

Business communication prepositions and determiners pairwork speaking game

Student A

Choose one section below and read out sentences **without saying the word in bold** (e.g. "I will give recommendations BLANK dot dot dot" or "BEEP first problem with this is its price") until your partner guesses the missing word. They can **only guess once per sentence**. If you run out of example sentences without them guessing correctly, give them other hints, or make up more example sentences. You can use the same section more than once if you haven't used all the examples there yet.

A

Do you have **a** business card?

Have **a** good weekend.

Hmm, that's **a** difficult question.

Hope you had **a** good weekend.

I also have **a** question about...

I think I can suggest **a** compromise.

It was **a** pleasure to meet you.

It's **a** deal.

Just **a** minute. I'm looking for the information now.

Just **a** moment while I write that down.

Please take **a** seat.

Sorry, I can't hear you very well. Can you speak **a** little more loudly?

Sorry, could you possibly speak **a** little more slowly?

That's a pity./ That's **a** shame.

About

How **about** splitting the difference?

I'm afraid I have another meeting at that time. What **about** Friday afternoon?

I'm phoning **about** the marketing plan.

I'm writing to you **about** our meeting next week.

John, what do you think **about** that?

We'll think **about** it.

You also asked us **about** the possibility of...

At

If you look **at** page 73, you will see...

This is Steve. John and Jane are also here. Can I check who's **at** that end?

What are you working on **at** the moment?

Back

Yes, please. Can you ask him to call me **back**?

Can I check that **back**?/ Can I read that **back**?

Any

Anyway, we have to leave this room at six, so shall we get started?

Did you have **any** problems finding us?/ Did you have **any** trouble getting here?

Do you have **any** other meetings today?
Do you have **any** plans for the weekend?
I won't keep you **any** longer.
If you have **any** questions, I'll be very happy to answer them now.
If you need **any** more information, please do not hesitate to contact me.
Is there **anything** else that we need to discuss?
I'd like to apologise for **any** inconvenience caused.
There don't seem to be **any** more questions, so I'll stop there.

Down

Sorry, could you write that **down** for me?
Well, it's been great to chat but let's get **down** to business, shall we?

From

I'm looking forward to hearing **from** you.
I'm afraid she's away **from** her desk. Would you like to leave a message?

In

I am writing to you **in** connection with...
In answer to your second question,...
Let's speak again **in** two weeks.
Sorry, can I come **in** here?
Thanks for taking part **in** today's meeting.
Thanks **in** advance.
What time is it now **in** New York?

Your

Does that answer **your** question?
How has **your** day been (so far)?/ How has **your** week been (so far)?
How was **your** flight?
How was **your** weekend?
I look forward to **your** call.
Okay. I'll make sure that he gets **your** message./ I'll pass **your** message on to him.
Thank you for **your** quick reply.
Thanks for all **your** great contributions.
Thanks for **your** email.
Thanks for **your** help.
Yes, what's **your** question, please?

With

We were very sorry to hear about your problems **with** our products.
I hope that is acceptable **with** you.
Can I help you **with** anything else today?

Switch worksheets with your partner and do the same activity again, this time making sure that you start with the most difficult examples (because they have already seen those examples).

Student B

Choose one section below and read out sentences **without saying the word in bold** (e.g. "I will give recommendations BLANK dot dot dot" or "BEEP first problem with this is its price") until your partner guesses the missing word. They can **only guess once per sentence**. If you run out of example sentences without them guessing correctly, give them other hints, or make up more example sentences. You can use the same section more than once if you haven't used all the examples there yet.

For

Have you finished **for** today?
Hi Jon. Thanks **for** phoning me back.
I'll schedule another teleconference **for** the week after next.
I'm afraid that is a little too low **for** us.
Sorry **for** my late reply.
Thanks **for** calling.
Well then, what can I do **for** you today?

My

Can I introduce you to one of **my** colleagues?
I'll do **my** best.
I'm Alex and **my** colleagues Steve and Geoff are here too.
I'm Helen Armstrong, the head of HR, and this is **my** colleague James Hadfield.

Of

I'm afraid we've run out **of** time.
Last **of** all, I was wondering if you could tell me...
Of course. Please go ahead.

On

I think we've already been quite generous **on** this.
It seems that we both agree **on** this.
I'd love to come, but unfortunately I'm flying to America **on** that day.
I'll let you get **on**, then.
I'm afraid he's **on** another line. Can I take a message?
Okay, I can be flexible **on** that./ I can move **on** that.
I can shake **on** that.

