on airfares and hotel bills. Our people can meet more frequently at less cost.'

'Video conferences also enable us to bring together people who would never meet if the technology was not there.'

Fiona Clark, a communications consultant who advises companies about digital conferencing solutions, is also enthusiastic. But she sounds a note of caution.

'Companies have to realize that the technology is not free. Video conferencing systems are getting cheaper and more reliable, but companies which want to use them still have to make some kind of investment. This can be a particular problem for small and medium-sized companies,' says Fiona.

'There's also the problem of people feeling comfortable with video conferencing,' she adds.

'Meeting via a video link-up definitely beats discussing issues via email. But users often find the video conference environment difficult at first.'

Fiona often recommends companies that adopt video conferencing to invest in training for the staff who will meet each other digitally.

'People have to realize that a meeting via video conference is not the same as a face-to-face meeting. People can feel nervous and act in a different way than usual,' Fiona comments.

'We provide training where we videotape users and get them to notice their nervous tics on screen. If people play with their hair or put their hands in front of their mouths because they're nervous, we can draw

their attention to this and help them to appear more relaxed,' she adds.

'We also advise people to slow down their body language. Hand and body gestures can sometimes seem more aggressive on screen.'

'And don't forget that everyone should wear name tags during video conferences,' says Fiona.

Having a video conference may not be as easy as going to a real meeting, especially at first. But more of our meetings are going to be held via video link-up in the future. It looks like we're all going to need some of that training.



OVER TO YOU

- According to the article, what are the advantages and disadvantages of video conferencing?
- Can you think of other problems users can have with video conferencing? How could these problems be overcome?
- Have you ever participated in a video conference? If so, what did you like or dislike? If not, would you like to?

4

I'm not sure I agree

STARTER

You should never disagree during meetings. The aim should always be to reach agreement.



Disagreement is an important part of solving problems. If it leads to conflict, that's great. Conflict is creative and produces solutions.



It's OK to disagree sometimes, but too much disagreement just causes conflict, and conflict keeps you from getting real work done.

Which opinion(s) do you agree with? Discuss your answers with a partner.

AUDIO



17

- 1** Three managers at the pan-European consultancy Proflexis are brainstorming questions to ask job candidates in a group interview. Listen and tick ☒ the six topics they want to ask questions about.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> budgets | <input type="checkbox"/> project planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> deadlines vs quality | <input type="checkbox"/> staff |
| <input type="checkbox"/> flexibility | <input type="checkbox"/> team building |
| <input type="checkbox"/> junior and senior members | <input type="checkbox"/> time management |

AUDIO



17

- 2** How will the managers ask for the participants' opinions during the interview? Listen again and mark the phrase or word you hear.

- 1 Would you like to **comment on** / **respond to** that?
- 2 Do you **think so** / **agree**?
- 3 Tell us what you think **about** / **of** this.
- 4 Does anyone **have any opinions on** / **want to say anything about** that?
- 5 What do you **feel** / **think** about that?
- 6 Does anyone want to give us their **views** / **ideas** on this?



3 Now look at how the managers express opinions. Listen to the meeting at Proflexis again and complete the sentence beginnings below.

- 1 ☐ _____, we need to think of some difficult ...
- 2 ☐ _____, I think we should ask ...
- 3 ☐ And _____, I think that we haven't asked ...
- 4 ☐ _____, it's more important to meet a project deadline ...
- 5 ☐ _____, that's probably all we'll have ...



Listen again and match the completed beginnings (1–5) with the endings (A–E) to make sentences from the dialogue.

- A ☒ 5 ... time to talk about.
- B ☐ ... than to guarantee the quality of the project outcome.
- C ☐ ... questions about project management.
- D ☐ ... about project planning.
- E ☐ ... enough questions about team building in the past.

4 Unscramble the words to make sentences which ask for or express opinions. Can you say which is which?

- 1 about/our website/you think/what do/redesigning

What do you think about redesigning our website?

- 2 her job well/in my mind/that she does/well,/there's really no doubt

- 3 to finish/we should try/the report/more quickly

- 4 that I should chair/the annual general meeting/do you think

- 5 should invest/that we/in a new IT system/it's absolutely clear

- 6 instead/for you/is it possible/to fly to Manchester

- 7 a new corporate image/but I think/I could be wrong/that we need

- 8 feel that/by ship instead/send the goods/we should/do you

Asking for an opinion: 1 _____

Expressing an opinion: _____

5 Sometimes our opinions are stronger – or weaker – than normal. Read the sentences below and decide whether the opinions given are strong, neutral, or tentative. Compare your answers with a partner's.

	strong	neutral	tentative
1 I could be wrong, but don't we need to invest more time in this project?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 We could send him the minutes of this meeting.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 There's no doubt in my mind that Jess should spend more time on planning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 We might need a bigger team for this project.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 We should take a break at half past eleven.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6 Mike doesn't spend enough time with his customers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7 I do think that John should come to the next meeting.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8 Is it possible for her to spend less time in meetings?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9 There can be no doubt that we have a problem here.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



6 Some managers are discussing whether to outsource their company's facility management. Listen and tick ☒ the appropriate box. What do they think about Craig's proposal?

	Agrees strongly	Agrees tentatively	Isn't sure	Disagrees
1 Helen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 William	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 Claire	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 Oliver	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Now match the two parts to make sentences from the dialogue. Listen again to check your answers.

- | | |
|----------------------------|---|
| 1 Absolutely. I think it's | a up to a point. |
| 2 I can't go along | b whether or not I agree with Craig's proposal. |
| 3 I'm afraid I | c can't agree. |
| 4 I support the idea | d with this, Oliver. |
| 5 I'm not sure | e a fantastic idea. |

DISAGREEMENT AND CRITICISM

When expressing disagreement or criticism in English it's normally best to use polite and diplomatic language. This is especially important when talking to native British English speakers, who – instead of saying *I disagree!* – will often use (and expect to hear) phrases such as:

I'm afraid I can't agree.

Generally, you can expect business contacts from the US to be more direct in their use of language than their British counterparts. Some British people can be a little sensitive about both offering and accepting criticism. This is probably why one of the most frequently used phrases for disagreeing in British English is:

Yes, but This really means something like: '(I'm saying) Yes (because I don't want to be impolite) but ... (I don't really agree with you at all).'

7 Work with a partner. Read out the opinions and use the phrases you have learned to say whether you agree (strongly or tentatively), disagree, or are not sure.

- The biggest problem for businesses is that there are too many rules and regulations.
- We spend far too much time in meetings and not enough time doing real work.
- It's more important to have a few customers who spend a lot of money than a lot of customers who spend very little money.
- Unemployed people should have to do work for the money they receive.

8 Work with two partners. You are meeting two colleagues from the senior management team of your company to discuss three important policy issues. As you talk about the issues, practise asking for and giving opinions using the phrases you have learned.

Partner A

Your topic is ***whether smoking should be allowed in the company.***

Tell your partners what you think about the subject and ask for their opinions.

Partner B

Your topic is ***whether accepting and giving gifts to business partners should be allowed.***

Tell your partners what you think about the subject and ask for their opinions.

Partner C

Your topic is ***whether you should allow employees to work from home.***

Tell your partners what you think about the subject and ask for their opinions.





9 Larry Hodgins is telling his team about a product he has recently seen at a conference: Voice over IP. Listen to this extract from the meeting and say whether the sentences are true ☒ or false ☒.

- 1 Larry doesn't think that they should use their computers to make all their phone calls. ☐
- 2 He wasn't very interested in Voice over IP before he went to the presentation. ☐
- 3 The quality of service for Voice over IP is excellent. ☐
- 4 The technical demonstrations at the conference were not very impressive. ☐
- 5 Metroloop said the call didn't go through because of a firewall. ☐



Listen again and complete the sentences with words from the box. How diplomatic is the criticism in the dialogue?

below standard • disappointing • inadequate • mediocre • terrible • unsatisfactory

- 1 The current Voice over IP solutions are, frankly, rather _____.
- 2 The technical demonstrations that they gave were _____.
- 3 It all sounds a bit _____.
- 4 One of the demonstrations was actually really _____.
- 5 It was all a little _____, I must say.
- 6 The technology is still pretty _____.

DIPLOMATIC LANGUAGE TO EXPRESS CRITICISM

Sometimes you may want to express criticism in a strong and direct way:

Your performance has been terrible/awful.

But, most of the time, you probably want to express criticism in a less direct and more diplomatic way. For example, you should avoid using negative words such as **terrible** and **awful**:

His performance was awful.

*His performance was **not very good**.*

Her report was terrible.

*Her report was **not really up to standard**.*

You can also use words such as **somewhat** and **a bit** to soften criticism.

*Your work on the project was **somewhat** unsatisfactory.*

*Her management of the team is **a bit** disappointing.*

Expressions such as **unsatisfactory**, **below standard**, and **inadequate** can be softened in this way:

*The quality of service is **not really satisfactory**.*

*The voice quality is **not really up to standard**.*

*Your work is **not really adequate**.*

10 Rewrite these sentences to make the criticism less strong and direct.

- 1 The quality of your company's customer service is unsatisfactory.

Sorry, but the quality of your company's customer service is not really satisfactory.

- 2 Your management style is terrible.

- 3 The service we have received from Metroloop is mediocre.

- 4 The results of your market research are disappointing.

- 5 Your approach to problem solving is inadequate.

- 6 Geoff's presentation was below standard.

MAKING POSITIVE SUGGESTIONS

One way to stop arguments is to make positive suggestions that might solve the problem. There are a number of phrases we can use to do this:

I suggest that we / they ask for another meeting with the supplier.

Let's ask her to start work a week earlier than planned.

English-speakers often put suggestions in the form of questions:

Why don't we contact a few alternative suppliers?

Couldn't we come to the office at the weekend?

What about if you wrote her a letter explaining our position?

This ensures that the suggestion does not sound like a command or an order and may make it easier for other people to agree to it. To agree, say: *That's a good idea.*

11 Work with a partner. Look at the problems and choose which solution you prefer. Suggest the solution using phrases from above.

- 1 **Problem:** Our current telecoms provider is too expensive.

Possible solutions:

- a save money in other areas
- b try to renegotiate the contract
- c get out of the contract and find another provider.

- 2 **Problem:** Our call centre operators are rude to customers.

Possible solutions:

- a provide more training in customer care
- b replace the existing team with staff who have a more positive attitude
- c provide customer care via the Internet.

12 Work with three partners to practise exchanging opinions. Look at the Useful Phrases before going to the Partner Files.

PARTNER FILES

Partner A File 6, p. 57
 Partner B File 11, p. 58
 Partner C File 17, p. 60
 Partner D File 16, p. 59

USEFUL PHRASES

Asking for opinions

Do you agree?
 What do you think about that?
 Would you like to give us your views on this?
 Would you like to comment on that?
 Do you think we should ...?

Agreeing

I think you're right.
 That's right.

Agreeing strongly

Absolutely. I think that's a fantastic idea.
 I agree completely.
 Yes, that's definitely true.

Agreeing tentatively

I think what you're saying is true up to a point.
 I suppose that might be true.
 I guess I see what you mean.

Disagreeing

No, I think you're wrong there.
 I'm afraid I can't agree with you there.
 I don't think that's true.
 Yes, but ...
 I completely disagree.

Making positive suggestions

How about if we ...?
 Couldn't we just ...?
 Why don't we ...?
 What about if you ...?

13 Put the words in the right order to make sentences with expressions from this unit.

- 1 that about what think you do?
- 2 good that's very suggestion a yes
- 3 be sure not honest so that I'm about to
- 4 to agree point I a up
- 5 that all afraid don't at with agree I I'm
- 6 we about visit person if company the how in?

QUICK MEETING

You are organizing a barbecue for twenty people.
 You want to provide hamburgers in warm rolls, baked potatoes, salad, chilled wine, and soft drinks. You want to sit down to eat at 2 p.m. You have the barbecue equipment but nothing else.

Work in pairs to prepare a project management plan.
 Remember: some tasks can happen simultaneously.
 What time do you need to start?

OUTPUT

Whether we like it or not, conflicts sometimes happen during meetings. Which piece of advice for resolving a conflict do you agree with most?

A The best way to stop an argument is to get the people who disagree to brainstorm solutions to the problem. This works well because it's a positive approach to the situation. Arguing is so negative and such a waste of time. Brainstorming solutions helps everyone to work as a team again.

C There's no way that a solution to a disagreement can be found if people are angry and upset. The most important thing that people need to do to stop an argument going further is to cool off. They can do this by taking a short break from the meeting, splashing some water on their faces, and getting some fresh air.

B An effective way to end a conflict is to get the people who disagree to say what the others' positions and opinions are. Most conflicts happen because people don't really understand what the others are thinking. If they have to think hard about this, it takes the heat out of any disagreement, no matter how strong.

D An argument should be stopped by getting the people involved to say sorry to each other for letting the situation get out of control. If people said unpleasant things to each other during the argument, they should apologize for having said them. That's the only way that everyone can move on and stop thinking about the conflict.



OVER TO YOU

- What are your strategies for resolving a conflict?
- What was the last conflict you had to deal with? How did you resolve it?
- Do you think apologies are important in business?



5

It's a deal



STARTER

Answer these questions yourself.
Then discuss your answers with a partner.

	You	Your partner
1 How important is consensus in the meetings which you attend?		
2 Do the meetings you attend usually end in agreement or disagreement?		
3 What sort of factors generally lead to disagreement?		
4 Is it normally possible to discuss the point causing disagreement until agreement is reached?		
5 What cultural differences in the way that agreement is reached have you noticed when meeting people from other countries?		



- 1** Stephanie Heller works for the UK subsidiary of a German company. Listen as she discusses upgrading the company's IT network with a potential supplier and say which statements are true ☒ or false ☒. Correct the false sentences.

- Stephanie, Isobel, and Andrew have never discussed this topic before. ☐
- Stephanie would like to order some new PCs. ☐
- Stephanie might order more than 55 PCs if the price offer is low enough. ☐
- Isobel and Andrew's company will install the new PCs. ☐
- Stephanie doesn't want to pay more for after-sales service. ☐

5 Work with a partner to practise the dialogue. Swap roles when you have finished and repeat the exercise. Use the expressions from exercise 4.

Partner A

Make your offer: 50 mobile phones for €6,000

Revise your offer: offer a 12% discount.

Revise your offer further: offer an 18% discount.

Offer a full-service after-sales package as well.

Partner B

Reject the offer: it's too expensive!

Reject the revised offer: it's still too expensive.

You find this more interesting: buy some time to think about it.

Accept the offer.



WORKING TOGETHER TO REACH AGREEMENT

It can be frustrating when some participants put off a decision and a meeting ends without agreement.

