
BETTER
BUSINESS
ENGLISH
60
Quick Techniques

Better Business English (eBook & audiobook)
60 Quick Techniques for professionals

How To Use This Book?

I wanted to write this ebook (+ audio) to be a quick and easy resource for busy professionals to 'speak, meet and present in English with confidence!'

It includes 60 quick techniques to improve your Business English in 6 areas:

- Presenting in English
- Telephoning & Conference Calls in English
- Job Interviews in English
- Meeting in English
- Emailing in English
- Negotiating in English

Develop your confidence speaking in English!

Practice & feedback are the keys to developing confidence!

1) Practice speaking in English, audio record yourself (webcam / smartphone). Give yourself feedback and ask others for feedback.
2) Do 1) again and better!
3) Send us your best audio recording for feedback info@englishtc.com or chris@englishtco.com

Good luck! Wishing you lots of success with your Business English!

See you soon! / ¡Hasta pronto!

Christopher Wright

The English Training Company – Feel equal. Speak, meet and present in English with confidence!

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Technique 1

What's Your Presentation Purpose?

As with most things in life if you don't have a **clear purpose** you won't succeed.

Successful Presentations are no different. You should be able to write your presentation purpose in one short sentence.

Here are two of the most popular for Business Presentations:

1. **To inform:** Your purpose goal is to inform and provide information that helps your audience to understand an issue or subject.
2. **To persuade:** Your goal is to persuade your audience to take a specific action, such as buy a product or implement a new policy.

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Technique 2

5 Presentation Structures

Presentations include 3 parts: opening, main body and a conclusion.

Around these 3 parts we structure our presentation.

Here are 5 popular Presentation Structures:

Directional: This presentation is organised by following a direction. For example, with a topic starting from the periphery issues and moving towards the core issues.

Cause & Effect: The presentation is organised in terms of showing cause and effect.

Chronological: The content of the presentation is organised chronologically in terms of time from the oldest event to the most recent event or vice-versa.

Problem-Solution: In this presentation you firstly introduce and describe a problem, then explain its solution and finally why you think this solution should be implemented.

Comparing: The organisation of this presentation focuses on comparing and contrasting different proposals, options or plans.

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Technique 3

Make a great first impression and a great lasting impression

Openings And Conclusions

With a business presentation we all want to make a great first impression and a great lasting impression with our audience.

For a presentation this involves having a **great opening and a great conclusion**.

Openings

Great openings do two things. They immediately catch the audience´s attention and communicate what the presentation will be about. Here are some examples:

1. Use a rhetorical question
2. Ask your audience a question
3. Use an unusual fact, statement or research
4. Show an object or a picture

Conclusions

Great conclusions do two things. They reaffirm your presentation´s key message to the audience and they help you to leave a great last impression. Here are some examples:

1. Give a summary of your presentation´s key ideas (1 to 3 key ideas maximum)
2. Conclude with a challenge (one sentence).
3. Conclude with a question (one sentence).
4. Conclude with a quotation (one sentence).
5. Conclude with an anecdote (one sentence).

Technique 4

The Power of Storytelling

Imagine you have to give a sales presentation to an international audience. And you ask yourself this key question:

- What do I want the audience to remember about me or my company?

One powerful communication tool to help you is **Storytelling.**

How?
Select powerful common images and tell a simple story of how your product/service solved a similar problem faced by their company. Their brain will remember your product/service in images and simple words 10 times longer than just words.

Here is an example to help you with some storytelling phrases:

Example
GHT is a company that has a problem with their email system and need a solution.

- *It was a cold winter´s day when GHT´s problem first appeared.*
- *Imagine the following situation, GHT´s email was not working and everybody was panicking.*
- *So what did everybody at GHT do? Did they start shouting and complaining at their IT support? Did they attack their computers in rage?*
- *No they didn't have to. Within 30 seconds our "Early Warning" Email System had diagnosed the problem and had activated the backup email system.*
- *Meanwhile "Early Warning" worked quietly on a solution.*
- *Knowing that their email was safe and well.. everybody lived happily ever after!*

Technique 5

Persuade Without Authority

Here are 3 steps to persuade without authority:

1. **Sell your expertise and not your job position.** Transform your specialist knowledge into measurable benefits for the company. There are 4 steps; problem, problem's consequences, benefits and outline solution.

   I. *The problem is that we are not dealing with client problems within the 2 days we promise all clients.*
   II. *As a result, we are losing 15% of clients with problems to the competition.*
   III. *The main benefits of my proposal of specialist training are that it will reduce this 15% to the industry average of 3% and also empower employees to solve customer problems.*
   IV. *Let me outline my proposal of specialist training. It consists of 3 parts, firstly…secondly…and finally….*

2. **Speak the language of your audience**. As a specialist or technical expert you need to use manager's language; use more management language and terms.

   I. *This solution achieves the company's goals of improving performance…*
   II. *This solution will deliver the following benefits for the company,…*
   III. *The return on investment is…*
   IV. *The final cost of the proposal is and will save the company 15%.*

3. **Conviction and belief.** When a manager or director is evaluating you, one of the most powerful ways to persuade is though your conviction and belief in your solution or proposal.

   I. *Use positive words for describing outcomes (e.g. succeed, benefit, win).*
   II. *Avoid negative words (e.g. problem, risk ,failure).*
   III. *Transmit certainty and use "when" and not "if" for future outcomes.*
   IV. *Transmit certainty using "will" and not modal verbs of possibility (may, might, could).*

Technique 6

What Can We Learn From Actors

How do actors transmit passion and energy?

They rehearse by reading their parts of the script out loud and with feeling. They picture themselves in the scene, and imagine the feelings of the character.

They know it is easier to remember their lines and connect to the audience when feelings are involved. Feelings are powerful for our memories.

In a Business Presentation we need to transmit our ideas to the audience and we need our audience to remember.

This is more effectively done with energy and feelings such as passion, excitement and enthusiasm. But how do we get excited or passionate about a financial report?

Solution: Associate our presentation with something we feel passionate or excited about

Even if the topic is boring we can convince our mind to be passionate and excited. All we need to do is associate a topic with something we feel passionate or excited about. And then remember and talk about that for 10-15 minutes before we practice or give the presentation.

For example you have to explain the monthly financial report. It´s not been a good month but you think things will improve in the next 6 months. You can associate your presentation with your child who for three months received bad marks at school and then improved greatly with help and support. How did you feel? You probably had feelings of hope, pride and satisfaction. Then start talking about this out loud and for 10-15 minutes before you give the presentation.

Now if you give your presentation immediately after this and still keep thinking of your child you´ll transmit the same feelings when giving your presentation about the monthly financial report.

Best of all nobody will know how you did it.

