Social Skills in Business Communication
## Block 1

### Social Skills in Business Communication

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*Indira Gandhi National Open University School of Vocational Education and Training*

*BFD-074 Communication and Entrepreneurship*
Welcome to the Course: Communication and Entrepreneurship. As the course title suggests, this course will help the learner in understanding the Social and Communication skills which are essential in business particularly with respect to Fashion Industry. This course will also be useful for people who want to establish their own enterprise, thus explaining how to develop entrepreneurial qualities- attitude, competencies and skills; setting up an enterprise, managing an enterprise etc.

In this course we have covered the entire gamut of situations you may be confronted with at the workplace. These include the following:

**Block 1- Social Skills in Business Communication**
**Block 2- Basics of Fashion Communication**
**Block 3- Entrepreneurship**

This course is for learners who are looking for upward mobility in their workplace. Remember along with knowledge of your specific job; it is your interpersonal and communicative skills that enable your professional life to go forward as a Fashion Designer.

Please give us feedback – both good and bad about the course. We are also striving to improve as we hope you are!

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

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Many of us have considerable knowledge of our specific business area, yet are not very successful in our professional life. This could often be because we lack the ability to communicate at the workplace with sensitivity and ease. We may also lack social skills which are very essential before we get down to the nitty-gritty of business. Remember each language has its own set of rules of etiquette which have to be acquired through practice and experience. The following units will help you in understanding the social aspects of business encounters. It will help you develop sensitivity to cultures other than your own. The units are as follows:

Unit 1 - Greetings and Introduction
Unit 2 - Importance of Small Talk in Business
Unit 3 - Language and Culture
Unit 4 - Business Etiquette

Hope you benefit from this block.
UNIT 1: GREETINGS AND INTRODUCTION

Structure

1.0 Objectives
1.1 Warm up
1.2 Language Focus
1.3 Reading Comprehension
1.4 Vocabulary
1.5 Grammar: Contractions
1.6 Speaking and Listening
1.7 Samples of Greeting
1.8 Pronunciation: Relationship between Sound and Spelling
1.9 Let Us Sum Up
1.10 Answers

1.0 OBJECTIVES

In this Unit you will:

- learn about formal and informal greetings;
- attempt activities based on greetings in other cultures;
- practice formulaic language used in introductions and greetings;
- read about introduction etiquette in India;
- introduce yourself as well as others;
- present a brief profile of yourself;
- use contractions in spoken language;
- analyze the nuances of English pronunciation with regard to sound and spelling.

1.1 WARM UP

Activity 1

i How do you introduce yourself to a new colleague at work?

ii How do you greet your colleagues when you meet them?

- at home?
- at a party?
- at a get-together?
Warm up activity

Find someone who……………….

This activity will help you to get introduced to other members of your study group. Your trainer will ask you to pick up slips of paper from a pool. Move around in the group and find someone who does or likes what’s written on the slip.

| Find someone who has no work experience. | Find someone who lives in a joint family. |
| Find someone who doesn’t like cricket. | Find someone who is a member of an environment group. |
| Find someone whose native place is the same as yours. | Find someone who writes with his/her left hand. |
| Find someone who knows four languages or more. | Find someone whose name begins with T. |
| Find someone who plays a musical instrument. | Find someone who is a sportsperson. |

1.2 LANGUAGE FOCUS

Activity 2

1. Now look at these greetings and state whether they are formal, semi-formal or informal. Check your responses with the answer key.

   i  Hi!
   ii  How do you do?
   iii  How are you doing?
   iv  What’s up?
   v  Hello!
   vi  How are you?
   vii  Good Morning / Afternoon / Evening
   viii Good to see you.
   ix  How’s it going?
   x  How are things?

2. Match the responses with the greetings:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Greeting</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i  Hi</td>
<td>a  Very well, thank you. And you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii  How do you do?</td>
<td>b  Hello / hi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introducing Yourself

I'm Anjana Iyer.
My name's Anjana Iyer.

Do not say
Myself Anjana Iyer.

There are a number of phrases that are commonly used to introduce strangers.

For Example:

I don't think you've met Radhika?

Can you think of at least two other ways in which you can introduce someone to the others? Check the key for more alternatives.

