

BUSINESS MEETINGS

Read the [article](#) titled "Meeting Etiquette" by workspace.co.uk

1 WARM UP

Task: Discuss the quotes related to meetings, use the prompts to guide your answer.

1. Discuss the meaning of each quote.
2. How could you apply the meaning of each quote to your life?
3. To what extent do you agree / disagree with each quote?
4. Can you think of any real-life example where you have seen the meaning of each quote in practice?

Quotes:

"You have a meeting to make a decision, not to decide on the question"

"Meetings are a symptom of bad organisation. The fewer meetings, the better."

"If you don't know where you're going, any road will take you there."

"In meetings, leaders should strive to create an environment where all voices are heard and collaboration can flourish."

"The best way to have a good idea is to have lots of ideas."



2 DIFFERENT TYPES OF MEETINGS

Task 1: Five types of meetings are in the box, use them to complete the sentences.

training	project update	negotiation	workshops	reviews
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1. **Reviews** are usually used to discuss performance, could be internal or external.
2. Meetings with customers will usually require a certain degree of **negotiation**.
3. **Training** can range anywhere from informal to mandatory, and individual to group.
4. Any big project that involves multiple departments will require regular **project updates**.
5. **Workshops** allow colleagues to discuss ideas, strategies and solve problems.

Task 2: Discuss the following questions as a class.

- a. Which type of meeting do you attend most often?
- b. How often do you attend meetings? Do you find meetings useful? Explain.
- c. Do you find workshops useful, or do you prefer to work independently?
- d. Do you have regular performance reviews with your manager / customers?
- e. Does your company offer regular training sessions?
- f. How do you feel during negotiations?
- g. Are project update meetings necessary, or could they be done via email instead?



3 PHRASAL VERBS

Task 1: Match phrasal verbs from the box with the correct synonyms (a-e).

pencil in	get back to	come up	put back	run (it) by
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- Tell. **Run it by.**
- Postpone. **Put back.**
- Arrange. **Pencil in.**
- Reply. **Get back to.**
- Happen. **Come up.**



Task 2: Complete the sentences using the phrasal verbs.

- I don't know right now, but I will **get back to** you tomorrow with the answer.
- Due to illness, the meeting will be **put back** to next week.
- The meeting has been **pencilled in** for tomorrow, so I'm going to start planning now.
- There has been a slight change to the contract, can you **run it by** the client.
- Something has **come up** so can we reschedule the meeting for next week?

Task 3: Practice using the phrasal verbs by discussing the following questions.

- How do you ensure that you effectively pencil in important personal and professional commitments in your busy schedule?
- When you receive a lot of emails, how do you prioritise who to get back to first?
- How do you feel when you have to cancel a meeting because something important comes up?
- Describe a time you had to put back a meeting. What happened?
- When you have a new idea, who do you run it by for feedback and approval, and why is this step important in decision-making?



4 MEETING ETIQUETTE TIPS

Task 1: Read the article below. Complete the headings using the words from the box.

Punctuality	Introductions	Sit appropriately	Prepare an agenda
Turn off mobile phone	Don't interrupt others	Food & drink etiquette	

Here are our top tips for adhering to meeting etiquette and maintaining a positive, professional image when doing business in London and across the UK:

Punctuality: You should always respect and prioritise the time of your colleagues and prospective clients, so it's always best to arrive in plenty of time for any business meeting. Punctuality is a key characteristic of a good leader and shows professionalism.

Introductions: If you are entering a group meeting with individuals that may not know each other, ensure you make adequate introductions to break the ice and give each person an opportunity to introduce themselves.

Prepare an agenda: Some business meetings may only last an hour; as business professionals have full schedules. However, with so little time and so much to say, it can be difficult to stay on track. Therefore, a meeting agenda is necessary, as it enables you to facilitate the conversation and maintain focus.

Sit appropriately: Particularly for formal, round-table meetings, it is important that you sit appropriately on your chair, without slouching. Adjust your seat so that you're at equal height with everyone else at the table.

Don't interrupt others: It is not a good trait to talk over others in any type of business meeting. Each person who is sitting around the meeting table is there for a reason, so ensure everyone gets a chance to have their say and that no-one dominates the conversation. It may be necessary to calm the enthusiasm of others.

Turn off phone: In the modern business world, it's understandable why people have their smartphones on the table during meetings. However, in terms of meeting etiquette, it's not recommended. The message alerts can be distracting to others. It can also indicate to others that you're not focused on the meeting. If you want to create a positive impression, leave your smartphone in your pocket. And leave the room briefly if you need to make a call.

Food and Drink: Preferably eat before a business meeting, as eating during a meeting is unprofessional. Avoid taking coffee or tea to meeting rooms unless advised by superiors.