Technique 7

4 Steps - How To Explain Technical Ideas to Non-Technical People

How can you communicate effectively with non-technical professionals?

Here are 4 steps to help you:

1. **Start with a rhetorical question to involve the audience**. This makes the audience think about the technical concept from the beginning.
2. Use **simple examples that everybody can immediately understand**.
3. **Use visual images** to explain a concept quickly.
4. **Use Simple English**. Avoid technical vocabulary, abbreviations and jargon.

Use the 4 steps to evaluate Erik Schlangen and his TED video "A self-healing asphalt"
https://www.ted.com/talks/erik_schlangen_a_self_healing_asphalt

Technique 8

The 3 Be´s Of Great Feedback

How To Give And Receive Great Feedback

You can learn a lot by asking for feedback and giving feedback.

There are 3 steps to great feedback known as **"The 3 Be´s".** Here are some examples:

1) Be specific
I thought your presentation was boring. = BAD EXAMPLE
I felt you spent too long talking about the graphs. = GOOD EXAMPLE
I think your main arguments need more evidence. = GOOD EXAMPLE

2) Be constructive
I liked the way you…
I was impressed with…
Next time, try…
I think the presentation's purpose would have been clearer if…

3) Be motivating
Maybe you could…
I suggest that you…
Have you thought about…

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Technique 9

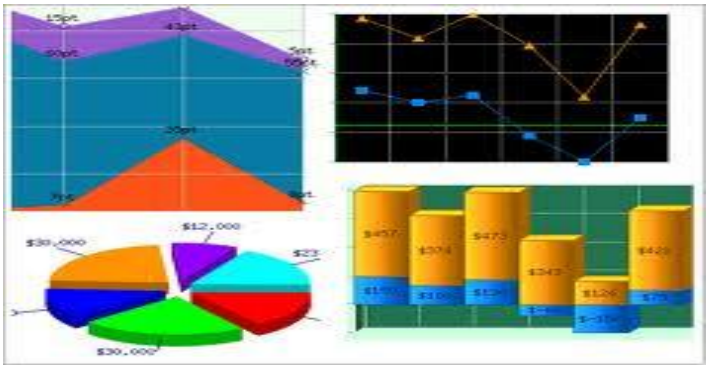
Describing Graphs – Maintain Interest And Help Your Audience To Remember

Research has shown that people remember best when they **see and listen to an idea at the same time.**

So when you want people to remember a key idea, you need to describe it and show a graph or visual that represents it at the same time.

Finally using varied and dynamic vocabulary will maintain the audience's interest. Boring the audience by repeating "go up" and "go down" 10 times won´t!

Describing: **to go up quickly**	to surge, to soar, to shoot up (e.g. Prices surged in April 2012)
Describing: **to go up slowly**	to rise slowly / steadily / gradually to increase slowly / steadily / gradually (e.g. Costs rose gradually in May 2013)
Describing: **to go down quickly**	to slump, to plummet, to plunge (e.g. Share prices slumped in June 2013.)
Describing: **to go down slowly**	to decrease slowly / steadily / gradually to go down slowly / steadily / gradually to slide (e.g. Market share slide during June 2011)



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Technique 10

Cross-Cultural Factors For International Presentations

Why are international presentations different?
Because cultural factors influence the way we communicate, receive communication and interpret communication when working with people from different cultures.

Here are three areas to take into consideration:

1. Audience expectations: Some audiences think it is important for a presentation be entertaining and show flair. So rhetoric and anecdote are very important. Latin countries tend to value this. Other countries demand detail and lots of technical information, such as Germany, Japan and Finland. Other countries insist on presentation features and benefits so they can make up their own mind, such as the UK. Other countries want a clear statement of what the presentation can do for them, such as the US and India.

2. Presentation Styles vary between countries
Time: In the US, presentations are short, around 15 to 30 minutes, which is not surprising because "time" is very important to Americans. Western Europe is a little bit longer with both the UK and Germans being used to listening to presentations of 30 to 60 minutes. Best to ask colleagues or people from that country/culture or to research what is the norm.

Questions: Is it acceptable to interrupt a presentation to ask questions? Or should we leave time at the end of our presentations for questions? In some countries you can interrupt a presentation to ask questions, particularly to clarify information, as in Germany because it is seen as a sign of interest not rudeness. While in other countries questions may be asked at the end, so it's important to plan and tell the audience they'll be time at the end for questions. In South East Asia, questions are often not asked at all, as it is seen as impolite! So you need to leave time at the end for people to approach you individually and ask you personally.

Style: Dynamic, traditional or personal presentation style? In many countries without using a personal communication style you won't connect with your audience. The audience is not interested in an impressive Powerpoint presentation; they want to feel your personal sincerity and you need to tell stories and show the kind of person you are to really connect with the audience.

In other countries a traditional formal style is acceptable with the presenter standing behind a lectern and reading the presentation. While a dynamic style involves moving around, interacting with the audience and entertaining them, a popular style in the US.

3. Signalling it, Saying it and Summarising it
If you and your audience are not native English speakers, it´s easy for an audience to get lost and stop paying attention to you. How can we stop this happening?

It's important that you tell your audience:
- what key points/ideas you're going to say (Signaling it)
- when you're saying key points/ideas (Saying it
- when you've finished saying key points/ideas (Summarising it)

It may sound repetitive, but your audience will be grateful for helping them follow your presentation.

<u>Examples</u>

Signalling it
"I´m going to talk about three areas…"
"My first point will be…. "
Saying it
"XXX is my first point"
"At the end you say "That was my first point."
Summarising it
"To summarise, I have made three points about presentations"
"To resume, my three key points were…"

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Telephoning and Conference Calls in English with confidence!

10 Quick Techniques for busy professionals

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Technique 1

Simple Structures For Telephone Calls

Greet, identification and offer
Greet, identification and request

When answering a telephone call you can use the following simple structure.

Greeting, identification and offer.

- *Good morning (greeting), this is Sara Lolka from BA Systems (identification). How can I help? (offer)*
- *Hi (greeting) this is Jim from BA Systems (Identification), what can I do for you? (offer)*

When telephoning someone you can use the following simple structure.

Greeting, identification and request.

- *Hi (greeting) this is Sam Eagles from NorthStar (identification). Can I speak to Mr.Yokitu please? (request)*
- *Hi (greeting) Mr.Yokitu, this is Sam Eagles from NorthStar (identification). Can you help me with something urgent? (request)*

Technique 2

Information Should Be Clear

Clear, Simple and Concise

How much time is wasted repeating telephone calls because the information was not communicated clearly the first time?

Approximately 86-87% of people using English for International Business in the world are non-native speakers according to many international sources (Times of India 2011).

So there's no place for local metaphors, slang and expressions.