In an international context, it's important to understand the reasons for this. For instance, in south-east Asian cultures it's the group that's important in decision-making. An individual will seldom agree to something until a consensus has been reached among colleagues.

Other business cultures (such as those of southern Europe) tend to be quite hierarchical. Executives may postpone reaching an agreement until they have discussed the issue with their boss.

So don't push for agreement right away: You may be pushing a potential business partner away. Instead, research before a meeting how the decision-making process works within the business culture you're dealing with.

6 There are a number of phrases which are often used during a negotiation. Complete the mini-dialogues with phrases from the box.

room for manoeuvre • get back to you • draw up a quotation • a range of possibilities • it's hard to say • that depends on • to follow up on our conversation

- A We don't have a lot of time. Can you deliver the machine parts by next Friday at the latest?
- B _____¹ how many other orders we're working on right now. I'll check and _____
 ... _____² early tomorrow.
- C What sort of after-sales service can you offer us?
- D There are _____³. I'll email you details of our different service packages and you can choose which one you want.
 ...
- E Can you give me a rough idea of how much this will cost?
- F No, sorry. At the moment _____⁴ how expensive it will be. I'll let you know as soon as I can.
 ...
- G Will you have a problem finishing the report by Thursday?
- H Yes, I will. Is there _____⁵ on when I can finish it? Can I give it to you a week later than planned?
 ...
- I Thanks for taking the time to talk to me today. Now, what's the next step?
- J Well, I'll _____⁶ and send it to you. Then you can see in detail what we can offer you.
 ...
- K Nice to see you again, Sue.
- L Nice to see you too. I wanted to meet you today _____⁷ from last week.

TALKING ABOUT POSSIBILITIES

We often show that we are talking about possibilities in a negotiation by using conditional forms.

Conditional 1 (to show that something is likely to happen)

*If the price **is** right, we'll **be able to buy** more.*

*If you **prepare** some different options for me, I'll **compare** the prices and specifications, then make a choice.*

Conditional 2 (to talk about things that are not certain)

***Could** you **deliver** the system quickly **if** we **gave** you the order?*

*We **would be prepared to pay** more **if** we **received** a good level of service back-up.*

Note that in conditional 2, the past simple form of the verb is used in the *if* part of the sentence.

*If you **prepared** some different options for me, I **could** compare the prices and specifications, then make a choice.* NOT: ~~if you would prepare ...~~

7 Complete the sentences with the correct form of the words in brackets.

- 1 If they _____ (give) us more time, we would be able to look at our logistics problems in more detail.
- 2 I'll give you a 13% discount if you _____ (place) your order today.
- 3 I would be prepared to place the order if you _____ (offer) us a better after-sales service deal.
- 4 If we _____ (confirm) the job offer today, he'll be able to start work at the beginning of the month.
- 5 If I _____ (come) to your team meeting at 10 a.m., would I be able to leave at midday? I have another appointment to get to.

8 Work with a partner to do the following role-play to practise talking about possibilities.



Sales Manager

You are a sales manager and you are meeting your boss, the sales director, to request two more members of staff for your team. You have made a note of some of the benefits that can be expected if you get the new staff. Use conditional sentences to explain to the sales director what he/she can expect if your team is increased by two new salespeople.

- Increase overall sales
- Provide better service for important clients
- Find more new customers
- Get more money from existing customers

Sales Director

You are a sales director listening to a request from your sales manager for two more salespeople for his/her team. Use conditional sentences to explain the increases in performance you expect if you agree to the increase in staff.



- 15% increase in overall sales
- 10% increase in sales to important clients
- 15% increase in profit from new customers



9 Listen to a meeting of the board at Gripex, an American-owned parts manufacturer for the automotive industry, where the directors are making an important strategic decision. Choose the word or phrase which corresponds to what you hear.

- 1 Christian wants Gripex to **continue** / **stop** production in Germany and to **decrease** / **increase** production in Slovakia.
- 2 Nadine **is against** / **supports** Christian's idea.
- 3 Regina **abstains** / **supports** Christian's proposal.
- 4 They'll meet again on **Tuesday** / **Thursday** next week.
- 5 The board's decision will result in **430** / **340** people losing their jobs.



10 Listen again. Complete the sentences from the dialogue with words from the box.

abstaining • abstention • against • favour • motion • proposal •
propose • put • second • vote • willing

- I _____ to the board that we look at shutting down our plant in Germany and moving production to our plant in Slovakia.
- Is anyone _____ to second Christian's _____?
- I'll _____ it.
- Let's _____ this to a _____.
- All those in _____? _____?
- Regina. Are you _____?
- Christian's _____ is carried: 7 votes 'for', none 'against', and one _____.

11 Look at sentences 1–8 below. Which of the functions in the chart would you use them for?

Asking for a vote on an issue	Confirming what has been decided	Making sure everyone agrees	Focusing participants on a decision
			
<i>Right. Let's put this to a vote.</i>	<i>We've decided that you'll contact the customer directly.</i>	<i>Does everyone agree with that?</i>	<i>We need to make a decision here.</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

- So, we've decided to advertise the job in *The Times* and to hold interviews on 30th August.
- So, does everyone think we should give the contract to Zafod Ltd?
- All in favour? Those against?
- Can I assume that everyone is now happy with the decision?
- Can we have a quick show of hands?
- Just to confirm, we're going to increase the size of the call centre team and provide more customer service training.
- Are we ready to make a decision?
- Let's decide what we want to do now.

- 12** During a meeting, the chairperson has to be aware of the time. Find sentences that can be used to control the timing of discussions.

1 We're	against	for	time.	2 We're	five.
a	bit	pressed	out	running	by
try	to	finish	of	time.	finish
3 Let's	time.	on	4 We	need	to
until	without	5 Let's	time.	over	only
6 Remember,	again	remember	the	next	unless
we	don't	have	deadline	still	within
again	go	much	time.	meet	through

- 13** Work with two partners to practise negotiating an agreement. Look at the Useful Phrases before going to the Partner Files.

PARTNER FILES

Partner A File 10, p. 58
Partner B File 23, p. 61
Partner C File 4, p. 56

USEFUL PHRASES

Rejecting an offer

Sorry, but I'm not able to go along with that.
Unfortunately, I won't be able to take you up on that.
I'm afraid I can't agree to that.
I don't think that would be possible.

Accepting an offer

I think we'll go for that.
That sounds good to me.
That would be great.

Asking for time to consider

I'd like a couple of days to think this over.
Can I get back to you on that?
I need some time to think it over.

- 14** Put the words in the right order to make sentences with expressions from this unit.

- can we'll we on you to
soon get as as back that
- discuss we can later that
again ?
- you can't with afraid agree
I I'm there
- think couple to like of
I'd over this a days

QUICK MEETING

Your company is under threat from competitors. You have to reduce overheads by 20%. Your present costs are divided as follows:

Salaries: 40%	R & D: 5%
Marketing: 10%	Travel: 5%
Administration: 10%	Facilities: 5%
Rent: 10%	Sundries: 5%
Communications: 10%	

Hold a meeting and decide how you can make the necessary economies.

OUTPUT

Read the article about intercultural training for business people. Do you think intercultural awareness is as important as foreign language skills when doing business with companies from other countries?

Building intercultural bridges for reaching business agreements

Discussions between companies from different countries often break down because of a lack of cultural understanding. Training in intercultural awareness – as well as languages – is the key to bridging the communication gap, writes *Samantha Cole*.



More and more companies are increasing their language training budgets to equip staff for global business. But language alone isn't always enough. According to Neil Calder, communications consultant, language training is only half the story. 'Companies from different countries can usually deal with language differences by learning foreign languages. But they also need to be able to deal with cultural differences. That's where intercultural training comes in.'

According to Calder, the differences between northern and southern European countries are well documented. Executives from Germany who want to do business in Italy or Spain need to understand the ground rules. Meetings are rarely used to solve problems and reach agreement in these countries. Instead, meetings are used to spread information about decisions which have already been made.

Similarly, business people need to understand the cultural systems of respect and deference when they meet up with Asian counterparts. For example, senior executives from Japan will only discuss business with people from the same

management level. The message for companies here is, don't send anybody but senior people to meetings with Japanese counterparts.

Calder has turned his attention recently to central and eastern Europe (CEE). So what has he found out?

'There are as many business cultures in CEE as there are countries, but we can make a few generalizations. For one thing, you can expect to discuss a proposal at a meeting right through to the agreement stage. But, in the end, verbal agreements are not taken seriously in the region: your business partners will want to see something in writing outlining the agreement in the days after the meeting.'

So how does Calder see the future of intercultural awareness in business?

'Companies are still investing more money in improving foreign language skills. I want to see a situation where investment in intercultural awareness is on the same level as language training. Only then will companies be able to send out well-rounded executives capable of building business bridges in the global environment.'

OVER TO YOU

- In your experience, are there more similarities than differences in the way that people from different cultures behave in meetings?
- What cultural differences have you encountered when doing business with people from abroad?
- What advice about business meetings in your country would you offer to someone from another culture?



2 Listen again and say in which order the speakers discuss the following points.

☐ specifications

☐ price

☐ after-sales service

☐ delivery details

☐ installation

☒ 1 quantity


3 Match the two parts to make sentences from the dialogue, then listen again to check.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| 1 I want to explore | a we'll be able to buy more. |
| 2 I'm sure that we can work | b until later. |
| 3 If the price is right, | c we'll be able to get them out to you within a week. |
| 4 Let's leave the issue of price | d something out for you. |
| 5 Once you've decided what you want, | e as soon as we can on that. |
| 6 We'll get back to you | f the possibility that you could help us with this. |

4 Which sentence means the same as the first: A or B?

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 Unfortunately, I won't be able to take you up on that. | <input type="checkbox"/> A I'm afraid I can't accept your offer. |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> B I'm afraid I can't agree with you. |
| 2 Can I get back to you on that? | <input type="checkbox"/> A Can I disagree with you about that? |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> B Can I give you an answer to that later? |
| 3 I think we'll go for that proposal. | <input type="checkbox"/> A We'll probably agree to that proposal. |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> B We'll probably attack that proposal. |
| 4 I'd like a week to think this over. | <input type="checkbox"/> A I need a week to consider this. |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> B I need a week to understand this. |
| 5 I need to run this past my boss. | <input type="checkbox"/> A I need to make sure my boss doesn't find out about this. |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> B I need to get my boss's approval for this. |

Which of the sentences (1–5) can you use for:

accepting? _____

rejecting? 1 _____

buying more time? _____

So, I think we're finished for today

STARTER

Answer the questions, then work with a partner and compare your answers.

Are all the meetings you attend recorded in a set of minutes?

Do you and your colleagues take turns to take the minutes, or does the same person always do the job?

In general, how detailed are the minutes from your meetings?

Who are the minutes distributed to?

Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of minutes with your partner.



- 1** The management team of the Scottish fabric company Tweed Tradition is discussing redesigning the company's offices. Listen to the end of the meeting and correct the six mistakes in the minutes.

Meeting to discuss redesign/move – 1st March 2 p.m.

Action points:

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| Mike to | • contact two interior designers for quotations for office redesign |
| | • look for interior design software (important!) |
| Sue to | • talk to marketing in Dundee about hiring a facility manager |
| Andy to | • talk to old building company (did work for us already) |
| | • get quotes from two other builders |
| Steffi to | • look for new computers |
| Nick to | • plan how to keep office running smoothly during building work |
| John to | • talk to lawyers |

Next meeting: 8th March 2.30 p.m.



2 Complete the sentences with words from the box. Then listen again to check your answers.

concludes • fix • just • over • participation • through • wrap

- Let's _____ things up there.
- I _____ want to go _____ what we've decided this afternoon.
- Let's _____ a time for our next meeting.
- That _____ our business for today.
- Thanks for your active _____ this afternoon.
- We really got _____ a lot of business.

TAKING MINUTES

Minutes start with the date of the meeting and a short description of what the meeting was about. There should also be a list of who was at the meeting and who was not able to attend:

Meeting to discuss Christmas public relations activities – 1st November

Present: Norman, Una, Frazer

Apologies: Franco, Connor

Usually, it is best to keep the minutes short and simple:

John to talk to bank

Votes are usually recorded:

The committee decided by 6 votes to 1 to hire a new salesperson. (This means that six people voted for hiring a new salesperson, and one person against.)



3 www.plush-furnishings.com is an online soft furnishings retailer. Listen to a meeting of the cost accounting team and answer the questions below.

- Is Ken happy with the outcome of the meeting?

- What are Petra and Alex going to do? Why?

- Who does Edward have to meet? Why?

- What does Ken think of Edward?

- What does Ken have to do next?

- What are the action points from the meeting?



4 Now listen to a meeting between managers at a call centre and take the minutes. Use the example in exercise 1.

AOB

The last item on more formal agendas is usually AOB (Any Other Business). This describes a part of the meeting which is reserved for the discussion of items which are not identified on the agenda. In a meeting with an agenda, the chairperson often asks at the beginning whether participants want to discuss anything under AOB:

Does anyone have anything they'd like to bring up under AOB?

If a subject comes up during a discussion, but is not directly relevant to the discussion, a chairperson might ask that the item be dealt with under AOB:

Could we deal with that point under AOB?

This way he/she can make sure that the agenda is followed.

5 Match the two parts to make sentences which can be used to talk about AOB.

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| 1 OK. Is there any other | a over that point under AOB? |
| 2 Let's talk about | b up under AOB? |
| 3 I have an item | c business that we need to discuss? |
| 4 Is there anything that anyone would like to bring | d for AOB. |
| 5 Could we talk | e that when we get to AOB. |



6 Listen to three dialogues of people saying goodbye after their meetings and match each dialogue to the correct description.

- | | Dialogue |
|---|--------------------------|
| 1 The speakers know each other well. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 The speakers work in the same office. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3 The speakers have never met before today's meeting. | <input type="checkbox"/> |



7 Listen to the dialogues again and complete the sentences.

- It really was a _____ to meet you in person at last.
- The pleasure was all _____.
- And thank you for _____ the time to show me around your plant.
- Well, Mr Marks, Matthew will show you back down to _____.
- I hope that you have a _____ journey home. Goodbye.
- Well, thanks for _____ along this afternoon.
- It was a _____ as always, Catherine.
- Have a safe _____ back to Birmingham.

- 9 Bye, and _____ you again _____, Catherine.
- 10 Carl and Gary, thanks for _____ us today.
- 11 Anyway, I'd better _____ going. I have another meeting in five minutes.
- 12 See you guys _____ for lunch?

