

## Day 3 + Day 4 + Day 5

## Vocab Review

## Fill in the blanks.

1. Poor standards of h\_\_\_\_\_e mean that the disease spreads fast.
2. American consumers prefer white eggs; c\_\_\_\_\_sely, British buyers like brown eggs.
3. Her mother was the d\_\_\_\_\_nt influence in her life.
4. He e\_\_\_\_\_ded his hand as a greeting.
5. I was j\_\_\_\_\_ed out of bed by the earthquake.

## 1 Connections



## Module 1.3 Small talk: keeping the conversation going

## LEAD-IN

## Small talk

Immediately after the handshake and introductions, you are supposed to make small talk.

What is small talk?

Listen and fill in the blanks.

Making small talk is vital to building connections that increase your business. Small talk is ..... conversation about things that are not important, often between people who are meeting for the first time. Making small talk gets friendships started and '..... the ice'. In spite of seeming to have little useful ....., small talk helps develop good relationships and a good ..... and the ability to ..... small talk is a business skill because it can make doing business easier. It's nothing difficult. Discussing the weather, for example, with people who you don't really know is an example of small talk that many of us are very familiar with on a daily .....

➤ **After the handshake and introductions;**

1. What would you say if you were in Japan and talking to a visitor from abroad? Fill in the blanks.

**Case 1**

You: "Is this ..... trip to Japan?"

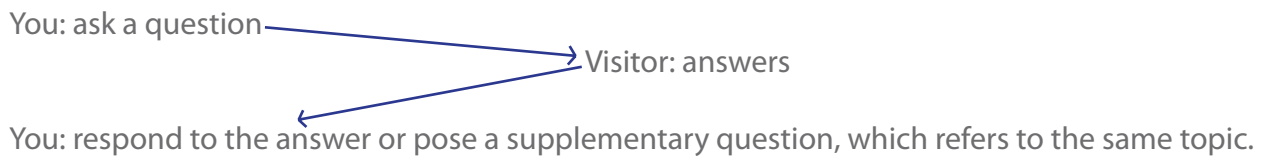
Read the conversation that follows and answer the question.

Visitor: "No, I was here on my honeymoon two years ago."

You: "Let me show you my office."

Question: What is wrong with what you last said?

**Conversation Flowchart**



Now suggest a better version of the same conversation. Your teacher will read a model version. Listen.

Role play 1

**Case 2**

You: "..... was the flight?"

Visitor: "Pretty smooth actually, except for some turbulence."

You: "Well, that must\* have been scary but it does not mean the plane will go down. Just keep your seat belt ..... all the time and you'll be safe."

Role play 2

◆ Which is better for small talk?

- A. Did you have a nice flight?
- B. How was your flight?

## &lt;GRAMMAR REVIEW&gt; \*Modals of Deduction

We can use modal verbs to express deduction and probability in certain situations in the present and past. They are very rich. (I know, I'm 100% certain → No need to use modals)

• **Must**

We use the modal 'must' to show 'we are 90% certain something to be true (= strong probability)'

They live in a very big house. They must be very rich. (I don't know, but they certainly look rich. I'm 90% certain)

You haven't eaten all day. You must be hungry. (Time focus: now)

We use 'must have + past participle' for the past.

You didn't eat all day yesterday. You must have been hungry. (Time focus: yesterday)

• **Can't**

The negative of this meaning of must is cannot or can't.

He cannot be at the meeting. I saw him walking on the street.

• **Might → May → Could**

These auxiliary verbs can be used to say something is possible. We are not sure if it is true or not, but it is possible.

That restaurant could be good. It's often quite busy.

She might be a teacher. I saw her at the Teachers' Conference.

I may be late coming home this evening.

**Modals of Deduction Exercise**

For each sentence, choose between can't, might or must to fill each blank.

1. Adriana is back at work now so she ..... be feeling better.
2. I don't know why I am so tired these days. I ..... be working too hard. Or maybe I am not sleeping too well.
3. The office is closed now so John ..... be there.
4. It's very wet outside so it ..... have rained in the night.

**Case 3**

You: "..... was the weather back home?"