Information needs to be communicated clearly. Here are three steps to achieve this:

1. **Prepare** - have **clear, simple** and **concise ideas** before you telephone.
2. **Communicate** those ideas **clearly, simply** and **concisely.**
3. **Check and confirm** that the other person has understood key information.

Technique 3

6 Steps - Guide and Control A Telephone Call

Here are 6 simple steps to guide and control a telephone conversation:

1. **Clear Purpose.** E.g. asking for information, resolving a problem, asking for help, asking for someone to do something.
2. **Preparation:** Prepare and order key questions and issues, so you don't have to rely on your memory or telephoning again.
3. **Take notes**: Have a note pad and pen for note-taking during the telephone conversation.
4. **Check and confirm information**. Repeat key information in your own words. *"So we'll meet next month?" "Ok let's meet next Tuesday". "Unrealistic delivery times, is that right?"*
5. **Ask specific questions**. Ask specific questions that have one or two possible answers. This saves you time.
6. **Summarise and confirm actions** that have been agreed during the telephone call.

Technique 4

Confirm What Was Said And What Is To Be Done (Follow-up Actions)

It can be embarrassing and time consuming if you have to telephone someone back because you didn´t understand everything they said.

One way to achieve this is before you finish a telephone conversation **confirm the basics of what you discussed**.

That means **confirming**…

…**the what** of any action that is required.
…**the where** of any action that is required.
…**the when** of any action that is required.
…**the how** of any action that is required.

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Technique 5

6 Steps – Take And Leave Effective Telephone Messages

Here are 6 simple steps for taking effective telephone messages.

1. Use a piece of paper with plenty of space not a post-it with limited space.

2. One message per piece of paper

3. Include key information:
   I. name and surname of the other person
   II. company name
   III. contact information - telephone no or email address
   IV. date and time of telephone call
   V. message subject
   VI. action required (e.g. call back, send information, reply to email sent, etc)

4. Check understanding – check and repeat key information to check your understanding (e.g. check spelling and information)

5. Date and time is essential to know if the message is urgent or not.

6. Where to leave messages? Make sure you put the message some place where it will be found easily and quickly by the recipient. You can also send them an email to confirm you left the message.

For Leaving Effective Telephone Messages Use Steps 1-5.

Technique 6

Have The Right Telephone Attitude

Be prompt and answer the telephone quickly in three to four rings, so the other person knows their call is important.

Smiling when using the telephone helps you to be personal, enthusiastic and to make a connection. It´s a well known fact that although people cannot see your smile they can sense it. It is a great way to connect and build rapport with the other person.

Use Positive Language. People respond better and more quickly to positive words than negative ones. Try changing typical negative telephone phrases and responses such as: *"I'll try," "You'll have to," "I don't know" or "I can't."* into positive telephone phrases and responses such as *"I will do", "We will solve this" and "We can do that"*.

Speak slowly and clearly. Be clear, simple and concise when communicating on the phone. Focus only on the telephone call and nothing else.

Be patient and polite. Life is getting faster but it doesn´t mean we have to forget our manners, patience and politeness, especially if we want people to respond well to us.

Technique 7

5 Steps - Dealing With Problems Over The Telephone

Here are 5 steps to be effective when dealing with problems over the telephone.

1. **Put the problem in context.** Introduce the problem clearly and simply in one sentence so the other person quickly understands the problem. Also to know quickly if they are the right person to deal with this specific problem.

2. **Give detailed information**. Give detailed information in a clear, simple and concise way. Remember to be polite and firm at the same time.

3. **Make an offer.** To maintain a good professional relationship with the other person show them you can be flexible. *(e.g. "How about we…", "Perhaps we could…", "….would that work?")*

4. **Propose a solution.** *(e.g. "What we will do is…" "We won´t charge…" "How about we email…" "Perhaps we could…")*

5. **Confirm solution.** Confirm the information and also that the other person is comfortable with the agreed solution. Then thank the other person.

Technique 8

How To End A Telephone Call Quickly And Professionally

Technique

- First, breathe deeply and keep calm.
- Second, wait for a pause and then interrupt them by saying sorry to the person (using their name).
- Third, explain why you can´t take their telephone call now.
- Fourth, give a specific time and day when you will call them to help them.

4 examples

1. *Pause – "**Sorry** Mr.Chen, **I can't talk now, as** I have an important meeting right now. **Can I call you on Wednesday at 4:00pm?"***
2. *Pause – "**I´m sorry** Mr.Watson, **I can't talk now, because** I have a client waiting for me. **Can I call you on Thursday at 09:00am?"***
3. *Pause – "**Sorry** Ms.Shah, **I can't take your call now, because** I have an urgent matter to attend to. **Can I call you on Tuesday at 10:00am or 11:00am?"***
4. *Pause **– "I´m sorry** Ms. Sousa, **I can't take your call now, as** I have a client lunch. **Can I call you tomorrow at 5:00pm?"***

Technique 9

How To Make Native Speakers Slow Down In Conference Calls In English

Why do native speakers always have to speak so quickly in conference calls?

The answer is simpler than you think. It´s because most native English speakers don´t have to work in another language, like Chinese or German. So they often don´t realise they´re the only ones working at "native speed" in English!

Here are some practical tips:

1. Suggest that each speaker says hi and introduces themselves. This will help you identify the speaker and will be easier to take notes during the conference call.

"Hi everybody, I´d like to suggest we all take turns to say hello and introduce ourselves. What does everybody think?"

2. Suggest that you all respect each person´s turn when speaking.

"I´d like to suggest that we all respect each other´s turn speaking and keep interruptions to a minimum. What does everybody think?"

3. You set the speed of the conference call in the beginning, but don´t overuse these phrases.

"Sorry Sarah, the connection is bad, can you repeat that slowly?"
"Alex I didn´t catch that, can you explain that again please?"
"Sorry Ryan, I´m not sure I really understood, what exactly do you mean by…?"

Technique 10

6 Typical Errors When Making Conference Calls In English

Here are 6 typical errors when making conference calls in English:

1. Not being clear, simple and concise when communicating in English with people from different countries and cultures
2. Excessive use of company abbreviations and jargon
3. Inappropriate use of humour
4. Lack of knowledge and understanding of cultural differences between countries
5. Lack of preparation for meeting topics
6. Not understanding how the concept of time changes between countries and cultures

Watch this video example to see these 6 typical errors:

Video – www.dailymotion.com Search for “International Conference Calls”

Webpage details: http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x1voa_international-conference-calls_shortfilms/#.UP0pBWfwC5I

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Job Interviews in English

10 Quick Techniques for busy professionals

Technique 1

Understand yourself and what you offer

The better you understand yourself and what you can offer a company, the easier you make it for the interviewer to choose you for the job.

Understand who you are.

Understand what you want in a job or job position.

