

LECTURE NOTES

ENGLISH PROFESSIONAL

Week 4

Business Meeting

LEARNING OUTCOMES

On successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

LO 1: demonstrate the upper intermediate English listening skills both academically and professionally

LO 3: demonstrate the upper intermediate English speaking skills both academically and professionally.

LO 4: demonstrate the upper intermediate English Writing skills both academically and professionally.

OUTLINE:

INTRODUCTION

DISCUSSION

- A. Listening Skill: Interpreting specific expression for business meeting
- B. Speaking Skill: Chairing a business meeting
- C. Writing Skill: Creating a Minute of Meeting

CONCLUSION

REFERENCES

INTRODUCTION

In this meeting, we will focus on listening, speaking, and writing skills especially related to business meeting expressions, tips, and minute of meeting. Listening some exposures of handling a business meeting and highlighting some of the business meeting expression will give benefits to implement the language use together with the tips in managing a business meeting. After knowing the expressions and way to handle the business meeting, It is also crucial to summarize and take note of the important points during the meeting. Here is the discussion on having a business meeting and note taking the result.

DISCUSSION

A. Listening Skill: Interpreting specific expression for business meeting

This part provides short phrases to help you run a business meeting from the beginning to the end.

1. Opening the Meeting

- a. Good morning/afternoon, everyone.
- b. If we are all here, let's get started
- c. let's start the meeting.
- d. let start.

Example: Good morning everyone. If we're all here, let's get started.

2. Welcoming and Introducing Participants

If you have a meeting with new participants, make sure to introduce them before as you start the meeting.

- a. Please join me in welcoming (name of participant)
- b. We're pleased to welcome (name of participant)
- c. It's a pleasure to welcome (name of participant)
- d. I'd like to introduce (name of participant)
- e. I don't think you've met (name of participant)

Example: Before I get started, I'd like to please join me in welcoming Anna Sue from our office in New York.

3. Stating the Principal Objectives of a Meeting

It's important to begin the meeting by clearly stating the main objectives for the meeting.

- a. We're here today to
- b. Our aim is to ...
- c. I've called this meeting in order to ...
- d. By the end of this meeting, I'd like to have ...

Example: We're here today to discuss the upcoming merger, as well as go over last quarter's sales figures.

4. Giving Apologies for Someone Who is Absent

If someone important is missing, it's a good idea to let others know that they will be missing from the meeting.

- a. I'm afraid..., (name of participant) can't be with us today. She is in...
- b. I have received apologies for the absence of (name of participant), who is in (place).

Example I'm afraid Paul can't be with us today. He's in London meeting with clients but will be back next week.

5. Reading the Minutes of Meeting in the Last Meeting

If you have a meeting that repeats regularly, make sure to read the minutes from the last meeting to make sure that everyone is on the same page.

- a. First, let's go over the report from the last meeting which was held on (date)
Here are the minutes from our last meeting, which was on (date)
- b. First, let's go over the minutes from our last meeting which was held last Tuesday. Jeff, could you please read the notes.

6. Dealing with Recent Developments

Checking in with others will help you keep everyone up to date on progress on various projects.

- a. Jimmy, can you tell us how the XYZ project is progressing?
- b. Jimmy, how is the XYZ project coming along?
- c. Jean, have you completed the report on the new accounting package?
- d. Has everyone received a copy of the Tate Foundation report on current marketing trends?
- e. Andrew, please tell us how the final arrangements for the merger are coming along.

7. Moving Forward

Use these phrases to transition to the main focus of your meeting.

- a. So, if there is nothing else we need to discuss, let's move on to today's agenda.
- b. Shall we get down to business?
- c. Is there any other business?
- d. If there are no further developments, I'd like to move on to today's topic.

Example: Once again, I'd like to thank you all for coming. Now, shall we get down to business?

8. Introducing the Agenda

Before you launch into the main points of the meeting, double check that everyone has a copy of the agenda for the meeting.

- a. Have you all received a copy of the agenda?
- b. There are three items on the agenda.
- c. First, Shall we take the points in this order?
- d. If you don't mind, I'd like to ... go in order/ skip item 1 and move on to item 3
- e. I suggest we take item 2 last.

Example: Have you all received a copy of the agenda? Good. Shall we take the points in order?

9. Allocating Roles (secretary, participants)

As you move through the meeting, it's important that people keep track of what's going on. Make sure to allocate note taking.

- a. (name of participant) has agreed to take the minutes.
- b. (name of participant) has kindly agreed to give us a report on this matter.
- c. (name of participant) will lead point 1, (name of participant) point 2, and (name of participant) point 3.
- d. (name of participant), would you mind taking notes today?