Visitor: "It was drizzling in England, as usual! I can't believe ..... is so sunny here."

You: "Yes, this summer has ..... great."

Visitor: "Do you normally get good summers here?"

Role play 3

◆ Which sentence is correct?

- A. What was the weather like?
- B. How was the weather like?
- C. How was the weather?

**Case 4**

You: "..... part of England do you come from?"

Visitor: "I am from Weybridge, Surrey."

You: "What is your hometown ....."?"

Visitor: "Well, it's a very nice town - very leafy Surrey. It is an outlying suburban town within the Greater London Urban Area. So, transport into London is easy ..... train. There are nice parks, lots of pubs, restaurants, good schools, and a great college. Weybridge is a good place to raise a family."

You: "What is the best season in your hometown?"

Visitor: "May is a lovely time if you are planning to visit gardens as the flowers will be in bloom."

## Role play 4

➤ **Reacting to what someone says**

Making small talk is not just about talking – it's also about listening. You need to show other people that you're interested in what they're saying.

A and B are making small talk. B is to respond. Fill in the blanks.

1. A: My daughter has just got a place at university. B: You ..... be very proud of her.
2. A: There was some turbulence over the equator, but otherwise no difficulties. B: I'm ..... to hear it.
3. A: My son is a manager for\*\* Olivetti. B: That ..... be an interesting job.
4. A: My wife and I visited Loch Ness last summer. B: That ..... very exciting.

## ◆ Which sentence is correct?

- A. My son is a manager of Olivetti.
- B. My son is a manager for/ at/ in/ with Olivetti.
- C. My son is the manager of a hotel in Osaka.

➤ **Asking for clarification**

Here is a list of useful English phrases you can use to express lack of understanding and seek clarification from the person you are talking to.

- In case of someone's name

(I'm) sorry, could you tell me your name again? Could you please spell out your name?

- In case of short-length utterance

(I'm) sorry, I didn't quite hear what you said. Could you say that for me again, please?

- In case of longer utterances (e.g. someone's point or idea)

(I'm) sorry, I don't quite follow you.

Could you clarify that, please? Would you elaborate on that, please? Could you be more specific/ explicit, please?

Could you give me an example? I wonder if you could say that in a different way.

➤ **Clarifying one's point or idea**

Let me explain that in more detail . . .

Let me put it in another way . . .

Let me give you an example . . .

2. Small talk topics

2A Match the topics (a-l) with the questions (1 - 13 ; two of the questions belong to the same topic).

- |                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| a. Place of residence   | 1. What do you do?                      |
| b. Hometown             | 2. How much do you earn?                |
| c. Religion             | 3. Do you have any brothers or sisters? |
| d. Opinion about places | 4. What's your ethnicity?               |
| e. Plans                | 5. Would you like anything to drink?    |
| f. Money                | 6. Who do you work for?                 |
| g. Jobs (profession)*   | 7. Where do you live?                   |
| h. Travel experience    | 8. What is your religion?               |
| i. Jobs (company)       | 9. What do you think of Manila?         |
| j. Food and drink       | 10. Where is your hometown?             |
| k. Ethnicity            | 11. What are you doing tomorrow?        |
| l. Family               | 12. Have you ever been to Rome?         |
|                         | 13. What company are you with?          |

2B You have here some answers to job questions. Fill in the blanks

1. I work ..... an engineer ..... an international manufacturing company in Nagoya.
2. I work ..... the Tokyo branch ..... a London stockbroking firm.
3. I am the manager ..... a hotel in Osaka.
4. I work ..... Vickers.
5. I'm ..... an Italian company called Olivetti.

◆ Which is better when we ask someone about their job\*?

- A. What's your job?
- B. What do you do?

2C Which of these topics are not suitable for a first conversation? Can you think of any other topics that should be avoided?

★ **Etiquette tip:** Several topics should be avoided when making small talk. Don't ask anything too personal. Personal health topics is among them. Other topics that should be avoided include age, appearance, politics, sex and death. "Where is your accent from," is also uncomfortable in work settings.

