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DVD 93



Ideal for classroom
use and self-study

Successful Meetings

For professionals who use English at work



Video Course

OXFORD

Contents

| | Meeting skills focus | Language focus | Task |
|---------------|--|--|---|
| Unit 1 | Participating in meetings • p4 | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The three stages of a successful meeting How to participate effectively at each stage | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asking for and checking information Stating opinions and disagreeing Empathizing and suggesting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in a meeting to discuss a survey and plan future strategy |
| Unit 2 | Formal meetings • p10 | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizing a meeting Chairing a meeting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Starting the meeting Moving through the items on an agenda Encouraging discussion and summarizing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chair a short meeting and manage the agenda |
| Unit 3 | Informal meetings • p16 | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Making informal meetings effective Leading an informal team meeting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talking about current progress Discussing projects and schedules Offering help and delegating | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in a team meeting to update on progress |
| Unit 4 | Networking • p22 | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How to make networking work for you Being interested, positive and interesting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Making conversation Giving information about you and your company Showing interest with questions Entering and leaving the conversation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Network at a trade fair |
| Unit 5 | Job interviews • p28 | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How to be an effective interviewer How to be a successful candidate | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explaining the interview procedure Asking open questions Describing the job Talking about your personal qualities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in a job interview as either the interviewer or the candidate |
| Unit 6 | Teleconferencing • p34 | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leading a teleconference Participating in a teleconference | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beginning a teleconference Dealing with technical problems Speaking on the telephone Managing who speaks at a teleconference Outlining what you are going to say | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in a short teleconference |
| Unit 7 | Negotiating • p40 | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reaching an agreement Three principles of negotiating | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Negotiating contracts and fees Understanding the other person's concerns Bargaining | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Negotiate a contract for a new website with a website developer |
| Unit 8 | Appraisals • p46 | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Setting objectives Giving and receiving feedback | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encouraging self-evaluation Identifying goals and setting objectives Giving feedback and rating performance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take part in an appraisal as either the appraiser or appraisee |

1 Participating in meetings

In this unit:

- the three stages of a successful meeting
- how to participate effectively at each stage



1.1 Talking points

1 Consider these questions.

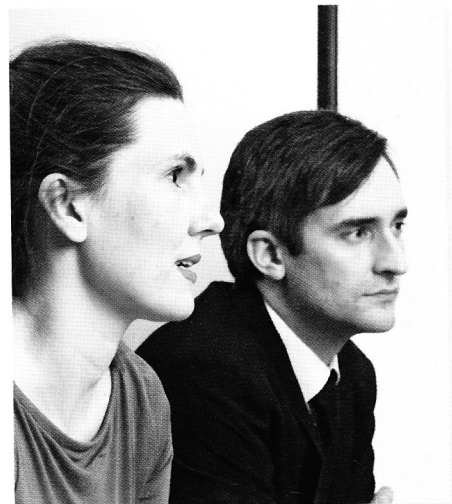
How can you make sure everyone participates in a meeting?
How do you handle people who disagree with you?

2 While you watch other people talking about the questions above, compare their experience with yours.

1.2 The meeting

3 Watch the first part of a meeting between four people at the energy company QPG. As you watch, answer the questions below.

- 1 What is the meeting about?
- 2 What is Maria's role?
- 3 Why was the market research done?
- 4 What was the research about?
- 5 Why are customers leaving?
- 6 Why doesn't Anna want to train staff again 'from scratch' (= from the beginning)?
- 7 What does Maria suggest they should review?
- 8 Does Anna agree to look at the report with Maria?



1.3 The expert view

- 4 Watch Andrew talk about the stages of a successful meeting and the skills you need for participating effectively. While you watch, make notes on Andrew's comments using the headings below.

- The three components of a good meeting
- How to listen carefully
- How to keep your emotions under control
- How to state your point of view
- How to show respect and empathy
- How to suggest positive action

For a summary of how to participate in meetings, read the article on page 52.

1.4 Analysis

- 5 Watch the meeting again and analyse Maria's participation. Make notes about her performance, including her body language or the language that she uses.

| | Does Maria ... | Notes |
|-------------------------------|---|-------|
| Sharing information | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • listen carefully? • check her understanding? | |
| Discussing ideas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • keep her emotions under control? • show respect and empathy for other people's concerns? | |
| Deciding on the action | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • try to reach agreement? • suggest ideas in a positive way? | |

How does Anna participate in this meeting? How is her participation different from Maria's?

1.5 The expert feedback

- 6 Watch Andrew's analysis of the participants in this meeting. How do his comments about Maria and Anna compare to your analysis?

Language focus

1.6 Asking for and checking information

- 1 Watch the first part of the meeting again. David is sharing information. Maria asks for and checks the information. Write in Maria's missing words.

David: We worked with a market research agency ... And the results were, well ... mixed.

Maria: Sorry, ¹ _____.? Why was this research done? Had there been complaints or ...?

David: Some complaints, yes, but also we are losing customers in the region and I wanted to know why.

Maria: Sorry, ² _____. Was the research about getting customer points of view or about customer profiles?

David: It was to get customer feedback on the company and its services.

Maria: Right, ³ _____.

David: So the results showed a few areas where customers were not happy. One of the most common ... how shall I put it ... issues, was with the call centre.

Maria: I see. ⁴ _____?

David: Well, basically, it seems that customers feel they are not getting good service, and they are leaving us for another supplier.

Maria: Right. So ⁵ _____ customers are leaving us because of the service from the staff or could there be other reasons too? I mean, ⁶ _____ that we haven't got very good systems in place for our staff?

Paul: Yeah, could be.

- 2 Replace Maria's expressions 1–6 in 1 with the similar phrases below.

- a do you mean ____
- b I understand. ____
- c Let me make sure I understand you correctly. ____
- d I'm not sure I follow you. ____
- e Could you explain that in a bit more detail? ____
- f is it possible ____

- 3 Notice how Maria avoids being too direct and uses polite language when she asks questions and gives suggestions.

'So are you saying customers are leaving us because of the service from the staff, or could there be other reasons too?'

Make the sentences below more polite by using an appropriate expression from 1 or 2.

- 1 I don't understand you!
- 2 OK. I get what you mean.
- 3 That's a bit vague. What do you mean exactly?
- 4 The plan is probably too expensive.
- 5 There was a problem with the design. Right?

TIP: SORRY

You can interrupt politely by starting with the word *Sorry* and then asking your question or expressing your opinion:

Sorry, can I just check ...

Sorry but ...

Sorry to interrupt but ...

Stating opinions and disagreeing

- 4 In the video Anna's opinions are very direct, which can seem rude: 'Starting completely from scratch seems like a waste of time and money. They all receive training when they start anyway.' Generally, people try to disagree in a more indirect way: 'Starting from the beginning might be expensive. I'm not sure that they need additional training.' Reorder these words to make expressions for disagreeing. Then decide if they are direct (D) or indirect (I).

- 1 completely I disagree _____ D / I
- 2 not I'm I agree sure _____ D / I
- 3 disagree afraid have I'm to I _____ D / I
- 4 agree there's way I can no _____ D / I
- 5 that can't we do _____ D / I
- 6 think I work sorry but don't that will _____ D / I



Empathizing and suggesting

- 5 Maria often shows empathy with Anna during the meeting. For example:

'Anna, I realize it's not easy for you to suggest more training for your staff ... I understand your point about possibly wasting time and money.'

Choose the correct verb in the sentences below that show empathy.

- 1 I know / realize / take your point about the need for additional training.
- 2 I can realize / take / understand your concerns about Martin's performance.
- 3 I follow / realize / take it isn't easy for you to cut marketing costs but we need to make savings.
- 4 I agree / appreciate / take what you're saying but I'm afraid some staff will have to go.
- 5 I can agree / see / take where you're coming from with this idea and will seriously consider it.

- 6 Maria also shows the importance of making positive suggestions. For example:

'I wondered if we could start with a review of the current training approach ... perhaps you and I could look at the report together?'

Match the first part of the suggestion 1–5 to the second part a–e.

- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| 1 I wondered if | a meeting next week to go through all the proposals that have been suggested? |
| 2 Perhaps you and I could | b you could reduce your marketing budget by cutting back on magazine advertising. |
| 3 Could it be | c should schedule a meeting to discuss how to deal with the staff cutbacks. |
| 4 Maybe we | d that Martin needs to go on a training course? |
| 5 How about | e discuss our specific training needs next week? |

- 7 Now empathize and make positive suggestions by matching an expression of empathy in 5 to a positive suggestion in 6.

For example: 1–b5 I take your point about the need for additional training. Perhaps you and I could discuss our specific training needs next week?

Meetings task: participating in a meeting

Work in a group of four. You all work for a food retail company with supermarkets across the country. This year, profits fell by 15% at your traditional stores but business at your online store rose by 32%. Although the traditional supermarkets are still profitable, the company is worried that profits might continue to fall. Recently your company carried out a survey about online shopping. You are meeting to discuss the main results of this survey. This is the agenda:

- 1 Person A will summarize the main points of the survey. (5 minutes)
- 2 Discussion of the survey and suggestions for possible action. (10 minutes)
- 3 Agreement of action plan for the future. (5 minutes)

Read the roles below and spend a few minutes preparing on your own for the meeting. At the meeting, listen to Student A summarizing the main results of the survey and take notes. Then discuss your ideas and give your opinion.

Student A: Turn to File A on page 58.

Student B: Turn to File B on page 59.

Student C: Turn to File C on page 60.

Student D: You are the chairperson. Turn to File D on page 61.

Alternative task

Work in small groups. Each person thinks of one problem at their place of work. For example, a problem with communication between departments, a problem with finding a space for meetings, etc. Meet with your colleagues and take turns to share information about your problem. Then discuss everyone's ideas for a solution and decide on some action to be taken.

Useful phrases

Asking for and checking information

Can I check something?
 Can you explain that in more detail?
 Do you mean that ...?
 Let me check I understand correctly.
 I'm not sure I understand.
 Sorry, I don't follow you.
 Can you be more specific?
 Can you give me an example?
 So are you saying ...?
 Right, I see.

Agreeing and disagreeing

Personally, I think we should ...
 I (completely) agree with you.
 I agree up to a point.
 Sorry but I disagree / can't agree.
 To be honest, I'm not convinced.

Empathizing

I take your point ...
 I know what you're saying ...
 I realize it isn't easy for you ...
 I understand your concerns ...
 I see where you're coming from but ...

Making suggestions

Perhaps we could / should ...
 So why don't we ...?
 How about ...? / What about ...?
 Have you thought about ...?
 Have you considered ...?
 What if we / you ...?
 Let's ...
 I suggest ...
 If I were you, I'd ...

Task assessment

Use this checklist to assess your meeting, including explanations where appropriate. Afterwards, compare and discuss your assessment with the rest of the group.

Stages of a successful meeting

Did your meeting follow all the stages of a successful meeting?

- Sharing information ☐
- Discussing ideas ☐
- Deciding action ☐

Comments

All the participants

Did all the participants at your meeting demonstrate these skills?

- Listen carefully ☐
- Keep emotions under control ☐
- Show respect and empathy ☐
- Suggest positive action ☐

Comments

You

Were you able to do the following at the meeting?

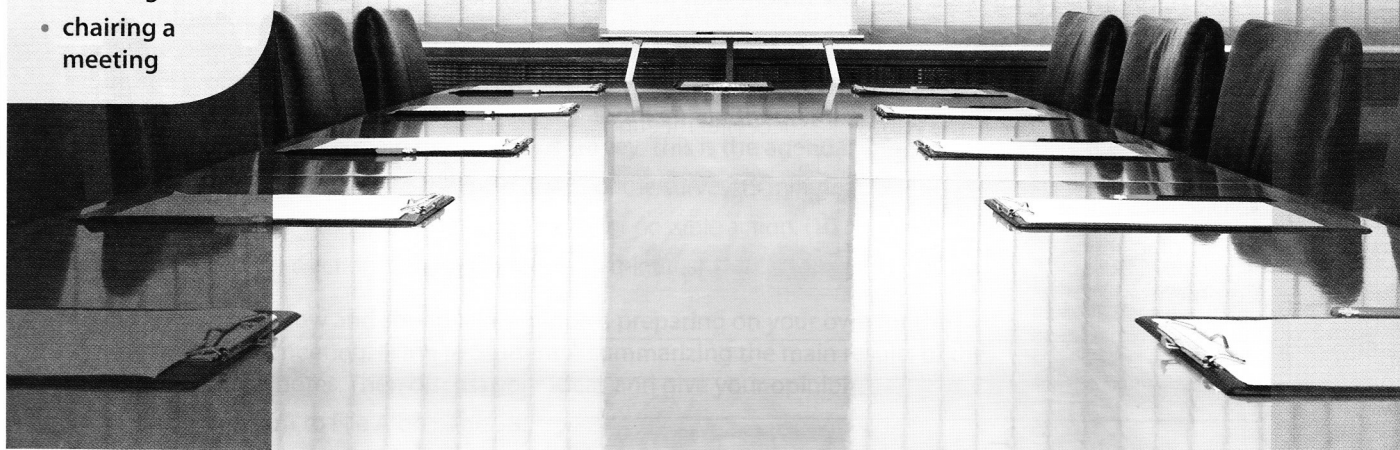
- Ask for and check information ☐
- Ask for and give your opinions ☐
- Make suggestions ☐

Comments

2 Formal meetings

In this unit:

- organizing a meeting
- chairing a meeting



2.1 Talking points

- 1 Consider these questions.
What types of formal meeting do you attend?
What makes a successful chairperson in a meeting?
- 2 While you watch other people talking about the questions above, compare their experience with yours.

2.2 The meeting

- 3 The heads of department at the energy company QPG are having their regular departmental meeting. Read their agenda below.

Agenda points

- 1 Progress report on relocation and flexible working hours (Paul Griegson)
- 2 Issues relating to the next board meeting
- 3 Report on costs for relocation
- 4 Presentation of online survey results (Patricia Reyes)
- 5 AOB (= any other business)

While you watch the video, answer the questions below about the agenda points.

- 1 Item 4: What time will Miss Reyes' presentation start? How might this affect the agenda?
- 2 AOB: What does Marcus want to discuss during 'any other business'?
- 3 Item 1: Does Maja want to discuss Paul's proposal in item 1? Why / why not?
- 4 Item 2: What does Marcus ask Lydia to tell him?
- 5 Item 3: What does Matt say about item 3?
- 6 Item 3: What does Marcus say in his summary of item 3?
- 7 Item 4: What time will they start again after the break?

2.3 The expert view

- 4 As you watch Andrew talk about chairing formal meetings, make notes about his comments by answering questions 1–8.

Content

- 1 Before the meeting, managing 'content' involves _____
- 2 During the meeting, managing 'content' involves _____
- 3 What techniques can you use to manage content?

Process

- 4 What does 'process' include?
- 5 During a meeting, how do you manage process?

Dynamic

- 6 'Dynamic' refers to 'the way people are _____ in the meeting'.
- 7 How should the chairperson manage the dynamic of a meeting?
- 8 What happens if someone concentrates too much on dynamic and not enough on content and process?

For a summary of Content, Process and Dynamic, read the article on pages 52–53.

2.4 Analysis

- 5 Watch the meeting again and analyse the performance of the chairperson, Marcus. Tick (✓) the points that Marcus does, and note down examples where appropriate.

| | Did Marcus ... | Example |
|---------|--|---------|
| Content | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • send people the agenda before the meeting? <input type="checkbox"/> • check everyone understood each point? <input type="checkbox"/> • summarize what was said? <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Process | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • deal with any changes to the agenda? <input type="checkbox"/> • manage the timing effectively? <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Dynamic | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • encourage everyone to discuss issues openly? <input type="checkbox"/> • encourage everyone to contribute? <input type="checkbox"/> | |

2.5 The expert feedback

- 6 Watch Andrew's analysis of the chairperson. How do his comments compare to your analysis?

Language focus

2.6 Starting the meeting

- 1 Read Marcus's introduction to the meeting in the video. Complete his introduction with these words. There is one extra word which he doesn't use.

apologies item break agenda
minutes any other business

Good morning everyone. Thank you very much for being here on time. We've got a lot to do today so let's get started. Now, everyone's here apart from John in Facilities. But we have ¹_____ from him. Has everyone got a copy of the ²_____?

Good. OK, can I draw your attention to ³_____ four where it says 'presentation of online survey results'? The presentation is going to be given by Miss Patricia Reyes who is a representative of the research company who we contracted to carry out the work. Now, Miss Reyes will arrive at eleven thirty so I plan to ⁴_____ at about eleven fifteen so she has time to set up. It may also mean that we need to interrupt the first few agenda items but we'll come back to those. And lastly, I'd like to leave a little bit of time under ⁵_____ to discuss whatever might come out of the presentation.



- 2 Watch the first part of the meeting again and check your answers in 1.
- 3 Underline and write down any useful expressions in the introduction in 1 that you can use to:
- a welcome everyone
 - b say who can't attend
 - c refer to items on the agenda
 - d talk about any changes to the agenda

Moving through the items on an agenda

- 4 Marcus often uses expressions to clearly end and start different points on the agenda. For example, notice how he ends item two and moves to item three:

'And that's everything I think on item two. Right. Moving on to item three and the cost breakdown for the relocation.'

Categorize these expressions in the table.

So, item one is ... Paul, can you take us through this next point?

Moving on to item two. I think that's enough on item one. Let's go on to the next item.

... is the next item on the agenda. We're running out of time so let's leave it there.

Introducing an item

Ending the item

Moving from one item to the next

So, item one is ...

- 5 Read a chairperson's sentences from a meeting. Complete them with words and phrases from 4.

- 1 Staff overtime is the next _____.
- 2 Rosaria, can you take us _____ point as it's your area?
- 3 Thank you Rosaria. I'm afraid we're _____ so we'd better stop there.
- 4 I think _____ on this item. We can return to it at the next meeting.
- 5 That's everything on item two so let's _____ item three ...

Encouraging discussion and summarizing

- 6 In the video, Marcus often encourages discussion and summarizes the main points after each item. For example:

'Matt, you look as if you might have a question ... I just want to summarize where we are so far.'

Look at more sentences for encouraging and summarizing. Replace the words that are underlined with one of the phrasal verbs below.

go over talk us through sum up open this up for discussion bring it up

- 1 I'd like to summarize our discussion so far.
 - 2 OK. So let's examine what we've all agreed.
 - 3 Would you like to explain to us your concerns about this point?
 - 4 If anyone has an objection, you should raise it now.
 - 5 I'd like to discuss this as a group.
- 7 Look at the sentences below that encourage discussion or summarize content. Match sentences 1–6 to the sentence a–f that has a similar meaning.
- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 Is there anything anyone would like to add? | a Can I just run through what we've agreed? |
| 2 I just want to summarize what we discussed. | b Does anyone have any further comments? |
| 3 What do other people think about that? | c Carl, you look as though you might have a question. |
| 4 Maria, do you have anything you'd like to say? | d What does everyone else think about that? |
| 5 Can I quickly go over what we've agreed? | e Are there any other opinions about this? |
| 6 Does anyone have any other views on this? | f I'd like to recap on what we discussed. |

- 8 Which of the sentences in 6 and 7 are used to do the following?

- a encourage comments from all the group _____
- b encourage an individual to speak _____
- c summarize what was agreed _____

Meetings task: chairing a meeting

Work in small groups of three to five people. You are the management team of a medium-sized manufacturer of bicycles. Your biggest market is Europe but you have a rapidly growing customer base in Asia. You have just developed a new type of folding bicycle for commuters, made from a strong but lightweight material. You believe the product will be very popular.



Alternative task

Work in small groups. You are meeting to discuss the plan to redecorate your office. Make a list of what you will need to discuss at the meeting. For example, the colour of the walls, the new furniture, the layout of the office, etc. When you have a list of four or five items, start the meeting. One person is the chairperson. The rest of the participants must argue for their preferences for each item on the agenda. The chairperson must try to control the meeting and reach a final agreement!

You are going to hold three short meetings lasting a maximum of five minutes each. Use the agendas below. Choose a different person to be the chairperson at each of the three meetings.

MEETING 1

Aim of meeting: To plan a marketing campaign for the folding bicycle in Asia

Apologies for absence: Rachel Smart – Marketing Assistant

Agenda items:

- 1 Determine key markets: China and / or other countries in Asia?
- 2 Decide on marketing campaign. What type of advertising? (e.g. TV commercials, Internet ads, etc.)
- 3 AOB*

MEETING 2

Aim of meeting: To choose new range of cycling accessories and target markets

Apologies for absence: Nergiz Gomm – Production Assistant

Agenda items:

- 1 Select accessory or accessories. Proposed accessories: helmets, locks, lights, jackets, mirrors, bells.
- 2 Target markets for each accessory (children, youth sector, middle-aged sector, male, female, etc.).
- 3 AOB

MEETING 3

Aim of meeting: To discuss proposal for new factory

Apologies for absence: Franco Sagarra – Production Coordinator

Agenda items:

- 1 Proposals for new factory: (1) build a new factory in the same country; (2) build a new factory in new country or continent.
- 2 Options for employment at new factory: (1) relocate existing employees; (2) recruit new employees locally.
- 3 AOB

*AOB = any other business

Useful phrases

Starting the meeting

Good morning.
Thank you for coming / for being here on time.
Let's get started.
(Jim) has sent his apologies for being absent.
The aim / purpose of this meeting is to ...

Referring to the agenda and timing

Has everyone got a copy of the agenda?
Can I draw your attention to item one of the agenda?
There is one change to the agenda.
I plan to end at / take a break at ...
I'd like to spend a little time on ...

Moving through the agenda

So, item one is ...
Let's go on to the next item.
Moving on to item three.
Can you fill us in on this next point?
We're running out of time, so let's move on.
I think that's enough on item one.

Encouraging comments

Would anyone like to / Does anyone want to comment on this?
What does everyone think about that?
Any thoughts about that?
You look as if you have a question.
Are there any further questions / issues?

Summarizing and ending

Let's stop there, shall we?
I'd just like to summarize what we have discussed.
To sum up what we've agreed so far.
Is there any other business?
Our next meeting is on ...

Task assessment

Use the form below to analyse the performance of the chairperson at the meeting. When you are the chairperson, use this form to assess your own performance. Make notes about how well the chairperson managed each point and what could be improved.

| Did the chairperson ... (✓/✗) | Notes |
|--|-------|
| • welcome everyone? <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| • outline the agenda and give apologies for absence? <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| • move through the agenda logically and control the timing? <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| • check that everyone understood each point? <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| • summarize what was said? <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| • encourage everyone to contribute? <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| • ask for any other business? <input type="checkbox"/> | |

3 Informal meetings

In this unit:

- making informal meetings effective
- leading an informal team meeting



3.1 Talking points

- 1 Consider these questions.
Why do you have team meetings?
When do team meetings work well?
- 2 While you watch other people talking about the questions above, compare their experience with yours.

