

seduo



(Not so) Basic Business English

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My name is Luke Ponsford. With over a decade of experience in teaching both general and business English, I'm here to guide you through the complexities of using English in a business setting. Before embarking on my teaching career, I gained invaluable experience working in various UK companies, collaborating with non-native English speakers. This unique background has given me deep insights into the specific challenges you may encounter.

If you're eager to improve your business English and communicate more effectively in your professional life, let's get started. Together, we can turn your language challenges into strengths.

Common pitfalls include:

- | **Basic Grammar and Vocabulary Errors:** Such as saying „Can you control the contract we have signed yesterday?”
- | **Literal Translations:** Phrases like “Can I have a question?” or “You have right”, which might make sense in your native language but sound unusual in English.
- | **Lack of Variety:** Repeating the same phrases, like “The next slide shows...” over and over in presentations.

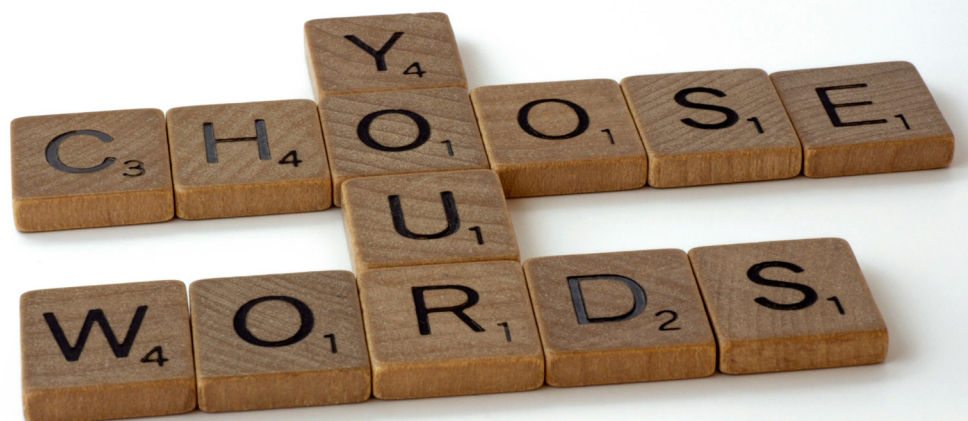
Asking for and giving updates

| Asking for updates:

- **Direct approach** - „Where is it?” or „When can I expect it to be delivered?” are necessary.
- **Informal and diplomatic** - „How’s... going?”, „How’s it going with...?”, „How’s ... coming along?”
- **Formal and open-ended** - „How does your side of things look?”, „What’s the current status of...?”

| Grammar for providing updates:

- „We signed the contract last week.”
- „I called him two days ago.”
- „I’ve finished the report.”
- „We haven’t heard from them yet.”
- „I haven’t made a decision about the brochure so far.”
- „We’re on track.”
- „Everything’s running smoothly”



Giving and Responding to Feedback

Key takeaways

- Master phrases for accepting positive feedback and showing gratitude.
- Be prepared to respond thoughtfully to constructive criticism.
- Have diplomatic and assertive responses ready for unfair criticism.

Remember, feedback, whether giving or receiving, is a tool for improvement and effective communication. Practicing these phrases will enhance your ability to navigate feedback scenarios with confidence and professionalism.

“There is only one thing in the world worse than being talked about, and that is not being talked about.”

Oscar Wilde

Asking for & Giving advice, Setting goals

| Asking for advice

Initiating the Conversation:

- „How can I improve my interpersonal skills?”
- „How should I approach new customers?”
- „What’s the best way to gain confidence in giving presentations?”

| Giving advice

Using modal verbs:

- „You could set a reminder to contact them again in three months.”
- „You should set a reminder...”