The unwritten rules of meeting etiquette may not seem like a big deal, but they truly can be the difference between securing that next big deal and damaging your reputation. Therefore, it is important to adhere to etiquette at all times during your business meetings.

Task 2: Research different synonyms for the following words.

1. etiquette.
2. prospective clients.
3. break the ice.
4. enthusiasm.
5. to distract.
6. a big deal.



Task 3: Create a series of sentences or a short story using each word listed above.

Task 4: Discuss the following questions as a class.

1. In your country, is it important that all meetings begin on time?
2. How do you ensure that you make a good first impression during your introduction?
3. During meetings at your company, is an agenda usually provided?
4. Are there any situations when using a phone during a meeting would be positive?
5. What is your opinion of people consuming food or drink during meetings?
6. Do you think sitting appropriately is important? Explain.
7. Why can interrupting someone be a problem?
8. Which of the tips from the article is most important to you?
9. Do you agree with all the tips?
10. Work in pairs, and think of two more meeting etiquette tips.



5 SEVEN STAGES OF A BUSINESS MEETING

Study the seven stages of a meeting below (1-7). Complete the activity at each stage.

1. Small talk.

Which are acceptable small talk subjects and which are not? Explain.

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|------------|-----------|------------------|
| - Politics | - Weather | - Netflix series |
| - Sport | - Travel | - Relationships |

2. Introductions.

Which of the statements are acceptable during an introduction? Explain.

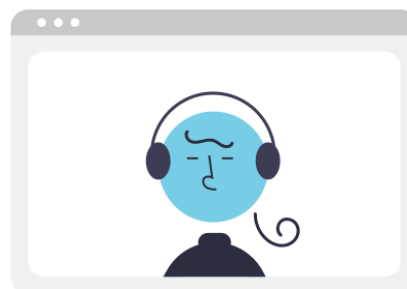
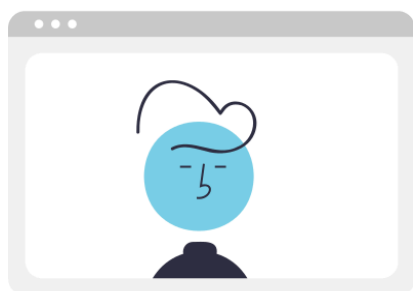
- Hello, everyone. Thank you for coming today.
- I refuse to wait for Amy, as she is always late, so let's get started.
- Ok, if you look at the first graph, it shows our sales have increased this month.
- Hello, ok it seems everyone is here, so let's get started

3. Set the agenda.

Read the example below, then answer the questions.

"Our meeting today will be brief because there are only a few things on the agenda. First of all, we will discuss last week's sales. Secondly, we will discuss our promotional activity for September. And finally, I will provide an update on the office move."

- What is the purpose of the underlined words? **Set the order.**
- Are there any advantages to following an agenda? **Organisation.**
- When do you set the agenda for the meeting? Before or during the meeting?



4. Agreeing and disagreeing.

Read the example below, then correct it using the phrases provided.

"You are completely wrong. I cannot believe you think a 50% discount will increase sales; it is a terrible idea! My idea, which is much better, is to offer our customers free delivery. This is a perfect solution, as it will cost us much less but will provide our customers with great service".

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| - I'm sorry but... | - I understand your point, but... |
| - I don't agree with you on that... | - Judging from my experience... |
| - I don't share your view.... | - I believe it would be wiser to... |

5. Checking understanding.

Which of the phrases would you use to check if you understood something? Explain.

- Could you explain your point again, as I'm not sure I fully understand.
- I have no idea what you are talking about; you need to repeat yourself.
- Apologies, I'm not sure that I follow you; could you give an example?
- Please slow down when you talk and pronounce your words clearly.

6. Stay on the agenda.

Read the examples then choose the correct option to complete the sentence. Explain.

- We're running short on time, so _____
let's move on to the next item. or be quiet unless it's important.
- Guys, this topic is not on the agenda, _____
but it's interesting so let's continue. or let's save it for another meeting.

7. Closing.

Read the good closing statement below, then answer the questions.

"Again, I want to thank you all for taking time out of your busy schedules to be here today. The minutes of today's meeting will be sent out via email tomorrow afternoon."

- Can you give another example of a closing statement?
- Do you believe it is important to send out the minutes of meetings? Explain.

