

ENGLISH

FOR BUSINESS MEETINGS

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E – book

WELCOMING THE PARTICIPANTS

So what are the best ways to welcome people at a meeting? Let's take a broad smile, eye contact and firm handshake for granted, shall we?

Introductory phrases

- Good morning everybody and welcome.
- Thanks for coming to... (our first international meeting.)

- (more formal) On behalf of our company, I would like to welcome you.
- It is good to see you all here.

Introducing yourself

- My name is... (Jill Look) and I am the... (CEO of Look Awesome.)
- I am... (Tom) and I am responsible for... (customer support.)

Offering something to eat or drink

- Make yourself comfortable and help yourself to some coffee or tea.

Expressing gratitude for the fact that people agreed to come quickly

- Thank you for coming/agreeing to meet at/on such short notice. (UK: at such short notice, US: on such short notice)

- I appreciate you coming at/on such short notice.

INTRODUCTIONS

Introductory phrases

- How are you?
- Nice to meet you.

Introducing yourself

- May I introduce myself?
- I am... (Bronislav Sobotka) and I am the... (lecturer of Seduo courses.)

Introducing two people to each other

- Do you know each other?
- Have you met? / Has everybody met... (John?)

Other useful phrases:

- I'm not sure everybody has had the chance to meet... (Kathy.)
- May I introduce you to... (Mrs. Brown?)
- (Chris)... is here to... (introduce the new metrics we want to start measuring.)
- I would like to take this opportunity to welcome and introduce our new colleague.

EXCUSES

Excuses for being late or leaving sooner

- I am sorry for the delay. We have been extremely busy with... (closing the fiscal year.)
- I'm afraid I will have to leave ten minutes early as... (I have another meeting.)
- Unfortunately, I was really busy the past few weeks.

If you need to excuse somebody else:

- Sadly, Peter won't join us as... (he's out on a business trip this week.)
- I'd like to apologise on behalf of... (Mr. Brown.) ...He couldn't attend today's meeting as he had an urgent matter to handle. – FORMAL

Excuses for starting late:

- We need to wait for... (Tom), he is stuck at another meeting. – INFORMAL
- (John) ...just texted me and he will be here in five minutes.
- We will start in a couple of minutes so you have time to grab a cup of coffee or water.

OBJECTIVES

Objectives for the beginning of the meeting:

- The purpose / aim / objective of today's meeting is... (to brainstorm a bit before we agree on what to do next.)
- The reason I wanted to meet was to... (agree who will do what.)
- Today we are going to talk about/discuss... (the quarterly results).
- (less formal) What I would like to do today is... (to give you some updates.)

Plan for the meeting:

- The agenda is as follows: first, ...(we'll go over the tasks from last week. Then...)
- I hope we will manage to... (go over all points outlined in my email.)

Getting things done:

- I'll try to keep it brief.
- Let's get down to business.

PRESENTING

Starting presenting:

- Here we go...
- (more formal) Can I start presenting?

Introduction

- As you can see on the screen, our topic today is... (our progress on quarterly goals.)
- My talk is particularly relevant to those of you who... (are dealing with this type of customer requests.)

Agenda

- In my presentation, I'll focus on two main points.
- It will take about 25 minutes to cover these issues.

Sharing handouts

- I'll be happy to email the PowerPoint presentation to you.
- I'll be handing out copies of the slides at the end of my talk.
- Does everybody have a handout of my report?

EXPRESSING OPINIONS

Giving your point of view

- I guess... (it is not actionable at the moment.)
Personally, I think... (that it is a win-win situation.)
 - It seems to me that... (we need to raise prices.)
As far as I'm concerned,... (we will have to spend more time on the project.)
 - From my perspective,... (we need more clients.)
-

Supporting your point

- Generally, it is thought that... (one has to start with market research.)
- It goes without saying that... (in this case, quality goes over quantity.)

AGREEING

Brief agreeing

- Absolutely.
- Exactly/Definitely.
- That is for sure.
- I agree 100%.
- That is exactly what I think/how I feel.
- That's so true.
- I couldn't agree more.
- I think so, too.

Giving others credit for the idea

- You are right.
- You have a strong point there.
- OK, that's convincing.

Giving a counterargument

- I see what you mean, but...
- That's a good / important point, however...

DISAGREEING

Brief and therefore slightly offensive disagreeing

- That's not right!
- I totally disagree!
- I don't agree.
- That's out of the question.

It's always more acceptable to soften the negativity of the disagreement. You can for example start with something like a "buffer":

- I'm afraid I disagree.
- I'm afraid that won't be possible under such circumstances.
- I'm not sure about that.

Or better yet, show respect and understanding for the other person's point of view by saying something like:

- That's one way of looking at it, however... (we should take the budget into consideration.)
- I understand what you're saying, but... (it's not on the agenda today.)

GIVING REASONS

Simple explanations

- She was late because... (of the traffic.)
- That's the reason why... (we need to have everything in writing.)

More formally

- For this reason,... (we need a new agreement.)
- Since/As... (the fiscal year is almost ending, we need to invoice all clients.)
- Due to that situation, ... (we need to move the deadline.)

More personal statements

- In my opinion, ... (we are not aiming at the right audience.)
- If you ask me,... (we should communicate it to the stakeholders as soon as possible.)