3.2 The meeting

- 3 Watch part of a team meeting in the HR Department of the energy company QPG. While you watch, complete Paul's notes in the table below.



| Item and person | Progress and / or problems | Agreed action or comments |
|---|---|--|
| <i>Temps: Karina</i> | <i>Problems with receptionist and the temp agency</i> | 1 _____ _____ |
| <i>Call centre training: Maria</i> | <i>Two external trainers are running courses. Call centre staff are not attending training.</i> | 2 _____ _____ _____ |
| <i>Intranet training: Maria</i> | 3 _____ _____ | <i>No action. Maria to speak to Matt and Lucy.</i> |
| <i>One-day event for schools: Maria</i> | <i>Preparing proposal for David in Marketing on 'schools' day'</i> | 4 _____ _____ |
| <i>Interviewing Monica at 1.30 p.m.: Karina</i> | 5 _____ _____ | <i>Paul to interview Monica with Maja.</i> |

3.3 The expert view

4 While you watch Andrew talk about informal team meetings, answer the questions below.

- 1 What is one of the most common problems with informal meetings?
- 2 Why are informal meetings difficult to control?
- 3 What are the three things you need to achieve in an informal meeting?
- 4 What is the best way to learn about progress?
- 5 After discussing a problem, what should you do before moving on to the next person?
- 6 Why is informal conversation useful at a meeting?
- 7 What did research show about the effects of holding a meeting standing up?
- 8 What is a good technique for teaching your team responsibility at meetings?

For a summary of how to chair informal meetings, read the article on page 53.

3.4 Analysis

5 Watch the team meeting again and analyse it using this feedback form. Tick (✓) the scale between 'very' and 'not very'. Note down any examples that support your feedback.

| | Very | Not very | Examples |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------|
| How informal and relaxed is the meeting? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| How good was the balance between 'talk' and 'action'? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| How effective is the team leader at identifying: | | | |
| - what progress has been made? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| - any problems? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| - what action is needed and summing it up? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| How well do the team members take responsibility for updating and taking action? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |

3.5 The expert feedback

6 Watch Andrew's analysis of this meeting. How do his comments compare to your analysis?



Language focus

3.6 Talking about current progress

- 1 Watch two extracts from the discussion between Paul and Maria. Listen and write in the missing words and expressions.

Extract 1

Paul: So, how are things going? Maria? What ¹ _____ in the Training Department this week?

Maria: So far so good. We have two external trainers in this week. One of them ² _____ with call centre staff at the other site so I hope they all turn up ...

Extract 2

Paul: And what about the intranet training? How ³ _____ with that?

Maria: We ⁴ _____ for IT to say they're ready. I think there have been some delays but now they ⁵ _____ me it'll be ready next month. I have an update meeting this week with Matt and Lucy.

Paul: They really are behind on that, aren't they? So, is that everything for the Training Department?

Maria: I ⁶ _____ something for David in Marketing ...

- 2 In sentences 1–6 in 1, Paul and Maria talk about current progress using a particular tense. Which tense is it? When do we use this tense?

- 3 Complete these expressions for asking about progress with the words below.

progressing fill are happening update coming

- 1 How's the new building work _____ along? Is everything OK?
- 2 What's _____ in your department this week?
- 3 How's the new IT project? Is everything _____ well?
- 4 How's it going with the market research? Can you _____ us on your progress?
- 5 How _____ things at your end? Any issues to report?
- 6 Can you _____ us in on how things are going with the marketing campaign?

Discussing projects and schedules

- 4 During progress updates, we check if a project is progressing well or if there are problems.

MARIA 'They are telling me it'll be ready next month.'

PAUL 'They really are behind on that, aren't they?'

Look at these phrases for talking about projects and schedules. Tick (✓) if the project is progressing well or put a cross (X) if it is progressing badly.

| | | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| The project is ... | ahead of schedule ✓ | behind schedule X | on schedule ✓ |
| The project is ... | under budget | over budget | within budget |
| We're going to ... | make the deadline | meet the deadline | miss the deadline |
| The project is ... / We are ... | in trouble | back on track | on track (to do sth) |
| We finished the work ... | late | on time | ahead of time |

5 Complete the sentences with some of the phrases from 4.

- 1 We're _____ schedule so we should finish the work a few weeks before the deadline.
- 2 They're really behind on this and the labour costs are rising. I'm concerned the project will go _____ budget.
- 3 We had a few problems but they've all been fixed so we're _____ track!
- 4 Our client needs the equipment by 1st June or they can't start their work. So don't _____ the deadline!
- 5 Thanks to our new software, the project came in \$20,000 _____ budget. It saved us a lot of time and money.
- 6 We've completed each of the stages _____ time so we're on track to meet the June deadline.

Offering help and delegating

6 In the video, Paul tries to solve problems and difficulties by offering his help or delegating:

(to Maria) 'I'm meeting Anna today so I'll mention it.'

(to Karina) 'Would you like to look at some new temp agencies in the meantime?'

Read Karina's problem. Complete Paul's response with these phrases.

Don't worry, I'll do ... Would you ... Could ... Shall I ...
Would you like me ...

- 1 **Karina:** I'm away next week and so I need somebody to organize the temporary staff.
Paul: _____ anyone here do it?
- 2 **Karina:** I'm going to be late tomorrow so I won't be able to show our visitors round in the morning.
Paul: _____ take them round? I'm free in the morning.
- 3 **Karina:** I can't understand how this new accounting software works.
Paul: _____ to show you how to use it? It's not that complicated.
- 4 **Karina:** We have two people away next week so I have to organize the conference on my own.
Paul: _____ be able to help her, Rachel?
- 5 **Karina:** I'm not going to have time to train the new assistant.
Paul: _____ it for you. I'm not that busy right now.

TIP: SUMMARIZING

We often sum up what action has been agreed for the future by using the verb form *going to* + *verb*. Notice how Paul uses it in his summary:

Let's just recap. I'm going to get back to you when I've spoken to Anna about the call centre training. You're going to speak to Matt and Lucy about the intranet training, and you're going to proceed with caution with David on the schools event.



Meetings task: a team meeting

Work in groups of four. You are having an informal meeting with a team of colleagues at work. The aim of the meeting is to update each other on what is happening in your departments. Study the information about your current project and then start the meeting.

- Student A: Turn to File A on page 58.
- Student B: Turn to File B on page 59.
- Student C: Turn to File C on page 60.
- Student D: Turn to File D on page 61.

Take turns to be the chairperson. Student A is the chairperson first. Ask Student B to update everyone on the progress of their project. Everyone can ask questions and, where possible, offer to help or you can delegate someone to help. At the end of this progress report, Student A sums up any action to be taken.

Next, Student B becomes the new chairperson and asks Student C to update everyone on their progress. Repeat this process until everyone has updated on their current progress and has also been the team leader at the meeting.

Alternative task

Update your group on what is happening in your real job. Make some notes about two or three projects you are currently involved in or things you are doing this week. In your notes, write down:

- what the projects are
- who else is working with you on the projects
- any important dates and deadlines
- any problems that are currently affecting the projects.

Useful phrases

Asking about progress

How are things going?

What's happening in your department this week?

How is everything in your department?

What's the current situation with ...?

Is that everything?

Discussing projects and schedules

We're currently in discussion with / meeting / talking to ...

The project is under budget / within budget / ahead of schedule / on schedule / back on track.

The project is behind schedule / over budget / in trouble.

We've hit a problem / missed the deadline.

Clarifying problems

What (exactly) is the problem?

What do you mean (exactly)?

Are you saying that ...?

So is the problem that ...?

Can you give me an example?

Can you expand upon that last point?

Offering help

I'll do it. / I can do it if that helps.

Shall I do it?

Would you like me to do it?

Leave it with me.

Delegating

Can you / Could you do it?

Would you be able to ...?

I need somebody to ...

Would someone ... for me?

Could anyone / Is anyone free to ...?

Summarizing the action to be taken

To recap / To sum up ...

I'm going to ... / We're going to ... / He's going to ...

We've also agreed that ...

Use this form to assess the meeting, the team leader, and the rest of the team. Add comments where appropriate.

[illegible]

4 Networking

In this unit:

- how to make networking work for you
- being interested, positive and interesting



4.1 Talking points

1 Consider these questions.

Is networking important for your job? Why / why not?
What topics do you talk about?

2 While you watch other people talking about the questions above, compare their experience with yours.

4.2 The meeting

3 Matt is attending a trade fair and meets Sanjit and Sabine from SavelIT for the first time. As you watch the video, decide if the statements are true or false.

- | | |
|---|--------------|
| 1 Matt is too early for lunch. | True / False |
| 2 Sanjit works for an IT company that designs networks and intranets. | True / False |
| 3 Matt is the Head of Finance at an energy company. | True / False |
| 4 Matt's company wants to improve its IT security. | True / False |
| 5 Sabine created the company, SavelIT. | True / False |
| 6 SavelIT is at stand 42. | True / False |
| 7 Sanjit goes back to the stand because there's no one there at the moment. | True / False |
| 8 Sabine and Matt decide to have lunch in a café. | True / False |



4.3 The expert view

- 4 As you watch Andrew talk about successful networking, answer the questions about his three rules.

Be interested

- 1 Why is it important to show interest?
- 2 How do we show that we are interested?
- 3 What will happen in most cases if we show interest?

Be positive

- 4 What should you talk about? What shouldn't you talk about?
- 5 What kinds of positive comment can you make to the other person?
- 6 What should you do when you say goodbye?

Be interesting

- 7 How much information should we give about ourselves when we meet someone new?
- 8 Why is it important to give a bit more information than usual?

For a summary of how to network effectively, read the article on pages 53–54.

4.4 Analysis

- 5 Watch the meeting between Matt and Sanjit again. Make notes of any examples of the three rules of networking, including any useful expressions that Matt or Sanjit uses.

Matt

Sanjit

Be interested

Be positive

Be interesting

4.5 The expert feedback

- 6 Watch Andrew's analysis of Matt and Sanjit's meeting. How do his comments compare to your views?

Language focus

4.6 Making conversation

1 In the video, Matt and Sanjit ask lots of questions at the beginning of their conversation. Match their questions 1–6 below to the correct responses in a–f.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 How are you finding the trade fair? | a I'm with an energy company. |
| 2 Do you have a stand here? | b We're an energy provider. But we also provide services to companies ... |
| 3 Networks? What area? | c Well, we're here to improve our web presence but we also need to improve security. |
| 4 How about you? | d Busy! There's so much to see. |
| 5 What kind of energy company? | e Well, we specialize in IT security for networks and so on. |
| 6 So what brings you to the trade fair? | f Yes, we do. I'm with SaveIT. We're an IT company specializing in networks. |

2 Now watch the first part of the video and check your answers.

Giving information about you and your company

3 Matt and Sanjit ask and give information about themselves, their work and their companies. For example:

SANJIT 'We're an IT company specializing in networks.'

Write the missing words in these sentences.

specialize provide head up charge responsible overseeing
head based

- I'm the _____ of Marketing for SaveIT.
- We're _____ in Stuttgart.
- We _____ in IT security for networks.
- We _____ services to help companies train their staff in IT.
- I'm in _____ of our Internet advertising.
- I'm _____ for implementing our sales strategy in Latin American.
- At the moment, I'm _____ our new project in Vietnam.
- I _____ the Finance Division in Shanghai.

TIP: SHOWING INTEREST

Notice how people use these kinds of expressions before the follow-on question:

I see.

That's amazing!

Sounds interesting.

I can imagine.

Really?

It's important to use rising intonation to sound sincere:

That's amazing!

Really?

Showing interest with questions

- 4 In the video, Matt and Sanjit show interest and ask follow-on questions to develop a business relationship and find connections. For example:

MATT 'I'm with an energy company.'

SANJIT 'I see. What kind of energy company?'

Match the statements to the follow-on questions.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 I work in event management. | a That's fascinating. Where in Asia? |
| 2 Our sales have doubled in two years. | b I see. What kinds of events do you organize? |
| 3 Currently I'm based in Hong Kong. | c Really? How do you like it there? |
| 4 My company designs software to analyse market trends. | d Sounds interesting. Is that for the stock market? |
| 5 We've opened five more offices in Asia this year. | e I can imagine. How long did it take? |
| 6 Setting up a new IT system took a long time. | f That's impressive. What's caused the increase in sales? |

- 5 Think of another new question for each of the statements in a–f to show interest.
- 6 Work with a partner. Make sentences about your job and your company using the verbs in 3 and show interest in your partner's comments, using the phrases and questions in 4.

Entering and leaving the conversation

- 7 In the video, Sanjit brings Sabine into the conversation with Matt and then leaves.

'Sabine, let me introduce you. This is Matt Lauder, he's head of IT at an energy firm ... Nice meeting you Matt. You have my contact details – please feel free to get in touch ...'

Read these lines from a conversation between Joanna, Rachel and Piotr. Number lines 1 to 9 of the dialogue in the correct order. The first and last lines have been done for you.

- 1 Joanna: Piotr. Let me introduce you to someone. This is Rachel Franks. Rachel, this is Piotr.
- ___ Piotr: Nice to meet you too.
- ___ Piotr: Yes, in fact I visited the office in Sydney. It's a great city.
- ___ Joanna: Rachel works in our sales office in Sydney. I was just telling her about your recent fact-finding trip in Australia.
- ___ Rachel: Glad you liked it. If you come to Sydney again, please drop me a line.
- ___ Rachel: Yes, it was good to meet you too.
- ___ Rachel: Hello. Nice to meet you Piotr.
- ___ Piotr: Thanks. I will. I'll get your details from Joanna. Anyhow, I'd love to stay and talk but I'm afraid I've got a meeting. It was really nice meeting you Rachel.
- 9 Piotr: I hope we meet again. Bye.



Meetings task: networking

You are going to practise a networking situation with everyone else in your group. You are all attending a trade fair on future technologies in business.

- 1 Work on your own. Prepare notes about yourself, or create a new role for yourself using the *Useful phrases* in the box opposite. Be prepared to talk about the following things:
 - What is your name? Where are you from?
 - What does your company do? Where is it based?
 - What's your main area of business? What are you in charge of?
 - What is your reason for being at the trade fair?
- 2 Everyone in the class stands up and starts networking. Start talking with one other person for a maximum of three minutes. Try to find out something about their job or business and establish a connection between both of your jobs and companies.
- 3 At the end of the three minutes, end the conversation and meet someone new.
- 4 Continue this process and try to meet everyone in the room. As the networking develops, introduce people you met earlier to new people you are talking to. Suggest possible business connections between them.
- 5 At the end, tell the rest of the group about anyone you think would be a good business contact in the future.

Task assessment

You can use this assessment form to assess your own or another person's performance in networking. Note down examples of their or your behaviour to support your feedback.

| | |
|---|---|
| How interested was this person? | Very interested <input type="checkbox"/> Fairly interested <input type="checkbox"/> Not very interested <input type="checkbox"/> Comments: _____ _____ |
| How positive was this person? | Very positive <input type="checkbox"/> Fairly positive <input type="checkbox"/> Not very positive <input type="checkbox"/> Comments: _____ _____ |
| How interesting was this person? | Very interesting <input type="checkbox"/> Fairly interesting <input type="checkbox"/> Not very interesting <input type="checkbox"/> Comments: _____ _____ |

Useful phrases**Starting the conversation**

Is this seat free?

I don't think we've met. I'm ...

How are you finding the trade fair / the conference, etc.?

Introducing yourself

I'm ... Nice to meet you.

Nice to meet you too.

Here's my card.

I'm in charge of ... / responsible for ... / deal with ...

I'm in IT ...

I work as an IT consultant ...

I'm with / I work for an IT company ...

We specialize in ... / produce ... / develop ... / manufacture ... / design ...

Making conversation

Why are you at ...? What brings you to ...?

Tell me more about ...

What do you think about ...?

I imagine that ...

What about you?

Showing interest

Really? How interesting.

Right. / I see. / I can imagine.

Do you? / Are you? / Does it? / Is it?

That's interesting / fascinating / amazing.

Sounds fascinating.

Introducing others

Do you know Sabine?

Have you met Sabine?

I think you should meet ...

Would you like to meet her?

Matt, meet Sabine.

Matt, this is ...

Let me introduce you to ...

He / She's in charge of ...

I was just telling Sabine about ...

Leaving the conversation

Sorry, I have to go ...

It was really interesting talking to / meeting you.

It was good to meet you.

It was nice meeting you.

Maybe we can meet again later.

Would you like to meet up again later?

Let's keep in touch ...

5 Job interviews

In this unit:

- how to be an effective interviewer
- how to be a successful candidate



5.1 Talking points

1 Consider these questions.

How can you prepare for a job interview?

What should you do when you have an interview?

What should you do when you interview someone?

2 While you watch other people talking about the questions above, compare their experience with yours.



5.2 The interview

3 Monica is applying for the position of Finance Assistant. As you watch parts of her job interview, make notes on the form below.

Name: Monica Bagley Current position: ¹ _____

Reason(s) for applying: ² _____

Employment history: Worked for the accountancy firm Reynolds and Waters.

Duties included: ³ _____

Reason for leaving previous job: ⁴ _____

Relevant skills for this position: ⁵ _____

Candidate's expectations of the position (e.g. challenges of the post): ⁶ _____

Reason why the candidate thinks he / she would be suitable: ⁷ _____

Possible training this candidate may require: ⁸ _____

Action needed: Email Monica details of ⁹ _____

5.3 The expert view

- 4 You are going to watch Andrew talk about what makes a successful job interview from the point of view of both the interviewer and the candidate. As you watch, make notes under each of the headings below.

| Tips for the interviewer | Tips for the candidate |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| The interview room | Do research before the interview |
| The job description | Demonstrate research |
| Prepare your questions | Prepare positive answers |
| Types of questions | Think about your skills and qualities |
| Make the candidate feel comfortable | Prepare questions |
| The candidate's questions | Be a positive version of yourself |

For a summary of how to be a successful interviewer or job candidate, read the article on pages 54–55.

5.4 Analysis

- 5 As you watch the job interview again, analyse the performance of both the interviewers and the candidate. Rate each item in the table below using the following scale:

1 = successful 2 = satisfactory 3 = unsuccessful

| The interviewers: <i>Paul and Maja</i> | The candidate: <i>Monica</i> |
|--|--|
| Appropriate layout and seating | Appearance |
| Explains how the interview will work | Demonstrates research |
| Gives details of post | Gives positive answers with examples |
| Uses range of open questions | Has prepared answers to common questions |
| Makes candidate feel comfortable | Asks her own relevant questions |
| Leaves time for candidate's questions | Gives a good impression |

5.5 The expert feedback

- 6 Watch Andrew's analysis of the interviewers and the candidate. How do his comments compare to your views?

Language focus

5.6 Explaining the interview procedure

- 1 In the video, the interviewer explains the interview process and describes the position in more detail. Complete the sentences below from the video by writing the *verb + noun* pairs in the gaps. Change the form of the verb where necessary.

structure + interview look at + job description
 apply + post apply + job use + initiative ask + questions

- 1 Thanks for coming and for _____ for the _____ of Finance Assistant.
- 2 What we'd like to do is _____ you a few _____.
- 3 We'll be _____ the _____ in the same way as with an external applicant.
- 4 Did you get a chance to _____ the _____ I sent you?
- 5 What we're looking for is someone who can help Maja and her team ... but also someone who can _____ their _____ and help the whole Finance Department as and when things come up.
- 6 Can I start by asking why you _____ for the _____?



- 2 Now watch an extract from the video of the interview and check your answers.

Asking open questions

- 3 As Andrew explained, an 'open question' encourages candidates to say more about themselves than 'closed questions' which only need a yes / no answer. Are the questions below open or closed questions?

- | | |
|--|---------------|
| 1 Why did you leave your last job? | open / closed |
| 2 Do you have any strengths? | open / closed |
| 3 Did you have any responsibilities in your previous post? | open / closed |
| 4 What do you see yourself doing five years from now? | open / closed |
| 5 How would you describe yourself? | open / closed |
| 6 What do you think you could bring to this post? | open / closed |
| 7 Would you be good at this job? | open / closed |
| 8 Do you have experience in using spreadsheets? | open / closed |

- 4 Rewrite the closed questions in 3 as open questions.

Describing the job

- 5 Match the words and the definitions.

salary CV / résumé graduate position / post applicant / candidate skills

- 1 a job _____
- 2 a person who applies for a job _____
- 3 a person who has a university degree _____
- 4 the money that an employee is paid for doing their job _____
- 5 a written record of your education and the jobs you have done _____
- 6 abilities to do something well _____

- 6 Complete the different job advertisements from a recruitment website by adding the words in 5.

Ambitious, hard-working individuals needed for sales positions!

Are you an intelligent, resourceful and outgoing ¹ _____ of marketing, looking to start a successful career within sales? If so, apply now to join the sales team of one of Europe's largest travel companies. The ² _____ offers a competitive ³ _____ along with a range of benefits including a company car.

.....

Trainee Software Developer

Fantastic opportunity for an enthusiastic and creative individual to join our innovative software development team. You will have excellent IT ⁴ _____, including experience of website design, and be passionate about gaming software. Successful ⁵ _____ to start immediately on a 6-month contract. Apply initially by sending your ⁶ _____ and a covering letter.

Talking about your personal qualities

- 7 During the interview, both the interviewers and the candidate refer to personal qualities. For example:

MAJA 'Would you say you're quite **ambitious**, then?'

MONICA 'I'm very **enthusiastic** and I get on well with people ...'

Look at the job adverts in 6. Underline the adjectives that are used to describe personal qualities.

- 8 Read these comments by candidates in interviews. Match the personal qualities to the comments.

ambitious enthusiastic reliable flexible decisive determined
hard-working creative

- 1 My last manager trusted me and let me deal with clients on my own.
- 2 I like to think that I always approach any new task with a positive attitude and a smile.
- 3 I'm able to take tough decisions when you have to.
- 4 I think it's important to achieve your aims and I always try my hardest to make sure this happens.
- 5 I suppose in two or three years' time I'd hope to see myself promoted to a senior position.
- 6 I'm able to work with most people and adapt to different working environments.
- 7 I don't mind working late or working extra hours when there's a lot of work to do.
- 8 I've been told that I'm pretty good at coming up with new ideas.

Meetings task: a job interview

Work in pairs or small groups. One person is a candidate who is applying for one of these posts. The other person or people work for the employer and interview the candidate.

Alternative task

Write a job advertisement for your job or find an interesting job advertised in a newspaper or on the Internet. Swap your advertisement with a partner. Take turns to interview each other for the position you have been given.

Telephone Banking Advisor

A major bank is seeking Customer Advisors to work in their call centre in Swansea, Wales. As an advisor you will be taking calls from banking customers and dealing with general customer queries. Along with providing excellent customer service you will be expected to promote the bank's products and services. Call centre experience desirable but full training provided. Apply initially by sending your CV and a covering letter.

Area Sales Manager, Southern Europe

Leading educational publisher is looking to recruit an Area Sales Manager for Southern Europe. This is an exciting opportunity for an ambitious individual who is passionate about the university sector. Sales experience required along with the ability to speak Spanish and Italian. The post offers a competitive salary along with an annual bonus and a company car.

Spend some time preparing for this interview. The candidate chooses the post and thinks of possible answers to questions and of questions to ask. The interviewer(s) should think about what skills and qualities they are looking for in the candidate and prepare their questions.