Some

Could you possibly send me **some** information on...?
I'd also like **some** information about...
See you again **sometime**.
We're having **some** problems with the equipment.

The

All **the** best
How's **the** weather over there now?
If you have any questions, I'll be happy to answer them at **the** end.

Is this **the** right place for the new English course?
I'm afraid that's **the** best I can do.
Let's move on to **the** next point on the agenda.
Please find **the** agenda attached.
Please hold **the** line. I'll check if he's available.
Sorry, I didn't catch **the** last thing that you said.
Sorry, can you spell **the** last word for me?
That brings me to **the** end of my presentation.
The topic of my presentation is...

This

Is **this** seat free?
Thanks for coming to **this** presentation so early in the morning.
Is **this** your first time in Tokyo?

To

Great **to** see you again.
I hope we have the chance **to** meet again soon.
It was lovely **to** see you again.
It's so nice **to** finally meet you.
Okay. I'm willing **to** accept that.
Okay. Speak **to** you then.
Pleased **to** meet you.
Sorry **to** interrupt.
This is Alex. Can I speak **to** Mr Jones, please?
To summarise **our** discussion,...
Turning **to** the second topic,...
We regret **to** inform you that...
We seem **to** have covered everything.
Yes, what would you like **to** know?

Up

It's been nice to catch **up**, but we have a lot to get through today, so shall we get started?
Someone else is waiting to use this room, so we'd better wrap things **up** there.
To sum **up** what we've agreed,...

- (= nothing)

See you – tomorrow
How's – business?
I'd like to meet – next week, if you are available then.
See you – next week.
That's – great news.

Switch worksheets with your partner and do the same activity again, this time making sure that you start with the most difficult examples (because they have already seen those examples).

Brainstorming stage

Without looking above, try to write at least two suitable phrases in each section below.

Starting**Meeting people/ Starting conversations****Small talk/ Social language at the start****Starting teleconferences****Starting telephone calls****Starting emails (opening lines, after “Dear Mr...” etc)****Starting presentations****Ending small talk/ Getting down to business****Body (of the email, call, conversation, presentation, etc)****Requests****Talking about documents**

Moving on/ Changing topics

Turn taking (interrupting, etc)

Asking people to wait

Dictation/ Taking and leaving messages

Checking/ Clarifying/ Dealing with communication problems

Making arrangements (fixing meetings, etc)

Apologising/ Dealing with complaints/ Giving bad news

Asking for information/ Enquiries

Giving information/ Answering enquiries

Negotiating – making proposals

Negotiating – positive responses

Negotiating – negative responses

Ending
Ending presentations (Q&A, etc)

Summarising

Checking that you have finished

Finishing conversations

Ending telephone calls

Ending emails

Ending meetings

Small talk/ Social language at the end

Mentioning the next contact between you

Look above for ideas, brainstorm more, then compare with the phrases below.

Suggested answers

Meeting people/ Starting conversations

Is **this** seat free?

Is this **the** right place **for the** new English course?

Small talk/ Social language at the start

Did you have **any** problems finding us?/ Did you have **any** trouble getting here?

Great **to** see you again.

How has **your** day been (so far)?/ How has **your** week been (so far)?

How was **your** flight?

How was **your** weekend?

How's – business?

I'm Helen Armstrong, **the** head **of** HR, and this is **my** colleague James Hadfield.

Is **this your** first time in Tokyo?

It's so nice **to** finally meet you.

Please take **a** seat.

Pleased **to** meet you.

That's – great news.

That's **a** pity./ That's **a** shame.

What are you working **on at the** moment?

Starting teleconferences

How's **the** weather over there now?

I'm Alex and **my** colleagues Steve and Geoff are here too.

This is Steve. John and Jane are also here. Can I check who's **at that** end?

We're having **some** problems **with the** equipment.

What time is it now **in** New York?

Starting telephone calls

Hi Jon. Thanks **for** phoning me **back**.

I'm phoning **about the** marketing plan.

This is Alex. Can I speak **to** Mr Jones, please?

Starting emails (opening lines, after “Dear Mr...” etc)

Hope you had **a** good weekend.

I am writing to you **in** connection **with**...

I'm writing to you **about our** meeting next week.

Sorry **for my** late reply.

Thank you **for your** quick reply.

Thanks **for your** email.

Starting presentations

If you have **any** questions, I'll be happy to answer them **at the** end.

Thanks for coming **to this** presentation so early **in the** morning.

The topic **of** my presentation is...

Ending small talk/ Getting down to business

Anyway, we have to leave **this** room **at** six, so shall we get started?

It's been nice to catch **up**, but we have **a** lot to get **through** today, so shall we get started?