Here are some typical corporate situations where you need to greet people. Match the situation to the appropriate dialogue box. Now practice the conversation with your partner.

Situations:
A Receiving a foreign customer at the airport
B Running into someone you know at a conference
C After being introduced to someone at a business event e.g. Trade fair
D Meeting someone in a restaurant for a business lunch to which you’ve been invited
E Receiving an important visitor in your cabin

Dialogue Boxes

You: How are you? I hope I didn’t keep you waiting too long!
B: Fine thanks. I just arrived a couple of minutes ago.
You: Nice place. Have you ordered anything yet?

A: Hello!
You: Oh Hi! Imagine running into you like this.
A: Yes, it’s so good to see you after such a long time.
How have you been?
You: Great! How about you?
When you meet someone the first time in a formal situation, it is common to greet the person with "How do you do?" the correct response to this is also "How do you do." However, the stress pattern is different in both cases. The stress is marked for you in the given box:

A: How do you do?
B: How do you do?

Alternatively the response can be:

A: How do you do?
B: Fine thank you. How do you do?

If you find “How do you do?” too formal you may choose to greet someone straight away with “Pleased to meet you.” In this case the response would be “Pleased to meet you too.” The stress pattern will be as follows:

A: Pleased to meet you, Mr. Raghavan.
B: I’m pleased to meet you too. OR
B: Pleased to meet you too.

Here is a short introductory conversation:

Victor: Sunil, I'd like you to meet Radhika.
Sunil: How do you do?
Radhika: How do you do?
Victor: Radhika works for ...

A variation is also "It's a pleasure to meet you." or "Pleased to meet you." or “I’m glad to meet you.”
Victor: Sunil, I'd like you to meet Radhika.
Sunil: It's a pleasure to meet you.
Radhika: How do you do?
Victor: Radhika works for ...

Victor: Sunil, I'd like you to meet Radhika.
Sunil: How do you do?
Radhika: Pleased to meet you.
Victor: Radhika works for ...

Never ask anyone 'What is your good name'. Instead you may say 'May I know your name please' or 'I don’t think we’ve met. I’m Radhika. How about you?'

Can you now complete these expressions?

i How _______ you do?
ii ___________ to meet you.
iii It’s a _________ to meet you.
iv ___________ like you to meet Radhika.

Check your answers with the script above to ensure that you’ve got these expressions right.

It is common to greet people formally according to the time of the day. ‘Good morning’ is used until noon after which one uses ‘good afternoon’ until 4 pm. Anytime after 4 pm is ‘good evening’ even if the time is not evening but night. ‘Good night’ is used at leave taking after the evening.

Greetings are generally followed by introductions where you either introduce yourself or the person/s accompanying you. Choice of appropriate language is important in these situations.

In social situations, a man is traditionally introduced to a woman. However, in the business world introductions are based on a person's rank or position in an organization. The person with highest-ranking position is introduced first and the others follow in order of their position. If you introduce two people of equal rank to each other, introduce the one you know less well to the one you know better.

Look at these dialogues and mark the words used to describe what you or someone else does. Language may vary according to the degree of formality required in a situation. Note the differences in the two given dialogues.

I You: I’d like to introduce you to our Managing Director, Mr. Sandeep Mehta.
Ms. Nigam: How do you do Mr. Mehta?
Mr. Mehta: Fine thank you. Pleased to meet you.
Ms. Nigam: I’m pleased to meet you too.
You: Ms Nigam is in Sales. She looks after our clients from the South.

II You: Benoy, this is Sunita. She’s part of our sales team.
Benoy: Hi! Glad to meet you. I’m assistant to the Finance Manager.

A few helpful tips:

1 Americans shake hands when first introduced to new people. Rarely do they shake hands while parting. In India it is customary to shake hands as part of leave taking.

2 When someone pays you a compliment, it should be accepted graciously with a thank you rather than deny it. A Westerner would accept the compliment whereas an Indian may deny it.

3 Titles are highly valued in some cultures including India. Advanced degrees are listed on business cards and mentioned in introductions. This must be kept in mind during introductions.