Reminding the reason

- As you know... (we have arranged a conference call for later today.)

GIVING SUGGESTIONS

Simple suggestion

- How about... / What about... (trying this approach)? (+ ing)

Offering help or reaching a compromise

- I thought we might/could... (do this instead.) (+ infinitive)
- Maybe we should... (think about what to do next.) (+ infinitive)

Expressing your personal opinion

- If you want my opinion,... (I would change the wording.)
- I'm just thinking out loud here.
- I would recommend... (working closely with Amy on this.) (+ ing)

Typical making suggestion

- Why don't you... (prepare the presentation)? (+ infinitive)

RESPONDING TO SUGGESTIONS

Simple responses to suggestions

- Yes, that's a good idea.
- Yeah, you are right.
- I would vouch for that idea.
- I would agree with this solution.
- Good point/idea.

Expressing your doubts

- Hmm, interesting, but don't you think that... (we should try a different strategy?)
- Actually, I don't think that is a good approach.

INTERRUPTING

Nice and polite interrupting

- Sorry to interrupt, but... (could you tell us more about the research?)
- Sorry to cut you off, but... (I don't think that's relevant to the discussion.)

Adding a piece of knowledge

- Before you go on / move on, I'd like to say something.
- If I might add something... (I'd like to praise Jackie for her input.)
- I would like to point out that... (extraordinary customer service is our mission.)
- Can I add something here?

Stepping up for yourself and for others

- Please let me finish what I have to say first.

- I think Deborah would like to add something.

Typical phrases for polite requests

- Could I ask you to... (check the data?)
- Do you think you could... (move the meeting to Tuesday?)

CLARIFYING ASKING FOR CLARIFICATION

Simple asking for clarification

- I'm not sure I follow.
- I'm not sure I understand.
- Sorry, could you repeat that?
- I would vouch for that idea.

Summing up

- So you're saying that... (we should track the serial numbers?)
- If I understood it correctly, you're suggesting that we do... (another round of interviews?)

Avoiding misunderstanding

- In other words, what I meant was... (we should hire another marketing manager.)
- I was trying to say that... (the website needs a redesign.)

NEXT STEPS

Clarifying what you expect

- (strict) I expect this report by Friday.
- (more polite) We need the report by... (Monday.)

Polite assigning tasks to people

- Do you think you could get me the report by... (Friday?)
- Could you prepare... (the brief) while... (I talk to the financial team?)
- Could you please take care of this? (meaning: Could you please do this?)
- The client would like to have... (the proposition next week) ...at the latest.

CONCLUDING SUMMARY

Highlighting things that need to become a priority

- I would like to emphasise the importance of... (having after-sales service.)
- The most important thing/outcome of this meeting is... (that we need to request an estimate of the cost from the supplier.)
- The key takeaways for me are... (that we need to submit the project proposal next week.)

Summarising the main points

- Let me repeat that... (we welcome any feedback.)
- I think the participants are in agreement on the following points: (hiring more people and moving the deadline.)
- We are looking forward to exploring the next opportunities... (in this particular area.)

COMPLIMENTS

General compliments

- Congratulations on.... (your promotion.)
- Well done. Keep up the good work!

Specific compliments

- Nice job on... (that business deal. You clearly put a lot of effort into it.)
- You did a really great job on... (that report.)
- I really enjoyed... (your presentation.)

- You touched on some very interesting points in your presentation.
- You did a fine job of explaining the complex matter in a simple way.

Responding to compliments

- Oh, that's so nice of you to say!
- I'm happy you feel that way.

GIVING THANKS CLOSING THE MEETING

Expressing appreciation and gratitude

- I appreciate your help/time/remarks.
- We are very thankful for your time.
- Many thanks for giving me this opportunity.
- (more formal) It's been a pleasure doing business with you.
- I appreciate the chat with you.
- I am grateful for your support.
- Thank you for sharing your expertise.

SAYING GOODBYE

If you have run the meeting

- Thanks for coming. We are so glad you could make it.
- It was a pleasure having you here.

If you have attended a meeting

- What a great meeting.
- We should do this more often.
- It is a pity that you must go.
- (more formal) I look forward to our next meeting.
- See you later/soon.
- Talk to you later/soon.

SPECIAL PHRASES FOR ONLINE MEETINGS

Checking connection

- Can you all see/hear me now?
- If you can't see me, please let me know.

Technical difficulties

- We can't hear/see you.
- You're muted. / Your mic is on mute.

Sharing the screen

- Sorry to interrupt but we can't see your presentation.
- You haven't started sharing your screen.

Fixing technical issues

- I have to turn my video off to speed up my connection.
- You're breaking up a lot, maybe try turning your video off.

SPECIAL PHRASES FOR ONLINE MEETINGS

Lost connection

- (Sam) ...has trouble with his internet connection.
- It seems we have lost ... (Sam).

Problems that only one side can notice

- I'm sorry, my screen froze for a moment, what did you say?
- I'm having trouble/difficulties hearing you.

Interruption

- Sorry, I have to step away momentarily. Please continue without me. I'll join again in... (ten minutes.) – FORMAL

Pointing at chat

- If you have any questions, feel free to post them in the chat and I'll answer them during the call.