When you are ready, start the interview.

Afterwards, swap roles and practise another interview using the post in the second advert.

Useful phrases

FOR THE INTERVIEWER

Explain the procedure

Thanks for coming / applying for this position.
I'd like to ask you a few questions about ...
We're looking for someone who can ...
We have five minutes left so do you have any questions?
We're interviewing more people so I'll be able to tell you something by the end of the week.

Describing the job and the responsibilities

It's a challenging / demanding / rewarding role.
It's a varied job / position / post.
We need someone to deal with / manage / organize / oversee ...
You would be in charge of / responsible for ...

Asking the candidate questions

Can you tell us about / describe your last job?
Why did you leave your last job?
What exactly were your responsibilities in your previous position?
Can you give me an example of a time when you had to use your initiative?
How do you think your colleagues would describe you?
What would you say are your strengths and weaknesses?
Where do you see yourself in five years' time?
What do you think you can bring to the post?

Useful phrases

FOR THE INTERVIEWEE

Talking about personal qualities and past experience

I get on well with people / like a challenge.
 I've been told that that I'm quite good at ...
 I like to think that I'm quite creative.
 I'm a fast learner / a team player /
 a hard worker.
 I have quite a lot of experience in ...
 For example, in my last job I was responsible
 for ...

Questions for the interviewer

Would I receive any training for this job?
 What would a typical day be like for someone
 in this position?
 What would be my main duties?
 Will I be working on my own or as part of
 a team?
 Does the post require any travel or time away?
 Is there a probationary period?
 When are you looking for someone to start?

Task assessment

You can use these assessment forms to:

- assess your own performance either as the interviewer or as the candidate afterwards.
- assess your partner's performance as the interviewer or as the candidate.

Tick each point and give reasons or comments in each case.

The interviewer ...

| | | |
|--|--------------------------|-------|
| made the candidate feel comfortable | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| explained the procedure | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| described the job in enough detail | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| asked a range of 'open' questions | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| gave the candidate the opportunity to ask questions. | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |

The candidate ...

| | | |
|---|--------------------------|-------|
| was appropriately dressed | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| demonstrated preparation and research | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| demonstrated a positive and enthusiastic attitude | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| answered the questions with relevant examples | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| described his / her personal qualities with relevant examples | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| asked the interviewer relevant questions. | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |

6 Teleconferencing

In this unit:

- leading a teleconference
- participating in a teleconference



6.1 Talking points

1 Consider these questions.

What are the problems with teleconferences?

How can you improve communication at teleconferences?

2 While you watch other people talking about the questions above, compare their experience with yours.

6.2 The meeting

3 Matt Lauder is leading a teleconference between himself and David, who work for QPG, and Sabine and Sanjit, who work for SaveIT. SaveIT is currently developing a website and an intranet for QPG and they are meeting to discuss progress. As you watch the video, decide if the statements below are true or false.



- | | |
|---|--------------|
| 1 Sabine is in Hong Kong. | True / False |
| 2 It is midnight in Hong Kong. | True / False |
| 3 Sanjit is having problems with the line. | True / False |
| 4 David is the Finance Director. | True / False |
| 5 Both Sabine and Sanjit have received the agenda. | True / False |
| 6 The intranet is supposed to go live in three weeks. | True / False |
| 7 The testers have found a problem with part of the intranet. | True / False |
| 8 Sanjit will need two weeks to check the intranet. | True / False |
| 9 David wants to discuss four things with Sabine and Sanjit. | True / False |
| 10 Sabine wants to discuss her contract with Matt. | True / False |

6.3 The expert view

- 4 You are going to watch Andrew talk about how to lead and how to participate in a successful teleconference. While you watch, make notes under each of the headings below.

| LEADING A TELECONFERENCE | PARTICIPATING IN A TELECONFERENCE |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| • Managing the process and the agenda | • Saying who you are |
| • Managing the teleconference | • Staying focussed |
| • Managing who speaks and when | • Being clear when speaking |

For a summary of how to take part in teleconferences, read the article on page 55.

6.4 Analysis

- 5 Watch the teleconference again. Analyse the performance of the leader and participants, making notes to support your answers.

The leader

Does he introduce the participants to each other?

yes / no

Does he explain the agenda clearly?

yes / no

Does he always use participants' names to avoid confusion?

yes / no

Does he make sure that only one person speaks at a time?

yes / no

The participants

Do they all stay focussed?

yes / no

Do they outline what they are going to say before saying it?

yes / no

Notes

| |
|--|
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |

6.5 The expert feedback

- 6 Watch Andrew's analysis of the teleconference. How do his comments compare to your views?

6.6 Beginning a teleconference



Matt: Oh, well, it sounds OK now.

- 1 check if anyone else is there yet
- 2 explain who is coming and who is already there
- 3 check if everyone can hear you properly
- 4 explain that your telephone connection failed

3 Read the phrases below concerning technical problems. Match them to the categories A–C.

- 8 He's been cut off.

| |
|---|
| A |
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |

Speaking on the telephone

- 4 In the video, the participants at the teleconference use many words and phrases to describe the process of using a telephone.

'He's calling from Hong Kong ... He must be having problems with the line.'

Replace the words in bold in 1–6 with the words below.

contact connect me answering engaged phoned hang up

- 1 The line's **busy** _____. He must be on another call.
- 2 It's a bad line. Why don't you **put the phone down** _____ and dial me again?
- 3 Have you **called** _____ Tom to let him know about the meeting?
- 4 I don't understand why he's not **picking up** _____ the phone.
- 5 Hello. Can you **put me through** _____ to Rachel?
- 6 I can't seem to **get through to** _____ him. Is this the right number?

Managing who speaks at a teleconference

- 5 The leader of a teleconference needs to use people's names in order to run the meeting effectively. For example, in the video Matt controls the meeting by using names in this way:

'Sorry, you're both talking at once. Sabine, can you speak first and then Sanjit. Sabine ... go ahead.'

Rearrange the words below to form an expression for leading a teleconference.

- 1 David so over to you. So David, over to you. / So, over to you David.
- 2 Helen you can next go ? _____
- 3 to respond would you like to that Shoko ? _____
- 4 can speak you Ania first then Tom and ? _____
- 5 was Max there anything else ? _____
- 6 you'd is add anything Simone there like to? _____

Outlining what you are going to say

- 6 In teleconferences, it's important to outline what you are going to say before you say it. In the video, David does this:

'There are basically three issues I'd like to discuss with you ...'

Read pairs of sentence where the speaker outlines what he or she is going to say and then starts to say it. Write in the correct verb to match the purpose of the second sentence.

suggest agree refer summarize ask

- 1 Now I'm going to _____ Tiuu to comment on this issue. Tiuu, what's your opinion?
- 2 I'm going to _____ to the figures on the handout so please look at the table on page one. If you look at the table ...
- 3 I want to _____ what we've agreed so far. So far we've said the initial plans for the prototype still need more work and ...
- 4 Can I _____ two ways that we could solve the problem of delays. Firstly, let's change the supplier? Secondly, ...
- 5 I'd like to _____ with your first point. You're absolutely right that we need to put more money into this.

TIP: USING NAMES

Make sure you use people's names more than you would in a face-to-face meeting.

Over to you David.

Did you receive the agenda Sabine?

Sorry Ayako but can I interrupt you?

Is there anything else José?

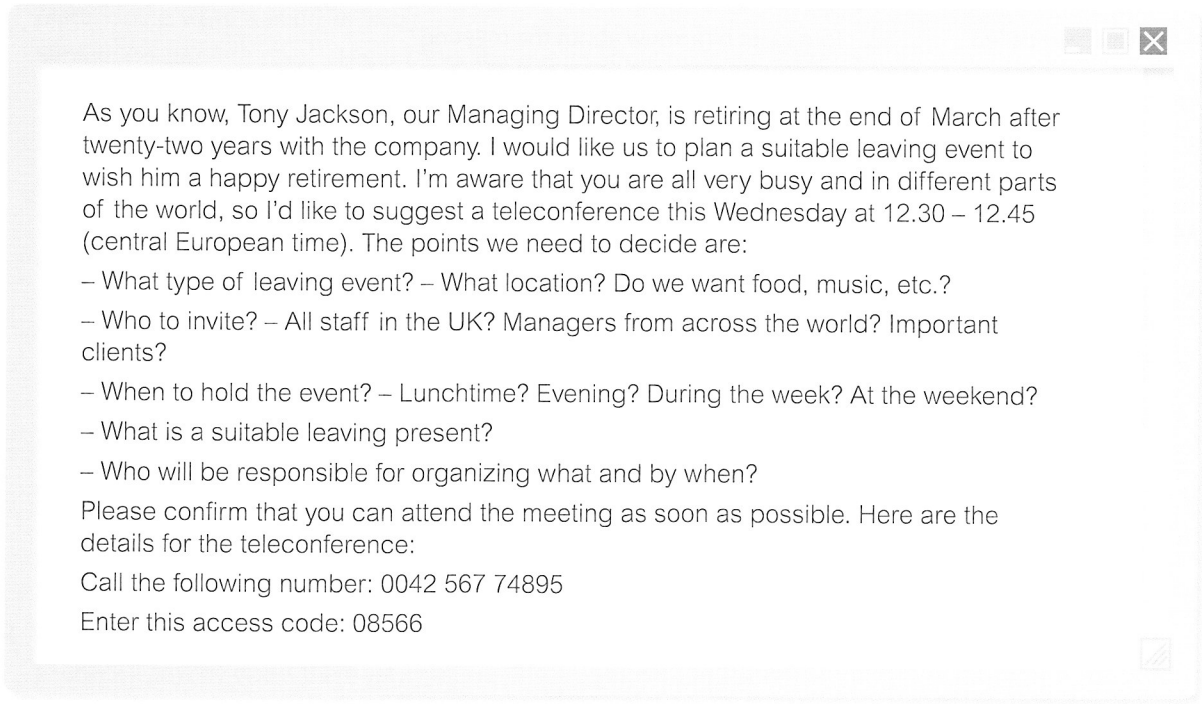
Meetings task: a teleconference

Work in groups of three or four. You are going to have a teleconference. Either use teleconferencing equipment and work in different rooms or, if this isn't available, sit in a circle with your backs to each other. Choose one person to lead the teleconference.

- 1 You have received this email from the leader of the teleconference. Spend a few minutes thinking about your ideas for the agenda.

Alternative task

Plan an event for your real job. Before the teleconference, discuss the kinds of events you are all involved in and choose one to organize. Make a list of what would need arranging. Then begin your teleconference and discuss and plan each part of the event.

A graphic of an email window with a title bar containing three small squares and a close button (X). The email text is as follows:

As you know, Tony Jackson, our Managing Director, is retiring at the end of March after twenty-two years with the company. I would like us to plan a suitable leaving event to wish him a happy retirement. I'm aware that you are all very busy and in different parts of the world, so I'd like to suggest a teleconference this Wednesday at 12.30 – 12.45 (central European time). The points we need to decide are:

- What type of leaving event? – What location? Do we want food, music, etc.?
- Who to invite? – All staff in the UK? Managers from across the world? Important clients?
- When to hold the event? – Lunchtime? Evening? During the week? At the weekend?
- What is a suitable leaving present?
- Who will be responsible for organizing what and by when?

Please confirm that you can attend the meeting as soon as possible. Here are the details for the teleconference:

Call the following number: 0042 567 74895

Enter this access code: 08566

- 2 When you are all ready, begin your teleconference. Decide where you are calling from (country? city?) and what time it is.
- 3 If you are the meeting leader, remember to welcome everyone and make some small talk until everyone is there (for example, find out where they are calling from and what the time is). Also check there are no technical problems and that everyone can hear clearly. Then start the meeting and discuss the agenda in the email. Your time limit is 15 minutes.

Useful phrases

Getting connected

Hello? Is anyone there?

Hi ... This is ...

How are you?

... is here with me.

We're still waiting for ...

He's calling from ...

Dealing with technical problems

Can you hear me?

He's gone. / We've lost him. / He's been cut off.

The line is bad. / There's an echo. / You're breaking up.

You're very faint. / Can you speak up? /

Can you slow down a bit?

That's better. / It's fine now. /

We can hear you now.

Leading the teleconference

Let's start. / Let's begin.

Did you all receive the agenda?

The first item is ...

Let's end there. / I'll let you all go now.

Managing who speaks

Can you speak first Sabine, and then David?

Over to you David. / Go ahead Sanjit.

Would you like to respond to that Peter?

Sanjit, what's your view?

Sabine, is there anything you'd like to add?

Matt, was there anything else you wanted to say?

Outlining what you are going to say

I'd like to discuss ...

I'm going to talk about / highlight / outline ...

I want to summarize ...

I'd like to ask a question ...

Task assessment

Use this assessment form to analyse the success of your teleconference, noting down examples where appropriate.

- If you used teleconferencing equipment, were there any technical problems?

- At the beginning, was it clear who was at the meeting? Why / why not?

- How well did the leader of the teleconference start the meeting?

- Were there any communication problems? (e.g. two people speaking at once)

- Did the meeting leader clearly manage who spoke and when effectively?

- Did participants outline what they were going to say before speaking?

- Were all the points on the agenda covered? Was it clear who was responsible for organizing what and by when?

- Was there anything you think you and / or the whole group could improve on next time?

7 Negotiating

In this unit:

- reaching an agreement
- three principles of negotiating



7.1 Talking points

1 Consider these questions.

What kinds of negotiation do you have at work?

What makes an effective negotiation? Is it always important to 'win'?

2 While you watch other people talking about the questions above, compare their experience with yours.

7.2 The negotiation

3 The company SaveIT is currently creating a website and intranet for the energy company QPG. Matt Lauder, the Finance Manager of QPG, and Sabine Kohlbeck of Save IT are talking by videoconference. Matt has a query about an extra fee in Sabine's recent invoice. As you watch the video, choose the correct answer to complete the sentences.

- The additional work was requested by ...
 - Matt's department.
 - the Marketing Department.
- Matt is unhappy because ...
 - they never discussed the extra fees.
 - they agreed a lower fee.
- Sabine says that the intranet ...
 - is ready to use.
 - has technical problems.
- Matt is concerned about ...
 - the delays and additional costs.
 - technical problems with the intranet.
- Sabine is mainly concerned about ...
 - the late fees.
 - not getting paid for additional work.
- Sabine offers to drop the additional fee and in return Matt will ...
 - drop the late fees.
 - change the schedule.
- In future, Matt agrees to ...
 - not ask for additional work.
 - confirm agreements in writing.



7.3 The expert view

- 4 Watch Andrew talk about how to reach an agreement in a negotiation and the three principles of negotiating. Make notes about how you can put the three principles into practice by answering the questions below.

1: Don't make it personal

- 1 How do you stop things from becoming personal?
- 2 What types of phrases can you use?

2: Focus on the real issue

- 3 What do you need to find out from the other person?
How do you do this?
- 4 Why does honesty help in negotiations?

3: Look for a win-win solution

- 5 What do you need to check and agree upon during the negotiation?
- 6 After you come to an agreement, what do you need to do?

For a summary of how to negotiate successfully, read the article on page 56.

7.4 Analysis

- 5 Analyse the negotiation between Matt and Sabine using the seven items below. Tick (✓) if you think one of them or both of them demonstrated the skill.

Matt

Sabine

- 1 stayed calm and avoided negative emotion
- 2 showed understanding of the other person
- 3 tried to find out the real issue and the other person's concerns
- 4 were honest about their own interests
- 5 checked both person's understanding at each stage
- 6 made suggestions about what each person should do
- 7 summarized what was agreed

7.5 The expert feedback

- 6 Watch Andrew's analysis of the appraisal. How do his comments compare to your analysis?

Language focus

7.6 Negotiating contracts and fees

- 1 In the video, Sabine and Matt often refer to written agreements between their companies.

SABINE 'And that you'll draft confirmations following any discussions.'

MATT 'I'll confirm this conversation in writing too.'

Match these words from the video to the definitions below.

parties a clause an invoice a fee to cost sth to draw sth up

- 1 a sentence or section of a contract (= a written legal agreement) a clause
 - 2 the different people or groups involved in a legal agreement _____
 - 3 a list of goods sold, work done, etc., showing what you must pay _____
 - 4 an amount of money that you pay for a service _____
 - 5 to estimate how much money is needed for something _____
 - 6 to prepare and write a contract or document _____
- 2 Complete these sentences from the video, using an appropriate form of the words in 1.
- 1 Your _____ of last month. There's a supplementary charge for the website.
 - 2 When we _____ the contract, 70% of the fee was for the intranet costs.
 - 3 But there's a _____ in the contract which covers additional work.
 - 4 Well, it says any additional work will be charged over and above the agreed _____.
 - 5 Yes, I know the clause you mean. But it also says that any fee for this kind of work must be agreed by both _____.
 - 6 I wasn't aware that this part of the job was going to be _____ separately.

- 3 Now watch an extract from the negotiation video and check your answers in 2.

Understanding the other person's concerns

- 4 Early in the negotiation, Sabine tries to understand Matt's concerns:

'OK, Matt. Let's see if we can work this out. I want to check I understand you correctly first. So, your main concern is the existence of additional costs when there are delays and ... Is that right?'

Replace the underlined expressions in the dialogue below with one of the phrases a–h opposite that have the same meaning.

- A Let's see if we can work this out. ¹ We need to try to solve this problem. What are your main concerns here? ² _____ The additional fees on the invoice or the timing?
- B Well both I suppose.
- A But the most important issue for you is ³ _____ the timing.
Is that right? ⁴ _____
- B Yes. My position is this. ⁵ _____ I'm prepared to pay a bit more if we think we can get the same job done more quickly.
- A I'm certain we can resolve this. ⁶ _____ There's no reason why we can't complete the project ahead of time. However, a lot of the delays so far have come from both sides I'd say. Does that sound fair? ⁷ _____
- B Yes, I'd say so. ⁸ _____



- a We need to try to solve this problem
- b Let me explain my position.
- c Your priority is ...
- d I think so.
- e What's your biggest worry?
- f Is that reasonable?
- g I'm sure there's a solution to this.
- h That's correct, isn't it?

Bargaining

- 5 An important part of any negotiation is the bargaining. Notice in this example from the video how Sabine bargains by making an offer and asking for something in return. Matt accepts the offer but with a condition.

SABINE 'What I propose is this: first, let's forget the additional fee for this month. In return, would you agree to dropping any late fees this time?'

MATT 'I think that would be OK. I'm still concerned about the delays though.'

Look at the expressions and match them to the correct category in the table below.

- | | |
|---|---|
| a What I propose is this. First, ... | g What I can offer you is ... |
| b I'm sorry but we can't agree to that. | h What if I offered you / to ...? |
| c In return, would you agree to ...? | i Sorry, that isn't possible. |
| d I think that would be OK. | j I can't agree to that but I could ... |
| e That would be fine. | k OK, that's a deal. |
| f That would be difficult for me but I might agree to ... | l I'm afraid I can't accept that. |

Make an offer: a

Ask for something in return or suggest an alternative:

Accept an offer:

Reject an offer:



- 6 Read the dialogue below which contains expressions from 5. Write in the missing words.

- A What I ¹_____ is this. We'll place an order for \$10,000 worth of your product each year for the next three years. In return, ²_____ you agree to giving us a 10% discount on all our orders?
- B Sorry, that ³_____. You already receive the goods at a reduced price.
- A I see. ⁴_____ I offered to increase our order to \$12,500 per year?
- B That would still be difficult for me but I ⁵_____ a 5% discount on guaranteed orders of \$12,000 and above. Does that sound OK?
- A I'd need to check with my bosses but I think that ⁶_____.
- B Good! Sounds like we have a deal.

TIP: WOULD

The modal verb *would* is very common in negotiations because it refers to possibility and hypothetical situations.

Would you be prepared to ...?

How would you feel about ...?

Would you agree to ...?

I think that would be OK.

Meetings task: a negotiation

Work in pairs. You are going to negotiate an agreement between a company and web designer for a new website. You will need to agree the following areas:

- Date for completion: how long the work will take and when the website will be ready to go live.
- Price: the price for the work and how it will be paid (i.e. in stages or in one payment).
- A maintenance and service fee: after the website is launched it might need updating or fixing if there are any problems.

Student A: You work for the web design company. Turn to File A on page 58 and read your information.

Student B: You work for the company that needs a new website. Read the information below.

Alternative task

Work in pairs. You both work in the same office. Your boss wants one of you to work late this evening. He doesn't mind who and asks you to decide. The same situation has happened twice before and both times Student B has worked late and Student A has left early. Student A has an appointment tonight. Student B is free tonight but feels that Student A is not sharing the work fairly and wants something in return for working late again. Negotiate an agreement.

Student B

Your company: a seller of office equipment

Your requirement: a new website for online sales

The negotiation: you are currently negotiating with different website design firms. You have already asked one company for a quote. Read the details in this table.

| | What you would like | First company's offer | Second company's offer |
|--|--|---|------------------------|
| Time for project | Within six months | Six months | |
| Cost | Around \$20,000 | \$23,000 | |
| Terms of payment | Once at the end or in two stages in the middle and at the end | In three stages: a payment on signing contract, another payment in the middle of the project and a final payment at the end | |
| Service contract after completion | A maintenance service should be included in the fee for the first year, and then \$400 for following years | \$2,000 for the first year and \$500 for following years | |

You now have a negotiation with a second company represented by Student A. Try to improve on the offer that you received from the first company. Make notes about Student A's offer in the table and try to reach a win-win agreement.

Useful phrases

Introducing an issue

There's one issue we need to discuss.
 We'd like to discuss something.
 We have a problem with ... (the price / terms / your offer / your invoice, etc.)
 There's an issue about ... that I'd like to raise with you.

Understanding the other person's position and explaining your own

What are your main concerns?
 What's your position / view on ...?
 Would you be willing to ...?
 My main concern is ...
 My position is this ...
 I think we may be able to resolve this.
 Let's see if we can work this out.
 Does that sound fair? / Is that reasonable?
 Is that right? / Is that correct?

Bargaining and making offers

What I propose is this. First ...
 I can offer you ...
 ... and maybe you could offer me ...
 In return, would you agree to ...?
 What if I offered you ... / to ...?

Accepting (with and without conditions)

I think that would be OK.
 I think we could agree to that.
 That would be fine.
 OK, that's a deal!
 That's OK but I'd also need ...

Rejecting (with and without conditions)

I'm sorry but we can't agree to that.
 Sorry, that isn't possible.
 I'm afraid I can't accept that.
 I can't agree to that but I could ...
 That would be difficult but I might agree to ...

Task assessment

Use this form to analyse the negotiators' performance. You can use it in different ways:

- Assess you and your partner's performance afterwards.
- Ask another person to assess and give feedback on your negotiation.

| | Negotiator A | Negotiator B |
|--|--------------|--------------|
| 1 Stayed calm and avoided negative emotion | | |
| 2 Showed understanding of the other person | | |
| 3 Tried to find out the real issue and the other person's concerns | | |
| 4 Were honest about their own interests | | |
| 5 Checked both persons' understanding at each stage | | |
| 6 Made suggestions about what each person should do | | |
| 7 Summarized what was agreed | | |

8 Appraisals

In this unit:

- setting objectives
- giving and receiving feedback



8.1 Talking points

- 1 Consider these questions.