6 ROLE PLAY

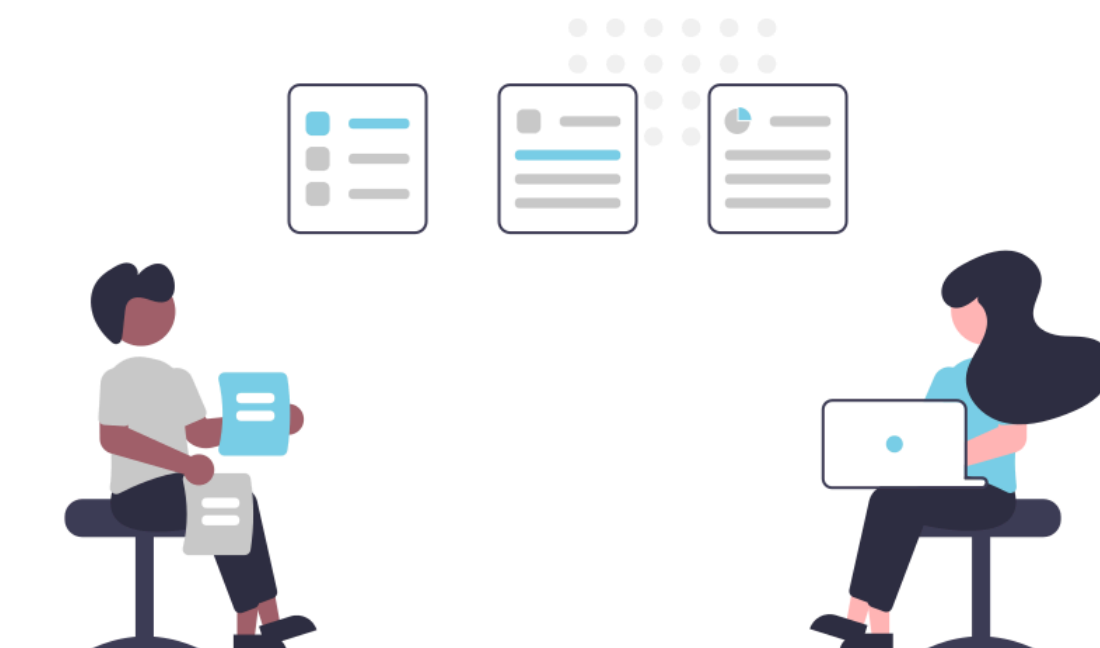
Task: Read the two situations, then decide what action you would take in each situation.

1. Your company has been criticised for hiring too few women. How could you improve the situation?
2. Your company has lost a valuable contract with a big customer. The CEO has asked you to make savings. What savings would you propose?

Work in pairs. Hold a meeting with a partner and discuss the situations above. You must use the language and tips provided in the lesson. Follow the structure below:

- Introduce the meeting.
- Set the agenda.
- Work through the agenda.
- Discuss each point with a partner.
- Agree / disagree with your partner's opinion.
- Closing.

Tip: Throughout the meeting; check for understanding and stick to the agenda.



7 LET'S DEBATE

Task: Study the statements, then decide if you agree or disagree with them. Use the language in the table at the bottom of the page to help structure your answer.

John


Business meetings often serve as a platform for self-promotion rather than genuine collaboration.

Oli


In virtual meetings, it's easier for participants to multitask or be distracted, leading to reduced engagement and focus.

Beth


Mandatory attendance hinders productivity and creativity.

Amy


Back-to-back meetings disrespect participants' time.

Express an opinion It seems to me that... I feel that... I'm absolutely convinced that... In my opinion,... I believe / suppose / feel (that)...	Express disagreement I don't agree with you about... I can't accept your view that... I have a different opinion... I'm not sure if... I'm not convinced that...
Express pro's and con's There are two sides to this point... On the one hand...,on the other hand... An argument for / against is... Some people think that...,others say that... The advantages / disadvantages are...	Summarise So, in conclusion... To summarise.. Overall, it is clear that... As a result.. The bottom line is...

HOMework

1 BUSINESS COLLOCATIONS

Task 1: Use the words in the box to correctly complete the sentences.

achieve

miss

stick

set

chair

1. Due to the team's excellent strategy, they were able to **achieve** their targets easily.
2. It is important not to **miss** deadlines with customers as it shows unprofessionalism, and ruins trust
3. John found it difficult to **stick** to a budget because of inflation.
4. To ensure good attendance it is important to **set** a date that everyone agrees on.
5. If you **chair** a meeting, it is your responsibility to ensure everyone stays on the agenda.

Task 2: On a separate piece of paper, write detailed answers to the questions below.

- a. Do you have targets in your job? Do you always **achieve your target**? Explain.
- b. How do you ensure that you don't **miss any deadlines**?
- c. Do you often **chair meetings**? How do you feel when doing so?
- d. What are the consequences of not **sticking to a budget**?
- e. How far in advance do you normally **set a date** for an important customer meeting?