Well, it's been great **to** chat but let's **get down to** business, shall we?

Well then, what can I do **for** you today?

Requests

Could you possibly send me **some** information on...?

Would it be possible **for** you **to**...?

Talking about documents

If you look **at** page 73, you will see...

Please find **the** agenda attached.

Moving on/ Changing topics

Let's move **on to the** next point **on the** agenda.

Turning **to the** second topic,...

Turn taking (interrupting, etc)

John, what do you think **about** that?

Of course. Please go **ahead**.

Sorry **to** interrupt.

Sorry, can I come **in** here?

Asking people to wait

Just **a** moment while I write that **down**.

Just **a** minute. I'm looking **for** the information now.

Please hold **the** line. I'll check if he's available.

Dictation/ Taking and leaving messages

Can I check that **back**?/ Can I read that **back**?

I'm afraid she's **away from her** desk. Would you like **to** leave **a** message?

I'm afraid he's **on another** line. Can I take **a** message?

Okay. I'll make sure that he gets **your** message./ I'll pass **your** message **on to** him.

Yes, please. Can you ask him to call me **back**?

Checking/ Clarifying/ Dealing with communication problems

Sorry, I can't hear you very well. Can you speak **a** little more loudly?

Sorry, I didn't catch **the** last thing that you said.

Sorry, can you spell **the** last word **for** me?

Sorry, could you possibly speak **a** little more slowly?

Sorry, could you write that **down for** me?

Making arrangements (fixing meetings, etc)

I'd like to meet – next week, if you are available then.

I'd love **to** come, but unfortunately I'm flying **to** America **on that** day.

I'm afraid I have another meeting **at** that time. What **about** Friday afternoon?

Apologising/ Dealing with complaints/ Giving bad news

I'd like **to** apologise for **any** inconvenience caused.

We regret **to** inform you that...

We were very sorry to hear **about your** problems **with** our products.

Asking for information/ Enquiries

I also have **a** question about...

I'd also like **some** information about...

Last **of** all, I was wondering if you could tell me...

Giving information/ Answering enquiries

In answer **to your** second question,...

You also asked us **about** the possibility of...

Negotiating – making proposals

How **about** splitting **the** difference?

I think I can suggest **a** compromise.

Negotiating – positive responses

It's **a** deal.

Okay, I can be flexible **on** that./ I can move **on** that.

Okay. I'm willing **to** accept that.

I can shake **on** that.

Negotiating – negative responses

I think we've already been quite generous **on** this.

I'll do **my** best.

I'm afraid that is **a** little too low **for** us.

I'm afraid that's **the** best I can do.

We'll think **about** it.

Ending presentations (Q&A, etc)

Does that answer **your** question?

Hmm, that's **a** difficult question.

If you have **any** questions, I'll be very happy **to** answer them now.

That brings me to **the** end **of** my presentation.

There don't seem to be **any** more questions, so I'll stop there.

Yes, what would you like **to** know?

Yes, what's **your** question, please?

Summarising

To sum **up** what we've agreed,...

To summarise **our** discussion,...

Checking that you have finished

Is there **anything** else that we need **to** discuss?

We seem **to** have covered everything.

Finishing conversations

Can I introduce you **to** one **of my** colleagues?

Do you have **a** business card?

I won't keep you **any** longer.

I'll let you get **on**, then.

Ending telephone calls

Can I help you **with anything** else today?

Thanks for **your** help.

Thanks **for** calling.

Ending emails

All **the** best

I hope that is acceptable **with** you.

If you need **any** more information, please do not hesitate **to** contact me.

I'm looking forward **to** hearing **from** you.

Thanks **in** advance.

Ending meetings

It seems that we both agree **on** this.

I'm afraid we've run **out of** time.

Someone else is waiting to use **this** room, so we'd better wrap things **up** there.

Thanks for all **your** great contributions.

Thanks for taking part **in** today's meeting.

Small talk/ Social language at the end

Have you finished **for** today?

Do you have **any** other meetings today?

Do you have **any** plans **for the** weekend?

Have **a** good weekend.

It was **a** pleasure **to** meet you.

It was lovely **to** see you again.

Mentioning the next contact between you

I hope we have the chance **to** meet again soon.

I look forward **to your** call.

See you – tomorrow.

I'll schedule **another** teleconference **for the** week **after** next.

Let's speak again **in** two weeks.

Okay. Speak **to** you then.

See you again **sometime**.

See you – next week.

Choose one section above, say the heading, then help your partner complete all the sentences in it with blanked sentences, etc.