Do you worry about appraisals? Why / why not?

How can an appraisal help an employee?

- 2 While you watch other people talking about the questions above, compare their experience with yours.

8.2 The appraisal

- 3 Maria joined the company QPG as the Training Manager a year ago. She is having her first appraisal with her line manager Paul. As you watch, make notes on Maria's appraisal form.

CORE AREAS

- 1 Researching and responding to the training needs within different departments

Maria's assessment of her performance: ¹ _____

Agreed objective: ² _____

STRENGTHS

Maria's assessment of her strengths: ³ _____

Manager's feedback on her strengths: ⁴ _____

WEAKNESSES AND AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Maria's assessment of her weaknesses: ⁵ _____

Manager's feedback on her time management skills: ⁶ _____

Agreed action: ⁷ _____

OVERALL PERFORMANCE (✓tick one)

⁸ Excellent ☐ Performing well ☐ Satisfactory ☐ Poor ☐

Manager's summary of her overall performance this year: ⁹ _____

8.3 The expert view

- 4 As you watch Andrew talk about two aspects of successful appraisals, complete the missing words on the graphics below and make notes on what each word means.

SMART objectives

Specific

M_____

A_____

R_____

Time-based

Feedback

Positive feedback

Specific

I

Third-party endorsement

S

Improvement feedback

Specific

I

Perspective

S

For a summary of how to lead a successful appraisal, read the article on pages 56–57.

8.4 Analysis

- 5 As you watch the appraisal again, analyse the performance of the appraiser. Tick or cross (✓ / ✗) the comments and note examples where appropriate.

Setting objectives

The appraiser encourages the appraisee to define an objective.

He sets SMART objectives.

Positive feedback

The feedback is specific and describes the impact of their behaviour.

He provides third-party endorsement.

He explains the skills demonstrated.

Improvement feedback

The feedback is specific and describes the impact of their behaviour.

He puts things in perspective.

He seeks solutions and discusses any support needed.

General

The appraisal is collaborative.

8.5 The expert feedback

- 6 Watch Andrew's analysis of the appraisal. How do his comments compare to your analysis?

Language focus

8.6 Encouraging self-evaluation

1 In the video, Paul asks questions to encourage Maria to evaluate her own strengths and to identify areas for improvement. Match the two halves of his questions.

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 How well do you think ... | a how you might deal with this? |
| 2 How would you like ... | b score yourself overall? |
| 3 What do you feel are ... | c you've achieved this so far? |
| 4 Do you feel that you are ... | d your main strengths? |
| 5 Do you have any idea on ... | e weak in any area? |
| 6 How would you ... | f to define that objective? |

2 Match these sentences from Maria's replies to the questions in 1.

- a I think that's something that needs more work this year. 1
- b I don't think a training course would help. ____
- c I would give myself a 'performing well' rating. ____
- d I suppose time management has been the hardest thing for me. ____
- e I feel fairly confident about my own abilities as a trainer. ____
- f How about ... 'To set up a clear process for finding out department training needs. Something as simple as that?' ____

3 Watch the video again and check your answers in the 1 and 2.

Identifying goals and setting objectives

4 Paul and Maria use certain *verb + noun* collocations during the appraisal. For example:

*'So perhaps we should **set** this as one of your **objectives** for the next 12 months.'*

Complete these sentences with the collocations below.

do + job rate + performance express + opinion set + objective
give + feedback carry out + appraisal

- 1 How would you _____ your _____ on a scale of one to ten?
- 2 Could you _____ me some _____ on my performance this year?
- 3 Can we _____ that as a personal _____ for you to aim for?
- 4 This appraisal is a chance for you to _____ your _____ on any issues related to your work.
- 5 Is there any training that would help you to _____ your _____ more effectively?
- 6 Before we _____ the _____, you'll need to complete the self-assessment questionnaire.

Giving feedback and rating performance

- 5 Towards the end of the appraisal, Paul gives positive feedback but also suggests areas for improvement.

'In many ways I'd rate your performance as excellent ... But as we agreed, I think this year some of your core management skills around time management and prioritization need work on.'

Replace the underlined words in these sentences with the phrases below.

address the issue of would gain from
need to work on could improve
demonstrated exceptional ability
improved a great deal

- 1 Overall, you're performing very well although I think your ability to prioritize tasks requires attention.
 - 2 I think you have to improve your attention to detail and general organizational ability.
 - 3 The feedback from your team has been excellent – you've shown outstanding skill in people management.
 - 4 We've identified some areas that need attention but overall you've made great progress this year.
 - 5 I think you would benefit from some training in presentation skills so would like to recommend that you attend a course.
 - 6 We've both agreed you're going to deal with the problem of how to communicate with other departments more effectively.
- 6 Look at the sentences in 5. What kind of performance is the speaker describing? Match these ratings (a–c) to each sentence.

a = The feedback is very positive.

b = The person's performance is good but the feedback suggests areas for improvement.

c = The feedback is not positive (= improvement feedback).

- | | |
|------------|--------|
| 1 <u>b</u> | 4 ____ |
| 2 ____ | 5 ____ |
| 3 ____ | 6 ____ |



TIP: SPEAKING GENERALLY

At the beginning and at the end of an appraisal we talk in general terms about the person's performance like this:

Overall, we're very happy ...

In general, your performance is good ...

On the whole I'd rate your performance as satisfactory.

Meetings task: an appraisal

Work in pairs. You are going to practise an appraisal with a company's Sales Manager using parts of an appraisal form. During the appraisal, the appraiser takes notes and completes the form below.

Student A: Turn to File A on page 59.

Student B: Turn to File B on page 60.

Alternative task

Carry out the appraisal like a real-life appraisal. The appraiser uses the form below to structure the meeting, and the employee responds with comments about his or her real-life work.

CORE AREAS

Core area: *To manage the sales team in North America.*

Student B's assessment of his / her performance:

Agreed objective for next year:

Deadline for objective:

FEEDBACK

Student B's assessment of his / her strengths:

Agreed feedback on strengths:

Student B's assessment of his / her areas for improvement:

Agreed action:

OVERALL PERFORMANCE (✓ tick one and add comments)

Excellent performance ☐ Performing well ☐

Satisfactory performance ☐ Poor performance ☐

Useful phrases

Encouraging self-evaluation

How well do you think you've done this year?
 What do you feel are your main strengths?
 Do you feel that you are weak in any area?
 Can you identify any areas that need improvement?
 Do you have any views on how you might deal with this?
 How would you score yourself overall?

Setting objectives

Shall we set that as one of your objectives?
 Is that an objective we can set for next year?
 How would you like to define that objective?
 What date could we set as the deadline for that?
 When would that be completed by?

Giving positive feedback

Well done. / You've done well.
 You've demonstrated the ability to work with other people.
 You've made a real difference to / impact on the department.
 Overall, your progress has been good this year.
 There's plenty to be positive about.

Giving improvement feedback

We've identified two key areas to improve.
 We've both agreed you're going to address the issue of ...
 You could work on / develop your ... skills.
 You need to show greater interest in ...
 You'd benefit from some training in ...

Task assessment

Use this form to assess the appraisal. Tick (✓) and make comments where appropriate.

Setting objectives

The appraiser encourages the appraisee to define an objective. ☐

He/She sets SMART objectives. ☐

Positive feedback

The feedback is specific and describes the impact of their behaviour. ☐

He/She provides third-party endorsement. ☐

He/She explains the skills demonstrated. ☐

Improvement feedback

The feedback is specific and describes the impact of their behaviour. ☐

He/She puts things in perspective. ☐

He/She seeks solutions and discusses any support needed. ☐

General

The appraisal is collaborative. ☐

Skills review

1 Participating in meetings

Successful meetings usually have three components: information is shared, ideas are discussed and actions are decided. The meeting should be friendly and respectful even when there is disagreement.

Sharing information

Most meetings involve the sharing of information. In order to do this effectively, participants need to pay careful attention to each other and to actively listen. 'Active' listeners check that they have understood things correctly and ask for further examples or explanation if they are unclear about any issues.

Discussing ideas

During the discussion stage, people will have different opinions. This is perhaps the most difficult stage of the meeting to participate in because you may need to interrupt and to disagree. When participants express opinions, they can become emotional. As a consequence, the discussion can break down or become unproductive. It's important to keep your emotions under control even if other people are emotional. Recognize that if you show anger, it will be difficult for the meeting to proceed. You can still express your feelings but do so in a respectful way that recognizes other people's points of view and shows empathy. Acknowledging and repeating the other person's view is an effective way to do this. Avoid negative body language and extreme words or phrases such as 'ridiculous'.

Deciding action

After discussing and listening to everyone's ideas, it's time to decide on final action. This is the third key component of any meeting. It's important to suggest your ideas for action in a positive way and to explain how they will move things forward. At the same time, point out how your suggestion also addresses other people's concerns. In other words, don't simply say 'I suggest we do XYZ', say, 'I suggest we do XYZ, because it will help deal with the issue you raised'.

2 Formal meetings

When you organize or chair a formal meeting, there are three important elements to consider:

Content, Process and Dynamic.

Content

'Content' refers to the items on the agenda of a meeting and what is going to be discussed. Before the meeting, you need to choose which items to include on the agenda and to decide the order in which you'll discuss them. The participants need to receive a copy of the agenda and any documents connected with the agenda before the meeting begins. During the meeting, the chairperson needs to make sure all the facts are correct and that everyone understands the key issues. You can do this by asking questions when you think an issue is unclear or requires further discussion. Summarizing what was discussed also helps to clarify content.

Process

The second category is 'process'. This refers to administrative aspects of the meeting such as controlling when it starts and ends, the location, and how much time is needed for each item. During the meeting, you'll need

to manage how much time is taken up by each item and change the order of items if necessary. As the chair, you are responsible for keeping the meeting on time. This is an aspect of the meeting that the other participants are unlikely to think about.

Dynamic

The final element is the 'dynamic' of the meeting. In other words, it's about how the participants feel and communicate with each other. The chairperson needs to make sure that the discussion is open and productive and that any disagreements do not become too personal (see also *Discussing ideas* in 1 *Participating in meetings*). The chairperson needs to encourage the quieter people to speak and to make sure that everyone in the room gets an equal chance to contribute.

Knowing your personal style is important as you may be stronger or weaker in one of these three categories and you can then pay particular attention to your weakest area. Delegating responsibility for certain aspects of the meeting, for example for time-keeping, can be one way of dealing with this.

3 Informal meetings

In most companies, teams of work colleagues meet informally on a regular basis. These meetings are a good opportunity for people to socialize and to find out what is going on in the company. Because they have a less rigid structure than formal meetings, informal meetings can sometimes be difficult to control. There is a danger that they involve a lot of informal talk but not enough action or useful discussion. Informal meetings work best if they have an agenda and a clear purpose. It's useful to remember that there are three key objectives:

- to get an update on everyone's progress
- to discuss any problems
- to decide what action needs to be taken next and who is responsible.

Update on progress

If you are leading the meeting, begin by asking each person in turn to say what progress has been made since the last meeting. You can ask directly with questions like: 'How are things?', 'What's happening with your team?', etc. Useful information can also come up through informal conversation and by listening carefully.

Identifying problems

As you get progress updates, you need to identify any problems and also help the person resolve those problems. This stage in the meeting will usually involve discussion from the whole team.

Agreeing on action and summarizing

Because identifying problems takes time and can be complex, you need to summarize what has been discussed and what has been agreed before moving on. Make sure as much key detail as possible is included in the summary such as who is responsible, what needs to happen next, and when is the deadline for the work to be completed.

4 Networking

Networking is about meeting new people and developing positive business relationships. It's not about forcing other people to notice you or trying to agree on a deal as soon as you meet someone. It's about having good conversations which might lead to a business relationship in the future.

There are three things to remember when you network: **be interested**, **be positive** and allow yourself to **be interesting**.

Be interested

It feels good if someone is interested in us so it's important to show interest in the person you are talking to. The main way to do this is to ask questions. Ask the other person about their job and their area of business. When they answer, respond to the information they give in an interested manner, and when appropriate, ask further questions. When they give their answer, listen carefully for any further questions you can ask. If you are interested in them, they will usually become more interested in you and the conversation will start to flow.

Be positive

It's important to be positive at a first meeting. Talk about what you like, not what you dislike. Look for opportunities to make positive comments to the other person, for example you might have heard something good about their company. When you say goodbye, say how much you've enjoyed talking to them and encourage them to stay in touch. Avoid being negative as this will leave a negative memory of you in the mind of the other person.

Be interesting

To make it easier for the other person to be interested, it's important that you allow yourself to be 'interesting'. In other words, instead of giving short answers or the minimum amount of information, try to give extra information. For example, if someone asks you what you do, don't just tell them your job title, also explain what your responsibilities are. By giving the other person more information, you create more material for conversation and also more opportunity for you both to discover connections and similarities with each other. Successful networking is a two-way process which allows two people to discover what they have in common.

5 Job interviews

The interviewer

Prepare for the interview

Recruiting the right person for a job is vital and it can also be expensive. For this reason, good preparation is crucial. Start by choosing a suitable room in which the candidate will feel comfortable. It needs to be somewhere private without interruptions. Arrange the seating appropriately.

Ask the right questions

At the start of the interview, explain how the interview process will work before you ask any questions. Prepare your questions beforehand and, where possible, try to ask the same questions to each candidate so that you can compare their responses. Ask 'open questions' with words such as 'how' and 'what' which need more than a simple 'yes' or 'no' answer. These encourage the candidate to explain their thoughts and motives more fully.

As the candidate talks, try not to make immediate judgements or challenge them too much. You want the candidate to feel relaxed so that he or she can speak openly.

Be prepared to answer questions

Towards the end, leave time for the candidate to ask their own questions. Be prepared to answer any questions about what the job involves and the terms and conditions. Remember that the questions that they ask can indicate how much research they have done and how interested they really are in the position.

The candidate

Do your research

As the person applying for the job, you need to do your research before the interview. Check the company's website, read recent news about the company and talk to people who know the company. During the interview, try to show you have done your research as it shows you are serious about the position.

Prepare your answer

Most interviews have similar questions. Think carefully about what questions you will be asked and prepare positive answers in advance. Think carefully about what strengths, skills and qualities you want them to notice in you. If you need to discuss any challenges or weaknesses, then explain how you intend to overcome them. In general, try to present a positive version of yourself. Dress well, try to relax and be friendly.

Prepare questions

Finally, prepare questions which you would like to ask. Remember that good questions will demonstrate that you have done your research and have thought carefully about the requirements of the job.

6 Teleconferencing

Teleconferences can be difficult. Because you can't see each other, there's more opportunity for misunderstanding and it's harder to interact and express your opinion naturally. If you lead the teleconference, you need to pay more attention to 'process' than you would in a normal meeting (see *2 Formal meetings*). Here are some guidelines to avoid these kinds of problems.

Preparation

If you are leading the teleconference, you need to prepare certain items before it starts. Remember to send out any handouts or information early and create a clear agenda with timings. Give everyone clear instructions including numbers and access codes.

Timing

Be aware that discussion in teleconferences can take longer than in a conventional meeting so it's better to have a short agenda. If you need to discuss further issues, be prepared to leave an item for a different phone call or to resolve the issue by email.

Joining the teleconference

The person leading the teleconference should be there first in order to welcome the other participants. As each person joins, say who has already joined and who else is expected. People want to know who is there and it's a chance to say hello and make a little small talk. It's important to start on time so if you have a large group of people, you only need to summarize who is there occasionally (although successful teleconferences tend to have a smaller number of participants).

Controlling the teleconference

If you are leading the teleconference, make sure only one person speaks at a time. Say people's names before you ask them to comment. This will feel unnatural at first but it's effective and prevents more than one person talking at once. With large groups, it's sometimes useful to establish rules and to ask people to announce themselves before they speak.

Participating in a teleconference

Because the other participants at a teleconference can't see you, you can't use body language to indicate that you want to speak. You need to interrupt clearly and to say who you are before speaking. It's important to speak clearly. It's often helpful to outline what you are going to say before you say it. This helps people to prepare themselves for your comments. If you are listening to the meeting, stay focussed and don't be tempted to catch up with other unrelated work during the meeting.

7 Negotiating

Negotiation is the process of reaching agreement when two parties disagree over a particular issue. A 'win-win' agreement is an agreement that is satisfying to both sides. There are a number of steps involved in achieving this.

Avoid making it personal

When you allow negative emotions to take over the negotiation, you probably won't reach an agreement. It is important to show the other person that you understand their interests. Even if you don't agree with them, stay calm and show empathy for their concerns. Demonstrate that you are willing to find a positive solution.

Focus on the real issue

You need to understand the other person's perspective when negotiating. Find out from the other person what their interests or concerns are. You can do this by summarizing what you think their needs are and checking if you've understood correctly. They will either agree with your assessment or tell you their true thoughts on the issue which may be different from what you had expected. You can then be honest about your own concerns. This kind of openness enables you to develop trust and allows you both to focus on the real issues. This makes it easier to work together towards an agreement.

Developing and summarizing the final agreement

As you start to put together an agreement, keep checking the other person is happy with what's agreed at each stage. It will take time to identify what both sides can do or give away and it's important that it feels fair and balanced. Even when you have agreed on all the points, spend time at the end summarizing exactly what has been agreed. This avoids potential misunderstandings and disagreements later on.

8 Appraisals

Appraisals are a combination of providing feedback on an employee's recent performance and setting objectives for the future. Good appraisals give us a clear sense of our aims for the following year and also help us to identify our strengths and the areas in need of improvement. It is important to ask the person being appraised for their views and opinions so that they are involved in setting objectives and planning improvement. It should be a collaborative process.

Setting SMART objectives

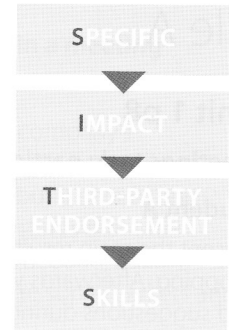
Objectives should be **SMART** – **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**elevant and **T**ime-based. By 'specific' we mean that the objective is clearly defined. The employee needs to know exactly what it is that they are required to do. It should also be 'measurable' so that it is easy to judge objectively if the target has been achieved and with what degree of success. So, was it achieved on time? Can we objectively measure how successfully it was done, (for example by looking at sales figures or customer feedback)? The objective has to be 'achievable', in other words it is a realistic aim. We should not set an objective that is too hard or impossible to achieve as this would be demoralizing. A 'relevant' objective is connected with the core aspects of the employee's work, so it is a task which is clearly related to their job and past experience. Finally, objectives need to be 'time-based' with agreed deadlines so that progress can be reviewed afterwards.

Feedback

Feedback can be classified into two types: **positive feedback** and **improvement feedback**.

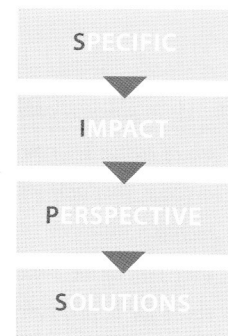
Positive feedback: the SITS model

Positive feedback should include four elements. The feedback must be **specific** so that it includes specific examples or evidence of the employee's behaviour. It should describe the positive **impact** that their work has had on others. Telling someone about the positive consequences of their work highlights the importance of what they do. Adding **third-party endorsement** (i.e. positive comments made by other people) is a very effective technique when giving positive feedback. Telling the employee what someone has said about them can be very motivating. Finally it is important to clearly describe the **skills** the person has shown. We want them to continue doing what they do well.



Improvement feedback: the SIPS model

The first two stages of improvement feedback are the same as for positive feedback. You need to be **specific** and also discuss the **impact** of the person's behaviour on others but this time by emphasizing some of the negative consequences of their actions (for example, they have caused delays to other departments). You shouldn't be too negative however so you need to put things in **perspective**. You must emphasize that your comments refer to a single area of their work and remind the person of other things that they do well. Improvement feedback is not about blame. We want to seek **solutions** and to find ways to help them to change their behaviour. For this reason, it's helpful to discuss what kind of support the person requires.



Task files

File A

Unit 1 p8

Meetings task: participating in a meeting

Student A

Present the main results from the survey into online shopping. Afterwards you can also give your opinions and suggestions during the discussion.

Trends in online shopping: survey results

- * 6% of customers now buy weekly shopping online. On average, they only visit actual supermarkets once a month.
- * Over half of the customers who buy online still use shops for buying everyday items (e.g. milk, bread, etc.). They generally don't go to supermarkets for these items, preferring to visit small local shops instead.
- * 45% of customers expressed interest in online shopping. Of these people, only 50% knew that we offered online shopping and 15% already order online from competing supermarkets.

Unit 3 p20

Meetings task: a team meeting

Student A

You work in Facilities.

Current project: Organizing move into new offices

Deadline for project: End of next month

Any problems affecting your progress:

- The furniture supplier cannot deliver the office furniture requested by the deadline date. It will be a week late.
- The new car park area will not be ready in time. There will only be enough parking spaces for half the staff.

Unit 7 p44

Meetings task: negotiating a contract for a website

Student A

Your company: a small but successful web design company specializing in designing websites.

The negotiation: a new client wants a quote for a new website. This table shows your standard rates.

| | Standard rates | What the client would like |
|--|---|----------------------------|
| Time for project | Six months | |
| Cost | Between \$23,500 | |
| Terms of payment | In three stages (a payment on signing the contract, another payment in the middle of the work and a final payment at the end) | |
| Service contract after completion | \$2,000 for the first year and \$300 for following years | |

You have some flexibility. For example, you can reduce the time by a couple of weeks. You can accept a lower price on the overall cost and service fees if necessary. You will also accept payment in two stages if you have to.

Start the negotiation when you are both ready. Make notes about what the client would like in the table and try to reach a win-win agreement.

Unit 8 p50

Student A

You are the appraiser. Read the following notes about the employee before the appraisal begins.

Name: _____

(complete with Student B's name)

Job title: Sales Manager.

Length of time with company: Two years.

Core area: To manage the sales team in North America.

Objective for next year: To open three sales offices in South America and develop that market.

Deadline: To be agreed.

Strengths: Sales have risen by 8% this year. People in sales team say they like his/her management style. Planning in the department has also improved.

Areas for improvement:

- *Communication skills:* Other department heads have complained that this person does not consider the needs of other departments. Recently, he/she won a new order which the Production Department had difficulty to supply on time, causing a great deal of overtime for production staff.
- *IT skills:* The Sales Manager will need to learn the new software for managing and tracking sales orders.
- *Language skills:* To learn Spanish for work in Latin America.

Overall performance: Performing well with some areas to work on.

File B

Unit 1 p8

Meetings task: participating in a meeting

Student B

You are involved in running the company's supermarkets. You think your company should keep most of the large supermarkets but it should also develop a chain of smaller local stores that offer essential food items. Before the meeting, make a list of your reasons for maintaining large supermarkets and opening smaller local stores.

Unit 3 p20

Meetings task: a team meeting

Student B

You work in HR.