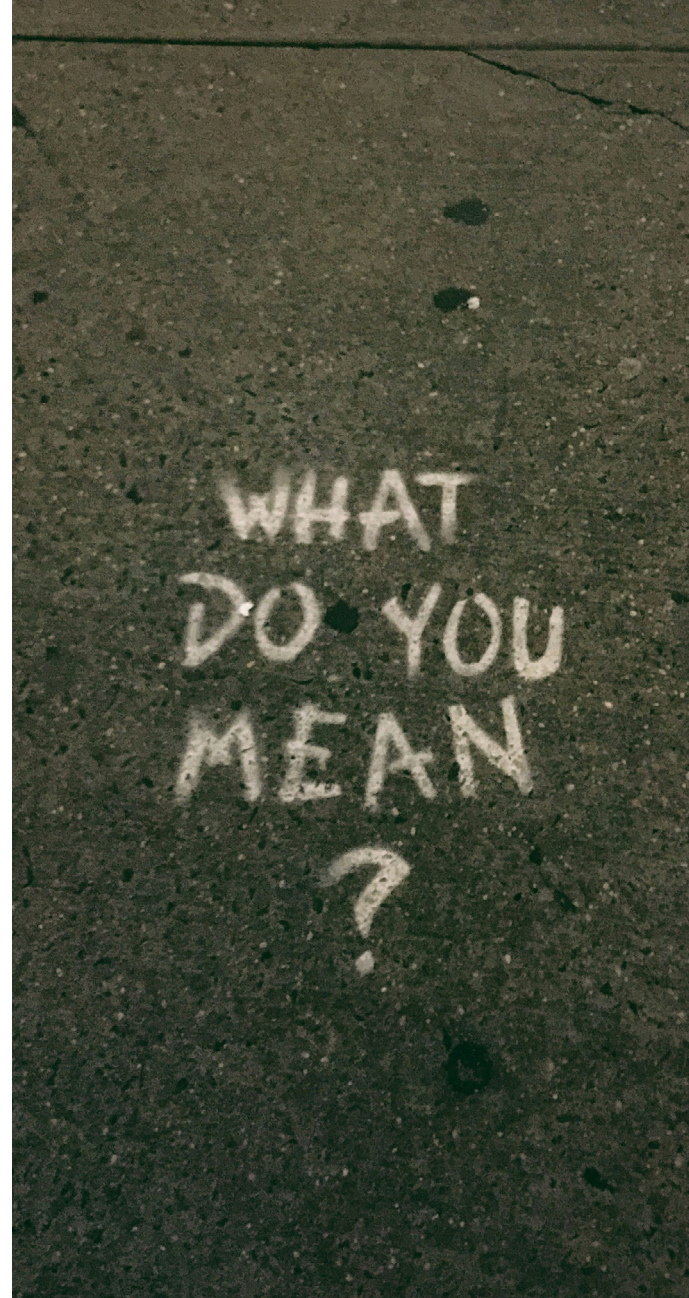
Mirroring questions:

- „To improve..., you can join the training starting in January.”
- „The best way to... is by practising at home.”
- „You need to research their requirements before contacting them.”

| Setting goals

Using inclusive language:

- „Can I identify that as a personal goal?”
- „Let’s put that on your list of goals.”



| Actionable steps

- Reflect on your personal goals for this course.
- Practice asking for and giving advice using the expressions learned.
- Be proactive in applying these in feedback sessions, both as a giver and receiver.
- Remember, consistent practice is essential for improvement.

Managing meetings and discussions

| Starting the meeting

- „Let's start.”
- „Let's begin.”
- „Let's get down to business.”

| The meeting's goal

- „The purpose of today's meeting is...”
- „Today I'd like to establish...”

| Keeping focus

- „Can I suggest we come back to...?”
- „Coming back/Returning to...”

| Inviting contribution

- „Perhaps you'd like to talk us through...”
- „Let's hear what ... has to say...”
- „What's your position on this?”



| Asking to speak

- „Could I just say something?”
- „If I could just come in there...”

| Closing the meeting

- „Let's summarize.”
- „So, a quick recap...”
- „So, in conclusion,...”

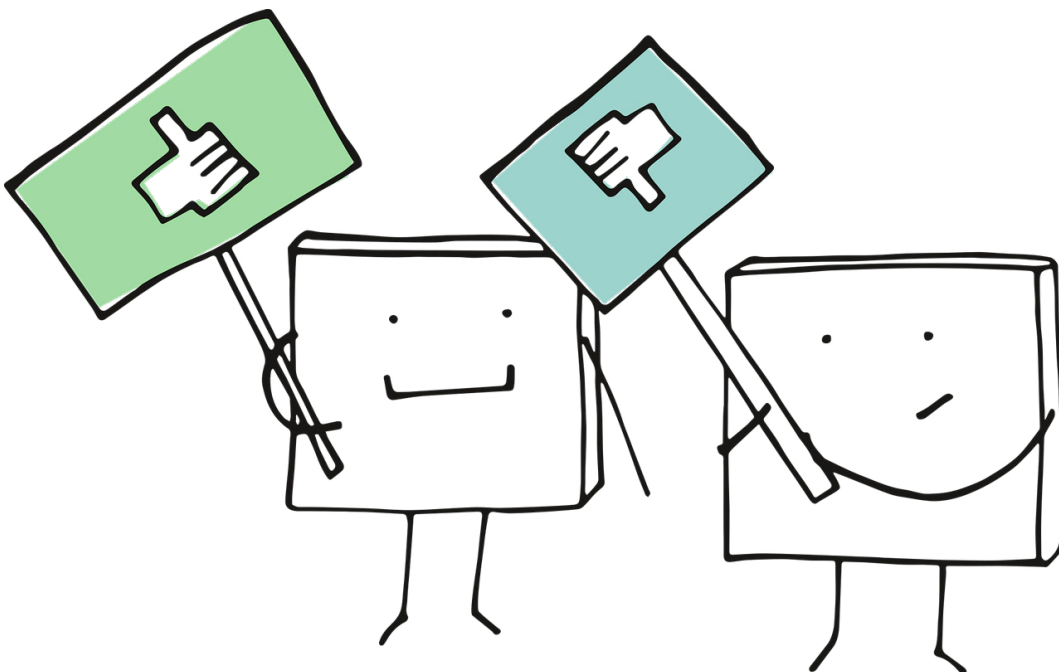
Expressing **and** Soliciting **Opinions**