8 After a meeting, people often write follow-up emails. Complete the three emails with words from the box.

attached • attending • in contact • greatly • impressed •
interesting • know • spending • taking

Hi Gary, hi Carl,

Thanks again for _____¹ our team meeting yesterday – it was really useful to have you there. Attached are the minutes of the meeting.

I spoke to Andre and Sabine after lunch yesterday and they agree that these less formal 'inter-team' meetings are a good idea in addition to our existing interdepartmental meetings.

What time are you going for lunch?
Let me _____².

Cheers,

Julie

Dear Mrs Cooper,

I am writing to thank you once again for _____³ the time to meet me yesterday. It really was most _____⁴ to look around your plant. I was very _____⁵ by your expertise in rapid re-tooling and feel certain that this will guarantee you success with your expansion plans.

It was also fascinating to hear about your plans to enter the Chinese market. We will be proud to offer you any assistance that we can in this venture.

Please note that I have now spoken to our sales engineer Mr Kovak who will be _____⁶ with you in the near future.

I _____⁷ look forward to our next meeting.

Best regards,

Bernard Marks

Dear Silvius,

It was good to see you again on Friday. Please find an outline of our discussion _____⁸ to this mail.

Thanks for _____⁹ time looking at our new range of water-resistant fabrics. As promised, I have now sent the samples to you – they should be with you by Wednesday.

I look forward to seeing you in August. Have a nice holiday!

Best wishes,

Roger Conibear

9 Work with two partners to role-play a meeting. Look at the Useful Phrases before going to the Partner Files.

USEFUL PHRASES

Ending a meeting

Let's finish here.
I think that's everything.
I think that brings us to an end.

Confirming decisions and actions

So, to sum up what we've decided ...
Right. I'm going to ...
We've decided to ...
Tracy, you'll ...

Thanking someone for a meeting

Thank you all for coming in today.
Thank you very much for your time.
Thank you for your hard work. I think we've come up with a lot of good ideas.

Saying goodbye

I look forward to seeing you (all) again soon.
I hope you have a safe journey.
Have a safe trip home.

PARTNER FILES

Partner A File 12, p. 58
Partner B File 18, p. 60
Partner C File 2, p. 56



10 Put the words in the right order to make sentences with expressions from this unit.

- here up things wrap let's
- again time once you and today thank the for taking come to us visit
- safe home that I journey you have a hope
- get meeting minutes better another 15 so I I'd going have in
- again seeing forward to I soon look you

QUICK MEETING

You have been asked to look after two foreign visitors for the whole of Sunday in your city. The budget is \$400. How would you arrange the day in order to make the best possible impression on them? Plan a full day starting at 9 a.m. and finishing late at night.

OUTPUT

Have you ever done business with people from any of the countries in this guide? If so, do you agree with the information given?

Mixing Business and Pleasure

Gone are the days when business was only carried out in offices and conference rooms. Now people mix business and pleasure in a range of settings. But what are the rules of business entertaining in an international context? Here's a brief guide.

China In common with other Asian business cultures, the Chinese are keen on lavish business entertaining. Large evening meals are very much on the agenda here. Expect your host to order enough to feed twelve people for a party of six. The meal will probably also consist of several courses, so it's a good idea to pace yourself and not eat too much early in the meal. That said, good manners require you to leave lots of the food uneaten: finishing off your food will send the insulting signal that your host has not ordered enough to satisfy your hunger.



It's not a bad idea to practise eating with chopsticks before making your business trip to China. Your hosts will certainly appreciate your efforts to use them and you should avoid asking for European-style cutlery if at all possible.

Japan If you're doing business here, you can expect to be lavishly entertained after office hours by your host, who will pick up the bill for food and drinks. In the evenings, business is pretty much off the agenda, so don't expect to put the finishing touches to a deal over sushi. What is firmly on the agenda, however, is drinking – and quite a lot of it. Japanese business people can consume a good deal of saki during an evening's after-work partying and enjoy toasting one another. If someone offers you a toast, be sure to return the compliment.



Karaoke is an especially popular activity for entertaining business contacts. If you are taken to a karaoke bar, the golden rule is to take part. It's important to show your hosts that you're a good sport, even if your singing voice is not exactly your strong point.

Britain Forget breakfast meetings. They're deeply unpopular, even in forward-looking London. The British prefer to do business over lunch or, on occasion, dinner. The latter meal is, however, usually reserved for pleasure, allowing business contacts an opportunity to get to know each other a little better, so don't expect to talk shop over your lamb cutlet and trifle.



One after-hours venue where business and pleasure can be mixed is the pub. 'Going to the pub' is something of a national pastime, no less so among business people than the population as a whole. If your British business contacts take you to the pub, be prepared to drink the British version of beer. Expect something a little different from the light, refreshing beers you may be used to. British beer – warm and flat – is an important national product. Make sure to try it before moving on to something a little more drinkable.

USA Breakfast meetings, where business is mixed with smoked salmon and scrambled eggs, have become pretty popular here in recent years. If you're invited to one, set your alarm clock for an early rise: such meetings often get under way as early as 7 a.m.! Expect to discuss a lot of business over your breakfast.



Business people from the US are also keen on after-hours entertaining. It's not unusual to receive an invitation to have an evening meal with a business host at his or her home. If you receive an invitation like this, remember to turn up punctually. You can also expect a tour of your host's home before the evening gets underway. Bring flowers or a bottle of wine. ■

OVER TO YOU

- After a meeting is finished, do you prefer to socialize with your business partners over a drink in a pub, or would you rather take them to a cultural event such as the theatre?
- Can you offer advice about socializing with people from other cultures that you have worked with?
- What advice would you offer a visitor to your country about the after-hours business culture?

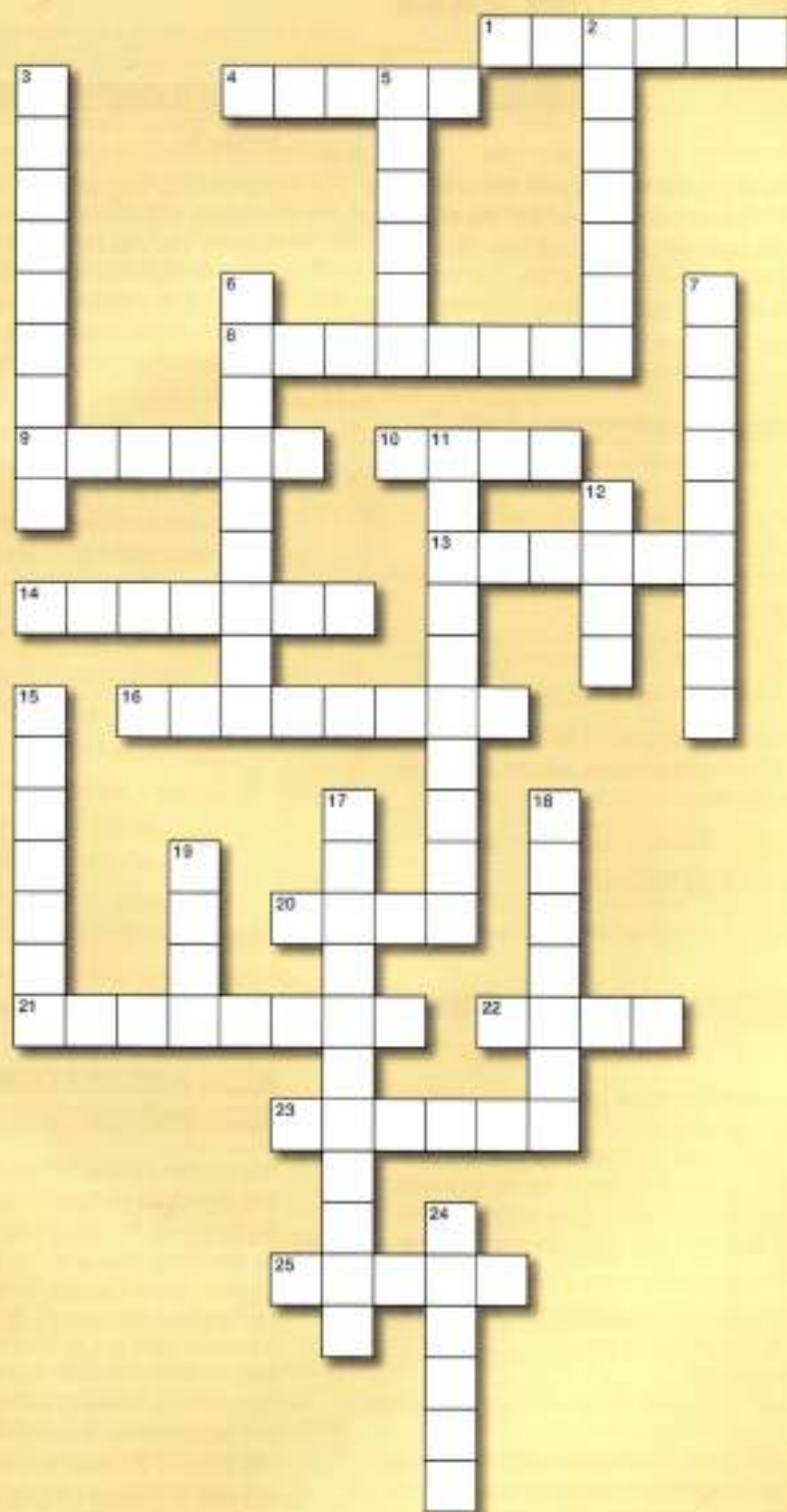
Test yourself!

Across

- 1 Another word for *prepare*: *I'll ... a quotation for you and send it to you by Friday.*
(2 words - 4, 2)
- 4 *If I come to your team meeting at 10 a.m., ... I be able to leave at midday?*
- 8 To hold a meeting later than originally planned: *Unfortunately I can't make our meeting on Tuesday. Could we ... the meeting to Wednesday?*
- 9 Another word for *badly*: *Sales performed very ... here.*
- 10 Another phrase for *Let's finish our meeting now*: *Let's ... things up here.*
- 13 To support a motion: *I'll ... that.*
- 14 To start a discussion: *Who wants to get the ball ...?*
- 16 The opposite of *I think you're absolutely right*: *I completely ...*
- 20 To reject an offer or suggestion: *I'm afraid I won't be able to ... you up on that.*
- 21 The voice quality is terrible: *The voice quality is not really up to ...*
- 22 A group of people who work together in a department: *Every Tuesday all the people in my department get together for a quick ... meeting.*
- 23 Explaining why something has happened: *I think this was as a ... of some bad planning on our part.*
- 25 Not exact: *Can you give me a ... idea of how much this will cost?*

Down

- 2 Another word for *schedule*: *Could you ... a meeting with the marketing assistant for next Tuesday?*
- 3 To speak when somebody else is speaking: *Can I ... here?*
- 5 Another way to say *examine*: *Our objective today is to ... the new advertising campaign.*
(2 words - 4, 2)
- 6 (Dan) can't come to the meeting: *(Dan) has sent his ...*
- 7 *May I ... Tim McCarthy to you? Tim, this is Charlotte Bone.*
- 11 To change the time: *Can we ... our meeting? I'm afraid I won't have time on Tuesday after all.*
- 12 To make a democratic decision: *Right. Let's put this to a ...*
- 15 The written record of a meeting: *Have you got a note of that for the ..., Ms Michaels?*
- 17 A person in control of more formal meetings: *A ... should finish the meeting on time, even if a decision hasn't been reached.*
- 18 Another word for *say something about*: *Does anyone want to ... on that?*
- 19 Another way to say *Let's start now*: *Let's get ... to business.*
- 24 The list of topics to be discussed in a meeting: *Colin has asked me to draw up a quick ...*



Partner Files

UNIT 1, Exercise 4

File 1

Partner B

You need to arrange a meeting with two colleagues. You want to discuss the problems you are all having with the new customer service software your company has invested in. Find a time that suits you all to meet. Do not show your diary to either of your partners.

Monday

12.30-2.00 Martin Brown

2.15-5.30 Meet new HR manager

Tuesday

9.15-11.00 Harriet's presentation

11.30-1.00 Progress meeting with Claudia and Andrew

Wednesday

12.00-2.30 Business development meeting

3.00-5.45 Prepare for AZF Ltd meeting

Thursday

4.00-5.30 Meeting to discuss possible co-operation with AZF Ltd

Friday

All-day team-building workshop

UNIT 6, Exercise 9

File 2

Partner C

You are chairing a meeting between your company, Holdermatic Ltd, a manufacturer of vending machines where you are head of production, and Noble Paints, a manufacturer of industrial paints. You have just finished discussing whether Noble Paints can develop a new paint for your vending machines.

Start the role-play by concluding the meeting. Make sure you do the following things:

- end the meeting
- ask the others to summarize what action they are going to take
- thank your visitor from Noble Paints for coming
- show your visitor to the reception area and say goodbye.

After the meeting is over, write a list of the action points and include it in an email to your colleague and the representative from Noble Paints.

UNIT 2, Exercise 14

File 3

Partner A

You work for Burotech PLC, an office equipment company with branches across Europe. The firm has recently been taken over by a US company which wants to implement its quality control methods at Burotech. The US company has selected staff from all levels of the business to act as Quality Workers and is holding a series of meetings to launch the project.

You are the chairperson at one of these meetings. Welcome the other participants. Explain the objectives of the meeting to them. Ask them to introduce themselves and provide some background information about their work for Burotech.

Objectives of meeting:

Ask team members to introduce themselves.
Explain the quality control method.
Brainstorm ideas about how the method can be implemented at Burotech.

UNIT 5, Exercise 13

File 4

Partner C

You are the assistant finance manager at Genexis Ltd. Your boss wants to buy software licences from AccountSoft. He/She wants your entire team of 50 people to have licences. Each licence costs € 50. He/She thinks that the licences are too expensive and wants a discount of about 20% for 50 licences. If he/she can't get AccountSoft Ltd to agree to a high-enough discount, he/she will order fewer licences to be used by key staff members. Your boss will negotiate the number of software licences you will buy and the price you will pay for them, but you are enthusiastic to take part. Try to speak as much as possible by making polite interruptions.

UNIT 3, Exercise 10

File 5

Partner C

You're a member of the public relations team at a pet food manufacturer. Your leading brand of dog food is Friskeee. Unfortunately, you've just heard that Friskeee contains small quantities of Z44T. This is a chemical which is not dangerous for animals to eat. It can, however, cause sickness in humans if they eat a lot of it. Food safety guidelines do not provide clear rules about Z44T and there is no legal reason why you should withdraw the product from shops. This is strictly a potential public relations problem.

You are going to have a meeting with other members of the PR team to decide what to do. Here are your notes for the meeting.

The situation will not cause any serious health problems, but it could be a serious public relations problem.