Current project: Recruiting three new staff for IT department

Deadline for project: IT needs them as soon as possible

Any problems affecting your progress:

- The head of IT doesn't want to recruit anyone that needs training. He wants them to be skilled with necessary software straight away.
- None of the candidates from the first interviews were suitable or qualified.

Unit 8 p50**Student B**

You are the employee. Read the following background notes before the appraisal begins.

Name: _____

(Add your name.)

Job title: Sales manager.

Length of time with company: Two years.

Core area: To manage the sales team in North America.

Objective for next year: To open three sales offices in South America and develop that market.

Deadline: To be agreed.

Strengths: You have increased sales by 8% this year. You also think you have improved the department and the team this year.

Comments on your performance:

- You feel other department heads don't support your efforts to supply new orders on time. For example, some customers have not received their orders on time because of delays in production.
- You haven't had time to learn the new software for tracking sales orders.

Your rating of your performance: Excellent performance.

File C**Unit 1 p8****Meetings task: participating in a meeting****Student C**

You are involved in the development of the company's Internet services and would like to expand online deliveries. You think the future of high street supermarkets is poor and future investment should go into online selling with home delivery. Before the meeting, make a list of your reasons for developing online services.

Unit 3 p20**Meetings task: a team meeting****Student C**

You work in Human Resources.

Current project: Training staff in new health and safety rules

Deadline for project: Ongoing but all staff must attend before the end of the year. Staff only have to attend one session lasting 60 minutes.

Any problems affecting your progress:

- No one came to last scheduled training session.
- Managers or departments are not giving their staff the time to attend the sessions.

File D

Unit 1 p8

Meetings task: participating in a meeting

Student D – The chairperson

You are the chairperson at this meeting. You are worried about the falling sales and want to find new ways to increase profits. Prepare your introduction to the meeting. During the meeting, you are responsible for making sure that everyone follows the agenda. You can express your opinions and make suggestions during the meeting. Try to get everyone to agree and reach a final plan of action.

Unit 3 p20

Meetings task: a team meeting

Student D

You work in Accounts.

Current project: Updating accounting software

Deadline for project: By the end of next month

Any problems affecting your progress:

- The software has been installed but staff have not received their usernames and passwords.
- Ten people are waiting for training with the new software from the Training Department.

Answer key

Talking points

The answers to these questions are found on the video for each unit.

1 Participating in meetings

The meeting

- 3 1 A new training programme for the call centre.
2 To develop and run the training.
3 To find out why there had been complaints but also because the company is losing customers in the region.
4 It was about customer feedback on the company and its services.
5 Customers are leaving because of the poor service at the call centre.
6 Because it's a waste of time and money. They all receive training when they start.
7 The current approach to training.
8 Yes, she agrees.

The expert view

- 4 *The three components of a good meeting:* Information is shared, ideas are discussed, actions are decided.
How to listen carefully: Actively check and ask for clarification, examples and more information.
How to keep your emotions under control: Be aware of what you are feeling and recognize that if you show anger, it will make the meeting less successful.
How to state your point of view: Avoid negative or aggressive body language. Stay professional and avoid extreme words or phrases.
How to show respect and empathy: Show you understand the other person's situation even if you disagree with it, and acknowledge their concerns.
How to suggest positive action: Describe how your suggestions are helpful and take into account other people's concerns.

The expert feedback

- 6 Andrew mainly focuses on Maria's performance. He says that at the start of the meeting she makes a real effort to make sure she understands the situation and is able to raise important questions. Maria remains in control of her emotions and shows Anna empathy and respect. She suggests positive action by offering to collaborate with Anna. Anna does not control her negative feelings and uses extreme and negative language but does not suggest positive action.

Language focus

- 1 1 can I just check 2 I'm not sure I understand
3 I see 4 Can you be more specific
5 are you saying 6 could it be
2 a 5 b 3 c 1 d 2 e 4 f 6

3 Suggested answers:

- 1 Sorry but I'm not sure I understand.
2 I see.
3 Can you be more specific?
4 Could it be / Is it possible that the plan is too expensive?
5 Can I just check? Was there a problem with the design?
4 1 I completely disagree. D
2 I'm not sure I agree. I
3 I'm afraid I have to disagree. I
4 There's no way I can agree. D
5 We can't do that. D
6 Sorry but I don't think that will work. I
5 1 take 2 understand 3 realize 4 appreciate
5 see
6 1 b 2 e 3 d 4 c 5 a
7 1 b5 2 c4 3 a2 4 d3 5 e1

2 Formal meetings

The meeting

- 3 1 At 11.30. Her presentation might interrupt the first few items on the agenda but they will come back to them.
2 Any issues that come out of the presentation.
3 Not really. She wants more time to read the proposal in detail before discussing it any further.
4 If he goes beyond ten minutes.
5 He complains that the relocation costs for the IT department will be higher than expected.
6 That Maja has tried to allocate costs across all departments but that IT feel their costs are too high.
7 At 11.30.

The expert view

- 4 1 choosing the right items for the agenda and checking people have the right information.
2 making sure facts are correct and that people understand the issues.
3 Summarizing and asking questions.
4 Administrative things such as when and where the meeting is taking place, and how much time is allocated for each agenda item.
5 Make sure items don't take up too much time and negotiate a change in order of the items when necessary.
6 *feeling*
7 Help people to discuss issues openly without getting upset. Encourage quieter people and make sure everyone gets an equal chance to contribute.
8 Everyone has a great time but nothing gets achieved.

The expert feedback

- 6 Content:** Andrew says that Marcus checks everyone has understood and encourages quieter people to speak. He summarizes Maja's suggestion and clarifies her point.
Process: He establishes who is absent, deals with the agenda and manages the timing, partly by delegating responsibility to Lydia.
Dynamic: He praises Paul and encourages Matt to speak when he notices that he is unhappy. Marcus also uses summarizing to manage content, process and dynamic.

Language focus

- 1** 1 apologies 2 agenda 3 item 4 break
 5 any other business
 He doesn't use the word *minutes*.
- 3 a** Good morning everyone. Thank you very much for being here on time.
b Everyone's here apart from ... / We have apologies from...
c Can I draw your attention to item ... / I'd like to leave a little bit of time under ... to discuss
d It may also mean that we need to interrupt the first few agenda items.
- 4** *Introducing an item:* So, item one is ..., ... is the next item on the agenda. / Paul, can you take us through this next point?
Ending the item: We're running out of time so let's leave it there. / I think that's enough on item one.
Moving from one item to the next: Moving on to item two. / Let's go on to the next item.
- 5** 1 item on the agenda. 2 through this next 3 running out of time 4 that's enough 5 go on to / move on to
- 6** 1 sum up 2 go over 3 talk us through
 4 bring it up 5 open this up for discussion
- 7** 1 b 2 f 3 d 4 c 5 a 6 e
- 8** a 1 b 3 d 6 e
 b 4 c
 c 2 f 5 a

3 Informal meetings

The meeting

- 3** 1 Karina to look at some new temp agencies to replace the current one.
 2 Paul to talk to Anna in Customer Services.
 3 IT have had delays with the new intranet. Update meeting this week with Matt and Lucy.
 4 Maria to be careful about how much time she spends on 'schools day'.
 5 Karina is away tomorrow so needs someone to interview.

The expert view

- 4** 1 They become just talk and not enough action.
 2 The structure is less rigid than in a formal meeting and there is more 'chat' or informal conversation.

- 3 (1) Learn what progress has been made since the last meeting. (2) Identify what actions need to be taken (by who and by when). (3) Identify and resolve any potential problems.
 4 Ask questions directly.
 5 Make a clear summary of what has been discussed and agreed so far.
 6 To catch up in a social way. It is often how we learn what's really going on in the organization.
 7 That meetings are 30% shorter.
 8 Asking different members of the team to lead a meeting.

The expert feedback

- 6** Andrew notes that Paul is an effective team leader. He manages to deal with all three stages: updating on progress, identifying action to be taken and resolving problems. He asks Maria for clarification in order to identify her problem and then summarizes the actions they've agreed to take. He keeps the meeting relaxed which helps discussion. He focusses on actions the group needs to take and encourages people to look for solutions. He also manages time effectively.

Language focus

- 1** 1 's happening 2 is working 3 are things going
 4 are waiting 5 are telling 6 'm preparing
- 2** The present continuous. We use it to describe actions that are currently in progress and happening now or around the time of speaking.
- 3** 1 coming 2 happening 3 progressing 4 update
 5 are 6 fill
- 4** ahead of schedule ✓ behind schedule X on schedule ✓
 under budget ✓ over budget X within budget ✓
 make the deadline ✓ meet the deadline ✓
 miss the deadline X
 in trouble X back on track ✓ on track (to do sth) ✓
 late X on time ✓ ahead of time ✓
- 5** 1 ahead of 2 over 3 back on 4 miss 5 under
 6 on
- 6** 1 Could 2 Shall I 3 Would you like me 4 Would you
 5 Don't worry, I'll do

4 Networking

The meeting

- 3** 1 False (He is too late.) 2 True 3 False (He is the Head of IT.) 4 True 5 True 6 False (It's at stand 32.)
 7 False (Julie is there but she wants to go for lunch.)
 8 True

The expert view

- 4** 1 People like to feel that they matter. It feels good if someone shows they are interested in us.
 2 Ask questions and be curious.
 3 The other person will become more interested in you.
 4 Talk about positive things (e.g. what you like) and don't talk about negative things (e.g. what you don't like).

- 5 Good things you've heard or read about their company.
- 6 Tell them how much you've enjoyed meeting them and encourage them to stay in touch.
- 7 Give more information than normal. Don't be shy or give small amounts of information.
- 8 Because it creates material for conversation and so it's more likely that we discover something in common and create a positive business relationship.

The expert feedback

- 6 Both people follow the rules of being interested, being positive and being interesting. Andrew notes that Sanjit is particularly good at networking. He shows interest by asking Matt about the trade fair and his company and replies with positive phrases like, 'That's fascinating!'. He also compliments Matt on his business card. He gives extra information about his company and responsibilities so Matt also starts to show more interest.

Language focus

- 1 1 d 2 f 3 e 4 a 5 b 6 c
- 3 1 head 2 based 3 specialize 4 provide
5 charge 6 responsible 7 overseeing 8 head up
- 4 1 b 2 f 3 c 4 d 5 a 6 e
- 5 Some possible questions:
 - a That's fascinating. Do you have plans for any more next year?
 - b I see. Is that a growing area?
 - c Really? How long have you been there?
 - d Sounds interesting. Who are your main clients for that kind of information?
 - e I can imagine. How many people did it involve?
 - f That's impressive. Why do you think you've grown so quickly?
- 7 1 **Joanna:** Piotr. Let me introduce you to someone. This is Rachel Franks. Rachel, this is Piotr.
3 **Piotr:** Nice to meet you too.
5 **Piotr:** Yes, in fact I visited the office in Sydney. It's a great city.
4 **Joanna:** Rachel works in our sales office in Sydney. I was just telling her about your recent fact-finding trip in Australia.
6 **Rachel:** Glad you liked it. If you come to Sydney again, please drop me a line.
8 **Rachel:** Yes, it was good to meet you too.
2 **Rachel:** Hello. Nice to meet you Piotr.
7 **Piotr:** Thanks. I will. I'll get your details from Joanna. Anyhow, I'd love to stay and talk but I'm afraid I've got a meeting. It was really nice meeting you Rachel.
9 **Piotr:** I hope we meet again. Bye.

5 Job interviews

The meeting

- 3 1 Receptionist
2 Looked like an interesting job and would like to move up the company.

- 3 Reception work and acted as PA to three accountants.
- 4 She was on a temporary contract covering someone on maternity leave.
- 5 Time management, knowledge of accounting and the kind of software used in finance.
- 6 Getting to grips with the processes and software, managing time well, doing all the administrative jobs.
- 7 Knowledge of the company, enthusiasm and ability to get on well with people.
- 8 Use of spreadsheets and software used in accounting.
- 9 Terms and conditions of the job compared to her current position.

The expert view

4 Tips for the interviewer

The interview room: Make it comfortable, private with no interruptions, with phones set to silent.

The job description: Be prepared to answer questions about this.

Prepare your questions: Prepare your questions in advance. To make the process fair, most of them should be the same for every candidate.

Types of questions: Ask open questions such as 'How ...?' or 'What ...?'

Make the candidate feel comfortable: Don't be judgemental. The more comfortable they feel, the more they will reveal about themselves.

The candidate's questions: These indicate how much research they have done or how eager they are.

Tips for the candidate

Do research before the interview: Find out about the company from the website, news and talking to people.

Demonstrate research: Mention facts you have come across or ask relevant questions.

Prepare positive answers: Think about the likely questions and prepare answers.

Think about your skills and qualities: Prepare examples that demonstrate your strengths.

Prepare questions: These demonstrate your research and that you have thought about the job.

Be a positive version of yourself: Emphasize your strengths and enthusiasm. Dress well, relax and be friendly.

The expert feedback

- 6 *The interviewers:* Paul explains how the interview will work, and makes Monica comfortable. He asks good open questions but is a bit unprepared to talk about the conditions of the job. Maja tends to judge and challenge too much. She also uses less open questions and this may make the candidate more cautious.

The candidate: Monica is prepared, dresses suitably and is positive. She answers questions well and demonstrates her abilities with examples. Only one common question causes her problems. Her answer is a little vague and she

should have prepared better for this. Overall she gives a good impression.

Language focus

- 1 1 applying / post 2 ask / questions 3 structuring / interview 4 look at / job description 5 use / initiative 6 applied / job
- 3 1 open 2 closed 3 closed 4 open 5 open 6 open 7 closed 8 closed
- 4 Possible questions:
 - 2 What would you say are your main strengths?
 - 3 What kinds of responsibility did you have in your previous post?
 - 7 Why do you think you would be good at this job?
 - 8 How much experience do you have in using spreadsheets?
- 5 1 position / post 2 applicant / candidate 3 graduate 4 salary 5 CV / résumé 6 skills
- 6 1 graduate 2 post / position 3 salary 4 skills 5 applicant / candidate 6 CV / résumé
- 7 ambitious, hard-working, intelligent, resourceful, outgoing, enthusiastic, creative, passionate
- 8 1 reliable 2 enthusiastic 3 decisive 4 determined 5 ambitious 6 flexible 7 hard-working 8 creative

6 Teleconferencing

The meeting

- 3 1 False (She is in Germany.) 2 True 3 True 4 False (He is the Marketing Manager.) 5 True 6 False (In two weeks.) 7 True 8 False (He'll need a week.) 9 False (He has three things to discuss.) 10 True

The expert view

4 Leading a teleconference

Managing the process and the agenda: Provide clear instructions, create a clear agenda with timings and send out handouts and information early. Move discussions into separate calls or emails if necessary.

Managing the teleconference: Be the first person on the call to welcome participants. Announce who has joined and who else is expected. With large groups, summarize who is present occasionally. Start on time.

Managing who speaks and when: Make sure only one person speaks at a time. Say people's names before they comment or ask them to say who they are before they speak. If there is a large group, consider establishing rules for this.

Participating in a teleconference

Saying who you are: Announce yourself before you speak.

Staying focussed: Don't do other things, like answering emails, during the teleconference.

Being clear when speaking: Outline what you are going to say before you actually say it.

The expert feedback

- 6 Andrew notes that Matt introduces each participant. He also checks that everyone has the agenda and introduces the items. In a few instances, Matt doesn't use people's names and this means two people speak at once. Sanjit becomes distracted at one point. David demonstrates a good example of outlining what he is going to say before he says it.

Language focus

- 1 1 Anybody there? 2 This is 3 calling from 4 here with me 5 gone 6 lost 7 Is that 8 cut off
- 2 1 Hello? / Anybody there? 2 This is ... / We're waiting for / ... is here ... as well. 3 Can you hear me? 4 I was cut off. ... / ... the line was bad.
- 3 1 A 2 B 3 C 4 B 5 C 6 B 7 A 8 A
- 4 1 engaged 2 hang up 3 phoned 4 answering 5 connect me 6 contact
- 5 1 So David, over to you / So, over to you David. 2 Can you go next Helen? / Helen, can you go next? 3 Would you like to respond to that Shoko? / Shoko, would you like to respond to that? 4 Ania, can you speak first and then Tom? / Can you speak first Tom and then Ania? 5 Was there anything else Max? / Max, was there anything else? 6 Is there anything you'd like to add Simone? / Simone, is there anything you'd like to add?
- 6 1 ask 2 refer 3 summarize 4 suggest 5 agree

7 Negotiating

The meeting

- 3 1 b 2 a 3 a 4 a 5 b 6 a 7 b

The expert view

4 Principle 1

- 1 Show you understand the other person's interests. Stay calm and empathize.
- 2 'I understand', 'I see', 'Let's see if we can work this out', 'I think we can reach agreement.'

Principle 2

- 3 Find out what their interests or concerns are. Say what you think their concerns are and ask if you are right.
- 4 Because you develop trust and it becomes easier to work together.

Principle 3

- 5 That you are both happy at each stage and that what each person agrees to do or give away is balanced by what the other person agrees to do.
- 6 Summarize what each side has agreed to do.

The expert feedback

- 6 Andrew's feedback focusses on Sabine. She demonstrates all the skills in the table during the negotiation. She asks Matt about his concerns, checks back her understanding

of this and explains her own concerns. She keeps control of her emotions and identifies the real issues that need addressing. She then summarizes what has been agreed.

Language focus

- 1 1 a clause 2 parties 3 an invoice 4 a fee
5 to cost sth 6 to draw sth up
- 2 1 invoice 2 drew up 3 clause 4 fee 5 parties
6 costed
- 4 1 a 2 e 3 c 4 h 5 b 6 g 7 f 8 d

- 5 Make an offer
a, g, h
Ask for something in return
or suggest an alternative
c, f, j
Accept an offer
d, e, k
Reject an offer
b, i, l

- 6 1 I can offer you 2 would 3 isn't possible 4 What if
5 might agree to 6 would be OK

8 Appraisals

The appraisal

- 3 1 OK. The process was new to her so it took her some time to work out how to deal with it.
2 To set up a clear process for finding out department training needs within three months.
3 Confident in her ability as a trainer. Project management has gone well.
4 Deals with department heads in an assertive and helpful way.
5 Time management has been hard for her.
6 Could improve some of her time management skills and how she prioritizes.
7 Paul will give her advice when needed on this area.
8 Performing well
9 Has established herself well. Outstanding communication skills. Has developed a good relationship with colleagues. A good start.

The expert view

- 4 SMART Objectives
Specific: An objective shouldn't be vague. It should be clearly defined.
Measurable: It should be easy to judge if an objective has been achieved and we can objectively measure progress from sales figures, etc.
Achievable: Don't make it too hard or impossible to achieve.
Relevant: Relevant and connected to core work.
Time-based: There is a deadline when progress is reviewed.

Feedback

Positive feedback

Specific: Be specific with examples or evidence that shows if the person is doing well or needs to improve.

Impact: How their behaviour affects others.

Third-party endorsement: Telling the person their behaviour has been noticed by others.

Skills: Tell them what skills they demonstrated.

Improvement feedback

Specific: (See Positive feedback)

Impact: (See Positive feedback)

Perspective: Emphasize we are talking about one specific behaviour and remind them of areas where they perform well.

Solutions: Find ways to improve things and discuss the kind of support required.

The expert feedback

- 5 Paul encourages her to define the objective and sets a SMART objective. He then gives positive feedback with third-party endorsement but Andrew suggests he should describe the impact of her behaviour a little more. He's good at creating a collaborative discussion. For improvement feedback, Paul follows the steps of SIPS but could be more specific in describing the impact of her behaviour. He ends by seeking a solution.

Language focus

- 1 1 c 2 f 3 d 4 e 5 a 6 b
2 a 1 b 5 c 6 d 4 e 3 f 2
4 1 rate / performance 2 give / feedback 3 set / objective 4 express / opinion 5 do / job 6 carry out / appraisal
5 1 could improve 2 need to work on 3 demonstrated exceptional ability 4 improved a great deal 5 would gain from 6 address the issue of
6 1 b 2 c 3 a 4 b 5 c 6 c

Videoscript

The *Videoscript* contains the scripts for the *Meetings*, *Expert view* and *Expert feedback* videos and the *Language focus* sections. The scripts for the *Talking points* videos are available as subtitles on the DVD. The *Meeting* video is repeated in the *Analysis* section of each unit (e.g. DVD 1.4) but is not repeated in the *Videoscript*.

Introduction

DVD 0.1

Andrew Mallett: communication skills coach and trainer

Hello. My name's Andrew Mallett. I'm a communication skills coach and trainer and I'm delighted to welcome you to this course on successful meetings. I'll be your guide for all eight units of the course.

The aim of the course is to provide you with the skills you need to run or participate in a meeting successfully in English. The first three units cover the most common types of business meeting, formal and informal. The later units explore some more specific situations: job interviews, appraisals, negotiations, networking and teleconferences.

Each unit features a video of meetings at Quartz Power Group – a fictional company. The videos demonstrate both the communication skills and the language in action. In every unit I explain the theory behind that unit, then later I provide analysis of the video. In your coursebook, you'll find practice exercises and summaries of all the content. Each unit in the book also provides you with the essential language tools for meetings, including key phrases and language exercises.

This is a flexible course. You can explore each unit one at a time, or if you prefer, you can concentrate on the individual situations which are relevant for you. Either way, I hope you find the course useful and enjoyable.

1 Participating in meetings

DVD 1.2

The meeting

PAUL Right, shall we get started? Well, we're here to talk about a new training programme for the call centre. David, I asked you to come because you were involved in the market research we did, so I thought you could give us a short summary of the findings. And Anna, obviously it's your

customer service teams who'll be affected by this.

ANNA Yes, exactly.

PAUL So we thought you might have some ideas on the best way to approach the training programme. And Maria will be developing and running the training. OK, David, could you run us through the main points from the research?

DAVID Sure. Um, we worked with a market research agency over a period of a few weeks to gather information about our customers and what they thought of us. And the results were ... well, mixed.

MARIA Sorry, can I just check. Why was this research done? Had there been complaints or ...?

DAVID Some complaints, yes, but also we are losing customers in the region and wanted to know why.

MARIA Sorry, I'm not sure I understand. Was the research about getting customer points of view or about customer profiles?

DAVID It was to get customer feedback on the company and its services.

MARIA Right, I see.

DAVID So the results showed a few areas where customers were not happy. One of the most common ... how shall I put it ... issues, was with the call centre.

MARIA I see. Can you be more specific?

DAVID Well, basically, it seems that customers feel they are not getting good service, and they are leaving us for another supplier.

MARIA Right. So are you saying customers are leaving us because of the service from the staff, or could there be other reasons too? I mean, could it be that we haven't got very good systems in place for our staff?

PAUL Yeah, could be. Anna?

ANNA Look, I have no problem with giving the staff a refresher course, but starting completely from scratch seems like a waste of time and money. They all receive training when they start anyway.

PAUL Yes, that's a good point, Anna, and we don't know yet if we will have to start from scratch. It may be that we haven't done enough to monitor their activity, and that a simple refresher course will be enough. Or it may be that we have to look at customer contact from start to finish and try to implement some new protocols. Maria?

