

# English for Business

## **Chapter 13**

### **Meetings**

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# Meetings

1. Opening a meeting
2. Holding a brainstorming meeting
3. Participating in meetings
4. Leading a meeting

# Setting objectives for meetings

1. Give or share information
2. Present a proposal for discussion
3. ...
4. ...

# Opening a Meeting

1. Signal the start of the meeting (if there are a number of participants)
2. Greet and welcome participants, introduce any new participants.
3. Explain the background to the meeting.
4. State the purpose of the meeting..
5. Ask for contributions or hand over to the first speaker.

# Opening Meetings

- a. John – could you start by reminding us what the three ideas were?
- b. Good morning, everybody. Thanks for coming along this morning.
- c. So the purpose of this meeting is to review the feedback.
- d. As you know, we've set up this team so that we can discuss ways of three new ideas, and we agreed we would all try to get some feedback from our colleagues.
- e. OK – let's make a start!

1. Interrupt social conversation and signal the start of the meeting.
2. Greet and welcome participants, introduce new participants.
3. Explain the background to the meeting.
4. State the purpose of the meeting.
5. Ask for contribution or hand over to the first speaker.

# Opening Meetings

- a. John – could you start by reminding us what the three ideas were? **(5)**
- b. Good morning, everybody. Thanks for coming along this morning. **(2)**
- c. So the purpose of this meeting is to review the feedback. **(4)**
- d. As you know, we've set up this team so that we can discuss ways of three new ideas, and we agreed we would all try to get some feedback from our colleagues. **(3)**
- e. OK – let's make a start! **(1)**

1. Interrupt social conversation and signal the start of the meeting.
2. Greet and welcome participants, introduce new participants.
3. Explain the background to the meeting.
4. State the purpose of the meeting.
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# Holding a Brainstorming Meeting

- 3 to 8 people is an ideal number for brainstorming meetings.
- People think more creatively in a relaxed atmosphere.
- It is useful to have a facilitator who doesn't contribute, but keeps the session on course and records ideas.
- Everyone should feel that their opinions are valued.
- Don't reject any ideas during brainstorming. Criticism kills creativity.
- Don't judge or analyze ideas during brainstorming.
- Write all ideas on a board or flipchart.
- When enough ideas have been suggested, make a short list of the best ones.
- Evaluate the ideas by considering how they would work in practice.

# Making Suggestions

- How about if we change the displays more often?
- Why don't we hold some special events?
- What if we held some fashion shows?
- It think we should introduce more discount sales.
- I don't suppose we could invite some celebrities?
- Perhaps we could decorate in a more modern style.
- I suggest we move to smaller buildings.

# Responding to Suggestions

- OK. Any other ideas?
- Yes – I like that!
- That's crazy – it would never work!
- Right – I've got that. What else?
- That's a good idea!
- That's interesting. Go on!

# Participating in a Meeting

1. Listen to what people say
2. Be aggressive
3. Use polite phrases to agree and disagree
4. Make personal comments
5. Make your point short, simple sentence.

# Starting a Meeting

## **If you are the chairperson**

When participants don't know each other.

- Introduce people
- Say a little about what they do
- Say why they are at the meeting

### General

- Summarizes the aims and objectives of the meeting
- Remind people of any decisions that must be reached
- Tell people how long the meeting will take and if there will be any breaks

## **If you are attending the meeting**

When you arrive.

- Introduce yourself to people that you do not know
- Say a little about your job and company
- Say why you are at the meeting

### General

- Read the agenda before the meeting
- Be clear about the aims and objectives of the meeting
- Prepare any information that you may need to talk about at the meeting

# Making Meetings More Effective

## Before the meeting

1. Read the minutes of the previous meeting (and other relevant documents)
2. Make up your mind about key issues and be prepared to convince everyone that you are right

# Making Meetings More Effective

## During the meeting

1. Make only relevant and interesting points
2. Make sure everyone understands your point of view
3. Speak loudly and repeat your ideas often
4. Listen carefully to other people's points of view
5. Don't say anything because you might sound stupid
6. Don't discuss too much because you want to finish the meeting quickly
7. Avoid any conflicts or disagreements
8. Find out what different people think
9. Try to reach a conclusion that everyone can feel satisfied with.

# Responding and Turn-taking

## Function:

1. Agree and add another argument in support
2. Put an alternative point of view
3. Correct a mistake or misunderstanding
4. Get your turn to speak
5. Deal with an interruption
6. Bring up a new point or argument

## Phrase

- a. Can I come in here?
- b. I have a point to raise about ...
- c. Sorry, but that's not quite right.
- d. That's right! And I'd also like to point out that ...
- e. But don't you think ...?
- f. Can I just finish?

# Responding and Turn-taking

## Function:

1. Agree and add another argument in support **(d)**
2. Put an alternative point of view **(e)**
3. Correct a mistake or misunderstanding **(c)**
4. Get your turn to speak **(a)**
5. Deal with an interruption **(f)**
6. Bring up a new point or argument **(b)**

## Phrase

- a. Can I come in here?
- b. I have a point to raise about ...
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- d. That's right! And I'd also like to point out that ...
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# Participating in Meetings

- Prepare the meeting.
- Know your objectives.
- Speak clearly and confidently.
- Show respect.
- It takes time to develop an argument.
- Adapt your contribution to reflect what others have said.
- Concede a point if you are wrong.
- Remember that you share a common purpose with others.

# Leading a Meeting

1. To help a meeting be more efficient
2. As a time keeper
3. Control the discussion

# Leading a Meeting

## Language

1. OK, Thank you, Jenny. Gaby, you wanted to say something...
2. Right. Why do you think that?
3. Peter, what do you think?
4. So, to sum up ...
5. I don't think that belongs to the present discussion.
6. So, what you're saying is ..., is that right?

## Action

- a. Tell a speaker to keep to the topic.
- b. Clarify the meaning.
- c. Encourage someone to say more.
- d. Summarize.
- e. Ask someone to contribute.
- f. Stop one speaker so that another person can speak.

# Leading a Meeting

## Language

1. OK, Thank you, Jenny. Gaby, you wanted to say something...
2. Right. Why do you think that?
3. Peter, what do you think?
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## Action

- a. Tell a speaker to keep to the topic. **(5)**
- b. Clarify the meaning. **(6)**
- c. Encourage someone to say more. **(2)**
- d. Summarize. **(4)**
- e. Ask someone to contribute. **(3)**
- f. Stop one speaker so that another person can speak. **(1)**

# Attitudes to Interruptions

## **One task at a time**

- Punctuality  
lateness is not tolerated.
- Agenda  
The meeting must follow the agenda.
- Organization  
The meeting is tightly controlled.

## **Several tasks at once**

- Punctuality  
Lateness can be tolerated.
- Agenda  
Talk freely about various concerns.
- Organization  
Meetings are more fluid.

Thank you and see you in the 14<sup>th</sup> session.

Yours sincerely,

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# Original Source:

The original source of this chapter is taken from the book entitled  
“ **Intelligent Business Skills Book**”

1. Intermediate Business English level, written by **Christine Johnson**.

Published by **Pearson Education Limited**.