We should:

- not tell anyone outside the company about the problem
- remove Friskeee from all shops
- eliminate Z44T from Friskeee in the future

During the meeting, as well as offering your opinions, you should interrupt the other participants and ask them to clarify what they are saying.

UNIT 4, Exercise 12

File 6

Partner A

You are a member of the customer care management team at the subsidiary of a British insurance company in your country. You are meeting with three other managers to discuss possible changes in the way you offer customer care.

The company has a call centre with 65 agents. 25 of these agents spend their time making calls to potential customers. The other 40 agents answer calls from potential and existing customers.

The company has been looking at web-based customer care for several years. You think that call centre agents should no longer answer calls from

customers. Instead, there should be a customer care website where new customers can buy insurance and existing customers can find answers to their questions.

Your reasons for thinking this are:

- An effective website is not cheap, but you would save money on staff and training. This money could be used for designing and developing the website.
- Call centre agents sometimes give customers inaccurate information and are sometimes not very polite. A website would let you control the quality of your company's customer care.

UNIT 2, Exercise 14

File 7

Partner C

You work for Burotech PLC, an office equipment company with branches across Europe. The firm has recently been taken over by a US company which wants to implement its quality control methods at Burotech. The company has selected staff from all levels of the business to act as Quality Workers and is holding a series of meetings to launch the project.

You are one of the Quality Workers. The chairperson will ask you to introduce yourself and your work for the company. Use the following details:

Name: Use your own name

Job title: Administrative Assistant

Based in: Use your own town

Joined company: 2002

UNIT 2, Exercise 14

File 8

Partner D

You work for Burotech PLC, an office equipment company with branches across Europe. The firm has recently been taken over by a US company which wants to implement its quality control methods at Burotech. The company has selected staff from all levels of the business to act as Quality Workers and is holding a series of meetings to launch the project.

You are one of the Quality Workers. The chairperson will ask you to introduce yourself and your work for the company. Use the following details:

Name: Use your own name

Job title: Purchasing Team Leader

Based in: Use your own town

Joined company: 2004

UNIT 3, Exercise 10

File 9

Partner B

You're a member of the public relations team at a pet food manufacturer. Your leading brand of dog food is Friskee. Unfortunately, you've just heard that Friskee contains small quantities of Z44T. This is a chemical which is not dangerous for animals to eat. It can, however, cause sickness in humans if they eat a lot of it. Food safety guidelines do not provide clear rules about Z44T and there is no legal reason why you should withdraw the product from shops. This is strictly a potential public relations problem.

You are going to have a meeting with other members of the PR team to decide what to do. Here are your notes for the meeting.

This is not a serious problem! People are probably not going to eat the product.

We should:

- *try to keep this information confidential*
- *keep Friskee in the shops*
- *eliminate Z44T from Friskee in the future*
- *prepare a PR strategy to show we are eliminating Z44T from the dog food, to use if the media finds out about the problem*

During the meeting, as well as offering your opinion, you should interrupt the other participants and ask them to clarify what they are saying.

UNIT 5, Exercise 13

File 10

Partner A

You work for AccountSoft and have a meeting with the Genexis Ltd finance manager. He/She wants to order software licences. Each licence costs €50. Normally, you do not offer discounts unless the customer orders at least 40 licences. The standard discount is 5%. However, you really need to get the order from Genexis and are ready to be more flexible about price than usual. Negotiate the number of software licences your customer will buy and the price he/she will pay for them. Try to get an order for as many licences as possible with the smallest possible discount.

UNIT 4, Exercise 12

File 11

Partner B

You are a member of the customer care management team at the subsidiary of a British insurance company in your country. You are meeting with three other managers to discuss possible changes in the way you offer customer care.

The company has a call centre with 65 agents. 25 of these agents spend their time making calls to potential customers. The other 40 agents answer calls from potential and existing customers.

The company has been looking at web-based customer care for several years. Some people are saying that call centre agents should no longer answer calls from customers. Instead, they think there should be a customer care website where new customers can buy insurance and existing customers can find answers to their questions.

You disagree strongly with the idea. You think that:

- The company wouldn't save any money. A customer care website would be very expensive and the company will lose money as customers who do not want to do business on the Internet go to other insurers.
- Quality of service problems should be solved by providing more training for call centre agents. A 'frequently asked questions' page on the website will not help customers with individual questions. Also, people will not want to buy insurance products without first speaking to a call centre agent.

UNIT 6, Exercise 9

File 12

Partner A

You are a salesperson for Noble Paints, an American-owned paint company which sells mainly to industrial companies. You are meeting with two production engineers from Holdermatic Ltd, and you have just finished discussing the possibility of developing a paint for their new range of vending machines.

In the meeting you have agreed to:

- arrange a meeting between you, Noble Paints' head of product development and the people from Holdermatic. You will try to set up the meeting for two weeks from now
- start work on developing the new paint
- draw up a timetable for testing the new paint.

Once the meeting has finished, write an email to your contacts at Holdermatic thanking them for the meeting and confirming the action you will take.

UNIT 1, Exercise 4

File 13

Partner A

You need to arrange a meeting with two colleagues. You want to discuss the problems you are all having with the new customer service software your company has invested in. Find a time that suits you all to meet. Do not show your diary to either of your partners.

Monday	10-12.30 Meet Stephen Story
Tuesday	1.00-6.00 Interviews for team assistant job
Wednesday	In Hamburg on business
Thursday	9.15-11.15 Meeting to discuss next quarter's targets with George Cox 11.30-12.30 Meet Fiona MacNab to discuss software problems
Friday	All-day team-building workshop

UNIT 2, Exercise 14

File 14

Partner B

You work for Burotech Ltd, an office equipment company with branches across Europe. The firm has recently been taken over by a US company which wants to implement its quality control methods at Burotech. The company has selected staff from all levels of the business to act as Quality Workers and is holding a series of meetings to launch the project.

You are one of the Quality Workers. The chairperson will ask you to introduce yourself and your work for the company. Use the following details:

Name: Use your own name

Job title: Regional Logistics Manager

Based in: Use your own town

Joined company: 1997

UNIT 3, Exercise 10

File 15

Partner A

You're the manager of the public relations team at a pet food manufacturer. Your leading brand of dog food is Friskeee. Unfortunately, you've just heard that Friskeee contains small quantities of Z44T. This is a chemical which is not dangerous for animals to eat. It can, however, cause sickness in humans if they eat a lot of it. Food safety guidelines do not provide clear rules about Z44T and there is no legal reason why you should withdraw the product from shops. This is strictly a potential public relations problem.

You are going to chair a meeting of the PR team where you will decide what to do. The meeting could be rather stressful. Participants will probably have some strong views on the subject and interrupt each other a lot. Try to be fair in the way you handle interruptions. Your aim is to allow a discussion in which everyone can take part.

UNIT 4, Exercise 12

File 16

Partner D

You are a member of the customer care management team at the subsidiary of a British insurance company in your country. You are meeting with three other managers to discuss possible changes in the way you offer customer care.

The company has a call centre with 65 agents. 25 of these agents spend their time making calls to potential customers. The other 40 agents answer calls from potential and existing customers.

The company has been looking at web-based customer care for several years. Some people are saying that call centre agents should no longer answer calls from customers. Instead, they think there should be a customer care website where new customers can buy insurance and existing customers can find answers to their questions.

Your job is to chair the meeting. You are uncertain where you stand on the issue. Listen carefully to your colleagues' arguments and ask them to clarify what they are saying. By the end of the meeting, decide together what to do.

UNIT 4, Exercise 12

File 17

Partner C

You are a member of the customer care management team at the subsidiary of a British insurance company in your country. You are meeting with three other managers to discuss possible changes in the way you offer customer care.

The company has a call centre with 65 agents. 25 of these agents spend their time making calls to potential customers. The other 40 agents answer calls from potential and existing customers.

The company has been looking at web-based customer care for several years. Some people are saying that call centre agents should no longer answer calls from customers. Instead, they think there should be a customer care website where new customers can buy insurance and existing customers can find answers to their questions.

You disagree with the idea. You think that:

- Making and maintaining a website will cost as much as the call centre agents.
- A website is essential for good customer care. However, customers want human contact as well, so call centre agents are important too.

UNIT 6, Exercise 9

File 18

Partner B

You are a production engineer at Holdermatic Ltd, a company which specializes in the manufacture of vending machines. You are meeting with a salesperson from Noble Paints, an American-owned company which produces industrial paints, and you have just finished discussing the possibility of the company developing a new paint for you.

In the meeting you have agreed to:

- make samples of the metal and plastic surfaces which you need the paint for
- send the samples to your contact at Noble Paints
- draw up the technical requirements for the new paint.

After the meeting has finished, write an email to your contact at Noble Paints thanking him/her for the meeting and confirming the action you will take.

UNIT 3, Exercise 10

File 19

Partner D

You're a member of the public relations team at a pet food manufacturer. Your leading brand of dog food is Friskeee. Unfortunately, you've just heard that Friskeee contains small quantities of Z44T. This is a chemical which is not dangerous for animals to eat. It can, however, cause sickness in humans if they eat a lot of it. Food safety guidelines do not provide clear rules about Z44T and there is no legal reason why you should withdraw the product from shops. This is strictly a potential public relations problem.

You are going to have a meeting with other members of the PR team to decide what to do. Here are your notes for the meeting.

The situation could be very bad for our company image. We should be completely honest about the problem. Otherwise, there might be a scandal if the media finds out.

We should:

- *tell the public immediately! Honesty is the best policy*
- *remove Friskeee from all shops*
- *eliminate Z44T from Friskeee and announce the changes to the media*

During the meeting, as well as offering your opinion, you should interrupt the other participants and ask them to clarify what they are saying.

UNIT 1, Exercise 4

File 20

Partner C

You need to arrange a meeting with two colleagues. You want to discuss the problems you are all having with the new customer service software your company has invested in. Find a time that suits you all to meet. Do not show your diary to either of your partners.

Monday	9.30-10.30 Angela Stevens 3.00-6.00 Brainstorming meeting
Tuesday	Out of the office all day
Wednesday	9.00-10.00 Dentist appointment 11.00-12.45 Planning meeting about PR events for new product launch
Thursday	10.00-12.30 Meet with team leaders 3.45-6.00 Team meeting
Friday	All-day team-building workshop

UNIT 5, Exercise 13

File 21

Partner B

You are the finance manager at Genexsis Ltd. You want to buy software licences from AccountSoft. You want your entire team of 50 people to have licences. Each license costs €50. You think that the licences are too expensive and want a discount of about 20% for 50 licences. If you can't get AccountSoft Ltd to agree to a high-enough discount, you will order fewer licences to be used by key staff members. Negotiate the number of software licences you will buy and the price you will pay for them.

Answer key

UNIT 1

page 5

- | | |
|-----|-----|
| 1 e | 4 f |
| 2 c | 5 a |
| 3 d | 6 b |

1 (model answers)

Dialogue 1

- a some changes to a contract with a customer
b Monday at 2 p.m.
c no specified time – meeting will be open-ended

Dialogue 2

- a a job offer
b Monday next week at 7.30
c about an hour and a half

page 6

2 Call 1

- | | |
|------------|----------------------|
| 1 schedule | 8 Perhaps, in person |
| 2 about | 9 do, have |
| 3 make | 10 suit |
| 4 about | 11 afraid |
| 5 plan | 12 on, at |
| 6 open | 13 forward |
| 7 see | |

- a 1, 8
b 5, 6
c 2, 4, 9, 10
d 3, 11
e 7, 12, 13

- 3 2 When would you like to meet?
3 How about Thursday morning at 11.30?
4 How would next Tuesday be for you?
5 Yes, that would be fine.
6 I look forward to meeting you then.

page 7

- 5 The email from Mark Peters is informal; the email from Caroline Jones is formal.

page 8

- 2 Thanks for agreeing to meet with me.
3 I would also like to confirm the date and time of our meeting:
4 Should you have any questions in advance of our meeting, please do not hesitate to get in touch with me.
5 Looking forward to seeing you on Monday.
6 Regards,

6 (model answers)

Hi David

Just a quick note to let you know that the meeting to discuss the problems with the cleaning contract will

be held in my office on Wednesday, 29th June at 10.20 a.m.

Looking forward to seeing you then.

Regards

Dear Mrs Franks

It was a pleasure to speak to you today. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank you for agreeing to meet me.

I would also like to confirm the date and time of our meeting: 3.00 p.m. on Friday, 12 September at your head office in Bristol.

Should you have any questions in advance of our meeting, please do not hesitate to get in touch with me.

I very much look forward to meeting you on 12 September.

Yours sincerely

page 9

7 (model answer)

Caroline Jones is calling to change the time of her meeting with Charles Armitage. They decide to move their meeting to the following Wednesday at half past seven in the evening.

- | | |
|--------------|-----------------|
| 1 terribly | 6 mind |
| 2 afraid | 7 postpone |
| 3 reschedule | 8 suit |
| 4 come | 9 inconvenience |
| 5 out | 10 helped |

- 8 b It couldn't be helped, I'm afraid.
c Sorry to inconvenience you.
d I'm terribly sorry.
e Do you have another time in mind?
f Something has come up.

page 10

- | | |
|-------------|----------|
| 9 1 book | 5 order |
| 2 email | 6 attend |
| 3 circulate | 7 take |
| 4 reserve | |

page 11

- | | |
|--------------|----------|
| 11 2 arrange | a 4 |
| 3 cancel | c 2 |
| 4 postpone | d 5 |
| 5 chair | e 3 |
| 6 attend | f 6 |
| 1 postpone | 4 attend |
| 2 arrange | 5 hold |
| 3 cancel | 6 chair |

page 12

12 Across

- 4 cancel
6 suggest
7 suit
10 agenda

Down

- 1 brainstorming
2 take
3 postpone
5 circulate
8 team
9 chair

- 13 1 Could we schedule a time to meet next week?
2 Perhaps we could meet and go over the details in person?
3 I look forward to meeting you then.
4 Give me a call if you have any questions before the meeting.
5 I'm afraid I have another appointment at that time.