Understand what type of company you want to work for.

Understand what type of company culture you enjoy working in.

Understand why you have specifically chosen this company and not another.

Identify which competencies a person needs to have to do this job well.

Identify which of your past job and career experiences demonstrate the competencies needed to do this job.

Identify which of your past job and career experiences this company will not be interested in.

Technique 2

Research

"What do you know about our company?" is always asked by interviewers.

If you're really interested in this job and working for this company, one way to differentiate yourself from other candidates is through your excellent research of the company, their future opportunities and challenges.

This is much more than just reading the company website.

Here are some areas you could research:

- The company´s recent history, competitors and market performance
- Organizational Structure
- Business Goals (obtained from the company's mission statement)
- Details about new products and services
- Recent industry news and how that will impact the company
- What are competitors doing?
- How is the company performing against its competitors?
- Identify future opportunities for the company and industry
- Identify future challenges for the company and industry

Use the internet to search news stories, LinkedIn to see the job profiles of people who work for that company and ask your contacts, networks and friends for any information.

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Technique 3

Tell Me About Yourself

This is a typical question to begin an interview with.

It´s often a trick question to see if you talk and talk or if you know how to summarise.

The best answer is to give a very short summary of your professional experience in two sentences. Then in one sentence describe your top 3 personality characteristics related to work.

Here is an example for a Senior Business Consultant:

A competent and commercially aware Senior Business Consultant with over 8 years work experience in business process and business risk project work, statistical analysis, corporate and supply chain strategy planning, with major global organisations. Major strengths include the understanding of strategic planning, international finance, business risk and business intelligence with the ability to manage projects at both a technical and non-technical level. Proven track record of delivering projects on time and to budget. Skills include the ability to interact effectively with people at all levels, excellent information technology skills and working effectively in a multi-tasking environment.

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Technique 4

How Do You Practice A Job Interview In Another Language?

Is preparing for an interview in English any different to preparing for an interview in your own language? Yes.

Here are some steps to help you:

1. Imagine what competencies, skills and experience the company is looking for.
2. Identify 7-10 questions based on number 1) they will ask in the interview.
3. Write answers to these questions.
4. Practice reading your answers out loud at least 3-4 times.
5. When practicing ask for feedback from a friend or family member.

Plus remember:

1. Communicate your ideas using CSC, “Clearly, Simply and Concisely”.
2. Practice 4-5 times to maximise your confidence, effectiveness and level of relaxation.
3. Positive Visualization. Before an event, great athletes maximise their confidence by repeatedly visualising themselves performing excellently in the event. Visualise performing excellently in the interview in English.

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Technique 5

Creating A Good First Impression And Lasting Impression

Creating a good first impression

1. A smile.
2. Good direct eye contact (natural).
3. Hello (Hi) I'm (first name) (last name). It's a pleasure meeting you.
4. A firm but gentle handshake.

Creating a good lasting impression

1. A smile.
2. Good direct eye contact (natural).
3. Say "It sounds like a great opportunity" or "I look forward to hearing from you".
4. A firm but gentle handshake and good direct eye contact.

Technique 6

Giving Your Best Performance On The Day Of The Interview

There are different types of interviews; in-person interviews, phone interviews and video-conference (skype) interviews.

Here are a few tips to help you give your best performance in each one.

Phone Interview

- Find a quiet room to do the interview without background noise.
- Use prepared notes to help you remember your answers
- Have pen and notepad to take notes or to ask questions
- Confirm date and time in advance via email or phone
- Use your voice to communicate enthusiasm and real interest

In-Person Interview

- Arrive early (not too early) and allow yourself plenty of time to arrive at the company's offices.
- Do a 30-second check of your appearance in the mirror of a toilet or restroom.
- The interview starts when you enter the company´s office so be respectful and professional with everyone you meet there.
- Enter the interview room with a confident body language

Video-Conference (Skype) Interview

- Test your Internet connection.
- Be well dressed and have a clear wall as a background.
- Be natural - use the same body language as you would in an In-Person Interview.
- Practice the interview by recording it to check your distance from the computer, hand gestures and the clarity of your speech
- Make an effort to speak a little slower, articulate and pronounce words clearer

Technique 7

Why Are You Leaving Your Current Job?

This question can be difficult without carefully preparing your answer.

The interviewer wants to check to see that you are really interested in this job and not just "running away" from your current position. The key is to…

1. focus your answers on the future and talk about the great opportunity and challenge this new job offers you.
2. focus on giving the interviewer the impression that you are doing very well in your current position and are ready to take the next step in your career.
3. focus on emphasizing the strong contributions you've made in your current position.

Avoid speaking badly of your current company, manager and co-workers as this reflects badly on you!

Technique 8

Clear, Simple and Concise (CSC)

In the Global Business World, the most valued communication is quick, clear and simple.

Approximately 86-87% of people using English for International Business in the world are non-native speakers according to many international sources (Times of Asia 2011).

So there's no place for local slang and local expressions if communication is your goal.

Effective International Communication is:

1. Have **clear, simple** and **concise ideas**.
2. Get those ideas across to other people in a **clear, simple** and **concise way.**

Technique 9

How to Structure Your Answers

One highly effective method of structuring your Interview Answers in English is the **SOAR** method. SOAR stands for:

Situation – Describe the background and context of the specific situation.

Obstacle / Opportunity – Describe the obstacle or opportunity of the specific situation.

Action – Describe the actions you took to overcome the obstacle or to take advantage of the opportunity.

Result – Explain the results of your actions and emphasize your role and your team members´ roles.

Technique 10

Interview Follow-up – Positive Lasting Impression

The objective of Interview Follow-up is to leave a positive lasting impression.

You can email a thank you note or telephone them to thank them.

Do it within 24 to 48 hours of the interview.

Include all or some of the following:

- your appreciation for the opportunity to interview.
- repeat your strong interest for the job position.
- mention something particularly interesting that the interviewer shared with you during your conversation.
- mention any additional information about your qualifications or professional experience not covered in the course of the interview.
- 1 or 2 more questions you have about the company that shows your interest in the position.

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Emailing in English
10 Quick Techniques for busy professionals

Technique 1

Emails – Why, Who, What

Save time when you write emails in English by answering 3 key questions:

1. Why are you writing this email? (main objective)
2. Who are you writing for? (audience)
3. What are you telling them? (how)

Why are you writing this email?

What is your main objective? Are you trying to persuade, inform, entertain or impress. Choose only one main objective for maximum impact; otherwise you confuse the reader by giving them a choice of objectives.

Who are you writing for?

Who is your intended reader or readers?
What are their expectations, concerns and issues?
What is their existing knowledge of the subject?

This enables you to choose the right register and style. For example, formal or informal and a light tone or a serious tone.