MARIA Yes, that's right. I'm sure there's a way of dealing with this sensitively. Anna, I realize it's not easy for you to suggest more training for your staff. So I wondered if we could start with a review of the current training approach and look at what we need to do to address the problems brought up in the survey.

ANNA Yes, we could do that.

MARIA But, I would need to look at the full report first, of course. Um, Anna, I understand your point about possibly

wasting time and money, so perhaps you and I could look at the report together?

ANNA Yes, OK.

MARIA Then we'll be able to decide what needs addressing and how – if it's more training or even a complete systems overhaul.

PAUL Good idea. I've brought in copies of the report. Perhaps we can start with the highlights first.

DVD 1.3

The expert view

In this unit we'll explore the key skills we need to participate successfully in a meeting. Let's consider first what we mean by a successful meeting. A good meeting usually has three components: information is shared, ideas are discussed and actions are decided. Ideally, the meeting should be friendly and respectful, even when people disagree with each other. So what are the skills that you need to make sure this happens and that you participate effectively? Let's look at each of the meeting's components.

In terms of sharing information, it's important to pay careful attention to what other people at the meeting are saying. In other words you need to really listen. Listening doesn't simply mean sitting and not speaking. It means actively checking that you understand things correctly. If you don't understand something, you need to ask for further explanation. If something is unclear, you need to check you understand it correctly. If you require more facts or details, ask for examples or more information.

During the discussion of ideas, people will probably have different opinions. This is where things can become emotional. It's important that you keep your own emotions under control, especially if others are failing to do so themselves. How do you do this? Well, I'm not going to pretend that it's easy! The key is to recognize that if you show irritation or anger, it will make things difficult for the meeting to proceed effectively.

Now, this doesn't mean that you can't say what you feel. It's more to do with how you state your point of view. I can say that 'I disagree' or 'I'm not happy about' something while remaining calm and professional. It's only when I behave in an angry or irritated way that it becomes a problem. So avoid negative or aggressive body language, such as folded arms and frowning. And be careful about your language too: stay professional and avoid extreme words or phrases like 'ridiculous' or 'I don't believe it'.

So when discussing ideas, always make sure that you are showing respect to other people's points of view. Empathize with their viewpoint, show that you understand their

situation, even if you disagree with their opinion. Actually say to them 'I understand that this is difficult' or 'I recognize this isn't easy' and so on.

For the discussion to be effective, the participants need to reach an agreement about what happens next, in other words which actions will be decided as part of the meeting. Again, it's important to show respect to other people's concerns, perhaps by acknowledging and repeating back to the person the concerns they have raised.

Similarly, it's also important to suggest ideas in a positive way. When you suggest a particular action, take time to describe how your suggestions are helpful while also taking account of other people's concerns. In other words, don't simply say 'I suggest this'. Instead say something like 'I suggest we do this, because it will help deal with the issue you raised'.

So the key things we need to do when participating in meetings are: Listen carefully, which includes being prepared to ask questions and check understanding. Keep your emotions under control. Show respect and empathy, especially when you disagree. And finally, suggest positive actions.

DVD 1.4

Analysis

→ See videoscript for Video 1.2

DVD 1.5

The expert feedback

I'd like to focus mainly on Maria, the Training Manager. In the early information sharing part of the meeting, Maria makes a real effort to make sure she understands the situation correctly and has the facts that she needs ... (extract of video 1.2)

Because of this, she is then able to raise important questions about whether it's the people or the systems which need to be addressed.

Let's contrast Maria's approach with Anna ... (extract of video 1.2)

Oh dear. Anna's upset and she's not really controlling her emotions. In fact she demonstrates that she hasn't really been listening to the discussion, probably because of her feelings. Although her body language is OK, when she uses the phrase 'a waste of time' she shows that she is not in control of her negative emotions. Also, she doesn't really make any positive suggestions about what she thinks should happen.

This causes a difficult atmosphere. Thankfully, both Paul and Maria handle the situation sensitively by showing empathy towards Anna's position. Maria is particularly effective in the way in which she shows empathy and respect and also suggests positive actions. We'll take another look at the final exchange between her and Anna. Notice Maria's empathy and the way in which she

moves Anna to a more positive position by offering to collaborate with her ... (extract of video 1.2)

Maria shows excellent communication skills here. She could be quite upset by Anna's earlier comments, but she remains in control and focuses on the positive steps which they need to take. Anna may still be feeling a bit negative, but I think she's now prepared to engage with the discussion more positively thanks to Maria's sensitivity.

So Maria has demonstrated all the key skills: she listened carefully, she kept control of her emotions, empathized with Anna and carefully suggested positive actions. She really moves the meeting forward.

DVD 1.6

Language focus: asking for and checking information

PAUL Right, shall we get started? Well, we're here to talk about a new training programme for the call centre. David, I asked you to come because you were involved in the market research we did, so I thought you could give us a short summary of the findings. And Anna, obviously it's your customer service teams who'll be affected by this.

ANNA Yes, exactly.

PAUL So we thought you might have some ideas on the best way to approach the training programme. And Maria will be developing and running the training. OK, David, could you run us through the main points from the research?

DAVID Sure. Um, we worked with a market research agency over a period of a few weeks to gather information about our customers and what they thought of us. And the results were ... well, mixed.

MARIA Sorry, can I just check. Why was this research done? Had there been complaints or ...?

DAVID Some complaints, yes, but also we are losing customers in the region and wanted to know why.

MARIA Sorry, I'm not sure I understand. Was the research about getting customer points of view or about customer profiles?

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DAVID So the results showed a few areas where customers were not happy. One of the most common ... how shall I put it ... issues, was with the call centre.

MARIA I see. Can you be more specific?

DAVID Well, basically, it seems that customers feel they are not getting good service, and they are leaving us for another supplier.

MARIA Right. So are you saying customers are leaving us because of the service from the staff, or could there be other reasons too? I mean, could it be that we haven't got very good systems in place for our staff?

PAUL Yeah, could be. Anna?

2 Formal meetings

DVD 2.2

The meeting

MARCUS OK, well, good morning everyone. Thank you very much for being here on time. We've got a lot to do today so let's get started. Now, everyone's here apart from John in Facilities. But we have apologies from him. Has everyone got a copy of the agenda? Good. OK, can I draw your attention to item four where it says 'presentation of online survey results'? The presentation is going to be given by Miss Patricia Reyes who is a representative of the research company who we contracted to carry out the work. Now, Miss Reyes will arrive at eleven thirty so I plan to break at about eleven fifteen so she has time to set up. It may also mean that we need to interrupt the first few agenda items but we'll come back to those. And lastly, I'd like to leave a little bit of time under 'any other business' to discuss whatever might come out of the presentation. OK? So item one is relocation and plans for flexible working. Now, as you know, Paul and his team have been working on plans to extend flexible working hours across the company. So, Paul, perhaps I can begin by asking you to fill us in on your progress ...

PAUL Sure. Thanks Marcus. ...

MARCUS OK, thank you very much indeed Paul. On behalf of everyone I'd like to say 'thank you' to you and to your team for all the hard work that you've put in so far on this project. I really appreciate it. Before we move on to item two are there any comments anyone has ... er, anyone would like to make on item one? No? Maja, I'm aware that flexible working hours has a particular impact on some of your team. Do you have any thoughts on that?

MAJA Well, from my point of view, what Paul is proposing sounds fine. I am a bit concerned about working with a system of core hours and then flexible hours. But I think we all need time to read through Paul's proposal in more detail before discussing it any further.

MARCUS OK, that sounds reasonable. And what do other people think? Do you agree with Maja that we need to look through the proposal in more detail first? Yes? OK, right. Well I'm sure we can return to it at next month's meeting. Good. Are we all okay to move on to the next point? Right, so the upcoming board meeting. Now, we don't need to spend too much time on this but there are one or two issues which we need to be aware of. Lydia, can you warn me if we go beyond ten minutes on this one ... So those two people will be replacing the two members of the board who are leaving us. And that's everything I think on ... on item two. Right. Moving on to item three and the cost breakdown for the relocation. Now, Maja,

thank you very much for emailing the current figures to all of us. I hope that we've all had time to look at them, to read them through. Maja. Is there anything you want to add before I open this up for questions?

MAJA Not really. Nothing's changed since it was sent out as far as I know.

MARCUS Are there any questions arising from Maja's report? Matt, you look as if you might have a question ...

MATT Yes, I suppose I do. Well it's more of a comment really. The fact is IT will have the highest costs attached to this relocation in terms of moving equipment and I'll also need to bring in quite a few contract people to help. But the figures in here don't seem to be the same as the estimates I gave you. It's all going to require a lot of overtime in my department.

MAJA Well, I have allocated some of the costs to the budgets of other departments. That seemed the fairest way to do it. Otherwise, as you say, IT is responsible for a large part of the relocation costs.

MATT So do you mean any IT costs related to, say, marketing will be covered by the marketing budget?

MAJA Yes, in a way, look, this might help clarify it. You see, I've broken the IT department up into segments.

MARCUS I'm sorry can we continue this discussion after lunch? The lady from the research company is waiting to join us and to present her results, but before we take a break, I just want to summarize where we are so far. Now, my understanding is that Maja has tried to allocate the relocation costs across departments as far as is possible but that Matt feels that IT is still taking too many costs. Is that right?

MAJA Yes.

MATT That's about right.

MARCUS Good. OK, let's take a break now and can we all be back here promptly at eleven thirty to continue where we left off? Lydia, could you bring Miss Reyes up please?

DVD 2.3

The expert view

People often complain about meetings. But most people also recognize that they are necessary for a business to work effectively. Formal meetings can be complicated. They require a lot of preparation such as arranging who is going to attend, setting agendas, and so on. They also require good communication skills when chairing. We can divide these different chairing elements into three categories: Content, Process and Dynamic.

By Content, I mean anything connected with the items we're discussing in the meeting. This means choosing the right items for the agenda and checking that people have the right information before the meeting. During the meeting, it also means making sure that facts are correct

and that people understand the issues.

Techniques we can use here include asking questions when an issue is not clear or when we think an item should be discussed in more detail. Summarizing what is being said is another important technique when chairing. It helps to clarify content, and it provides a way to end one item before moving on to the next one which is an aspect of our next category: process.

'Process' includes administrative things like: the time of the meeting, where it's happening, how much time is given to each item on the agenda. During the meeting, it involves making sure that some items don't take up too much time or negotiating a change in the order of items if this is necessary. When you are the chair, you are usually responsible for keeping things on time.

The final element is the Dynamic, or the way people are feeling in the meeting. It's very unusual for everyone to agree on every point, so it's part of our job to help people to discuss issues openly but at the same time to prevent any disagreements from becoming too personal. We also need to encourage the quieter people to give their views and make sure that everyone has an equal opportunity to say something.

So these are the three elements you must manage throughout the meeting: Content, Process and Dynamic. Most people are naturally strong in one or two elements but weaker in another. For example, somebody who is very strong on Content may not pay enough attention to Process, and as a result the meeting may finish late. Or sometimes someone is so focussed on the Dynamic that everyone has a great time but nothing gets achieved!

It might be a good idea to delegate some of the responsibilities to other people in the meeting. Often, it's the Process elements which are safest to pass on to others, like time-keeping. The key thing is that you are aware of your own natural preferences and pay attention to the element which is your weakest area.

DVD 2.4

Analysis

→ See videoscript for Video 2.2

DVD 2.5

The expert feedback

Let's consider the first element, Content. Remember, a big part of this is about making sure that people have understood things and that issues are explored in enough detail. A key moment in this meeting is when Marcus asks for comments about the plans for flexible working. Marcus knows that Maja probably has some comments that she would like to make but she is keeping quiet. So he encourages her

to say what she thinks ... (extract of video 2.2)

Notice also how Marcus makes sure he summarizes Maja's suggestion to the rest of the group before moving on. By doing this he clarifies her point to everyone.

Now how does Marcus handle the Process? ... (extract of video 2.2)

There's a lot of detail here about how the meeting will run: he says who is absent, checks that everyone has the agenda and communicates changes in timings. These sorts of details are crucially important. Marcus is managing people's expectations of the meeting. In particular, he says that the meeting will be interrupted by Patricia Reyes's presentation, so it will seem less of an interruption when she arrives.

As I mentioned earlier, if you're chairing the meeting, people will leave it to you to keep things on time. I like the way Marcus delegates part of this responsibility to Lydia ... (extract of video 2.2)

Let's move on to the final category: Dynamic. People want to feel listened to in a meeting. I like the way Marcus thanks Paul for his team's work. Meetings are a great opportunity to make people feel recognized. Being praised in front of others is often more powerful than when it's done in private.

But it's not just about making people feel good. Sometimes, good chairing is about noticing when people are unhappy and giving them the chance to say what's on their minds. Later in the meeting, Marcus notices Matt's negative body language. Instead of ignoring it, he encourages him to speak ... (extract of video 2.2)

If Marcus didn't say anything, Matt would probably continue sitting in silence and become more upset. It's important that he and Maja have the opportunity to discuss their misunderstanding. Unfortunately, they are interrupted by the arrival of Patricia Reyes. Notice here how Marcus pauses the meeting ... (extract of video 2.2)

Once more we see the power of summarizing. It can actually help all three of the elements we have explored. Marcus outlines his understanding of Matt and Maja's different positions. In terms of Content, this clarifies to the team precisely what is happening. In terms of Process, it creates a natural break for the next part of the meeting. And finally, in terms of Dynamic, it helps Matt and Maja take a step back from their disagreement.

DVD 2.6

Language focus: starting the meeting

MARCUS OK, well, good morning everyone. Thank you very much for being here on time. We've got a lot to do today so let's get started. Now, everyone's here apart from John in Facilities. But we have apologies from him. Has everyone got a copy of the agenda? Good. OK, can I draw

your attention to item four where it says 'presentation of online survey results'? The presentation is going to be given by Miss Patricia Reyes who is a representative of the research company who we contracted to carry out the work. Now, Miss Reyes will arrive at eleven thirty so I plan to break at about eleven fifteen so she has time to set up. It may also mean that we need to interrupt the first few agenda items but we'll come back to those. And lastly, I'd like to leave a little bit of time under 'any other business' to discuss whatever might come out of the presentation.

3 Informal meetings

DVD 3.2

The meeting

KARINA Hi. Sorry I'm late.
PAUL You got my text then?
KARINA To saying we were meeting here?
PAUL Yes. Sorry, IT needed to do something to my computer, so my office wasn't free.
KARINA OK, well, this is fine.
PAUL Bad morning?
KARINA The receptionist is off and the temp needed some help.
PAUL Isn't it an admin job to deal with the temps?
KARINA Remember Marianne's just gone on maternity leave, so I'm covering.
PAUL Ah yes. When's the baby due?
KARINA Two weeks ago but she's still waiting.
PAUL Oh.
KARINA But when she gets back she needs to change the temp agency. That's the third temp we've had problems with.
PAUL We have had some people from them who've stayed with us.
KARINA I know but recently we've had some real problems. Or maybe it's just a coincidence.
PAUL Maybe! Well Marianne won't be returning for some time. Would you like to look at some new temp agencies in the meantime?
KARINA Sure.
PAUL Anyway, shall we start with an update from everyone? Can we try and keep this to twenty minutes though so we have time for the main item afterwards. So, how are things going? Maria? What's happening in the Training Department this week?
MARIA So far so good. We have two external trainers in this week. One of them is working with call centre staff at the other site so I hope they all turn up.
PAUL What do you mean?
MARIA Well, there were lots of absences for the last training we had at the call centre. I'm surprised really. It's in paid time and you'd think people would enjoy having some training.
PAUL But they have to go. It's not really

their decision to go or not. Did you speak to Customer Services?

MARIA No, I was going to do that today. Should I speak to Anna?
PAUL Yes. In fact, I'm meeting Anna today so I'll mention it.
MARIA Can you let me know how that goes, just so I know what I can do next?
PAUL Yes, I will.
PAUL And ... er, what about the intranet training? How are things going with that?
MARIA We are waiting for IT to say they're ready. I think there have been some delays but now they are telling me it'll be ready next month. I have an update meeting this week with Matt and Lucy.
PAUL They really are behind on that, aren't they? So, is that everything for the Training Department?
MARIA I'm preparing something for David in Marketing on my idea for schools' day.
KARINA What's that then?
MARIA We might be sponsoring a one-day event for schools to inform students about energy – where it comes from, how we use it, that type of thing.
KARINA Oh.
PAUL Be careful with that one Maria.
MARIA How do you mean?
PAUL Well, really it should all come under marketing. I'm happy that you're involved but I don't want it to come out of the training budget.
MARIA But what about my time on it?
PAUL I'm just saying watch how much time it takes. I know David. He'll have you organizing the whole event.
MARIA Oh, OK.
PAUL So that's quite a lot there, Maria. Let's just recap. I'm going to get back to you when I've spoken to Anna about the call centre training. You're going to speak to Matt and Lucy about the intranet training, and you're going to proceed with caution with David on the schools event – please keep me informed on that one.
MARIA Will do.
PAUL OK, so who's next? Recruitment. Karina?
KARINA Well, we have three applicants for the post of Finance Assistant.
PAUL Are all the interviews this week?
KARINA Yes, they are. But I'm away tomorrow. So somebody needs to interview.
PAUL Can't Maja do it? The applicants are applying to be in her team.
KARINA Yes but I think one of us should be there.
PAUL OK. Leave it with me.
KARINA Anyway, the applicant is Monica.
PAUL Monica? Monica on reception? You just said she's off sick.
KARINA I know. But her interview is tomorrow so we have to assume that she'll be there.
PAUL Sorry, so just to recap. I'm interviewing Monica with Maja tomorrow.

At what time?

KARINA 1.30.
PAUL And who'll be looking after reception while she's having her interview?
KARINA Well, the same temp as today I hope.
PAUL But you won't be there to make sure.
KARINA You said I could have tomorrow off.
PAUL I know, I know. It's fine. Erm, so who's next? Ingrid – how are things going with you?

DVD 3.3

The expert view

In most companies, it's usual to have more informal meetings than formal ones. Typically, teams will meet once a week or more to catch up on progress.

One of the most common problems with informal meetings is that they become just talk and not enough action. This is sometimes because people don't treat them as seriously as formal ones. All meetings, including informal ones, work best if they have an agenda and an obvious purpose. In informal meetings, the people are usually close colleagues so the meeting structure is less rigid and includes more chat and informal conversation. This can mean that they are difficult to control so good chairing skills are just as important as in a formal meeting.

If you are leading an informal meeting, in most cases there are usually only three things you need to achieve.

First, you generally want to learn from each person what progress has been made since the last meeting. Secondly, you want to identify what actions the group needs to take next – who is going to do what and when. Finally, you want to identify and resolve any potential problems.

To learn what progress has been made and what actions need to be taken, it's easiest to just ask each person directly to report on their work.

Identifying possible problems is a bit more complicated because we also want to resolve those problems. Deciding how to solve these problems may require a lot of discussion and thought from the team. This could take some time so it's important that you make a clear summary of what has been discussed and what has been agreed before moving on to the next person.

Of course, informal meetings are also an opportunity for people to catch up in a social way too. This is often how we learn what's really going on in an organization: who's moving where, what's going on in other departments and so on. This type of information can also be useful and important. It is also good for people to simply catch up with each other. You might want to hold the meeting in a place which is a bit more relaxed than a formal meeting

room, for example a café – or encourage people to relax by providing cakes or croissants. Just make sure that you are also focussed on any actions which need to be taken.

If you find that your meetings go on too long, make sure you are clear from the start about the time available. Even consider holding a stand-up meeting from time to time. One research study found that meetings were 30% shorter when held standing up, but they were just as effective in terms of the quality of the meeting.

If this all sounds like hard work, don't worry. In a good team, people will naturally take on the responsibility for updating and identifying actions without you having to control the meeting. If that doesn't happen in your team, a good technique is to ask different members of the team to lead a meeting so everyone gets a chance. This way, people quickly learn what's required.

DVD 3.4

Analysis

→ See videoscript for Video 3.2

DVD 3.5

The expert feedback

Remember that there are three key things we need to establish in the meeting: an update on progress, actions to be taken and potential problems. Take another look at Paul's exchange with Maria. Notice how Paul asks for clarification from Maria on the lack of people attending the training – this reveals the problem which they need to deal with ... (extract of video 3.2)

I especially like the way Maria checks with Paul at the end there that he will let her know the result of his conversation with Anna. In a good team, people should take responsibility for actions.

There's quite a lot of discussion between Paul and Maria. This means it's really important he summarizes the actions agreed. He does this very clearly ... (extract of video 3.2)

Overall, I think Paul demonstrates good chairing skills: he keeps the meeting relaxed and makes it easy for people to speak and give their opinions. At the same time, he focusses on the actions the group needs to take. Even before the meeting begins, when Karina is talking about problems with temps, he encourages Karina to look into other options. He also makes sure people are aware of time too ... (extract of video 3.2)

So, let's review Paul overall. With both Maria and Karina, he clearly asks for an update. He asks for more information about which actions need to be taken. He then discusses the potential problems and how they might be addressed. He summarizes everything clearly and keeps his team in a good mood and on time. I'd say he does a very good job.

DVD 3.6

Language focus: talking about current progress

Extract 1 from Video 3.2

PAUL Anyway, shall we start with an update from everyone? Can we try and keep this to twenty minutes though so we have time for the main item afterwards. So, how are things going? Maria? What's happening in the Training Department this week?

MARIA So far so good. We have two external trainers in this week. One of them is working with call centre staff at the other site so I hope they all turn up.

PAUL What do you mean? ...

Extract 2 from Video 3.2

PAUL And ... er, what about the intranet training? How are things going with that?

MARIA We are waiting for IT to say they're ready. I think there have been some delays but now they are telling me it'll be ready next month. I have an update meeting this week with Matt and Lucy.

PAUL They really are behind on that, aren't they? So, is that everything for the Training Department?

MARIA I'm preparing something for David in Marketing on my idea for school's day.

4 Networking

DVD 4.2

The meeting

MATT Excuse me? Do you know if there's a waiter?

SANJIT Err. There was. In fact, there were two or three people serving during the lunch break.

MATT Oh.

SANJIT I'm sure there'll be someone in a minute. It's been very busy.

MATT That's why I came later thinking I'd miss the rush.

SANJIT Me too but there was still a large crowd when I got here. How are you finding the trade fair?

MATT Busy! There's so much to see.

SANJIT I know what you mean. I've been coming here for the last three years and every year it gets bigger and bigger.

MATT So do you have a stand here?

SANJIT Yes, we do. I'm with SavelT. We're an IT company specializing in networks.

MATT Networks? What area?

SANJIT Well, we specialize in IT security for networks and so on. But we're also getting more and more into web design and specifically company intranets. That's my area.

MATT That's interesting.

SANJIT How about you?

MATT I'm with an energy company.

SANJIT Are you sure you're at the right trade fair then?

MATT I'm the head of IT

SANJIT Ah, I see. What kind of energy company?

MATT We're an energy provider. But we also provide services to companies to run more efficiently and responsibly.

SANJIT That's fascinating. I imagine that's a growing sector these days.