UNIT 2

page 14

- 1 1 c 4 b
2 b 5 a
3 a

page 15

- 2 1 see, How 5 Pleased
2 Fine 6 meet, too
3 very well 7 Let, introduce
4 Have, met 8 do you

- 3 Dialogue 1: work, sport, family
Dialogue 2: weather
Dialogue 3: work

page 16

- 4 1 b - G
2 g - C
3 a - D
4 f - B
5 d - F
6 e - A
7 c - E

page 17

- 6 1 ✓
2 X. He's from the company's advertising agency.
3 X. She can't attend the meeting and has sent her apologies.
4 ✓
5 ✓
6 X. She'll analyse problems in the existing sales strategy.
1 nice, everyone
2 begin, introduce
3 sent, apologies
4 make it
5 agenda, discussing
6 business
7 Welcoming participants - 3, 5
Introducing someone - b, 4, 6
Reporting apologies - c, d, 2, 9
Stating the aims - e, 7
Starting the meeting - f, 8, 10

page 18

- 8 1 d 4 e
2 f 5 a
3 b 6 c
9 1 d
2 a
3 e
4 c
5 b

- 1 looking, about
2 finishing
3 talking
4 going, over, about
5 at, about

page 19

10 (model answers)

A

Right. Welcome, everyone. Nice to see you all. Before we get going this morning, let me just tell you that Jim Hendry won't be joining us today: unfortunately he's ill.

Now, Does everyone know Margaret Hart? Margaret is joining us for the first time this morning. Thanks for coming, Margaret.

OK. We're here to talk about our last advertising campaign today. We've got lots to get through so let's get down to business.

B

Hello, everyone. Thanks for coming along this afternoon. We're going to finalize our plans for next year's sales conference today. But before we begin, can I just introduce Harry Finch from our event management agency? Thanks for coming in this afternoon, Harry.

OK. Now unfortunately Jill Cooper and Bob Culbert can't join us. Jill's on holiday and Bob's on a training course.

Right. That's enough from me. Let's get started.

- 11 1 d A 5
2 c B 1
3 e C 7
4, 5, 6 b D 2
7 a E 3

page 20

- 12 1 sales 4 key
2 three 5 feedback
3 members 6 catalogues

page 21

13 (suggested answers)

Formal: AGM, shareholder

Informal: brainstorming, kick-off, team, progress

- 15 1 Let me introduce my colleague.
2 Is this the first time you've come here for a meeting?
3 Does everyone know Ms Margaret Smith?
4 I hope you had a pleasant journey.
5 Tell us a bit about yourself.
6 Let's get down to business.
7 It's nice to meet you in person.
8 Sally can't be with us today.

UNIT 3

page 23

- 1 2 very good 4 acceptable
3 very poor 5 poor

page 24

- 2 1 e 1 result
2 b 2 because
3 d 3 being
4 a 4 reason
5 c 5 due
- 3 1 Here's a quick overview of the situation.
2 Let's look at telecoms first.
3 Let's turn now to pharmaceuticals.
4 I'll move on to the finance sector now.
5 Now, what about IT?

page 25

- 4 1 decreased
2 has gone up
3 has gone down
4 increased
5 has levelled off
6 have declined
7 reached a high
8 rose
9 has remained stable
10 fell
- A: has gone up, increased, reached a high, rose
B: decreased, has gone down, have declined, fell
C: has levelled off, has remained stable

page 26

- 5 1 well 4 well
2 extremely well 5 poorly
3 very poorly

From left to right:
performed very poorly
performed poorly
performed well
performed extremely well

- 6 1 e 6 i
2 g 7 l
3 d 8 c
4 a 9 b
5 h 10 f
- a 3, 4 c 2, 6, 8
b 5, 9, 10 d 1, 7

page 27

- 7 The first interruption is rather rude.
- 1 Hold, moment 4 come in
2 come, back 5 interrupt, point
3 Could, make 6 Sure, ahead

page 28

- 8 1 X 4 ✓
2 ✓ 5 X
3 X 6 X
- 1 finished 5 understand
2 argument 6 moment
3 just 7 chance
4 finish 8 has to say

Dealing with interruptions: 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8
Asking for clarification: 2, 5

page 29

- 9 b Do you think that we should have another meeting?
c Is your point that we should increase the training budget?
d Are you saying that we should upgrade our IT system?
e Is your point that he should spend more time with his customers?
f Do you feel we should increase the length of the conference next year?
- 2 d 5 c
3 e 6 b
4 a

page 30

- 11 1 Could I just interrupt you there?
2 What do you think about that point?
3 I promise we'll come right back to you in a moment.
4 Would you like to add something here?
5 I'm not sure I understand what you're saying.
6 If I understand you correctly, you would like to upgrade.
7 Are you saying that we should increase the budget?
8 I'm afraid I don't really follow your argument.

UNIT 4

page 32

- 1 project planning, staff, team building, junior and senior members, deadlines vs quality, flexibility
- 2 1 comment on
2 agree
3 about
4 want to say anything about
5 think
6 views

page 33

- 3 1 Obviously, B 4
2 Personally, C 1
3 frankly, D 2
4 Basically, E 3
5 To be honest,
- 4 2 Well, there's really no doubt in my mind that she does her job well.
3 We should try to finish the report more quickly.
4 Do you think that I should chair the annual general meeting?
5 It's absolutely clear that we should invest in a new IT system.
6 Is it possible for you to fly to Manchester instead?
7 I could be wrong but I think that we need a new corporate image.
8 Do you feel that we should send the goods by ship instead?

Asking for an opinion: 1, 4, 6, 8
Expressing an opinion: 2, 3, 5, 7

page 34

- 5 Strong: 3, 7, 9
Neutral: 2, 5, 6, 8
Tentative: 1, 4
- 6 1 Agrees strongly
2 Disagrees
3 Agrees tentatively
4 Not sure
- 1 e 4 a
2 d 5 b
3 c

page 36

- 9 1 ✓ 1 unsatisfactory
2 X 2 mediocre
3 X 3 below standard
4 ✓ 4 terrible
5 ✓ 5 disappointing
6 inadequate

page 37

- 10 (model answers)
- 2 Your management style is not really satisfactory.
3 The service we have received from Metroloop is not really up to standard.
4 The results of your market research are a bit disappointing.
5 Your approach to problem solving is not really adequate.
6 Geoff's presentation was a bit below standard.

page 38

- 13 1 What do you think about that?
2 Yes, that's a very good suggestion.
3 I'm not so sure about that, to be honest.
4 I agree up to a point.
5 I'm afraid I don't agree with that at all.
6 How about if we visit the company in person?

UNIT 5

page 40

- 1 1 X. They spoke about it on the phone last week.
2 ✓
3 ✓
4 ✓
5 X. She is prepared to pay more for good service back-up.

page 41

- 2 2 specifications
3 delivery details
4 installation
5 after-sales service
6 price
- 3 1 f 4 b
2 d 5 c
3 a 6 e
- 4 1 A 4 A
2 B 5 B
3 A

Accepting: 3
Buying more time: 2, 5

page 43

- 6 1 That depends on
2 get back to you
3 a range of possibilities
4 it's hard to say
5 room for manoeuvre
6 draw up a quotation
7 to follow up on our conversation

page 44

- 7 1 gave
2 place
3 offered
4 confirm
5 came
- 9 1 stop, increase
2 supports
3 abstains
4 Thursday
5 340

page 45

- 10 1 propose
2 willing, proposal
3 second
4 put, vote
5 favour, against
6 abstaining
7 motion, abstention
- 11 Asking for a vote on an issue: 3, 5
Confirming what has been decided: 6
Making sure everyone agrees: 2, 4
Focusing participants on a decision: 7, 8

page 46

- 12 2 We're running out of time.
3 Let's try to finish on time.
4 We need to finish by five.
5 Let's remember the time.
6 Remember, we don't have much time.
- 14 1 We'll get back to you as soon as we can on that.
2 Can we discuss that again later?
3 I'm afraid I can't agree with you there.
4 I'd like a couple of days to think this over.

UNIT 6

page 48

- 1 Mike to contact two three interior designers for quotations for office redesign
look for interior design software (not important!)
- Sue to talk to marketing human resources in Dundee about hiring a facility manager
- Steffi to look for new computers office furniture
- John to talk to lawyers bank
- Next meeting: 8th March 2:30 3:30 p.m.

page 49

- 2 1 wrap
2 just, over
3 fix
4 concludes
5 participation
6 through

- 3 1 See Transcript p. 72 for answers

page 50

- 4 (Model answer)
Minutes of meeting to discuss taking on more call centre staff
Apologies: Vanessa, Paul
The meeting decided by five votes to two in favour of taking on more call centre staff.
Sheila to contact Human Resources to inform them of the decision to hire new call centre staff
Susie to write new job description for the call centre staff
David to write a draft of the job advertisement for Human Resources
Sheila to book the training centre for the new staff
Next meeting: Wednesday, 20th May at 11.00 in Sheila's office.

- 5 1 c 4 b
2 e 5 a
3 d
6 1 B
2 C
3 A

- 7 1 pleasure 7 pleasure
2 mine 8 trip
3 taking 9 see, soon
4 reception 10 joining
5 safe 11 get
6 coming 12 later

page 51

- 8 1 attending 6 in contact
2 know 7 greatly
3 taking 8 attached
4 interesting 9 spending
5 impressed

page 52

- 10 1 Let's wrap things up here.
2 Thank you once again for taking the time to come and visit us today.
3 I hope that you have a safe journey home.
4 I have another meeting in 15 minutes so I'd better get going.
5 I look forward to seeing you again soon.

page 54

- | Across | Down |
|-------------|----------------|
| 1 draw up | 2 arrange |
| 4 would | 3 interrupt |
| 8 postpone | 5 look at |
| 9 poorly | 6 apologies |
| 10 wrap | 7 introduce |
| 13 second | 11 reschedule |
| 14 rolling | 12 vote |
| 16 disagree | 15 minutes |
| 20 take | 17 chairperson |
| 21 standard | 18 comment |
| 22 team | 19 down |
| 23 result | 24 agenda |
| 25 rough | |

page 23

Add up your total number of points to find out what type you are in meetings.

- | | | | |
|--------------|------------|--------------|------------|
| 1 a 0 points | b 1 point | 5 a 1 point | b 0 points |
| 2 a 0 points | b 1 point | 6 a 1 point | b 0 points |
| 3 a 1 point | b 0 points | 7 a 0 points | b 1 point |
| 4 a 1 point | b 0 points | | |

If your score is:

- 0–2 points You're a **quiet type**. You don't like to be the focus of attention and you're very considerate. But you could try to be more assertive.
- 3–4 points You're a **patient and diplomatic type**. You're prepared to let other people have their say, but you listen carefully and act quickly to counter their arguments when the time is right.
- 5–6 points You're an **energetic and enthusiastic type**. You try very hard to convince other people that you're right, and you sometimes need a strong chairperson to keep you under control. Despite your enthusiasm about your own arguments, you can still listen to other people's perspectives.
- 7 points You're a **strong and assertive type**. You always present your case with conviction and love the sound of your own voice. You could definitely work on listening more to what others have to say.

Transcripts

UNIT 1. Exercise 1

Call 1

- 2 Ian Ian Sweeney.
 Mark Hello, Ian. Mark Peters from the legal department here.
 Ian Oh, hello, Mark. How are you?
 Mark Fine, thanks. How about you?
 Ian Not too bad. Busy as ever.
 Mark Have you got a minute, Ian? I'm calling about some changes we're going to make to the contract with GBT. There are a few clauses I'd like to discuss with you and your team before you start to negotiate the contract. Could we schedule a time to meet next week?
 Ian OK. Mmm. How about Monday at nine?
 Mark Sorry, I can't make it then. I'm at the Brighton office on Monday morning. How about sometime after lunch ... about two?
 Ian Yes, I can manage that. OK, I'll get the team together for two. Should we plan for the whole afternoon?
 Mark We may be able to get through the new version of the agreement quite quickly. But then again ... Let's leave the length of the meeting open for now.
 Ian That sounds sensible. So, I'll see you on Monday at two.
 Mark Thanks, Ian. I'll have my assistant send you a quick email to let you know where we're meeting and give you an outline of what I'd like to discuss. See you on Monday, then.

Call 2

- 3 Charles Good morning, Charles Armitage.
 Caroline Good morning, Mr Armitage. This is Caroline Jones from Rainbow Search.
 Charles As in headhunters?
 Caroline That's right.
 Charles Aha ... And what can I do for you?
 Caroline I'll come straight to the point, Mr Armitage. I have a client who's looking for someone to head up their central and eastern European consulting team. We'd like to talk to you about the job.
 Charles Thank you for your interest in me but I'm not planning on changing companies right now. I've invested a lot in my career here at Fisher Group ... I hope to become a partner in a couple of years.
 Caroline Mr Armitage, my client is very serious about this offer. They will increase your current salary dramatically if you accept the job. And you could expect to be made a partner by the middle of next year at the latest.
 Charles That's interesting. But look ... It's difficult for me to discuss this with you on the phone.
 Caroline Perhaps we could meet and go over the details in person?
 Charles Yes ... OK. It would be interesting to hear a bit more.

- Caroline Right. Would it be possible for us to meet on Monday evening next week?
 Charles What time do you have in mind?
 Caroline Would half past five suit you?
 Charles I'm afraid I have another appointment then. How about 7.30 instead?
 Caroline Yes ... Yes, that would be fine.
 Charles And how long should we plan on meeting for?
 Caroline Let's say about an hour and a half. Is that all right for you?
 Charles Yes, that's fine.
 Caroline Good. Then can I suggest we meet at our London offices? My assistant, Joanna, will also be joining us. We're in Great Russell Street, near the British Museum. Number 11.
 Charles Right ... OK. Well, I'll see you on Monday at 7.30, then.
 Caroline Wonderful. I look forward to meeting you then.

UNIT 1. Exercise 7

- 3 Caroline Hello. Is that Charles Armitage?
 4 Charles Yes, that's right.
 Caroline Hello, Mr Armitage, it's Caroline Jones here.
 Charles Oh, hello.
 Caroline Mr Armitage, I'm terribly sorry. I'm afraid I have to ask you if we can reschedule our meeting next week. Something has come up. Unfortunately I can't get out of it.
 Charles That's all right. Do you have another time in mind?
 Caroline Well ... Could we postpone the meeting until Wednesday at the same time? Would that suit you?
 Charles Let me see ... Yes, that would be fine.
 Caroline Great. Thank you, Mr Armitage. Sorry to inconvenience you. It couldn't be helped, I'm afraid.
 Charles Don't worry, Caroline, that's fine. Oh, do you mind if I call you Caroline?
 Caroline No, not at all. Well, I'll see you on Wednesday, Charles.
 Charles See you then ... Bye for now.

UNIT 1. Exercise 9

- 5 OK ... note about Dresden contract and Ian Sweeney.
 Email Anna asking her to arrange for the meeting with Ian and his guys. All the usual stuff:
 ... book a meeting room and ask her to email the room number to me and Ian
 ... circulate the agenda to Ian and the consultants
 ... reserve audio-visual equipment ... we'll need a data projector and an OHP
 ... order some refreshments
 ... and she'll need to attend the meeting and take the minutes
 Right, now the next thing is ...