| Inviting personal opinions

- „So what did you think of the presentation?”
- „What are your feelings about the expansion?”
- „What do you think of their plan?”
- „What’s your opinion of the situation?”
- „I’d like to know what you feel about his idea.”

| Replying to opinions

- „To be (perfectly) honest (with you), I like it.”
- „Frankly speaking, I’m not sure.”
- „I have to say, I’m not convinced.”
- „To tell the truth, I’m a little sceptical.”
- „Personally, I think it’s a great idea.”



Structure, Flow, and Conclusion

| Structuring and starting presentations

Introduction:

- Begin by introducing yourself, your topic, and the presentation's structure. This tripartite approach ensures clarity and engagement.
- Use expressions like „What I'd like to do in this presentation is..." or „I've divided my presentation up into..."

Outlining structure:

- Detail the key sections: „First I'll..., then..., and I'll conclude by..."
- Keep it concise, focusing on three main points for easy retention.

| Referencing and signposting

Guiding the audience:

- Start with phrases like „I'd like to begin by..."
- Use forward and backward referencing to maintain flow: „I'll return to this topic later," „As I said earlier..."
- Employ visuals effectively: „You'll notice in/on this chart..."

Transitioning:

- Smoothly move between topics: „Okay, moving on," „Let's turn our attention to..."



| Background information and concluding

Providing background:

- Offer context or explanations: „So, for example..." „By... I mean..." „Just to fill you in on some of the background..."

Concluding the presentation:

- Summarize key points: „To summarize," „In summary..."
- Highlight the main message: „And this is my key point..."
- Invite questions: „I'd be happy to take any questions now."

Effective presentations are structured, clear, and engaging. Employing the 'rule of three' can aid in organizing content in a memorable way. Use these outlined expressions and strategies to guide your audience through your presentation, ensuring they grasp and remember the key points.

Mastering Statistics in Presentations

Basics of describing statistics

- Use verbs like „to go up”, „to increase”, „to grow”, „to rise”, „to climb” for upward trends.
- Incorporate noun or adjective forms for variety: „increase/decrease”, „growth”, „rising/falling”.

Adding drama to statistics

- Add adjectives/adverbs for emphasis: „a gradual increase” „rose rapidly”.
- Dramatic verbs for significant changes: „to soar”, „to rocket”, „to plummet”, „to collapse”.

Complex statistical descriptions

- Use expressions like „to reach a peak of”, „to spike at” for high points.
- Use „to fluctuate” for variations, „to pick up” or „to recover” for improvements.





Problems and complaints

| Navigating the problem

- „How can I help (you)?“
- „What can I do for you (today)?“
- „What seems to be the problem?“

| Can and/vs. could

- „Can: requests which can easily be fulfilled.“
- „Could: a more difficult request.“
- „Could: a more formal situation.“

| Giving a sense of urgency

- „I'll look into it straight away.“
- „I'll look into it immediately.“

| Delaying response

- „I'm going to have to look into this.“
- „I'll get back to you (soon/shortly).“

| Listing action steps

- „What I'll do is... and ...“
- „As soon as I have the information, I'll call you back.“

| Showing empathy

- „I see.“
- „I know what you mean.“

Making suggestions

| Basic structures for suggestions

- „I suggest contacting...”
- „I propose contacting...”
- „I would suggest contacting...”
- „I'd suggest contacting...”
- „I would propose contacting...”
- „I'd propose contacting...”
- „What I propose is...”
- „Let's”

| Questions to elicit suggestions

- „How about...?”
- „Why don't we...?”
- „Supposing we...?”





Congratulations!

Key Points

- | **Expanded Vocabulary**
- | **Enhanced Confidence**
- | **Active Usage**
- | **Practice and Review**
- | **Proactive Engagement**
- | **Versatility**

Notes



A series of horizontal dotted lines arranged in two columns, providing a template for writing notes.