Example: Anita, would you mind taking notes today?

10. Agreeing on the Ground Rules for the Meeting (contributions, timing, decision-making, etc.)

If there is no regular routine to your meeting, point out the basic rules for discussion throughout the meeting.

- a. We will hear a short report on each point first, followed by a discussion around the table.
- b. I suggest we go round the table first.
- c. The meeting is due to finish at...
- d. We'll have to keep each item to ten minutes. Otherwise, we'll never get through.
- e. We may need to vote on item 5, if we can't get a unanimous decision.

Example: I suggest we go round the table first to get everyone's feedback. After that, we'll take a vote.

11. Introducing the First Item on the Agenda

Use these phrases to begin with the first item on the agenda. Make sure to use sequencing language to connect your ideas throughout the meeting.

- a. So, let's start with
- b. Shall we start with. .
- c. So, the first item on the agenda is
- d. Peter, would you like to kick off?
- e. Michael, would you like to introduce this item?

Example: Shall we start with the first item? Good. Paul will introduce our plans for the merger and then will discuss the implications.

12. Closing an Item

As you move from item to item, quickly state that you have finished with the previous discussion.

- a. I think that covers the first item.
- b. Shall we leave that item?
- c. If nobody has anything else to add,

Example: I think that covers the important points of the merger.

13. Next Item

These phrases will help you transition to the next item on the agenda.

- a. Let's move onto the next item
- b. The next item on the agenda is
- c. Now we come to the question of.

Example: Now, let's move onto the next item. We've been having a bit of a personnel crunch lately.

14. Giving Control to the Next Participant

If someone takes over your role, give control to them with one of the following phrases.

- a. I'd like to hand over to Mark, who is going to lead the next point.
- b. Right, Dessy, over to you.
- c. I'd like to hand over to John, who is going to discuss the personnel issues.

15. Summarizing

As you finish the meeting, quickly sum up the main points of the meeting.

- a. Before we close, let me just summarize the main points.
- b. To sum up, ...
- c. In brief,
- d. Shall I go over the main points?

Example: To sum up, we've moved forward with the merger and expect to start work on the project in May. Also, the personnel department has decided to hire additional staff to help us with the increased demand.

16. Suggesting and Agreeing for the Next Meeting Agenda

As you end the meeting, make sure to arrange for the next meeting if necessary.

- a. Can we fix the next meeting, please?
- b. So, the next meeting will be on... (day), the . . . (date) of.. . (month) at...
- c. What about the following Wednesday?
- d. How is that?
- e. So, see you all then.

Example: Before we leave, I'd like to fix the next meeting. What about next Thursday?

17. Thanking Participants for Attending

It's always a good idea to thank everyone for attending the meeting.

- a. I'd like to thank Mary and Jean for coming over from London.
- b. Thank you all for attending.
- c. Thanks for your participation.

Example: Thank you all for your participation and I'll see you next Thursday.

18. Closing the Meeting

Close the meeting with a simple statement.

- a. The meeting is closed.
- b. I declare the meeting closed.

B. Speaking Skill: Chairing a Business Meeting

At some point in the career, someone may ask you to chair a meeting at your workplace. Being the chairperson can be a prestigious role, showing that people see the chairperson as dependable, approachable and knowledgeable on a broad number of topics discussed within the meeting. It can be helpful to learn about the additional responsibilities involved with being a chairperson. In this session, the discussion will be about what chairing a meeting means, the responsibilities of a chairperson and tips for chairing a meeting.

1. Chairing a business meeting definition

Chairing business meeting can be defined as a responsibility to lead the meeting. The chair of a meeting, also known as a chairperson, is the elected officer of an organized group, such as a board or committee. During the meeting, it is a chair's responsibility to prepare the meeting agenda, open the meeting, facilitate discussion and keep the conversation focused and balanced. There are many responsibilities a chairperson has before, during and after chairing a meeting, including the tips to handle the meeting in general.