UNIT 2, Exercise 1

- 1
Steve Hi, George. How are things down in logistics?
George Oh, you know how it is Steve ... overworked, underpaid, the usual.
Steve Tell me about it!
George How are Mandy and the kids?
Steve Keeping me busy. I can tell you. Did you see the football on Saturday?
George Oh, awful, wasn't it?
Steve Terrible. Look, we'll be late for this kick-off meeting. We'd better hurry up ...
- 2
George Hello, Paula. Nice to see you again. How are you?
Paula Fine, thanks. And you?
George I'm very well, thank you. Glad you could make it to our kick-off meeting today. Did you find a parking space all right?
Paula Yes, no problem at all. But the weather's terrible, so it took us longer than usual to drive down.
George I'm afraid you've brought the rain with you from the north. It's usually warm and sunny here.
Paula Oh, I hope not! George, have you met my colleague, Juliet Strauss?
George Hello, I'm George Frank. Pleased to meet you.
Juliet Juliet Strauss. Pleased to meet you too.
- 3
Paula Good to see you again, Steve.
Steve Hello, Paula. Good to see you too.
Paula How are you settling into your new job?
Steve Well, it's a lot of work but I'm really enjoying it.
Paula That's great! Oh, Steve. Let me introduce my colleague, Andre Jacob.
Andre Hello, Steve. I'm Andre. How do you do?
Steve How do you do, Andre? I think I've spoken to you a few times on the phone.
Andre That's right. It's nice to meet you in person!

UNIT 2, Exercise 6

- 9
Carla OK. Is everybody here? ... Ah, we're still waiting for Nigel. Oh, here he is. Morning, Nigel. Take a seat.
Now ... It's nice to see everyone. Before we begin, can I introduce Tim McCarthy to you all. For those of you who don't already know, Tim is from our advertising agency and he's going to give us an overview of his plans for our new advertising campaign. Welcome, Tim.
Tim Hello, nice to meet you all.
Carla Right ... Now, Sally Jones has sent her apologies. She can't be with us today because she had to go to a meeting in Brussels. And Pierre Kaufmann can't make it either.
OK. As I said in the agenda I emailed last week, we'll be discussing our strategies for increasing sales. You all know that our sales have been slower recently and we need to do something to change this. John Lawson from marketing will be giving us an overview of what our competitors are doing. After that, Alison King will present an analysis of some of the problems with our sales strategy at the moment.

We need to make some important decisions today. So, let's have some clear, constructive thinking, everybody.
Right. Now, let's get down to business.

UNIT 2, Exercise 8

- 10 Sam All right, everyone. Thanks for being here today. So, let's get going. Does everyone know Peter Thomson? No? Nicola? You two haven't met? Oh, OK ... Peter, why don't you introduce yourself to everyone. Tell us a bit about yourself.
Peter OK. Hi everyone. My name's Peter Thomson and I'm the new partnership manager. I've been with Brent Jones since 2002. I was the business development manager for the West for two years, but now I've come to join you all at the head office.
Sam Well, welcome to the centre of the universe, Peter. Right. This is Nicola Sullivan. She's our press officer. And this, this is Frank Arnold. Frank joined us two months ago as our head of PR. Right, so ...

UNIT 2, Exercise 11

- 11 A Our advertising agency has been looking in detail at our re-branding options and they've come up with three alternatives for our new corporate image. Now if you look at this slide, you can see ...
B Now, Charlotte Field can't be with us today. Our bankers have some more questions that she had to go off and answer. She's asked me to postpone discussing this paper about ...
C Yes. There is one issue I'd like us to discuss which didn't find its way onto the agenda today. We heard yesterday that Abredia Ltd have started discussing a possible merger with Borafed. We have to ...
D Well, in the last meeting, I didn't actually say that we should definitely cancel our initial public offering. What I did say was that we should put it back if the stock market remains weak. Could we please change the minutes to accurately reflect what I said?
E OK. As you can see from the minutes, we agreed at the last meeting that HR would advertise for a Shareholder Relations Manager. James, how are you getting on with that? Any strong candidates yet?

UNIT 2, Exercise 12

- 12 Ralf Ralf Schmidt here.
Polly Hi, Ralf. Polly here. Jack has asked me to draw up a quick agenda for next week's regional sales meeting. Are there any points that you want to see on it?
Ralf Next week? I thought it was the week after next.
Polly No, remember? Jack couldn't come and we moved it.
Ralf Oh yeah. That's right. Well, when is it exactly then?
Polly Thursday. That's the 13th of February. At 9.30. In the main meeting room.

- Ralf OK. Right.
 Polly Well? Have you got anything for the agenda?
 Ralf One or two things maybe. What points have you got already?
 Polly Well, let me see. Francesca wants us to discuss the sales targets for the next three months. And I've also got a note from Michael Warner saying that he wants to review which team members are responsible for key accounts.
 Ralf OK. Well, I think we should look at the feedback from marketing about the research that they've just finished.
 Polly Right.
 Ralf And I've got some copies of the most recent catalogues from our competitors we should discuss.
 Polly Is that all?
 Ralf Yeah, that's it. Thanks, Polly.
 Polly OK. I'll email the agenda to everyone this afternoon.

UNIT 3, Exercise 1

- 13 Karen Right. I think that deals with all the preliminaries ... So, let's get down to business.
 OK. It's time for us to hear from George Finch. George is going to review our recent sales performance. Over to you, George.
 George Thanks, Karen. Right. Overall, our sales performed well in the last quarter. I think this was due to excellent work by our production team. One or two of our teams are really marketing their conferences well. But when we look at our individual sectors, you'll see that some did better than others. Here's a quick overview of the situation.
 Let's look at telecoms first. The market is still a bit depressed because of debt and lower share prices. Despite this, the telecom sector's sales were really good – much better than we had expected. And actually, this made our overall figures better than they would have been. Sales were up here, for the reason that the telecoms team performed extremely well.
 Karen Great news, George. We should think about rewarding the telecoms team somehow. But go on ...
 George Thanks, Karen. OK. Let's turn now to pharmaceuticals. As you can see, pharmaceuticals was at the other end of the scale. Sales performed very poorly here. I think this was as a result of some bad planning on our part. Two other conference organizers held events about the new advertising regulations before we did. No one came to our conference because they'd heard it all from our competitors first.
 I'll move on to the finance sector now. Things were not too bad here. The guys on the finance team performed well, as ever. Now, what about IT? Well, the IT sector performed poorly, the reason being that we made some mistakes in our market research: we just didn't seem to understand what IT people were interested in during the last quarter. OK. That was that. Now, let me turn to our sales in the current quarter ...

UNIT 3, Exercise 7

- 14 Norman The project team performed quite poorly. It was slow to contact the sub-contractors and late in completing the tendering process, which meant ...
 Harry Yes, but I think that there weren't enough ...
 Maria Hold on a moment, please, Harry. We'll come right back to you.
 Norman As I was saying, the tendering process was completed later than planned. That meant that the first stage of building work didn't begin until November. And then of course we lost more time due to bad winter weather.
 Christina Could I possibly make a point here?
 Norman Yes, go on.
 Christina Well, we just didn't know that the weather was going to be so bad and that work would be delayed for so long.
 Norman I hear what you're saying. But look, it was winter and we should always plan for bad weather in winter. Well, anyway, all of this could have been avoided if we'd made a better job of the initial planning. We just have to do this better on future projects. Now, what about ...
 Harry Can I come in here, Norman?
 Norman Yes, of course.
 Harry Let's not forget that we had problems with our new project management software. But they've been solved now, so these difficulties with planning won't happen again.
 Norman OK, it's true that we've got over the software problems. But that doesn't mean that we don't have to concentrate a bit more on project planning in future. Poor planning is just too expensive. If we don't pay more attention to this then ...
 Claudia Sorry to interrupt you, but can I make a point here?
 Norman Sure, go ahead.
 Claudia Well, what you're saying is mostly true. But I think we should stop talking about what happened and start to look at what we need to do.

UNIT 3, Exercise 8

- 15 Meeting 1
 Ralph It's obvious. Outsourcing logistics has not really worked. We no longer have control and we're losing production time every month now. We should bring logistics back in-house as quickly as possible.
 Stephen Hold on, hold on. Can I make a point here?
 Ralph Sorry, but I haven't finished what I was saying. Look, we're not reaching our output targets because of these problems. Why do we have the problems? Because Buxton Services don't understand our needs. Let's bring logistics back in-house and stop wasting time.
 Stephen Yeah, but Ralph, as I wanted to say, we've cut our costs dramatically since we started working with Buxton. We can't just in-source logistics and lose these savings.
 Jill Sorry to interrupt but I'm afraid I really don't follow your argument.

Stephen Could I just finish? I'm not prepared to see our costs rise because some of us are nervous about outsourcing.

Jill Are you finished?

Stephen Yes, I am.

Jill Good. Well, I just wanted to say that I don't think we are saving money, because outsourcing is slowing down our production process. We need to radically review our relationship with Buxton. We can't just ...

Meeting 2

Beth Right ... So, Faber has finally made its take-over offer. The question is, do we recommend that our shareholders accept the offer? What do we all think? Robert, do you want to start us off?

Robert Never mind the shareholders. What about the company and its employees? We have absolutely no guarantee that Faber are not going to lay off half of our workforce. That should ...

Gordon Robert, we've already agreed that we ...

Robert If I could just finish, please ... Yes, it is important to think about the workforce when deciding whether or not to recommend this offer. Frankly, I would be surprised if Faber didn't fire most of our people and sell our assets.

Gordon Robert, can I come in now? OK. Well, as I was trying to say, we've already agreed that shareholder value is the most important factor for us as a board. That means we have to recommend that our shareholders accept. Besides, once our shareholders see the details of Faber's offer, they're going to accept anyway. Nothing we can say will change that.

Sue Can I say something here? I'm afraid that I don't understand.

Gordon Just a moment. You'll get a chance to speak soon.

Beth No, wait, let's hear what Sue has to say. Sue?

Sue You said yourself about two weeks ago that we have most of our shareholders where we want them and that they'll do what we tell them to do. Now ...

Gordon Yes, but I didn't ...

Sue Let me finish, please. This takeover is not definite. I think we should stand back and think about what's going to be best for the company as a whole ... not just the shareholders.

UNIT 4, Exercise 1

Tom OK. This won't take long. I just want to spend a few minutes brainstorming some questions for the project manager group interview on Wednesday. Ehm ... let's forget the simple things. Obviously, we need to think of some difficult questions about project management. Who wants to get the ball rolling?

Gerry Personally, I think we should ask about project planning. Something like: 'We think that the success of a project depends on the planning stage. Would you like to comment on that?'

Tom Not so fast ... I'm writing this down. Good.

Gerry And how about this: 'In our experience, it's best to decide which staff will be on the

project team before the project planning is completed. Do you agree?'

Nathalie OK. And frankly, I think that we haven't asked enough questions about team building in the past. What about this? 'The most important factor in a successful project team is that its members work well together. Tell us what you think about this.'

Tom Excellent. Here's another one: 'Teams should be made up of junior staff as well as managers. Does anyone want to say anything about that?'

Gerry And how about this: 'Basically, it's more important to meet a project deadline than to guarantee the quality of the project outcome. What do you think about that?'

Nathalie And what do you think of this question, Tom? 'Project objectives should be flexible. You should be able to change them as the project progresses. Does anyone want to give us their views on this?'

Tom Right, right, I've got that all now. To be honest, that's probably all we'll have time to talk about. Good work, everyone! Hopefully we'll find someone in this round of interviews who can take over our Australian project.

UNIT 4, Exercise 6

Oliver OK, so we have a proposal on the table here that we should outsource our facility management to the White Group. Craig has made a strong case for this, so we know where he stands. Can I just invite some comments from the rest of you? Helen, do you agree that we should go ahead with the proposed outsourcing?

Helen Absolutely. I think it's a fantastic idea. I think that it'll mean a lot more time to get on with other things. It's clear that it'll allow us to concentrate more on our core business activities. That's got to be a good thing.

Oliver How do you feel, William?

William I can't go along with this, Oliver. In my experience, outsourcing causes too many communication problems. In fact I think the whole thing is a terrible idea. I simply don't see how we can give up control of such an important aspect without there being problems. No, I'm afraid I can't agree.

Oliver What about you, Claire? Where do you stand?

Claire Hmm ... Personally, I support the idea up to a point. There could be big cost savings for us in this. But I think we should spend more time thinking about the potential disadvantages. I mean, we think we're going to save lots of time by doing this. But any time we save may be used making sure that Whites are doing what they're supposed to do. I think this could mean a lot of work for us. The other thing is that communication could be a big issue. I feel that this is something we have to look at very carefully.

Oliver I'm not sure whether or not I agree with Craig's proposal. I need some more time to think it over. To be honest, I would probably want to have some further information from some of their other customers before I could take the idea more seriously.

UNIT 4, Exercise 9

- 19 **Richard** Right. So, Larry, you were at that conference about Internet telephony last week. Why don't you tell us all about it. Do you think that Voice over IP is for us? Do you really think it makes sense for us to use our computers to make all our phone calls?
- Larry** I've got to say I don't think it is. Before I went I was pretty excited. You know – the potential cost savings for us in telephoning over the Internet are impressive. But the current Voice over IP solutions are, frankly, rather unsatisfactory.
- Olivia** Really? How come?
- Larry** There is still a basic problem with quality of service. They spent a lot of time at the conference trying to convince us that low quality of service would soon be a thing of the past. But the technical demonstrations that they gave were mediocre. There are still lots of problems with poor voice quality.
- Richard** It all sounds a bit below standard.
- Larry** Right. One of the demonstrations was actually really terrible. Metroloop asked for a telephone number from a member of the audience and then tried to call it. But they couldn't establish the call. It was really embarrassing. They tried about five times, but in the end they said that the call probably couldn't be established because of a firewall at the guy's company.
- Olivia** That's awful.
- Larry** Isn't it? It was all a little disappointing. I must say. I certainly wouldn't recommend switching to Voice over IP now. The technology is still pretty inadequate.

UNIT 5, Exercise 1

- 20 **Stephanie** Isabel, Andrew, thank you both for coming in today. I wanted to have this meeting with you to follow up on our conversation on the phone last week. As I mentioned, we're planning to expand our network. I want to explore the possibility that you could help us with this.
- Isabel** I'm sure that we can work something out for you. Let's talk about the basic requirements and then we can take it from there.
- Stephanie** Fine.
- Andrew** OK. So you're talking about buying more personal computers for your computer network, right? How many new PCs are we looking at?
- Stephanie** That depends on how much they would cost. But basically we need between 40 and 55 new PCs. If the price is right, we'll be able to buy more.
- Isabel** OK. Let's leave the issue of price until later. Of course, the price would also depend on the specifications you want for each PC.
- Andrew** That's right. Obviously, the higher the specifications, the more it's going to cost you.
- Stephanie** Right. If you prepare some different options for me, I'll compare the prices and specifications, then make a choice.
- Isabel** Sure.

