

Starting and ending meetings

Spend a few minutes chatting about topics from here:

- A recent sports match
- The weather
- The news
- Recent celebrity gossip
- A recent movie/ Going to the cinema
- This week/ This weekend/ This morning/ Last night
- Travelling here
- How well they know this city or area
- How they've been since last time you met them
- The last time you met
- Their colleagues or friends that you know
- Their appearance/ clothes

*Which of the topics above are most suitable for chitchat as you come into a meeting?
Does it depend on culture or any other things?*

What other topics of conversation are and aren't suitable in this situation?

What phrases can you use to go from the small talk stage into the meeting for real?

Getting down to business

Which of the phrases and actions on the next page wouldn't be suitable for you to use in business in this kind of situation?

- If I could have your attention, please
- *(cough cough cough)*
- Right, let's get down to business, shall we?
- Shall we get started?
- If everyone is here, perhaps we can begin.
- We've got a lot to get through this morning, so let's make a start.
- If everyone's got a drink, perhaps we can start by...
- Oy!
- Hello!
- *(clicking your fingers)*
- *(hitting the side of a glass with a pen or spoon)*
- *(rapping your knuckles on the table)*
- Right, here's the first slide.
- Quieten down please.
- I guess it's time to begin.
- Can everyone take a seat so that we can get started?
- It's been great to chat, but I know your time is precious so I'll get started, if you don't mind.
- Actually, that's connected to what I wanted to talk about today, which is...
- *(turning on the projector)*
- *(bringing up the first PowerPoint slide)*
- You really must tell me more about that after the meeting.
- Please look at the agenda in front of you.
- Sorry, if we could just...
- Okay, it's half past ten so we should really get going.
- Can we bring the meeting to order, please?
- I hate to interrupt you all, but we have to be out of here by twelve so we'd better get the meeting underway.

Once the meeting gets started, which of these things might you want to include in your introduction?

- ✧ Making sure all the participants know each other
- ✧ Saying how long the meeting is going to take
- ✧ Saying how the meeting will be organised
- ✧ Introducing everyone by name and role
- ✧ Explaining when questions should be asked
- ✧ Giving background information about the reason for the meeting
- ✧ Outlining the expected outcomes of the meeting
- ✧ Going through the agenda for the meeting
- ✧ Greetings, welcome and thanks for coming

What order would you do the things above in?

What language could you use for each of those stages?

Compete to give the longest introduction that you can. Your partner will time you and take away time for pausing before telling you how long you managed to speak.

Do the same for ending a meeting.

What things could you include in the final words by the chair at the end of the meeting, e.g. thanks for coming?

Look at the list below. Are there any that you wouldn't include?

- Instructions on how to get out of the building and get home
- Details of the next meeting
- Summary of the points discussed and decided
- Summary of action to be taken, by who and deadlines
- Invitation to go for a drink
- Thanking participants
- Saying the meeting must close
- Organising follow up
- Asking for documents based on the meeting

Hold a complete meeting, using the starting and ending phrases and tactics you have looked at.