What are you telling them?

This includes the "what" (content), and the "how" to tell them. Once you answer questions 1) and 2) you will be able to choose what to include, what to edit, what to remove and what "register".

Technique 2

What's The Purpose Of Your Email?

There are 4 main email purposes: **INFORMATION, ACTION, HELP** and **APOLOGISE.**

These are used to request information, action and help or to apologise to somebody.

1) Information:
Can you let me know your availability?
Could you send me more information about the TCT project?
I'd like to know how many people will be attending the meeting.

2) Action
Would you mind sending me the report as soon as you can?
Do you think you could bring your presentation to the meeting?
Please make sure you leave the BAC file with Julia before you go to Miami.

3) Help
Shall we organise the meeting for next month?
Why don't you call him and postpone the meeting to give us more time.
Can I ask you to confirm your attendance at the earliest convenience?

4) Apologise
I am writing in relation to your recent complaint.
I was very concerned to learn about your delayed order.
I would like to apologise for the inconvenience you have suffered.

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Technique 3

Email - Opening and Closing

Here are some examples for opening and closing emails.

Opening – Formal / Neutral	Opening - Informal
Dear Liu,	Hi Liu,
Dear All,	Hi Liu
Liu - I´d like you to…	Hiya,
Dear Liu,	Hello Liu,
Dear Ms.Xion,	Hi/hello everyone,
	Liu,

Closing Formal / Neutral	Closing Informal
I look forward to meeting you tomorrow.	It'll be good to see you again.
I'm looking forward to working with you again.	It'll be great to work together.
If you have any queries, please feel free to contact me.	See you soon.
We're looking forward to welcoming you in Paris.	See you next week.
Kind regards,	Bye.
Best regards,	All the best,
Yours sincerely,	Take care,
Thanks in advance.	Thanks,

Technique 4

Save Time – Use Other People's Emails

Save time - copy and paste phrases from other people's emails.

It is always surprising how many busy people don't keep copies of good emails in English that international clients, colleagues and suppliers have sent them.

In your work you receive thousands of emails every year in English from international colleagues, suppliers and clients.

Save time and take advantage of their good "Emailing Skills in English".

All you have to do is to save the ones you think our excellent and organise them into useful categories for quick and easy access when writing emails in English.

Example Categories:

- Complaints
- Proposals
- Asking for help
- Reports

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Technique 5

Apologising And Saying Sorry

Here are some useful email phrases to apologise and to say sorry when emailing:

- We / I **regret that** your order has been delayed for 2 days, due to a logistics error.
- We / I **regret to** inform you that your order has been delayed for 2 days, due to a logistics error.

And when the situation is really serious you can add "very much".

- We / I **very much regret that** your order has been delayed 5 weeks.
- We / I **very much regret to** inform you that your order has been delayed 5 weeks.

- We / I **apologise for** the 2 day delay, it was due to a logistics error.
- **First of all, let me apologise for** the delay, it was due to a logistics error.

And when the situation is really serious you can add "greatly".

- We / I **greatly apologise for** the 2 day delay, it was due to a logistics error.
- First of all, let me **greatly apologise for** the delay, it was due to a logistics error.

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Technique 6

Informal or Formal Emails

When writing business emails choosing the right register**, "informal"** or **"formal/neutral"** can be difficult. Here is a list of phrases from each "register" to help you.

Informal

1. What do you need?	2. Thanks for the email of 12 Feb	3. Sorry, I can´t make it
4. I´m sorry to tell you that…	5. I promise….	6. Could you …?
7. You haven´t …	8. Don´t forget (that/to) …	9. I need to …
10. Shall I…?	11. But…/Also…/So….	12. Please could you…?
13. I´m sorry for….	14. Re: your suggestion	15. See you next week.

Formal/Neutral

1. With regard to….	2. With reference to…
3. I can assure you that…	4. We note from our records that you have not…
5. Please let us know your requirements	6. I was wondering if you could…
7. I would like to remind you that…	8. I look forward to meeting you next week
9. I am afraid I will not be able to attend	10. Would you like me to…?
11. I would be grateful if you could	12. Thank you for your email received 12 February
13. Please accept our apologies for…	14. It is necessary for me to….
15. We regret to advise you that…	16. I am writing to inform you that…

Technique 7

When To Use The “CC” Option

With email the “CC” option can be very useful to share information, but it can also annoy and frustrate people if used without thinking.

Here are some examples of how using the “CC” option in emails can produce a negative reaction from people.

Examples

1. “Why have you copied me into an email where I received negative feedback from somebody I report to? Why can’t you talk directly to me first? **How irritating!”**

2. “Why have you copied me into this email to other colleagues? It’s not clear if you need me to do something or are you just letting me know that you asked the others to do these tasks? **How unclear!”**

3. “Why have you copied me into a communication that we agreed we would put on hold? Could you not have discussed this with me first? **How infuriating!”**

4. “Have you copied me into this email to receive acknowledgment of that good job you’re doing? I know you want to prove yourself but I really don’t need to be in copy every time you let the finance department know that you have saved the company money. **How tedious!”**

5. “Should I have read that email? I must have deleted the last 20 or so emails where you have put me in copy for no apparent reason and so I did the same for that last one. Was it important? **How am I supposed to differentiate between them!”**

6. “Why have you copied me into an email to someone else telling them that I will be completing a task for them today? You know I normally do this for you, but please ask me first to check my priorities. **How inconsiderate!”**

Technique 8

Emails – Create A Positive Impression

Here are 12 questions to help you create a positive impression when writing emails in English.

1. What are your emails really saying about you?
2. Are your emails clear, simple and concise?
3. Do you use short sentences (15 words or less) and short paragraphs (5 lines or less)
4. Do they represent you well?
5. Do they compromise your reputation?
6. How effective are you with emails?
7. Do you ever analyse the replies to your emails?
8. How many times do you get what you want first time? Second time?
9. How many requests for clarification do you get?
10. How many no responses and refusals do you receive?
11. Are you confusing, irritating, pressuring or simply using the wrong communication channel?
12. How much time do your emails waste for you and other people?

Technique 9

9 Tips - Effective Emails

Here are 9 tips to write effective emails:

1. Subject Lines are Headlines (between 1 to 5 words).
2. Make one key point per email (focus on one email objective).
3. Specify the response you want (what do you want the recipient of your email to do after reading it).
4. Use an end of message headline (repeat it at the end of the email).
5. Internal emails shouldn't be too informal (they are easily forwarded to others).
6. Short sentences (less than 15 words) and short paragraphs (5 lines maximum)
7. CSC – Check that sentences are CSC - clear, simple and concise.
8. Culture – Direct or Indirect Communication (Some cultures favour direct communication and speed while other cultures perceive that to be rude and prefer a more indirect style)
9. Culture – Task-Orientated or Relationship-Orientated (Relationship Orientated cultures focus on building relationships between people first before they can work effectively together. While Task-Orientated cultures put more emphasis on the task than the relationship).