- Stephanie** We don't have much time to play with here. Could you deliver quickly if we gave you the order?
- Andrew** Once you've decided what you want, we'll be able to get them out to you within a week.
- Stephanie** That sounds pretty good. Now, what about installing the new PCs? Would you do that, or would you contract out?
- Isabel** We prefer to take care of that ourselves.
- Stephanie** Splendid. And what about after-sales service? That's really important for us. We would be prepared to pay more if we received a good level of service back-up. What can you offer us there?
- Isabel** There's a range of possibilities. We'll go back to the office and draw up a detailed quotation for you. We'll include the full range of service packages that we can offer you. Once you've chosen what you want, we can figure that into the contract.
- Stephanie** Good. Now, price. I know you can't give me an exact quotation at the moment, but can you give me a rough idea of how much this would cost?
- Andrew** Sorry, but it's hard to say at this stage. We'll get back to you as soon as we can on that.
- Stephanie** I think I should mention that we'd like a discount on the price, since we're placing such a big order. Would that be a possibility?
- Isabel** I'll have to see what I can do. I might be able to offer you a better price. Let me get back to you on that, too ...

UNIT 5, Exercise 9

- 21 **Christian** ... And for all of these reasons – reducing our costs, increasing productivity, increasing our presence in central and eastern Europe – I propose to the board that we look at shutting down our plant in Germany and moving production to our plant in Slovakia.
- Louise** Christian, that's a radical proposal, but you've said what we've all been thinking for some time. Is anyone willing to second Christian's proposal?
- Nadine** I'll second it.
- Louise** Seconded by Nadine. Right. We need to make a decision here. Let's put this to a vote. All those in favour? Against? Regina, are you abstaining?
- Regina** That's right. I abstain.
- Louise** OK. So, Christian's motion is carried: 7 votes 'for', none 'against', and one abstention. Have you got a note of that for the minutes, Ms Michaels? Excellent. So ... (pause) Right, it's quite late and we're a bit pressed for time. I propose that we wind up now and get back together next week. Does everyone agree with that? So, let's meet again on Thursday next week. In the meantime, I'll ask our advisors at Strategem to start work on an action plan. We can look at that next time and decide on how to divide up the responsibilities. Right, now I don't think that I have to remind you not to tell anyone about today's meeting.

We've decided that we're going to look at ways of shutting down our main German production base. That means 340 lost jobs. We're going to be pretty unpopular, so let's keep quiet about this for as long as possible.

UNIT 6, Exercise 1

- 22** *John* Right. Let's wrap things up here. Good work as always. Before you all go, I just want to go over what we've decided this afternoon. Now, we've decided to redesign our current offices rather than moving into new premises. So we've decided that we'll contact three interior designers and ask them to give quotations for redesigning the office. Mike, I think we agreed that you're going to investigate that for us.
- Mike* Right, John. And I'll look for some interior design software which might help us do the job ourselves.
- John* OK, but don't spend too much time on that. As we agreed, it'll be better to leave the job to the professionals. Now, we also talked about employing a facility manager who will co-ordinate the redesign at our end. Now, Sue, you're going to talk to Human Resources in Dundee and ask them to agree to this.
- Sue* That's right, John.
- John* Splendid. Andy, you'll get in touch with the building company that did some work for us three years ago to see if they'd like to submit a quotation for the building work.
- Andy* Will do, John. And I'll ask two other builders to put in quotes as well.
- John* Great. And Steffi, you're going to look for some new office furniture for us.
- Steffi* Yes, that's right.
- John* And Steffi, don't forget that we agreed we don't want to spend too much on furniture. Try to find something modern and stylish at a price that we can afford.
- Steffi* OK, John.
- John* Nick, we agreed that we need to plan carefully how we'll keep the office running smoothly during the building and redesigning work. You're going to plan how we can best do this.
- Nick* Yeah, that's right, John.
- John* And that just leaves me. I'll talk to our bank and see how they can help us cover the work. Now, let's fix a time for our next meeting. Does the 8th of March at 3.30 suit everyone? Yes? Splendid. Well, that concludes our business for today. Thanks for your active participation this afternoon. We really got through a lot of business.

UNIT 6, Exercise 3

- 23** *Ken* I've got to say, I think we've made the right decision here today. We've needed more detailed information about our costs for a long time. I'm certain that this new method is the right place to start. What do you think, Petra?

- Petra* I think you're right, Ken. So, can we just confirm that everyone knows what they've got to do before the end of next week? Now, Alex and I are going to look at whether we need some help. We'll set up a meeting with Modulis and talk to them about the work they've done at ABC.
- Alex* Right. And I'll take a look at what sort of software modules are out there that might let us do the job ourselves.
- Petra* Right, Alex. And then we'll put our heads together and decide whether we really need a consultant on this or whether we can manage alone with software.
- Edward* OK, and I'll set up a meeting with the team leaders in dispatching to get their support.
- Alex* That's an important job, Edward. We need to ensure buy-in from the frontline guys or it isn't going to work.
- Ken* Don't worry, Alex. Edward can handle it.
- Petra* I'm sure he can! Now, Ken, remind us what you'll be doing.
- Ken* Well, I'll draft an action plan that will take us through to the November board meeting.
- Petra* Excellent. OK, let's finish there, and get started on our work! If we can manage to ...

UNIT 6, Exercise 4

- 1** *Sheila* Morning everyone. OK, we're here today to talk about whether we need to take on more staff in our call centre. Now, Vanessa won't be able to make it because she's on a training course. But she has told me that she supports the idea of increasing the size of the call centre team. Paul can't be with us either: his daughter's ill and he has to take her to the doctor.
- 2** *Sheila* OK. I think we've talked this over enough now. Can we just have a show of hands? Right. All those in favour of increasing the size of the call centre team? OK. Four. And then Vanessa's vote ... that makes five. All those against? Two. Right. Well, sorry, you two, but it looks like we'll be hiring new people. Now, let's ...
- 3** *Sheila* Right, can we just go over who's going to do what? Otherwise I'm going to get really confused. So, I'm going to let Human Resources know that we want to hire more staff. And Susie, you're going to write a job description for the call centre staff.
- Susie* Right, Sheila.
- Sheila* OK. And David, you're going to write a draft of the job advertisement for Human Resources.
- David* That's right, Sheila. And what about booking the training centre for the new staff? Am I doing that as well?
- Sheila* No, I'm going to do that. Unless you want to do it as well.
- David* No, no, Sheila, you can do it ...

- 4**
Sheila Right. Thanks for that everyone. I look forward to our call centre having a decent number of staff. We've needed to do this for some time. I'm sure the existing staff will welcome the increase in manpower. Right, now don't forget that we'll meet again next Wednesday. That's the 20th of May at 10.30 a.m.
David A, didn't we say 11.00? Remember I said that —
Sheila Sorry, that's right. 11.00 a.m.
Susie Where are we meeting, Sheila?
Sheila That's a good question, actually. I think the meeting rooms are booked for sales training for the whole of next week. Why don't we just meet in my office?
Susie Sounds good.

UNIT 6, Exercise 6

- A**
25 *Mrs Cooper* Well, Mr Marks, thank you once again for finding the time to come and visit us today. It really was a pleasure to meet you in person at last.
Mr Marks The pleasure was all mine. And thank you for taking the time to show me round your plant. It really was fascinating.
Mrs Cooper I'm glad that you found it interesting. If we can get our people to put their heads together, hopefully you'll be able to come back again soon and see your machine tools being used here.
Mr Marks I certainly hope so.
Mrs Cooper Well, Mr Marks, Matthew will show you back down to reception. I hope that you have a safe journey home. Goodbye.
Mr Marks Goodbye, Mrs Cooper, and I look forward to seeing you again soon.
Mrs Cooper Likewise, Mr Marks.
Matthew If you'll just come this way, I'll see you down to reception.
Mr Marks Thanks.
- B**
26 *Mrs Cooper* Right, and I look forward to receiving these samples from you next week.
Mr Marks Yeah. I'll get them to you by Thursday at the latest.
Mrs Cooper Here we are, Roger. I'll just call the lift for you. Well, thanks for coming along this afternoon.
Mr Marks It was a pleasure as always, Catherine. Enjoy your holiday in France.
Mrs Cooper Don't worry, I will. You can think of me sampling all that food and wine while you're slaving away at work. Ah, here's your lift. Bye for now, Roger. Have a safe trip back to Birmingham.
Mrs Cooper Bye, and see you again soon, Catherine.
Mr Marks Bye now.
- C**
27 *Mrs Cooper* OK guys. That's everything. Carl and Gary, thanks for joining us today.
Mr Marks Don't mention it. It was very useful to be in on your meeting.
Matthew Actually, I think we should do this more often. Interdepartmental meetings are all very well, but you don't get an idea of what's really going on in other departments unless you go to their team meetings.
Mrs Cooper That's a fantastic idea. I'll speak to the other heads and see what they think.
Mr Marks Anyway, I'd better be going. I have another meeting in five minutes.
Mrs Cooper OK. See you guys later for lunch?
Matthew Not today. I'm off for a lunch meeting with a customer.
Mr Marks I'll be in the canteen as usual. See you about one?
Mrs Cooper See you then. See you tomorrow, Gary.

A-Z word list

	Translation		Translation
A			
abroad [ə'brɔ:d]		to come up with solutions	
to abstain [əb'steɪn]		[kʌm ʌp wɪð sə'lju:ʃnz]	
accident ['æksɪdənt]		comfortable, to feel	
to accomplish [ə'kʌmplɪʃ]		[fɪl 'kʌmfəbl]	
accuracy ['ækjʊrəsi]		common ['kɒmən]	
to act [ækt]		to complain [kəm'pleɪn]	
advance notice		complaint [kəm'pleɪnt]	
[əd'vɑ:ns 'nəʊtɪs]		compliment, to return the ~	
after-sales service		[rɪ'tʌn ðə 'kɒmplɪmənt]	
[ˈɑ:ftəseɪlz sɜ:vɪs]		to conclude [kən'klʊd]	
agenda [ə'dʒendə]		confident ['kɒnfɪdənt]	
aim [eɪm]		construction [kən'strʌkʃn]	
airfare ['eəfeə]		contract ['kɒntrækt]	
to announce [ə'naʊns]		to contribute [kən'trɪbjʊt]	
annual general meeting		contribution [kən'trɪ'bju:ʃn]	
[ˌænjuəl dʒenrəl 'mi:tiŋ]		convenient [kən'vi:niənt]	
AOB (any other business)		to cope with sth [kəʊp]	
[ˌeɪ əʊ 'bi: ˌeni ɔðə 'bɪznəs]		core [kɔ:]	
to apologize [ə'pɒlədʒaɪz]		cost-cutting ['kɒstɪkʌtɪŋ]	
apology [ə'pɒlədʒi]		to cough [kɒf]	
approach [ə'prəʊtʃ]		customer acquisition	
attached [ə'tætʃt]		[kʌstəmə ækwɪ'zɪʃn]	
to attend [ə'tend]		to cut costs [kʌt 'kɒsts]	
to attend to sth [ə'tend tə]		to cut off [kʌt 'ɒf]	
audience ['ɔ:diəns]			
awful ['ɔ:fl]			
B		D	
background papers		data projector	
[ˈbækgraʊnd peɪpəz]		[ˌdætə prə'dʒektə]	
to be about sth [bi ə'baʊt]		to deal with sth ['di:l wɪð]	
to beat [bi:t]		debt [det]	
benchmarking data		deference ['defərəns]	
[ˈbentʃmɑ:kɪŋ dætə]		to develop [dɪ'veləp]	
board meeting ['bɔ:d mi:tiŋ]		disadvantage	
branch [brʌntʃ]		[dɪsəd'vɑ:ntɪdʒ]	
break, to take a ~		discount ['dɪskaʊnt]	
[ˌbreɪk ə 'breɪk]		to discuss [dɪ'skʌs]	
to break down [ˌbreɪk daʊn]		to distribute sth to sb	
to break the ice		[dɪ'strɪbjʊt tə]	
[ˌbreɪk ði 'aɪs]		to divide up sth [dɪ'vaɪd ʌp]	
to bridge a gap		to draw up sth [ˌdrɔ: ʌp]	
[ˌbrɪdʒ ə 'ɡæp]		driver ['draɪvə]	
buy-in ['baɪ ɪn]			
C		E	
to call a meeting		to enable [ɪ'neɪbl]	
[kɔ:l ə 'mi:tiŋ]		to encourage [ɪn'kʌrɪdʒ]	
capital investment		to ensure [ɪn'ʃʊə]	
spending ['kæpɪtəl ɪnvestmənt spændɪŋ]		environment [ɪn'veɪrənmənt]	
to carry a motion		to equip [ɪ'kwɪp]	
[ˌkæri ə 'məʊʃn]		to expect [ɪk'spekt]	
to clarify ['klærəfaɪ]			
to clear one's throat		F	
[ˌkliə wʌnz θrəʊt]		fabrics ['fæbrɪks]	
to come straight to the point		facility manager	
[kʌm ,streɪt tə ðə 'pɔɪnt]		[fə'sɪləti ,mænɪdʒə]	
		to fail [feɪl]	
		favour, to be in ~ of sth	
		[ˌbi ɪn 'feɪvər ɒv]	
		finishing touch	
		['fɪnɪʃɪŋ tʌtʃ]	
		to fix a time [ˌfiks ə 'taɪm]	

Translation

to follow up on sth
[fə'ləʊ 'ʌp]
former ['fɔ:mə]
frankly ['fræŋkli]
frontline ['frʌntlain]

G generalization

[dʒenərəl'aɪz(ə)n]
to get down to business
[get 'daʊn tə 'bɪznəs]
to get in touch [get in 'tʌtʃ]
to get on with [get 'ɒn wɪð]
to get out of control
[get aʊt əv kən'trəʊl]
to get the ball rolling
[get ðə 'bɔ:l 'rɔ:lɪŋ]
to go over the details
[gəʊ əʊvə ðə 'di:teɪls]
good manners [gʊd 'mænəz]
good sport, to be a -
[bi ə 'gʊd 'spɔ:t]

H to handle sth ['hændl]

to head up [hed 'ʌp]
heat, to take the - out of sth
[hi:t ðə 'hi:t aʊt əv]
to hold a meeting
[həʊld ə 'mi:tiŋ]
honest, to be ~ [tə bi 'ɒnɪst]
how about ...? [haʊ ə'baʊt]
to hurry up [hʌri 'ʌp]

