

1 Corporate culture

1.4 Speaking Meetings – one-to-one

Discussion

1 Do the questionnaire from a business magazine. Mark the statements *T* (true), *F* (false) or *D* (it depends). Then compare and justify your answers. Talk about how different cultural and business contexts affect your answers.

Office Etiquette Questionnaire



- 1 It is perfectly acceptable to call the boss by their first name.
- 2 You should never socialize with managers after work.
- 3 If a superior asks you to bring coffee for a visitor, you can tell them politely it's not your job.
- 4 Personal calls are acceptable only at certain times of the day.
- 5 Staying late at the office to finish your work is a sign of inefficiency.
- 6 In meetings it is advisable for junior staff to speak only when invited to do so.
- 7 It is OK to offer suggestions to superiors about how to improve the business.
- 8 It is not advisable to have a romantic relationship with a co-worker.

Listening for detail

2 1:05, 1:06 Listen to two versions of a conversation between Tiffany, an intern, and Simon, her supervisor. Underline the words that describe Simon's behaviour. Then compare your answers with a partner.

Version 1 – Simon is:	Version 2 – Simon is:
objective impatient a good listener	objective impatient a good listener
dogmatic diplomatic friendly firm	dogmatic diplomatic friendly firm
understanding insincere authoritarian	understanding insincere authoritarian
threatening weak frank	threatening weak frank

3 With a partner, discuss how Simon's language is different in each version.

4 Listen again and complete the sentences.

Version 1

- 1 You _____ talk about your colleagues like that.
- 2 Yes, _____ to refuse.
- 3 You _____ from people like Maureen if you're rude.
- 4 You _____ there'll be trouble.

Version 2

- 1 I think _____ more careful about how you talk about your colleagues.
- 2 You _____ why she couldn't help you.
- 3 _____ get better results from people like Maureen by being a little more diplomatic?
- 4 _____ ask Maureen to have a coffee with you, and just clear the air?

Diplomatic advice

5 In Version 2, Simon uses modal verbs, introductory phrases and negative questions to make his advice more diplomatic. Add these phrases to the correct category in the table below. Some phrases are used in more than one category.

It seems to me that ... Wouldn't you agree that ...? Actually, I think ...
 You could maybe ... Wouldn't it be better to ...? You'd do better to ...
 Why don't you ... ?

Modals <i>would, could and might</i>	You might want to ...
Introductory phrases	I think perhaps ...
Negative questions	Don't you think ... ?



6 Make these comments more diplomatic.

- You shouldn't disturb your co-workers.
- You won't meet deadlines if you don't prioritize.
- Delegate, or you'll never finish the job.
- You shouldn't eat at your desk.
- Don't make personal calls at work.
- If you ignore your colleagues, don't expect them to help.
- You'll make yourself ill if you don't take care of your life-work balance.

Pronunciation

7 In each sentence below, two words are more important than the others. These two keywords carry the stress. Underline the two keywords (or syllables) that are stressed in each sentence.

- I hear you had a problem.
- Perhaps you should be more careful.
- You ought to do the same.
- I appreciate that you work hard.
- I didn't mean to be rude.
- It can happen to anyone.

8 1:07 Listen and check your answers. Then practise saying the sentences with the stress on the keywords (or syllables).

9 The stresses have a regular rhythm. To allow this, the words between the stresses have to be very short and sound as if they are joined together, e.g. *youhada*, *youshouldbemore*. This is one of the main reasons why listening to English can be difficult. Listen to the sentences again. Then practise saying them with a regular rhythm.

Internet research

Search for the keywords "learn English". What are the best e-learning resources for English available on the Web?

Roleplay

10 With a partner, hold informal problem-solving meetings. Use diplomatic language to help you agree, unless you feel a more directive approach is necessary.

Student A: turn to page 110.

Student B: turn to page 116.