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Technique 10

Writing Emails - Cross-Cultural Factors

Here are some cross-cultural factors to consider when writing emails to people from different cultures:

1. **Humour:** Using humour and irony are good for cultures that do that, as they break the ice, but for cultures that don´t do that you risk offending them.
2. **Titles:** Title them by all their names. Why? You don´t know their marital status, sex, their appetite for informality and even the correct order of their names.
3. **Sports References:** You can use them, but think about which sports are popular in the country where the other person is from.
4. **Japanese e-mails:** When writing emails in English the Japanese tend to write one sentence and then use a new paragraph for each new sentence.
5. **Smalltalk in Emails:** In the US and UK people use Smalltalk in emails to break the ice, make people feel comfortable and to not appear rude. While in Germany people prefer to get right to the point in their emails and view Smalltalk in emails as a waste of time or fishing for private information.

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Technique 1

The Art of Persuasion in 5 Steps

Monroe's Motivated Sequence (MMS) is a simple and highly effective technique to logically order your ideas to persuade. There are 5 steps.

1) Get their attention – ask a question or use an usual fact.

"Have you ever wondered why…?"
"What if…? If I told you we could…, would you be interested?"
"It's hard to believe but… Did you know that…"

2) Explain the other person's need

"The problem is due to…"
"The problem is because of…"
"The problem is caused by…"

3) Solution

"Doing (solution)….will give us… (benefit)".
"(Solution)…. ensures we can… (benefit)".
"(Solution)…. will help us to do…(benefit)".

4) Visualize benefits – positive & negative

"Under this plan, we could see as much as a 35% increase in… "
"By implementing this plan immediately the company will see…"
"Without quick action the situation could…"
"If we don't do anything the situation is going to…"

5) Take action

"We need quick action and we need it now. I recommend that we…"
"I need your help to implement a winning solution for all of us. I think we should…"

Technique 2

5 Ways to Convert Needs into Questions

Example: An Air-Conditioning Repair and Check-up Service for offices:

5 Needs:

1. To keep equipment operating efficiently
2. To maintain value of equipment
3. To keep your office cooled
4. To keep objects cooled in the office
5. To guarantee visitors feel comfortable

5 Questions (5 needs converted into 5 questions):

1. What experience have you had with Air-Conditioning equipment that is not well maintained?
2. In this area how does good air-conditioning equipment affect office prices?
3. How often do you or your colleagues find your office uncomfortable?
4. What objects in your office need to be kept at 20C or below?
5. How much of a role does efficient Air-Conditioning equipment play in making your visitors feel comfortable?

Technique 3

The Art of Videoconferencing – Part 1

Here are 5 tips from a survey done of managers from over 500 multinationals.

1. **Have a realistic agenda:** Managers suggested organizing agenda points into "Priority" and "Optional". And putting a time limit for each agenda point.
2. **Start positively:** Give all participants the opportunity to introduce themselves and their role in the project or company.
3. **Smile and make good eye contact:** Again sounds obvious but smiling helps to make a good first impression and relaxes people. Good eye contact helps build trust….but don't stare!
4. **Agree meeting rules together:** If all the participants agree on 3-5 basic rules before you start, your international meetings will run more effectively. For example…how to interrupt, the role of the moderator or meeting chair, how to participate, how to follow the agenda and what to do if an argument occurs.
5. **Monitor progress**: When preparing a meeting agenda, time limits for each agenda point need to be estimated. This helps monitor the progress of the meeting and to keep the meeting focused.

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Technique 4

The Art of Videoconferencing – Part 2

Here are 5 tips from a survey done of managers from over 500 multinationals.

1. **Take notes:** Take notes during the meeting enables you to contribute better at the appropriate time. Especially when the meeting is conducted in English.
2. **Use your voice:** Vary your voice (volume, tone, speed) helps to make you more interesting to listen to. Monotonous voices are the quickest way to make other participants switch off (stop listening).
3. **Visual aids:** Images and pictures communicate key messages quicker and are retained for longer…so use them! Use internet tools like “slideshare” or email your presentation before the meeting. Nothing is worse than seeing PowerPoint full of text with no visuals, graphs, images or pictures.
4. **Know when to finish**: Who has time to waste at work? Nobody, so respect people’s time and keep to time limits. Participants should always ask the question if a point should be discussed now or in a later meeting.
5. **Summarize:** At the end of the meeting, the meeting moderator summarises key points and concludes. This helps us to feel we used time well and what we all need to do next.

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Technique 5

Business Storytelling – The 3I´s

Here are three techniques (3 I´s) to improve your business storytelling abilities.

Invitation – We need to stimulate people's curiosity. We can do this by asking them to share an exciting experience with you. We need to invite them to share something exciting with us. For example:

"We are going to explore….."

"Do you want your customers to have a bad experience, or do you want them to have an experience they will tell their friends about?"

Imagination – Our imaginations are more powerful than power point or flash. When we use our imagination we remember for longer. We just need to help people access their imagination. For example:

"Picture this…."

"Imagine you're working on ….when….happens. How would you feel?"

Impact – The audience wants impact they want to be entertained to know what they are listening to do is important. For this we need impact. To create impact we need a human connection. Human connections can be achieved using sounds, images, unusual facts or famous quotes. For example:

"Change is difficult but progress happens with the first step. As Neil Amstrong said, "one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind".

Technique 6

Contrasting

Contrasting is what the ancient Greeks called antithesis or saying ‘not this, but that’.

How? The speaker creates a contrast between the first and second phrase. Use clear, simple and strong contrasts.

Why? It causes the brain to think about and evaluate the contrast. Once the brain starts thinking about the contrast, you can guarantee your message has reached the audience.

Here are 3 examples:

Plato: “*Wise men talk because they have something to say; fools, because they have to say something.*”

Barack Obama: “*My budget does not attempt to solve every problem or address every issue. It reflects the stark reality of what we’ve inherited – a trillion dollar deficit, a financial crisis, and a costly recession.*”

John F. Kennedy: “*Ask not what your country can do for you; Ask what you can do for your country.*”

Technique 7

Before, During and After Meetings

Meetings have a three part process.

1. Before – clarify objectives

Save time by exchanging emails before the meeting with meeting participants. Get to know each other, clarify meeting objectives and intended outcomes (results). Arriving to meetings not knowing leads to misunderstandings.

2. During – meeting type

People enter a meeting with very different expectations. They may know the objective but not what type of meeting it is. Clarify in the beginning of the meeting if the meeting is for…

- …structured and polite discussion?
- …for creative and challenging discussion?
- …for top-down briefing or bottom-up brainstorming?
- …analysis or action?
- …taking fixed decisions or a preliminary discussion?