MATT Yes it is but it's more competitive too.

SANJIT I can imagine. So what brings you to the trade fair?

MATT Well, we're here to improve our web presence. But we also need to improve security.

SANJIT That's interesting! Well, the best person to talk to is my boss Sabine Kolbeck. She set up the company. But I'm in charge of most of our web development projects. My name is Sanjit Chudha.

MATT I'm Matt. Nice to meet you.

SANJIT How do I pronounce your surname, Matt? Is it 'louder' or 'lorder'?

MATT 'Louder'. As in noisy.

SANJIT I like your logo. Very fresh and clean.

MATT Thanks. That's just the impression we like to make.

SANJIT Well listen Matt. I think you'd get a lot from speaking to Sabina. We're at stand thirty-two.

MATT Let me just note that down.

SANJIT If you come along at around two, I'm sure Sabine will be there. She's the best person to talk to. Oh! In fact. There she is. Sabine! Sabine! Over here.

SABINE Oh hi. Is this the right place for lunch?

SANJIT It was. But we think it might be closed. Sabine, let me introduce you. This is Matt Lauder, he's the head of IT at an energy firm.

MATT Nice to meet you.

SABINE Very nice to meet you too. Sabine Kolbeck.

SANJIT Matt is here finding someone to develop his IT systems – security and web presence. Is that right?

MATT More or less.

SANJIT So I suggested he talk to you.

SABINE Great. Are you going back to the stand? Because Julie's on her own there and I think she'd also like to get some lunch now.

SANJIT Sure. Nice meeting you Matt. You have my contact details – please feel free to get in touch if you want to speak about anything in development.

MATT That's good of you. Thanks. Bye.

SABINE So, Matt. Have you had any lunch?

MATT No. But I still haven't seen anybody serving.

SABINE Well, I saw a café in the street about five minutes from here. Shall we go and get something there?

MATT Sounds great.

SABINE Lovely.

DVD 4.3**The expert view**

Networking has a bad image. Many people think it means being pushy or aggressive – perhaps you've met someone who wants to exchange business cards and tell you all about themselves and their business straight away. Or perhaps you've had an experience where you and the other person found it difficult to find anything to say. It doesn't have to be this way. Networking isn't complicated. But it does require a positive attitude and a bit of effort. There are three rules we're going to look at in this unit. These are: be interested, be positive, and allow yourself to be interesting.

The first rule – be interested – is the most important. People like to feel that they matter. It feels good if someone shows they are interested in us. So how do you show someone that you are interested? Well, mainly it's about asking questions. Ask them about who they are, what they do, where they work, what issues they face in their work. When they give their answer, listen for anything which you can ask them about more. In most cases, if you show them you are interested, they will become more interested in you as well. They will ask you similar questions and the conversation will start to flow.

The second rule is to be positive. Talk about what you like, not what you don't like. Look for opportunities to make positive comments to the other person. Perhaps you've heard good things about their company or have read something which they might find useful. If you exchange business cards, comment politely on the design of the card – in some cultures they are offended if you don't do this. And when you say goodbye, tell them how much you've enjoyed meeting them and encourage them to stay in touch.

Finally, allow yourself to be interesting. That may sound a bit strange so let me explain what I mean. Many people are a bit shy when they meet someone for the first time. Because of this, they only give a small amount of information about themselves. For example, when someone asks them what they do, they say something like 'I'm in marketing' or 'I work in a bank'. What I'm suggesting is that you make the effort to give a bit more information than this. So 'I'm in marketing' becomes 'I'm responsible for marketing XYZ in the Far East'. 'I work in a bank' becomes 'I advise small businesses on how to structure their finances'. And this isn't just for talking about your job. During the whole conversation, give a bit more than usual. Why is this so important? Well networking is about people being interested in each other. It's difficult for someone to be interested in you if you only give them small pieces of information. When you give more information, you create more material for

the conversation. As a result, you'll probably discover things you have in common, and create a positive business relationship.

Positive business relationships: that is what networking is all about. It's not about forcing other people to notice you or trying to create a deal as soon as you meet someone. It's about having conversations which might lead to a longer term relationship. If the conversations are good, the business opportunities will come naturally. You've probably had lots of conversations where an opportunity to create a business relationship was missed without you knowing it. With a little bit of effort you can make sure that doesn't happen again. Just be interested, be positive, and allow yourself to be interesting.

DVD 4.4**Analysis**

→ See videocript for Video 4.4

DVD 4.5**The expert feedback**

In this scene we saw Matt and Sanjit meeting for the first time. Both of them followed the rules of being interested, being positive and allowing themselves to be interesting by providing information about themselves. But Sanjit is especially impressive in this scene. He first shows interest by asking Matt how he is finding the trade fair. When Matt describes his work, Sanjit always responds positively with phrases like 'That's interesting' or 'That's fascinating', and he also comments on the design of Matt's business card. He explains his job with a bit of detail. He doesn't just say 'I'm in IT' but explains what his company does and his own responsibility for developing intranet business. In turn, Matt naturally starts to show interest too and we see the relationship progress quickly.

Let's see what happens when we don't make the effort to be interested and positive. This is an alternative version of the scene we just watched.

Alternative version

MATT Excuse me? Do you know if there's a waiter?

SANJIT Err. There was. In fact, there were two or three people serving during the lunch break.

MATT Oh.

SANJIT I'm sure there'll be someone in a minute. It's been very busy.

MATT That's why I came later thinking I'd miss the rush.

SANJIT Me too but there was still a large crowd when I got here ... How are you finding the trade fair?

MATT Busy.

SANJIT I know what you mean.

MATT What do you do?

SANJIT I'm in IT.

MATT Uh-huh.

SANJIT You?

MATT Energy.

SANJIT Where is that waiter?

MATT Yeah.

SANJIT Actually, I'd better get back. It was nice meeting you.

MATT OK, you too. Bye.

The expert feedback (continued)

Now, that version reminds me of a lot of conversations I've had in the past. Because neither person has the courage to give a bit more information or ask a few more questions, it just becomes a quick chat. Both of them will forget each other by the next day. Of course, they don't know what an opportunity they've missed. The same applies to us.

DVD 4.6**Language focus: making conversation**

MATT Excuse me? Do you know if there's a waiter?

SANJIT Err. There was. In fact, there were two or three people serving during the lunch break.

MATT Oh.

SANJIT I'm sure there'll be someone in a minute. It's been very busy.

MATT That's why I came later thinking I'd miss the rush.

SANJIT Me too but there was still a large crowd when I got here. How are you finding the trade fair?

MATT Busy! There's so much to see.

SANJIT I know what you mean. I've been coming here for the last three years and every year it gets bigger and bigger.

MATT So do you have a stand here?

SANJIT Yes, we do. I'm with SavelT. We're an IT company specializing in networks.

MATT Networks? What area?

SANJIT Well, we specialize in IT security for networks and so on. But we're also getting more and more into web design and specifically company intranets. That's my area.

MATT That's interesting.

SANJIT How about you?

MATT I'm with an energy company.

SANJIT Are you sure you're at the right trade fair then?

MATT I'm the head of IT

SANJIT Ah, I see. What kind of energy company?

MATT We're an energy provider. But we also provide services to companies to run more efficiently and responsibly.

SANJIT That's fascinating. I imagine that's a growing sector these days.

MATT Yes it is but it's more competitive too.

SANJIT I can imagine. So what brings you to the trade fair?

MATT Well, we're here to improve our web presence. But we also need to improve security.

SANJIT That's interesting! Well, the best person to talk to is my boss Sabine Kolbeck.

She set up the company. But I'm in charge of most of our web development projects. My name is Sanjit Chudha.

MATT I'm Matt. Nice to meet you.

5 Job interviews

DVD 5.2

The meeting

MONICA Hi Paul. Hi Maja.

MAJA Hello Monica. Do have a seat.

MONICA Thanks.

PAUL So, Monica. Thanks for coming and for applying for the post of Finance Assistant, which of course is why Maja is also here. You two do know each other, don't you?

MAJA Yes, I know Monica from reception but we've never really talked much, have we?

MONICA No. But I know who you are.

PAUL Good. Right. So, er. Thanks for filling in the application. Both myself and Maja have looked at it and what we'd like to do is ask you a few questions and, of course, give you time to ask us about the position. Although you already work here, in order to be fair we'll be structuring the interview in the same way as with an external applicant. Does that sound OK?

MONICA Yes. Great.

PAUL OK, so, did you get a chance to look at the job description I sent you?

MONICA Yes, I did. I also spoke to Chloe Watson about it and she gave me a lot of information about what the job involves.

PAUL Good. So essentially what we're looking for is someone who can help Maja and her team with their day-to-day administrative requirements but also someone who can use their initiative and help the whole Finance Department as and when things come up.

MONICA Yes, that's pretty much what Chloe said.

PAUL Good. So, can I start by asking why you applied for the job?

MONICA Well, I thought it looked like an interesting job, and one that I could do well. I've been on reception for a while now and I never intended to stay there forever. So when I saw this position being advertised I thought it would be a good opportunity to move up in the company.

MAJA Would you say you're quite ambitious, then?

MONICA Not especially, but I would like to do something a bit more challenging than reception ...

PAUL Can we talk a little more about your employment history, now?

MAJA Yes, I was looking at your CV and I saw that you worked with Reynolds and Waters – that's an accountancy firm, isn't it?

MONICA Yes, that's right.

MAJA What exactly were you doing for them?

MONICA Well it's a much smaller firm than this one so I did some reception work but I also acted as PA to three accountants. I was extremely busy and really had to learn to manage my time well.

MAJA So why did you leave? Was it too much for you?

MONICA No, not at all. I was on a temporary contract covering someone's maternity leave, so when she came back they had to let me go. No, I like being busy.

PAUL Makes the time pass quicker eh?!

MONICA No, I didn't mean ... It's just ... it's nice to have a job where you can use your own initiative.

MAJA That's interesting. And would you say you learned anything from working there that you could bring to this job?

MONICA Well, as I said, time management skills. I also learned about accounting, and the kind of software used in finance, which I imagine would come in handy in this job.

PAUL You mentioned using your initiative just now. Could you give us an example of a time when you have used your initiative? This could be with Reynolds and Waters or in your current position.

MONICA Yes. One example would be just last week. I'd noticed that our regular courier service has been performing poorly recently ... erm, with packages being picked up late on more than a few occasions. So I took it upon myself to compile a list of alternative suppliers and their rates which I passed onto Karina to look into. I think that demonstrates me taking initiative.

MAJA And you did this without being asked?

MONICA Yes that's right ...

PAUL Let's talk a little more about the position itself. Maja – I'm sure you have some more questions to ask Monica.

MAJA Yes, actually I wanted to tell you more about the job. It's a very demanding role. It's more than just basic office duties. The finance team needs someone they can rely on to organize the workload, deal with complicated data input ...

PAUL Yes, perhaps you could tell us what you think the biggest challenges would be and how you would overcome them.

MONICA Right well, I imagine at the start the biggest challenge would be getting to grips with the processes and the software and things. But I'm a fast learner and I'm not afraid to ask questions if I need to. Um, I imagine once I'd been in the job for a while, the main challenge would be managing my time well ... being able to do all of the administrative jobs, as well as being your PA, Maja.

MAJA And what do you think makes you the best candidate for the job?

MONICA Um, well, I suppose my knowledge of the company makes me a stronger

candidate than most people. Um ... I'm very enthusiastic and I get on well with people which I imagine is important in this sort of job.

PAUL OK. Well, thank you for answering our questions Monica. We have five minutes left. Are there any questions you'd like to ask us?

MONICA Yes, a couple of questions. Would I receive any kind of training for this job? For example, I saw in the job description it says I'll need to work with spreadsheets and basic software used in accounting. I'd need some help with that at the start.

PAUL Maja? Could you answer that?

MAJA Yes. I added that to the job description as something desirable rather than essential. So if we were to offer you the post, obviously we'd make sure you got the necessary training.

PAUL Anything else?

MONICA Well, are the work conditions the same in an office job as on reception? Is it the same working hours, holiday ...?

PAUL Ah, good question. I would need to look at the terms of your current employment before I could answer that. There are some differences between the jobs. Ah, yes, I should have looked into that before I came in. Can I email you the answer later on?

MONICA Yes, of course. Thanks.

PAUL OK, great. If you have any other questions you know where to find me. OK? Good.

MAJA Thanks for coming Monica.

MONICA Oh! There is one thing I forgot to ask. When will you know who's getting the job?

PAUL We're interviewing two more people tomorrow and the day after so I'll be able to tell you by the end of the week.

MONICA OK. Thanks.

PAUL Thanks Monica. Bye.

DVD 5.3

The expert view

We're going to explore job interviews from the point of view of both the interviewer and the candidate.

From the interviewer's perspective, finding the right candidate is vital. Recruitment can be an expensive process. We need to make sure that the interview gives a clear picture of the strengths and weaknesses of each candidate. Good preparation and interview technique can help make the process successful. Here are some key tips.

Make it comfortable for the candidate. Prepare the room. Make sure it is private and that there are no interruptions – be especially careful about phones – make sure they are set to silent. At the start of the meeting, explain clearly how the interview will work. And be prepared to answer any questions they have about what the job involves and the terms and conditions.

Prepare your questions in advance. To make the process fair, most of the questions should be the same for each candidate. You will only use different questions when exploring the detail of their CV or experience.

Use open questions: questions which require more than a yes or no answer. You want to find out as much as you can about the candidate. 'How' and 'What' questions are often the best. These encourage the candidate to explain what they are like, their motives and how they approach their work.

And try not to make judgments too soon. The purpose of the interview is to get to know and understand the candidate as well as you can. If you challenge them too much, they are less likely to be open about themselves. Generally, the more comfortable you make them feel, the more they will say.

Finally, make time for the candidate to ask you questions. The types of questions they ask will often indicate how much research they have done or how much they want the job.

So those are some key tips for the interviewer. What about when you are the candidate? These are the essentials.

First of all, show that you have done your research. You need to find out as much as you can about both the company and the position. Look at their website, search through news items and talk to people who know the company. During the interview, try to demonstrate that you have done this research. Mention interesting facts you have found or ask relevant questions.

Secondly, prepare positive answers. Many interviews have similar questions. For example, you will probably be asked about your job history and what you have learnt from previous jobs. Similarly, you will probably be asked what your strengths are and how you deal with challenges. Then there will be questions about the skills needed for the job and why you think you are the right candidate. In all cases, think carefully about what skills and qualities you want them to notice about you. Prepare examples you can describe to demonstrate your strengths.

Finally, prepare two or three questions which you would like to ask at the interview. If you can, ask questions which show that you have done your research and have thought carefully about the job.

Overall, you should be a positive version of yourself. Don't pretend to be perfect, but emphasize your strengths and enthusiasm. If you are discussing challenges or problems, make sure you mention the positives as well. Dress well, try to relax and remain friendly throughout the interview.

DVD 5.4

Analysis

→ See videoscript for Video 5.2

DVD 5.5

The expert feedback

Let's look at how the interview went. First of all, Paul. Generally, he does a good job as an interviewer. He starts the interview clearly, he asks good open questions and overall he makes it comfortable for Monica. He is a bit under-prepared though and can't provide Monica with details on the work conditions for the job.

The other interviewer, Maja, seems to judge and challenge too much. She uses less open questions than Paul and this makes the interview less comfortable. I also sense that Maja is trying to trap Monica into admitting negative qualities. For example, she asks Monica if she is ambitious and then later on, she challenges her about why she left her previous employer. I don't think this is a useful technique because it means that the candidate may become more cautious and say less.

In this case, Monica handles Maja's challenges well ... (extract of video 5.2)

I like the way Monica remains calm, and uses Maja's question to communicate that she likes being busy.

In fact, Monica follows many of the guidelines I outlined earlier. She shows that she is prepared and has researched the job, she's dressed suitably, and she's positive. She communicates directly that she is hard-working, that she feels fine about asking questions and that she likes to take the initiative. She's also able to give good examples. I particularly like the way she provides an example of taking the initiative. Notice how, in this extract, she provides the example and then reminds us what the example demonstrates ... (extract of video 5.2)

That's really clear and professional.

The only time Monica gets into trouble is when she's asked why she thinks she's the best candidate for the job. This is one of those common questions we need to prepare before the interview. I don't think Monica has – and it shows ... (extract of video 5.2)

Monica's answer is a bit vague. She says things like 'I suppose' and 'I guess' and she umms and errs a lot. She needed to be prepared for that question.

Overall, however, Monica does very well. She remains positive throughout, she seems honest and she doesn't allow the pressure to get to her. I think she has a good chance of getting the job.

DVD 5.6

Language focus: explaining the interview procedure

MONICA Hi Paul. Hi Maja.

MAJA Hello Monica. Do have a seat.

MONICA Thanks.

PAUL So, Monica. Thanks for coming and for applying for the post of Finance Assistant, which of course is why Maja is also here. You two do know each other, don't you?

MAJA Yes, I know Monica from reception but we've never really talked much, have we?

MONICA No. But I know who you are.

PAUL Good. Right. So, er. Thanks for filling in the application. Both myself and Maja have looked at it and what we'd like to do is ask you a few questions and, of course, give you time to ask us about the position. Although you already work here, in order to be fair we'll be structuring the interview in the same way as with an external applicant. Does that sound okay?

MONICA Yes. Great.

PAUL OK, so, did you get a chance to look at the job description I sent you?

MONICA Yes, I did. I also spoke to Chloe Watson about it and she gave me a lot of information about what the job involves.

PAUL Good. So essentially what we're looking for is someone who can help Maja and her team with their day-to-day administrative requirements but also someone who can use their initiative and help the whole Finance Department as and when things come up.

MONICA Yes, that's pretty much what Chloe said.

PAUL Good. So, can I start by asking why you applied for the job?

6 Teleconferencing

DVD 6.2

The meeting

MATT Hello?

MATT It doesn't sound like they're there yet.

DAVID What time is it with them?

MATT Sabine's in Germany so they're an hour ahead and I think she said her project manager's in Hong Kong.

DAVID Hong Kong? It must be the middle of the night there.

SABINE Hello? Hello? Anybody there? It's Sabine here.

MATT Hello Sabine. This is Matt.

SABINE Oh, hello Matt. How are you?

MATT I'm fine thanks.

SABINE Great.

MATT Sabine, we're waiting for Sanjit.

SABINE Yes, he's calling from Hong Kong. I believe it's about midnight there.

MATT OK. David is here with me as well. Remember you met him over here last time?

SABINE Of course. Hi David.
DAVID Hello Sabine.
SANJIT Hello?
MATT Hello? Sanjit?
SANJIT Hello?
MATT Hello Sanjit. This is Matt. Can you hear me? Sanjit? Oh! He's gone.
DAVID He must be having problems with the line.
SABINE Hi Matt?
MATT Sabine. We've lost Sanjit.
SABINE OK. Well let's start and hope he ...
SANJIT Hello?
MATT Sanjit?
SANJIT Yes? Hello? Is that Matt?
MATT Yes. Hi. We lost you.
SANJIT Yes. I don't know what happened the first time. I was cut off or something. And the line was bad.
MATT Oh, well, it sounds OK now. So, Sanjit, Sabine is on the line already.
SANJIT Hi Sabine.
SABINE Hi Sanjit. How's Hong Kong?
SANJIT Well so far I've only seen the airport and the hotel but it's fine.
MATT And Sanjit, I'm sitting here with David our Marketing Manager. I've invited him here so you can talk directly with him about the website pages.
DAVID Hello Sanjit.
SANJIT Hi David.
MATT And that's everyone. OK. So, let's begin. Can I check if you both got the agenda I emailed. Sabine?
SABINE Yes, I have it here.
MATT Good. Sanjit?
SANJIT Yes, I have it too.
MATT Great. So I wanted us to talk today because as you know the intranet is supposed to go live in two weeks, so we need to have an update on progress – that's the first item on the agenda. And then we can talk about the website and in particular the customer contact issues. So point one – the intranet. I believe there's been a few technical hitches. Am I right in saying it won't be ready to schedule now?
SABINE Well we might be able to put part of it ...
SANJIT Right, the problem is that there is ...
MATT Sorry, you're both talking at once. Sabine, can you speak first and then Sanjit. Sabine ... go ahead.
SABINE OK, so most of it is ready to go live. Our testers have found a slight problem with the discussion board.
MATT What sort of problem?
SABINE Well I think Sanjit can explain better ...
SANJIT Yes, the problem is that ...
MATT Right. So if you need two weeks to fix that, where does that leave our go-live date?
SABINE Matt, can I just say something for a second? I think Sanjit will need another week or so to check it all when he gets back.

MATT Sanjit?
SANJIT Yes?
MATT Sorry, I thought you were going to respond to that.
SANJIT Sorry, what was that?
MATT Will you need another week for the checks?
SANJIT I think that is realistic. I'd say the intranet will be ready for the thirtieth.
MATT OK, fine. Shall we move on to the company's website? I think David wanted to say some things. David, would you like to ...
SABINE Matt, just one more thing before we move on.
MATT Sorry, Sabine. What is it?
SABINE I think it is important that your testers also check it once the faults are fixed.
MATT Yes, of course, Sabine – we can do that at the same time as Sanjit does his testing. Anything else on the intranet? No?
OK. So, David, over to you.
DAVID Thanks, Matt. OK guys, there are basically three issues I'd like to discuss with you: one, the customer contact page, two, the placement of the logo, and three, the news panel at the top. OK?
SANJIT Yes.
SABINE Fine.
DAVID Firstly, the customer contact page. I think there are a couple of technical issues here ...
MATT Right. Well. I think that's everything. Thank you everyone ...
SABINE Matt? Before you go. I think we still need a separate conversation about the other issue.
MATT Other issue?
SABINE The contract.
MATT Oh, that issue. Yes, I need you to speak to our Finance Director about that. I'll email her and cc you in.
SABINE OK. But can we sort it out before the end of the month please?
MATT Sure. Thanks Sanjit. We'll let you go to bed now.
SANJIT Thanks. Bye Matt. Bye David.
DAVID Good night.
SABINE Bye Sanjit. Call me in the morning! He's gone. OK. Well, thanks Matt. Bye David.
MATT AND DAVID Bye.

DVD 6.3

The expert view

Taking part in a teleconference can be confusing. People cannot see each other, so there is a risk of misunderstanding and communication difficulties. In this unit we'll look at some simple ways to make the teleconference run smoothly. First, from the point of view of the leader of the teleconference. Secondly, from the point of view of the participant.

If you're the leader of the teleconference, you need to pay much more attention to the organization and process, than if you were leading a face-to-face meeting. For example: providing instructions for the

telephone number and any access codes; creating a clear agenda with timings, and sending out handouts or information early. It usually takes longer to discuss things in a teleconference, so keep the agenda short and be prepared to move discussions into separate calls or emails if necessary.

For the teleconference itself, it's important that you're the first one on the call so you can welcome participants as they join. As each person joins, you need to announce who has already joined and who else is expected. This seems repetitive, but it's important that people know who is present and who is not. It also gives people a chance to say hello and relax into the situation. Obviously, if it's a large group, you only need to summarize who is present occasionally. It's also important to start on time. It's unfair to make a group of people wait on the phone because one or two people are late.