➤ **Business Etiquette Quiz**

- At the beginning of your small talk, it is a good idea to discuss weather and politics.  
A. True B. False
- For doing business today making small talk is important because it  
A. Establishes a rapport with people and lets them know you're human.  
B. Gives people some ideas about your character.  
C. All of the above.

➤ **Keeping a conversation going**

Listen. Fill in the blanks.

- Make sure your ..... language is saying the right things. Don't ..... your arms. Keep your shoulders relaxed. .... every so often. .... the right distance from the person. Smile.
- Stay ..... on your conversational partner by actively listening and giving ..... Keep ..... of what the other person is saying by being a good listener. If you listen closely to what the other person is saying, you'll be able to store away ..... of information that will keep the conversation going.
- Maintain good eye contact without ..... Staring at your partner for a long time makes them feel uncomfortable. Never ..... around the room while they are talking to you.
- ..... asking simple 'yes/no' questions.
- Never answer questions with only one word. Answering with a simple "yes" or "maybe" will ..... the conversation immediately.
- Follow up with a question or statement. The person's response will influence whether you follow up with a question, or a statement. Try to find a balance between questions and statements. Too many questions will make the person feel like he/she is being ....., and too many statements won't give the person ..... to talk.

★ **Etiquette Tips**

- Before starting the conversation, ask yourself three questions.
  - Is this a "yes" or "no" question? If it is, is there a better way to present the question that might lead to a more in-depth conversation?
  - Is this question too personal? Might it make the person being asked uncomfortable?
  - Is this a question I'd want to answer myself?
- Put away your phone. There's nothing more annoying than talking to a person who is constantly checking his/her cellphone.
- During the conversation, ask yourself three questions
  - Before asking the other person another question, am I giving him/her a chance to talk about him/herself?
  - Am I showing that I am listening by such expressions as "is that so?"
  - Am I asking appropriate and relevant questions?
- During the conversation, don't interrupt, don't switch subjects in the middle of a sentence, and don't finish sentences for the other person. But do smile, and do nod to show you agree or understand.

➤ Closing the conversation.

When you meet someone for the first time, it is appropriate to end the conversation by saying again that you are glad to have met them. In a formal situation, you could say, for example, "Mrs. Peters, it was a real pleasure meeting you. I hope we can meet again soon." If the meeting was informal, you could say, for example, "Nice to meet you, Fiona. Hope to see you soon."



**PRACTICE** Making small talk

Start the conversation with your teacher and ask about the following topics:

- weather
- hometown
- hobbies

Answer any question he/she asks you. After each answer, say 'How about you?' or 'And you?'

**Match each definition (A – Q) with today's vocabulary word (1 – 17)**

**DEFINITIONS**

- A. the mood of a place or situation
- B. behaving in a way that is socially correct and shows respect for other people's feelings
- C. to organize or do something
- D. why you do something or why something exists
- E. a piece of valuable information
- F. strong sudden movements within air or water
- G. to ask someone a lot of questions, sometimes using threats or violence
- H. pleasant and quiet with a lot of trees
- I. a situation, fact, or idea from which something can develop
- J. relating to particular race
- K. to look directly at someone for a long time
- L. to move the head down and then up again quickly, esp. to show agreement, approval, or greeting
- M. added to something else in order to improve it or complete it
- N. extremely important
- O. to close or fix something together
- P. making you feel frightened
- Q. to rain in small light drops

1. conduct (v)
2. nugget
3. interrogate (v)
4. leafy
5. fasten (v)
6. nod (v)
7. stare (v)
8. supplementary
9. vital
10. purpose
11. scary
12. basis
13. atmosphere
14. polite
15. drizzle (v)
16. turbulence (n/ U)
17. ethnicity

**Fill in the blanks.**

1. There is a very relaxed a\_\_\_\_\_ere in our office.
2. They are c\_\_\_\_\_ting a survey.
3. The main p\_\_\_\_\_e of the meeting is to discuss the future of the company.
4. It took months to extract that n\_\_\_\_\_t of information from them.
5. The plane ran into some t\_\_\_\_\_ence over the Atlantic.
6. Police have arrested and i\_\_\_\_\_ated the two suspects.
7. Ken's essay can serve as a b\_\_\_\_s for our discussion.