2. Chairperson responsibilities

a. Before the meeting

There are a few steps to take before beginning a meeting: (1) Plan an agenda or create an agenda with a defined set of items to discuss throughout the meeting. It is useful to have a set amount of time for each point on the agenda; (1) Decide or be sure to have practical arrangements completed ahead of time, such as the location, technical equipment or visual aids; (3) Be prepared or review the agenda items ahead of time. Arrive at least 10 minutes before the meeting begins to ensure the room is set up correctly and collect all materials that are needed.

b. During the meeting

Throughout the meeting, there are a few key points to keep in mind as the chairperson such as: (1) Communicate or start by making any necessary introductions and then use the agenda to state clear objectives of the meeting. Be sure all members of the committee are aware of and follow meeting guidelines throughout the duration of the meeting; (2) Maintain control or keep conversations related to one discussion topic at a time. Decide

when to move on to the next subject. Summarize the topic if necessary to help the committee come to a decision on the issue; (3) Aid in decision-making, means the goal of most meetings is to come to an agreement on the subjects discussed in the meeting agenda, so it is useful that all members clearly understand how they can come to a final decision on each topic; (4) Conclude the meeting means before adjourning the meeting, summarize the decisions that committee members made. Decide on a date and time for the next meeting and agree on what items can be added to the agenda.

c. After the meeting

There are a few more tasks that can be completed as chairperson after a meeting like: (5) Record minutes, Minutes consist of writing important subjects covered during a meeting, such as listing those who were present, writing points made regarding each topic and recording all final decisions; (2) Think ahead or consider what went well during the meeting and what could change before the next meeting to be certain it runs more smoothly.

3. Tips for chairing a meeting

Chairing a meeting is a large responsibility, so it's useful to be prepared by using some of the following tips in order to have a successful meeting:

- a. Have a set of guidelines to govern the meeting.
- b. Keep to only the points listed on the agenda.
- c. Ensure full participation from all members
- d. Moderate the discussions fairly
- e. Give preference to people who haven't spoken before.
- f. Have a predetermined amount of time each member of the group can talk during each topic.
- g. Reach decisions

A. Writing Skill: Creating a Minute of Meeting

During a meeting it is important to have a report of it. One of the ways is creating a minute of meeting. Meeting minutes are business documents written during or after a meeting takes place within a company. The meeting minutes document outlines who was present at the meeting, what topics were discussed, what conclusions were drawn and what is on the agenda for upcoming events or business projects. This document is shared with company employees who may not be able to attend the meeting in person, but who must be kept up to date with decisions made in corporate meetings. Meeting minutes also are filed for future reference.

Creating meeting minutes provides a written record of what was agreed at a meeting. Good meeting minutes tell people what was decided and what they need to achieve and by what date. When meeting minutes are received it jogs memories about tasks that people need to do. If a task is not performed, then refer back to the meeting minutes and follow up on it. Without meeting minutes, there is no recourse if an action was not carried out. In the worst case, if meeting minutes are not written it may end up having to repeat the meeting. In some instances, meeting minutes may be required for legal reasons. An example of this is where local bylaws require it for certain types of organizations. Also, they may be required for disciplinary meetings with employees. Getting into the habit of taking meeting minutes is good practice.

When writing meeting minutes, different kinds of information need to be included such as the reason for the meeting, what it was about and where and when it was held. It is important to include a list of the attendees both their first and last names. If it is not clear, ask the attendees to make sure that the names were right, otherwise the meeting minutes may be a source of irritation for attendees. If someone did not attend but it was important that they did, this should be included. For example, sometimes decisions cannot be made without a particular person being present.

Before recording any details, a designated minutes recorder should familiarize themselves with the type of information that they should record. A group may be using a specific

format to record notes but, overall, the minutes of a meeting typically include the following details:

1. Date and time the meeting happened
2. Names of attendees, as well as absent participants
3. Acceptance of, or amendments made to, the previous meeting's minutes
4. Decisions made regarding each item on the agenda, such as:
 - a. Activities undertaken or agreed upon
 - b. Next steps
 - c. Outcomes of elections
 - d. Motions accepted or rejected
 - e. New business
 - f. Date and time of the next meeting

When the meeting ends, the individual tasked with writing minutes should get all the resources he needs to write up the minutes in a clear, presentable way. Here are some tips to consider:

1. Once the meeting ends, don't take too long to write the minutes. This way, everything that took place in the meeting is still fresh in the mind.
2. Review the outline that had been created earlier and make adjustments where necessary. This might include adding extra information or clarifying some of the issues raised. Also, check to see that all verdicts, activities, and motions were clearly recorded.
3. Revise the minutes and ensure they're brief but clear.
4. Distributing the Meeting Minutes

CONCLUSION

Related to listening skill especially interpreting specific expression for business meeting, 18 groups of expressions with some examples have been presented. For the next speaking skills in chairing a business meeting, there are three main discussions related to the definition, chairman responsibilities, and general tips to handle a business meeting. Lastly, it is important to keep up with the meeting through the existence of Minute of Meeting (MoM) as the media to help you in following up the agreement. Therefore, in the final part of this session, some details information and the general format of MoM is presented.

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