As leader, it's your job to make sure only one person speaks at a time. The best way to do this is to say people's names before you ask them to comment. If you don't, you'll often find two or three people answering at the same time. Saying people's names all the time is what most people find unnatural at first but it does work. If you have a large group, it's a good idea to establish rules for the participants: asking only one person to speak at a time and asking them to announce who they are before they speak.

Now what about if you are participating in the teleconference? As I just mentioned, you should say who you are before you speak. This is true especially when you first join the call, but in a large group you need to do this every time you speak. But probably the biggest difficulty with teleconferences is staying focussed. Because no one can see you, you might decide to check emails or text messages while others are speaking. Obviously it's very embarrassing when someone asks you a question and you have no idea what the discussion was!

Finally, it's important to be very clear when speaking. A useful technique here is to outline what you're going to say first before you actually say it. For example, I might say something like 'I want to make a comment about Stefan's report' before I give my view. This helps people to focus before you say the important things.

DVD 6.4

Analysis

→ See videoscrypt for Video 6.2

DVD 6.5

The expert feedback

Probably the first thing you noticed at the start of the call was the number of technical problems. Sanjit had problems with the line

and there were awkward pauses as people joined the call. These sorts of things happen a lot in teleconferences. If you're leading the call, don't worry about them too much.

I like the way Matt introduces people to each other on the call. He also checks people have the agenda, that they're ready to start and he introduces the key items on the agenda first.

What Matt could do better is to use people's names first when asking for comments ... (extract of video 6.2)

Notice how quickly we get people speaking over each other when we don't use names. Matt needs to improve this part of his technique. Later on he does the same thing ... (extract of video 6.2)

Here, he interprets the silence as meaning that everything is OK. It would be much clearer if he asked Sanjit and Sabine directly for a response.

The other common problem I mentioned is maintaining your concentration during the call. Notice how Sanjit becomes distracted during the call ... (extract of video 6.2)

As I said, be very careful. Sanjit manages to recover from his mistake here but on another occasion he could look very unprofessional.

Finally, I mentioned earlier the importance of outlining what we are going to say before saying it. David gives us a lovely example of this ... (extract of video 6.2)

So, as we've seen, teleconferences are often difficult meetings. To help them run smoothly, we need to pay extra attention to organizing the call and using people's names.

DVD 6.6

Language focus: beginning a teleconference

SABINE Hello? Hello? Anybody there? It's Sabine here.

MATT Hello Sabine. This is Matt.

SABINE Oh, hello Matt. How are you?

MATT I'm fine thanks.

SABINE Great.

MATT Sabine, we're waiting for Sanjit.

SABINE Yes, he's calling from Hong Kong. I believe it's about midnight there.

MATT OK. David is here with me as well. Remember you met him over here last time?

SABINE Of course. Hi David.

DAVID Hello Sabine.

SANJIT Hello?

MATT Hello? Sanjit?

SANJIT Hello?

MATT Hello Sanjit. This is Matt. Can you hear me? Sanjit? Oh! He's gone.

DAVID He must be having problems with the line.

SABINE Hi Matt?

MATT Sabine. We've lost Sanjit.

SABINE OK. Well let's start and hope he ...

SANJIT Hello?

MATT Sanjit?

SANJIT Yes? Hello? Is that Matt?

MATT Yes. Hi. We lost you.

SANJIT Yes. I don't know what happened the first time. I was cut off or something. And the line was bad.

MATT Oh, well, it sounds OK now. So, Sanjit, Sabine is on the line already.

SANJIT Hi Sabine.

SABINE Hi Sanjit. How's Hong Kong?

7 Negotiating

DVD 7.2

The negotiation

SABINE OK. So is that everything?

MATT Nearly. There's just one thing left which has come to me from my Finance Director.

SABINE Oh yes?

MATT Your invoice of last month. There's a supplementary charge for the website.

SABINE That's right. Are you talking about the extra costs for the marketing pages?

MATT Yes. Why isn't that work included as part of the main cost?

SABINE Well, because when we drew up the contract, 70% of the fee was for the intranet costs as it was going to be a much more complex project. But your Marketing Department has requested many changes and additions which weren't part of the agreement.

MATT But there's a clause in the contract which covers additional work.

SABINE Well, it says any additional work will be charged over and above the agreed fee.

MATT Yes, I know the clause you mean. But it also says that any fee for this kind of work must be agreed by both parties.

SABINE But when your Marketing people emailed me with their requests I checked with you at the time.

MATT But only the actual changes.

SABINE So you're saying we should have renegotiated on this price?

MATT I'm saying we should have discussed any additional fees. I wasn't aware that this part of the job was going to be costed separately. Look, I'm sure we can resolve this. How would you feel about including this cost in the intranet costs because that side of the project has in fact been easier than any of us expected.

SABINE But they are two different jobs. I don't think we can talk about them as the same thing. The fact is that website has become a much bigger project than we originally agreed on. So I'm sorry but we can't agree to that.

MATT There is also an issue of the late fee. Both projects have run over time and there's a clause in the contract for this.

SABINE Yes but Matt. Come on! The

intranet is ready.

MATT More or less. We still have some glitches.

SABINE Well, the website is only delayed because of Marketing. Look. What are your main concerns here? The dates for this or just the amount of the last invoice.

MATT Well both Sabine. I'm under a lot of pressure from my people asking why there are so many delays and now there are additional costs.

SABINE OK, Matt. Let's see if we can work this out. I want to check I understand you correctly first. So, your main concern is the existence of additional costs when there are delays and the fact that people are putting you under pressure. Is that right?

MATT That's it.

SABINE OK. Well, I think we may be able to resolve this. I can probably work something out regarding the fees on this occasion but my main concern is that I don't want to find myself in a position in the future where I don't get paid for additional work requested by other departments. Does that make sense?

MATT Sure.

SABINE In which case what I propose is this: first, let's forget the additional fee for this month. In return, would you agree to dropping any late fees this time?

MATT I think that would be OK. I'm still concerned about the delays though.

SABINE Absolutely. I quite understand. So the second part of my proposal relates to the delays. Now, obviously, there's nothing I can do about delays so far and, as I say, I think these have come from both sides. The problem has been more to do with the communication between us when Marketing have approached me with more changes and requests. Does that sound fair?

MATT Yes. I simply needed clearer estimates from you in terms of the additional costs and times involved.

SABINE OK. So, in future I suggest we make it clear that if there are any further changes and major work, we need to talk. That way you'll be up to date on progress and you won't be receiving any nasty surprises when the invoice arrives. At the same time, I won't be worried about putting in additional work for free.

MATT That sounds ... good, I think. One thing: I think any agreements we make for additional work and time should also be confirmed in writing.

SABINE That's a really sensible idea. I need to spend as much time on this project myself as I can – so would you be prepared to take on the responsibility for drafting these agreements?

MATT Sure. I'd prefer it that way myself.

SABINE Great.

MATT So, just to be clear, we've agreed that you will send me the replacement invoice, taking off the additional charges and that I'll forget about the late fees. And we've also agreed that in future, you will approach

me as soon as you've been asked to do anything extra which will affect progress and additional costs.

SABINE And that you'll draft confirmations following any discussions.

MATT Great. That makes life easier. I'll confirm this agreement in writing too.

SABINE Actually, Matt. Now we've got that out of the way, I need to speak to you because Marketing have just told they want changes made to the customers pages ...

DVD 7.3

The expert view

Negotiation is a process of reaching agreement when two sides disagree. We're going to look at a particular approach to negotiation known as 'Win-Win'. This is an approach which aims to reach agreements which are satisfying for both sides. In other words, it's about reaching agreement, not beating our opponent.

When people disagree about something, they often become fixed in an attitude of 'I'm right, you're wrong'. The negotiation stops being about reaching the right agreement and starts being a fight where each person is trying to prove that the other person is wrong. Win-win negotiation is about stopping this from happening. It has three principles. The first principle is that we don't make it personal. If we allow negative emotions to grow, we won't reach agreement. The second principle is that we focus on the real issue. Often, we only see things from our own point of view. If we try to remain objective and allow ourselves to see the other person's point of view, things start to look quite different. The third principle is to look for the solution that benefits both people: the win-win agreement.

So what does this mean in practice? What can you do to create a win-win solution? The most important techniques are these: To stop things becoming too personal, you should show that you understand their interests. Stay calm, empathize with their concerns by saying things like 'I understand' or 'I see'. Show that you want to reach a positive solution by saying things like 'Let's see if we can work this out' or 'I think we can reach agreement'.

In order to concentrate on the real issue, you need to check what that real issue is. Find out from the other person what their concerns are. Often the best way to do this is to tell them what you think their concerns are and then ask them if you've got it right. They will either agree with you or, more importantly, tell you the truth. When you know what their concerns are, you can then be honest about your own interests. By being open, you start to develop trust and it becomes easier to work together.

Once you start to develop an agreement, you need to check that both you and they

are happy at each stage. You might spend a lot of time identifying what each person can do to help the situation. This needs to be balanced, with each person agreeing to do one thing in exchange for another. So you'll say things like 'If I did this, would you be prepared to do that?' and so on.

Eventually, you'll find that you have come to an agreement. Don't stop there. Summarize with each other precisely what each person has agreed to do. We don't want any misunderstandings later on. As you can see, negotiation isn't a simple process. It can take time and care. But the key principles are: Don't make it personal – stay in control of your emotions. Concentrate on the real issue. Finally, look for the mutual solution. Make it win-win, not win-lose.

DVD 7.4

Analysis

→ See videascript for Video 7.2

DVD 7.5

The expert feedback

In the first part of the conversation, we see both Sabine and Matt becoming a little angry. Matt wants Sabine to reduce her invoice. Sabine doesn't like the idea of not getting paid for work which she has been asked to do.

Fortunately, Sabine is a very good negotiator. She manages to keep control of her emotions and tries to work out what the real issues are ... (extract of video 7.2)

Notice how Sabine asked Matt directly what his concerns were, then carefully said back to him her understanding of his situation. By doing this, the conversation became less emotional and more focussed on finding a proper solution. Notice also how she keeps things positive by saying 'Let's see if we can work this out'. In fact she does a very similar thing when she lets Matt know what her own concerns are ... (extract of video 7.2)

By checking that Matt understands her concerns, Sabine is able to negotiate some actions. She offered to remove the extra costs in the invoice on condition that Matt drops the late fee. Both of them agree to do things together. They've stopped fighting and are starting to collaborate.

Sabine is most impressive when she identifies the real issue which needs to be resolved. It's not about her fees. It's about the communication between them ... (extract of video 7.2)

This is great stuff. By focussing on both their interests, Sabine has identified the real issue. I love the way in which she proposes her solution and carefully explains how it solves both her and Matt's concerns ... (extract of video 7.2)

They both do well to carefully summarize everything that's been agreed ...

(extract of video 7.2)

Agreement has been reached. It hasn't become too personal. Both people are aware of each other's interests, and the solution focusses on the real issue of communication.

DVD 7.6

Language focus: negotiating contracts and fees

SABINE OK. So is that everything?

MATT Nearly. There's just one thing left which has come to me from my Finance Director.

SABINE Oh yes?

MATT Your invoice of last month. There's a supplementary charge for the website.

SABINE That's right. Are you talking about the extra costs for the marketing pages?

MATT Yes. Why isn't that work included as part of the main cost?

SABINE Well, because when we drew up the contract, 70% of the fee was for the intranet costs as it was going to be a much more complex project. But your Marketing Department has requested many changes and additions which weren't part of the agreement.

MATT But there's a clause in the contract which covers additional work.

SABINE Well, it says any additional work will be charged over and above the agreed fee.

MATT Yes, I know the clause you mean. But it also says that any fee for this kind of work must be agreed by both parties.

SABINE But when your marketing people emailed me with their requests I checked with you at the time.

MATT But only the actual changes.

SABINE So you're saying we should have renegotiated on this price?

MATT I'm saying we should have discussed any additional fees. I wasn't aware that this part of the job was going to be costed separately. Look. I'm sure we can resolve this. How would you feel about including this cost in the intranet costs because that side of the project has in fact been easier than any of us expected.

SABINE But they are two different jobs. I don't think we can talk about them as the same thing.

8 Appraisals

DVD 8.2

The Meeting

PAUL OK, page one includes your performance rating at the end of this so let's come back to that later. Can we start with page two? I'd like us to discuss the core areas of your job and how well you think they've been achieved this year. So number one is researching and responding to the

training needs within different departments. How well do you think you've achieved this so far?

MARIA OK. As you know in my previous job I was only responsible for training in the area of customer service. So researching into the training needs of other areas of business was something quite new. It took me some time to work out how to approach the process. And I think that's something that needs more work this year so there are clear processes in place for finding out department training needs and then following up the progress afterwards.

PAUL So perhaps we should set this as one of your objectives for the next 12 months.

MARIA Yes, I'd say that's a good idea.

PAUL OK. How would you like to define that objective?

MARIA Let me see ... How about ... 'To set up a clear process for finding out department training needs'? Something as simple as that?

PAUL So when would the process be actually in place?

MARIA Um ... in two months.

PAUL Do you think two months is realistic? I'm aware that you'll be very busy soon setting up the new coaching programme.

MARIA Actually, you're right – I'd forgotten about that. Perhaps three months would be more realistic.

PAUL OK. So ... in three months' time the new process for finding out department's training needs will be in place with all departments briefed on the new system. Are you happy with that?

MARIA Yes. Sounds good ...

PAUL So that brings us onto page three and strengths and weaknesses. What do you feel are your main strengths?

MARIA Well, I feel fairly confident about my own abilities as a trainer but some of the skills of a manager are new to me. But overall, the whole project management side of things has gone well. I really enjoy working with department heads and setting up different training projects for their staff.

PAUL Right. A lot of what you've said relates to your ability to deal with senior people. This is a key requirement in your job. You deal with the department heads in an assertive and helpful way. Just the other day, Matt in IT mentioned how impressed he was at the calm way you dealt with the double-booking on the spreadsheet training.

MARIA Thanks. That's nice to hear.

PAUL Let's move on. On the subject of management, do you feel that you are weak in any area?

MARIA I suppose time management has been the hardest thing for me. It's been hard to know what to spend most of my time on. I think I'm getting better now I understand the job more.

PAUL Yes, I'd agree with you there. I think your overall organizational skills are fine but that some of your time management skills and how you handle priorities could improve.

MARIA Well, as I say, I'm learning the skill on the job.

PAUL Yes. At the same time, it's important to finish everything within your normal working hours.

MARIA I know! But I always feel there's one more thing to do before I leave.

PAUL But as a manager, you never finish everything on your desk. Some things will always wait until the next day.

MARIA Yes, I think I'm starting to learn that.

PAUL Do you have any idea on how you might deal with this? Or any help that you might require? A training course for yourself perhaps?

MARIA I don't think a training course would help, but sometimes I do wish there was someone I could turn to when things are busy and I feel less sure of my priorities. Just someone to turn to informally for guidance.

PAUL I'd be happy to be that person if you feel comfortable.

MARIA Would you? I think that would make a real difference. It would give me a greater sense of security ...

PAUL OK, if we look at page one. Here you will have seen the performance ratings scores. How would you score yourself overall?

MARIA I suppose ... well overall I would give myself a 'performing well' rating. As we've discussed there are areas I need to work on ...

PAUL Sure. So shall we agree on 'performing well'? In many ways I'd rate your performance as excellent, especially in many of your core areas. But as we agreed, I think this year some of your core management skills around time management and prioritization need work on. Are you OK? You seem disappointed.

MARIA No, I'm fine, I guess. I wasn't expecting an 'excellent' rating. It's just, it's just I like to do a really good job.

PAUL Maria, you have done a really good job. Yes, we've identified some areas for improvement but that's only to be expected. At the same time, the overall picture is really good. You've established yourself well in your role. Your communication skills are outstanding. People like and respect you. I'd say for your first year, this has been a really good start. Does that sound fair?

MARIA Yes. Thank you. You're right, I shouldn't be so tough on myself.

PAUL It's fine. I feel the same sometimes. OK. I'll type this up and get a copy for you to sign by the end of the week. Is there anything you'd like to ask or talk about before we finish?

DVD 8.3

The expert view

Most people worry about appraisals. It can be uncomfortable to be assessed, especially if your company grades performance. But appraisals play an important role in clarifying the future. By setting objectives, we can organize our priorities in the months ahead. By giving or receiving feedback, we learn what we need to keep doing and how we can improve. So in this section we'll look at how we set objectives, and how we give feedback.

Let's look at objectives first of all. The guideline for setting objectives is that they should be SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-based. By specific, we mean that an objective shouldn't be vague or imprecise – it should be a clearly defined task. By measurable, we mean that it's easy to judge when an objective has been achieved and we can objectively measure progress, for example from customer feedback, sales figures, and so on. An objective should also be achievable, in other words it should be possible for someone to do it. If we set an objective which is too hard, the person will become demoralized and their motivation will suffer. It should also be relevant and clearly connected with the work that they do, and finally, there should be a time period for the objective, with a deadline when progress can be reviewed.

So that's SMART objectives. Now let's focus on feedback. There are two types of feedback: positive feedback, where we tell someone what they are doing well, and improvement feedback, where we examine how they can improve in the future. With all feedback, it's important that we are specific and provide examples or evidence of the behaviour. To make the feedback more powerful, we can also describe the impact that behaviour has on others. For example, if I'm told that my attention to detail in a report led to us winning more business, I'm more likely to recognize the importance of my skills. Or, if I'm told that my being late has caused others in the team to work longer hours, I will see that my actions have an effect on other people, not just myself.

With positive feedback, it can be especially powerful to provide third-party endorsement. This means telling them that the behaviour has been noticed by other people, not just you. If I learn that my performance is being noticed by a senior manager, I'm going to feel really good. With improvement feedback, we need to be careful that they don't interpret the feedback as a judgment of them as a person. We need to put things into perspective. We need to stress that we're talking about one specific behaviour and remind them of areas where they perform well.

To finish the positive feedback, it's worth explaining to them the precise skills they have demonstrated. We want people to continue doing what they do well. By telling them directly what skills they have, they will feel encouraged to continue using those skills. With improvement feedback it's different. We want them to change their behaviour. And the best way to do this is to look for solutions. Appraisals are not about blame. They are about what happens in the future. It's a good idea to ask them how they think they can improve things and to discuss what kind of support they need.

So there are two models for feedback: S-I-T-S or Sits for positive feedback and S-I-P-S or Sips for improvement feedback. Finally, I want to stress that, both for objectives and feedback, the more you ask questions and get them to create their own objectives and plan their improvement, the more motivated they will be. Try not to tell them everything. A good appraisal is a collaboration, not a lecture.

DVD 8.4

Analysis

→ See videocript for Video 8.2

DVD 8.5

The expert feedback

Let's analyse what happened in Maria's appraisal. Objectives first of all. Paul encourages Maria to form her own objective. He then asks whether her objective is achievable. Finally, he summarizes their discussion by defining a proper SMART objective. He has obviously been listening carefully, making sure in his own mind that Maria is being SMART... (extract of video 6.2)

Let's move on to the positive feedback. Paul lets Maria know that she handles senior people well. He also uses third-party endorsement by mentioning that Matt in IT was impressed with her. But Paul could have spent more time describing to Maria the impact of her behaviour, perhaps like this:

Alternative version

PAUL ... And you deal with the department heads in an assertive and helpful way. Just the other day, Matt in IT mentioned how impressed he was at the calm way you dealt with the double-booking on the spreadsheet training.

MARIA Thanks. That's nice to hear.

PAUL Well, it could have been a very difficult situation. Because you're comfortable dealing with senior people, they have more faith in you and in the service that training provides. So I'm happy to give you an 'Excellent' rating both in your ability to deal with senior people and in your interpersonal skills overall. Well done.

The expert feedback (continued)

I think that version would encourage Maria much more.

Overall, Paul is very good at creating a collaborative discussion. He always asks Maria for her opinion before giving his own point of view.

So what about Paul's improvement feedback? Paul handles Maria sensitively, but I'd prefer him to be more specific about Maria's time management and, most importantly, to describe the impact of this weakness. Here's an alternative version where Paul does just that:

Alternative version

MARIA I suppose time management has been the hardest thing for me. It's been hard to know what to spend most of my time on. I think I'm getting better now I understand the job more.

PAUL Yes, I'd agree with you there. I think your overall organizational skills are fine but that some of your time management skills and how you handle priorities could improve. I've noticed you working late quite a lot and I also know that you were late handing in your budget recommendations, which naturally led to them having to delay budget approvals. What do you think?

The expert feedback (continued)

It's important that Maria recognizes how her actions have an impact on others. She's more likely to change her behaviour as a result.

Paul also demonstrates 'seeking solutions' with Maria. He doesn't tell her what to do, he asks her what help she might need ... (extract of video 6.2)

Finally, we saw how Maria was still a bit disappointed after a mostly positive appraisal. People often focus on the negative even when almost everything is positive. This is why it's so important for us to provide perspective when talking about weaknesses and improvements

DVD 8.6

Language focus: encouraging self-evaluation

PAUL I'd like us to discuss the core areas of your job and how well you think they've been achieved this year. So number one is researching and responding to the training needs within different departments. How well do you think you've achieved this so far?

MARIA OK. As you know in my previous job I was only responsible for training in the area of customer service. So researching into the training needs of other areas of business was something quite new. It took me some time to work out how to approach the process. And I think that's something that needs more work this year so there are clear processes in place for finding

out department training needs and then following up the progress afterwards.

PAUL So perhaps we should set that as one of your objectives for the next 12 months.

MARIA Yes, I'd say that's a good idea.

PAUL OK. How would you like to define that objective?

MARIA Let me see ... How about ... 'To set up a clear process for finding out department training needs'. Something as simple as that?

...

PAUL So that brings us onto page three and strengths and weaknesses. What do you feel are your main strengths?

MARIA Well, I feel fairly confident about my own abilities as a trainer but some of the skills of a manager are new to me. But overall, the whole project management side of things has gone well. I really enjoy working with department heads and setting up different training projects for their staff ...

PAUL Let's move on. On the subject of management, do you feel that you are weak in any area?

MARIA I suppose time management has been the hardest thing for me. It's been hard to know what to spend most of my time on. I think I'm getting better now I understand the job more ...

PAUL Do you have any idea on how you might deal with this? Or any help that you might require? A training course for yourself perhaps?

MARIA I don't think a training course would help, but sometimes I do wish there was someone I could turn to when things are busy and I feel less sure of my priorities. Just someone to turn to informally for guidance ...

PAUL OK if we look at page one. Here you will have seen the performance ratings scores. How would you score yourself overall?

MARIA I suppose ... well overall I would give myself a 'performing well' rating. As we've discussed there are areas I need to work on ...

PAUL Sure. So shall we agree on 'performing well'?

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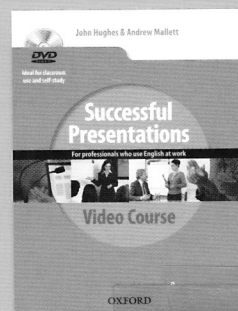
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