3. After – ensure implementation

Often we agree actions in meetings that are never completed or not completed on-time. Phone participants after the meeting to clarify their level of understanding of agreed actions and test their commitment to what was agreed in the meeting.

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Technique 8

How to Prevent Native English Speakers Dominating in International Meetings

Native English speakers often dominate international meetings because they have a linguistic advantage. How can you prevent this happening?

1. **Ask them to explain expressions**. Most people often don't realise their dominating a meeting until someone points it out to them. If you don't understand a business expression, ask them to explain, "Sorry Paul, what does making headway mean? If you ask more than once they will probably speak simpler.

2. **Ask them to repeat something**. If they speak too quickly, ask them to repeat things, "Sorry Sarah, I didn't catch that, can you repeat it please?", "Sorry Liu, can you explain that again?" Try to do this two times and the other person will soon realise that they're not helping communication.

3. **Learn business expressions.** Some business expressions are universal because they're taught during MBAs. Try to practice using a few for your work **http://www.businessdictionary.com/**

Have self-confidence. If you have been invited to a meeting, it's for a reason. People will be listening to your knowledge, know-how and experience and NOT your grammar mistakes. Clearly communicating your ideas is key. Remember nobody ever left an international meeting saying "her English grammar really helped solve our problem!!"

Technique 9

Making a Proposal

Here are 6 steps to make an effective proposal:

1. Describe the current situation
2. Describe any negative problems of current situation
3. What do you want to achieve
4. List the benefits
5. State your proposal
6. Introduce the details of your proposal.

Example: A supplier offering an IT solution for sharing know-how and information in the whole company.

1. As you know, the custom service department regularly deals with complex client problems.
2. Due to a lack of sharing of know-how in the company most of the customer service team can only solve 45% of these problems.
3. We want to solve 100% of these problems by greatly increasing know-how sharing in the whole company.
4. The benefits of this will be solving 95% of client problems instead of 45% and reducing the monthly loss of clients from 13% to 1%.
5. I'd like to propose that we implement the IT solution for know-how sharing for the entire company.
6. What will this involve? How much will it cost? Let me explain in more detail.

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Technique 10

Really Bad or Really Good PowerPoint Presentations in Meetings?

Here is an extract from one of Seth Godin´s most well read blog posts….

We've all sat in meetings where people have given terrible PowerPoint presentations. Try to save the rest of us from death by PowerPoint by following these 5 simple rules.

5 key rules to follow to produce great PowerPoint presentations.

1. *No more than six words on a slide. EVER. There is no presentation so complex that this rule needs to be broken.*
2. *No bad images. Use professional stock photo images.*
3. *No slide effects such as dissolves, spins or other transitions.*
4. *Sound effects can be used a few times per presentation, but never use the sound effects that are built in to the program. Instead, take sounds and music from CDs and leverage the effect this can have. If people start bouncing up and down to the Grateful Dead, you've kept them from falling asleep, and you've reminded them that this isn't a typical meeting you're running.*
5. *Don't give print-outs of your slides. They don't work without you there.*

The home run is easy to describe: You put up a slide. It triggers an emotional reaction in the audience. They sit up and want to know what you're going to say that fits in with that image. Then, if you do it right, every time they think of what you said, they'll see the image (and vice versa). Why? We remember the combination of images and words 5 times longer than just words.

Sure, this is different from the way everyone else does it. But everyone else is busy defending the status quo (which is easy) and you're busy championing brave new innovations, which is difficult.

To read the full blog post here
http://sethgodin.typepad.com/seths_blog/2007/01/really_bad_powe.html

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Technique 1

Negotiation Preparation

Sounds obvious, but it's amazing how many professionals don't prepare well for International Negotiations.

What should you prepare?

1. The issues or problems involved in the negotiation
2. Your interests
3. Your objectives
4. The other party's / person's interests
5. Cultural differences when negotiating

Technique 2

Relationship Building

When to socialise and when to discuss business

Relationship Building is a key part of having successful business relationships. But not all cultures view it in the same way.

The impact of socialising on international business negotiations can be quite significant in some cultures. Finding the right time or place to socialise and when in the meeting to start discussing business is important to building the relationship.

For instance, in Costa Rica and Saudi Arabia, you will often find that your counterparts do not make a clear distinction between their professional and personal relationships. Conversations vary from business to personal and you could receive an invitation from a colleague to attend a family event, which you should kindly accept or risk offending them.

While when doing business in China, you will be expected to socialize and spend time outside of work with your Chinese counterparts to build trust. Relationships are viewed as long term relationships built on mutual trust which takes time to build.

On the contrary, when doing business in Germany or Holland you might find that your counterparts prefer to keep their private life separate from their professional life. Conversation is rarely about any personal issues and most people will go home and not socialise at the end of the day. Even though your Dutch counterparts might restrict the relationship to the professional environment, they will still appreciate getting to know you a little by making small talk before they start to discuss business.

The US and UK are similar to Germany and Holland where people prefer to clearly separate their private lives from their professional lives. They do make more small talk before the start of a meeting and negotiation to create a comfortable atmosphere and to get to know the other person a little. They view the working day as the best time to discuss business and build business relationships. However they are pragmatic and will make exceptions if socialising outside of work is necessary for relationship building.

Technique 3

Making Smalltalk

Making “Smalltalk” before starting a negotiation helps create a positive and friendly atmosphere. But what can we talk about?

Smalltalk topics of conversation:

- The Weather
- Travel
- History
- People you both know
- Hobbies
- Sports

Here are some “Smalltalk” tips for different countries.

United Arab Emirates:
Your host will set the conversation and expect you to contribute intelligently with interesting ideas, opinions and reflections. The key is to contribute to enlightenment so both learn. You don´t need to always agree but be polite and respectful. Don´t interrupt.

China:
Before you go you should read a little about Chinese culture, history, and geography. Your hosts will appreciate your initiative. Negative replies are considered impolite. Instead of saying ‘no’, answer ‘maybe’, ‘I'll think about it’, or ‘we'll see’. Your hosts will expect this and you can talk details later.

India
Indians enjoy to talk about politics, cricket, films, economics, history and family. However be careful Indian politics can be very complex and often very regional in nature. Avoid talking about Pakistan. India is a rich and ancient civilization and most Indians are very proud of this.

Technique 4

Negotiation Questions

In a negotiation, knowing what type of question to ask and when can be very useful.