I ill, to be ~ ['ɪl]

immediately [ɪ'mɪdiətli]
inadequate [ɪn'ædɪkwət]
to inconvenience sb
[ɪnkən'vi:niəns]
to interrupt [ɪntə'rʌpt]
insulting [ɪn'sʌltɪŋ]
interdepartmental
[ɪntə:pi:t'men'tl]
interior design [ɪn'tɪəriə
dɪ'zaɪn]
IPO (initial public offering)
[aɪ pi'etʃu 'ɪnɪ] pʌblɪk
'ɒfərɪŋ]

J junior staff ['dʒu:niə stɑ:f]**K** keen on sth/sb, to be ~

[bi ki:n ɒn]
kick-off meeting
[kɪk'ɒf mi:tiŋ]

L lack [lek]

to last [ləst]
lavishly ['lævɪʃli]
length [leŋθ]
to level off [ˌlevl 'ɒf]

M to make it ['meɪk ɪt]

to manage ['mænɪdʒ]
manpower ['mænpaʊə]
matters arising
[mætəz ə'raɪzɪŋ]

Translation

meantime, in the -
[ɪn ðə 'mi:ntaɪm]
mediocre [ˌmɪdi'əʊkə]
to meet up with sb
[mi:t 'ʌp wɪð]
mess, to make a ~ of sth
[mek ə 'mes əv]
mind, to have sth in -
[həv ɪn 'maɪnd]
minutes ['mɪnɪts]
meantime, in the -
[ɪn ðə 'mi:ntaɪm]
to move on [mu:v 'ɒn]

N to negotiate [ni'ɡəʊʃieɪt]

nervous tic [nɜ:vəs 'tɪk]
nonsense [ˌnɒnsens]
notice, at short -
[ət ʃɔ:t 'nəʊtɪs]

O objective [əb'dʒektɪv]

old-fashioned [əld'fæʃənd]
opportunity, to take the -
[teɪk ðə ɒpə'tju:nəti]
outcome ['aʊtkʌm]
to outline [aʊtlaɪn]
to overcome [əʊvə'kʌm]
overhead projector
[əʊvəhed prɒ'dʒektə]
overworked [əʊvə'wɜ:kɪd]

P participant [pɑ:'tɪsɪpənt]

to pay attention to sth
[peɪ ə'tenʃn]
to perform [pə'fɔ:m]
performance [pə'fɔ:məns]
to phrase [freɪz]
to pick up the bill
[pɪk 'ʌp ðə 'bɪl]
plant [plɑ:nt]
pleasantry ['plezntri]
point, to make a -
[meɪk ə 'pɔɪnt]
to postpone [pə'spəʊn]
to predict [prɪ'dɪkt]
to prefer [prɪ'fɜ:]
to prepare for sth [prɪ'peə fə]
to prepare sth [prɪ'peə]
to push for agreement
[puʃ fə ə'grɪmənt]
to put sth to a vote
[put sʌmθɪŋ tə ə 'vəʊt]
pre-tax profits
[pri:tæks 'prɒfɪts]
profit warning
['prɒfɪt wɔ:nɪŋ]
profitability [ˌprɒfɪtə'bɪləti]
proposed [prə'pəʊzd]
to put sth back [put 'bæk]

Q quotation [kwəʊ'teɪʃn]

Useful phrases and vocabulary

ARRANGING A MEETING

Asking for a meeting

Could we schedule a time to meet next week?
I'd like to schedule a meeting as soon as possible.
Could I suggest that we meet?
Can we meet and go over this together?
Perhaps we could meet and go over the details together?
Do you have time to meet next week?
I was wondering if you might have time to meet on Thursday.

Suggesting a meeting time

How about Monday at nine?
How would Wednesday at four o'clock be for you?
How about sometime after lunch?
Could we meet next week?
Would it be possible for us to meet on Friday afternoon next week?
Can I suggest 7.30 on Thursday evening?
Could we schedule a time to meet next week?
Would half past five suit you?

Saying that you aren't able to attend

Sorry, I can't make it then.
I'm afraid I have another appointment at that time.
I'm afraid I have another appointment then.
I'm a bit tied up then. How about another time?

Saying that you can attend

Sounds good.
Yes, that works for me.
Yes, that would be fine.
Yes, I can manage that.

Confirming the day and time

See you on Monday at seven.
So, I look forward to seeing you on Tuesday at four.
So that's Tuesday at 3 p.m. in your office.

Agreeing the length of a meeting

Should we plan for the whole afternoon?
Let's leave the timing of the meeting open for now.
How long should we plan on meeting for?
The meeting should take about an hour and a half.

Saying that you're looking forward to seeing someone

It'll be nice to see you then.
I'm looking forward to it.
I look forward to meeting you then.

Saying sorry and rescheduling a meeting

I'm calling about our meeting next week.
I'm terribly sorry.
I'm afraid I have to ask you if we can reschedule our meeting next week.
I'm afraid something has come up.
Sorry to inconvenience you.
Could we postpone the meeting until Wednesday at the same time?
Would you be able to meet on Tuesday instead?
Would it be possible to meet a bit later/earlier?

INTRODUCTIONS AND SMALL TALK

Introducing yourself

Hello. My name's ...
Hi everyone. My name's ...
Hello, I'm ...
Pleased to meet you.
Nice to meet you.
How do you do? I'm ...

Making introductions

Ms Lai, do you know Mr Weimann?
Chris, have you met Fiona yet?
Mr Saramago, I'd like you to meet Ms Copeland.
Delphine, this is Eric. Eric, Delphine.

Asking someone to use your first name

Please, call me Chris.
By the way, it's Frances.
And you can call me ...
And I'm ...

Asking how someone is

How are you?
How are you doing?
How are things going?
How's business?

Making small talk

Which hotel are you staying at?
How long have you worked for your company?
Did you come here by plane?
Which airport did you fly into?
Is this the first time you've come here for a meeting?
Are you a colleague of ...?
Do you know my colleague, ...?
Is this your first visit to (country/town)?

Showing interest in what someone is saying

Right.
Oh, really?
Interesting.
That's absolutely fascinating!
I see.

STARTING A MEETING**Welcoming participants to a meeting**

It's nice to see everyone.
It's great to see everybody.
I'm glad you could all make it today.
Thanks for being here today.
Hello everybody.
It's good to see you all.

Saying who can't attend the meeting

I have apologies from Tina and Bob.
Derek has sent his apologies.
Peter can't make it either.
Unfortunately, Tim wasn't able to make it today.
Laura can't be with us today.
Laura has sent her apologies.

Stating what the meeting's about

We're meeting today to talk about ...
Our objective today is ...
We'll be discussing ...
Jim will be examining ...
Jeremy will present an analysis of ...
Chris is going to give us an overview of ...
John will be giving us an overview of ...

Introducing participants at a meeting

Before we begin, can I introduce Chris Hall to you all?
Does everyone know Mary Norman?
This is Christina, one of our consultants.
Let me introduce ...

Asking participants to introduce themselves

Why don't you introduce yourself to everyone?
Tell us a bit about yourself.
Could you tell us all who you are and say something about yourself?

Giving details about yourself

I'm the business development manager.
I've been with Burotech PLC since 2002.
I've worked for the company for four years.
I'm based in the Madrid office.
I work at our Cambridge branch.

DISCUSSING FACTS**Reporting progress**

Our customer base increased in size last year.
Our sales have increased during the current quarter.
Overall our sales performed well in the last quarter.
The telecoms production team performed extremely well.
The telecom sector's sales were really good.
Sales performed very poorly here.
The guys on the finance team performed satisfactorily, as ever.

Structuring a progress report

Here's a quick overview of the situation.
Let's look first at ...
Let's turn now to ...
I'll move on now to ...
What about ... ?

Explaining consequences

This was due to ...
I think this was as a result of ...
He performed poorly, the reason being ...
Our sales performed satisfactorily because of ...

TAKING PART IN DISCUSSIONS**Asking for comments**

What do you think about that?
What do we all think?
Do you want to start us off?
Do you want to come in here?
Would you like to make a point here?
Does anyone want to say anything on that?
Would you like to comment on that?

Interrupting

Sorry, but ...
Sorry to interrupt, but I feel that ...
Could I come in here?
I'd like to make a point here, if I could.
Can I just say something about that?

Dealing with interruptions

Hold on, please.
We'll come back to you in a moment.
Just a second, please. I promise we'll come right back to you.

Asking for clarification

I'm not sure I understand what you're saying.
Do you mean that ... ?
Are you saying that ... ?
If I understand you correctly, you think that ...

Asking for opinions

What do you think?
Do you agree?
Do you feel that ...?
What do you think about ...?

Giving a neutral opinion

I think that ...
Why don't we ...?
It seems to me that ...
In my opinion ...
We should ...

Giving a tentative opinion

It might be the case that ...
Perhaps we should ...
I tend to think that ...
Is it possible that ...?

Giving a strong opinion

I'm convinced that ...
It's (absolutely) clear that ...
And frankly I think that ...
There's no doubt in my mind that ...

Strong agreement

You're completely right.
Absolutely. I think it's a fantastic idea.
I totally / completely agree.

Agreeing in a neutral way

I think you're right.
That's right.
I agree.

Tentative or partial agreement

To a certain extent I agree.
I partially agree, but ...
Yes, but ...
I can agree with that up to a point.
I think I can agree up to a point.
I support the idea up to a point.

Neutral disagreement

I disagree.
I can't go along with that.
I think you might be wrong there.
I'm afraid I can't agree with you there.

Strong disagreement

No, I think you're wrong there.
I completely disagree.

Making positive suggestions

How about if we ...?
Couldn't we just ...?
What about if you ...?

DEALING WITH OFFERS**Offers and conditions**

If you buy more PCs, I'll offer you a good discount.
If we gave him more time, he would finish the project successfully.
He will be able to start work on Monday if we offer him the job today.
If we confirmed the job offer today, he'd be able to start work at the beginning of the month.
If they gave us more time, we could look at it in more detail.
If you place your order today, I'll give you a 13% discount.

Asking for time to consider

I'd like a couple of days to think this over.
Can I get back to you on that?
I need some time to think about this.
I need to run this by my boss.

Accepting an offer

I think we'll go for that.
That sounds good to me.
That would be great.
I'd like to take you up on that.

Rejecting an offer

Sorry. I'm not able to go ahead with this.
Sorry, but I'm not able to go along with that.
Unfortunately, I won't be able to take you up on that.
I don't see how I can agree to that.
I don't think that would be possible.
I'm afraid I can't agree.

PROPOSING AND VOTING**Making a formal proposal**

I propose to the board that we ...
I would like to propose that ...

Support for a formal proposal

Would anyone like to second that?
Is anyone willing to second Mr Brown's proposal?
I'll second it.
I second that.

Putting an issue to a vote

Let's put this to a vote.
Can we have a vote on this?
Can we have a quick show of hands?
All in favour? Those against?

Saying that you don't want to take part in a vote

I abstain.

ENDING A MEETING

Confirming what the meeting has decided

Just to confirm, we're going to ...
Well, it seems that we are all agreed that we should ...
We've decided that ...

Saying that it's time to close a meeting

Let's wind things up here.
Since time's wearing on, let's wind up this discussion now.
It's quite late and we're a bit pressed for time.
I don't want to let this discussion run over time.
Let's try to finish on time.

Thanking someone for a meeting

Thanks for coming in today.
Thank you very much for your time.
Thank you for your hard work. I think we've come up with a lot of good ideas.
Thank you very much for meeting with us today.

Saying your goodbyes

I look forward to seeing you (all) again soon.
I hope you have a safe journey.
Have a safe trip home.
I look forward to meeting you again soon.
I hope that you have a safe journey home.
Have a safe trip back to London.

USEFUL VERBS (in context)

	Translation
to abstain	Six people voted in favour, two against, and one abstained .
to attend	I attended a meeting with the HR managers on Friday.
to be about sth	As you all know, this meeting is about the changes in our department.
to be in favour of sth	Raj, are you in favour of the proposal?
to call a meeting	Shall we call a team meeting to discuss the new regulations?
to clarify	I'm afraid I don't quite understand. Could you please clarify that?
to conclude	So, that concludes our meeting for today.
to deal with sth	Could we possibly deal with that point at the end of the meeting?
to discuss sth	I'd like to call a meeting to discuss our new marketing strategy.
to distribute sth to sb	Could you distribute a copy of the minutes to everyone in the team?
to encourage sb	I'd like to encourage everybody to participate in the discussion.
to fix a time	Let's fix a time for our next meeting.
to follow up on sth	Shall we follow up on some of the points from our last meeting?
to get the ball rolling	So, who would like to get the ball rolling ?
to hold a meeting	Shall we hold the meeting in Mike's office?
to interrupt sth/sb	Sorry to interrupt you, but I have an important question.
to make a point	I think Andrea just made a very good point . We really do need to improve efficiency.
to make it	Sorry, Gary. I can't make it this week. Can we meet some other time?
to outline sth	I'd like to outline the main points of my argument.
to postpone sth	I suggest we postpone our decision until we get the full report from sales.
to prepare for sth	We're busy preparing for the meeting with our partners next month.
to reach a decision	Have we reached a decision then, or does anybody disagree?
to review sth	I think we should review our sales policy during the next meeting.
to schedule sth	Could we schedule another meeting for next week? Is that OK with everyone?
to speak up	If you have any questions, please speak up now. This is our last chance for discussion.
to stick to sth	Good point, but can we stick to the agenda and discuss that under AOB?
to suit sb	What time would suit everyone?
to take the opportunity to do sth	I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Jan for all his hard work.
to turn to sth	Now let's turn to our sales figures.
to wrap (sth) up	Does anyone have any other points? No? OK, then let's wrap things up for today.

English for Meetings

EXPRESS SERIES

English for Meetings is part of the EXPRESS SERIES. It is the ideal quick course for professionals who need to attend meetings in English. It can be used to supplement a regular coursebook, on its own, as a stand-alone intensive specialist course, or for self-study. **English for Meetings** is the perfect resource to refer to before your next international meeting.

Key Features of the Book

- Language presented in context with follow-up exercises
- Special focus on the appropriate language for formal and informal meetings
- Stimulating role-plays for groupwork tasks
- Language focus boxes with tips and key language for contributing effectively to meetings in an international context
- STARTER section at the beginning of each unit with warm-up and awareness-raising activities
- OUTPUT section at the end of each unit with topics for discussion and reflection
- Appendix including an answer key, transcript, A-Z wordlist, and a glossary of useful phrases and vocabulary

Key Features of the MultiROM

- Realistic listening extracts
- Interactive exercises to practise the language of meetings

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