Open Questions: When you want detailed information

- ***Why*** *is that important to you?*
- ***What*** *would be the benefit of choosing this option?*
- ***When*** *can we expect the first delivery?*
- ***How much*** *would you be willing to offer?*
- ***Who*** *will be responsible for this part of the project?*
- ***Where*** *are your suppliers based?*

Closed Questions: When you want a "yes" or "no" answer

- ***Do*** *you intend to enter the German market in the next 2 to 3 years?*
- ***Is that*** *your final price?*
- ***Can*** *you increase your offer?*

Indirect Questions: When you need to be diplomatic

- ***Could you tell me*** *how long you think the project will last?*
- ***Can you give me an idea of*** *your budget for this project?*

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Technique 5

Communicate Value-Added Before Price

If you don't want to compete only on price then you need to communicate value added first and before price.

The easiest way to do this is to develop a **Direct Value Statement (DVS).**

This is a statement that clearly, simply and concisely explains:

- why your organization exists
- what makes your product/service special

A DVS includes two sentences:

1. *We assist our clients in…(Why…?)*
2. *We do this by… (What…?)*

3 Examples:

1. ***We assist our customers in** the interior design industry to provide their clients with stylish Italian floors. **We do this by providing handmade 200 year old Italian stylish wooden floors.***
2. ***We assist our clients in** the real estate business to train their sales teams to provide friendly and helpful customer service. **We do this by giving top multinational sales training at an SME price.***
3. ***We assist our clients in** the Energy sector to reduce their Carbon emissions and increase their solar energy production. **We do this by designing cutting edge solar panels for factory roofs.***

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Technique 6

Saving Face In A Negotiation

Saving face refers to maintaining our “image” or “reputation” in front of other people.

Maintaining a positive face is vital to all of us. When it’s under threat we feel the need to defend it, hence the expression “saving face”.

Helping others to “save face” builds and strengthens a relationship.

Examples:

1. *“I think this clause in the contract has perhaps been misunderstood.”*
2. *“Well, you see, those figures were technically correct when viewed in that context.”*
3. *“No problem I can see now that the deadline was too tight. Let´s review it again”.*
4. *“Sometimes it happens; perhaps we need to review the specifications again”.*
5. *”Market uncertainty was unusually high in 2011. Perhaps we need to review our financial models”.*

Technique 7

Bargaining – Use Hypothetical Questions

Bargaining is often seen as “a game of reactions”. A hypothetical question is used to test the reaction of the other person to an offer. If they make a counter-offer it shows both people are open to bargaining.

You can use hypothetical questions to find the other party´s (other person´s) bargaining limits, for example the lowest and the highest option the other person will accept.

Examples:

*“**What if I were to** order more than 15,000 units?”*

*“**What would you say if I were** to increase our offer by 5%?”*

*“**What if I could** offer you a 3 year product guarantee?”*

Technique 8

Bargaining – Linking an Offer To A Condition

Linking an offer to a condition:

You will agree to do one thing if they agree to do something.

This involves linking a **condition** to an **offer.** State the **condition** then the **offer.**

This avoids interruption and makes sure the other person listens, because the other person will want to hear both the **offer** and **condition** before deciding how to react.

Examples:

"If you order more than 10,000 units (condition) then we will give you a 7% discount (offer)."

"If you would be prepared to supply the product now (condition), we will be able to increase our offer by 5% (offer)."

"If you guarantee the work for 5 years (condition), we are prepared to accept the proposal (offer)."

Technique 9

Gift Giving In International Business

Gift Giving in business relationships is acceptable in some cultures and unacceptable in other cultures. Here are some tips:

- Who is receiving the gift? (a person or a group)
- What is the position or status of the person/people receiving the gift?
- Should gift giving be reciprocated?
- What types of gifts are acceptable or unacceptable?
- What is the protocol associated with gift giving and receiving?

Gift Giving Etiquette: Cross-Cultural Differences

China

- Business gifts are always reciprocated.
- It is the proper etiquette for gifts to be exchanged for celebrations, as thanks for assistance and even as a sweetener for future favours.
- Don't give gifts in the absence of a good reason or a witness.
- When the Chinese want to buy gifts they often ask what you would like.
- Demonstrate appreciation of Chinese culture by asking for items such as ink paintings or tea.
- Don't give cash.
- Don't be cheap or too expensive with your gifts as this will reflect badly on you and your company.
- Try to give gifts in pairs if appropriate. Confucius philosophy is important in China and stresses "harmony and balance", hence gifts in pairs are appropriate.

Japan

- Emphasis is on the act of gift-giving not the gift itself.
- Gift-giving is a reciprocal and a central part of Japanese business etiquette.
- Present and receive gifts with both hands.
- Expensive gifts are common.
- The best time to present a gift is at the end of your visit.
- A gift for an individual should be given in private while gifts for a group should be given in public in front of all of them.

- Before accepting a gift it is polite to refuse once or twice before accepting.

Technique 10

The Harvard Negotiation Model Is Missing "Cross-Cultural Intelligence"

Here are four ways you can apply "Cross-Cultural Intelligence" to the different parts of the Harvard Negotiation Model:

Take into consideration the other party´s interests and objectives: The model emphasizes the need to find out and ask questions about the other party´s interests and objectives. However in an intercultural context not every culture feels comfortable revealing directly their interests and objectives. Some cultures feel the need to use **indirect communication** so questions need to be less direct and more indirect. Also there needs to be more time building trust and confidence in the relationship before this can happen.

Creating win-win solutions for both parts: One of the premises of the model is that when both parties are committed to a win-win solution they can be creative and openly discuss opposing points, conflict points and points in common to generate creative alternatives. However some cultures prefer to **avoid conflict to maintain harmony in the relationship**, which makes this part difficult. This means you need to avoid expressing disagreement openly and directly and to do this more indirectly and subtly.

Choose Objective Criteria for Decision-Making. This emphasizes the need to choose objective criteria to guide your decision-making in the negotiation. This is fine in a culture that puts business first then the relationship such as the US, UK or Germany. However in a culture where relationships come first before business, in the negotiation we need to concentrate on building trust and the relationship when we make decisions.

Detailed and Fixed Agreement: To avoid confusion and disappointment the model advises the importance of avoiding ambiguity and to focus on reaching a detailed fixed agreement. However for some cultures only the past and present is relevant and the future cannot be predicted, such as in China and Japan for example. This means that agreements and contracts should be less detailed, more flexible and open to renegotiate when major conditions change. This flexibility, less detail and opportunity to renegotiate should be interpreted as common sense for a relationship to work and function over the long term and under uncertainty. However it is often interpreted as a lack of trust and often leads to a deterioration in the relationship.

Author

My name is Christopher Wright and co-director of TETC, The English Training Company (www.englishtco.com).

My company TETC and I have helped thousands of companies and professionals succeed in Business English and to become advanced Business English speakers.

See our books and articles published by Amazon, Oxford University and McGraw Hill.

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