4 Greetings and leave taking generally follow a hierarchical order in India.

5 Indians generally do not use first names in business, even in conversations. This is not the case in the US and England. However, most European countries prefer the formal surname and some, for example Germans, are particular about the use of the business title during greetings and introductions.

6 In India ‘sir’ is frequently used to address someone in authority. It is not so in the US.

1.3 READING COMPREHENSION

Read the text below and then answer the questions that follow:

Indian social etiquette is a strange mix of Western and Indian culture. This is largely because of British influence during the colonial period which continued in post colonial India. Hence India is very much influenced by the British style of etiquette which is rather formal and somewhat conservative.

On the other hand, India is a multicultural society where religion, region, caste, language, tradition and custom play a large role in the kind of social etiquette prevalent in different parts of the country. These have an impact on the nature of greetings and introductions as well as the degree of formality used in social and business situations.

In addition to this is the impact of globalization, which is largely felt in the metropolitan cities. With changes in lifestyles as well as business environment, a synthesized form of social behavior and etiquette has emerged which is more in keeping with international practices. Having said this, it must be admitted that the influence of native culture continues to have its impact even in these environs. Hence, though a great deal of commonality can be seen in the social etiquette of Delhi, Mumbai, Calcutta, Bangalore and
Chennai, one may also observe many differences in the way people address and greet each other. One may easily conclude that there is no one correct way of introducing and greeting. To communicate effectively and strike the right note at the very beginning, it is advisable to study the social etiquette of different regions so that you may be able to make a good impression from the word go.

**Check your progress 1**

1. The most appropriate title for the passage is:
   - i. The impact of globalization on social etiquette
   - ii. Social etiquette in India
   - iii. Effective communication

2. State whether these statements are true or false:
   - i. Indian social etiquette is very different from that of the West.
   - ii. Indians are largely formal in their social etiquette.
   - iii. All Indians greet each other in the same way.
   - iv. The metropolitan cities of India are more influenced by global trends in social etiquette.
   - v. It is advisable to follow your own rules in social etiquette.
   - vi. Appropriate greetings and introductions can help us make a good first impression.

3. Find words from the passage which have similar meanings to these:
   - i. traditional
   - ii. part of the British Empire
   - iii. belonging to several cultures
   - iv. large and important
   - v. belonging to a specified region or place

**Check your progress 2**

Here is a passage on the etiquette followed in India while introducing people. Some words are missing in the paragraph. See if you can fill them in. In case of difficulty you may look into the key to find the right word.

Indian (i)_______considers it important to use a person’s title wherever it is possible. (ii)__________such as doctor or professor are always used. Titles are so highly valued that (iii)________degrees such as Ph. D. are listed on business cards and may be mentioned in introductions.
It is also advisable to use (iv)\_________ titles such as "Mr.", "Mrs.", or "Miss" for those without professional titles. One uses (v)\_________names only when the person you are speaking to invites you to use his / her first name. You may try ‘Sir/ Ma’am’ for (vi)\_________ and ‘Uncle/ Aunty’ (or Chachaji, Mausiji etc) for (vii)\_________ people in social situations. For a stranger who is not very old, it is better to suffix the name with ‘ji’, as a mark of (viii)\_________.

(ix)\_________ is often determined by a person's age, university education, caste, and profession. It is not uncommon to find people talking about their educational qualifications as well as the colleges or Universities they come from when they (x)\_________ themselves. Government employment is considered to be more (xi)\_________ than private business, although the scene is now changing.

As for greetings, men almost (xii) _______ shake hands with other men. Westernized Indian women may (xiii) _______ hands with foreign men, and sometimes with Indian men too. But by and large most women (xiv) _______ the traditional namaste.

1.3.1 Greeting People

Read the following passage:

Hello!
Hi!
Namaste
Assalam ale kum
Bonjour

Everyday we greet people. We greet our family members when we wake up in the morning; we greet our friends and teachers at school; we greet people at work; we greet people from whom we buy our bus or train ticket, a cup of coffee or newspaper. If it is a friend’s or a loved one’s birthday we greet them in a special way. If it’s a special day, a festival or celebration, we wish our loved ones in a special way too.

Greetings are a vital part of any language. While learning a second language one of the first things we learn is how to greet people.

Think about greeting different people on different occasions. How do you normally greet people? Does the form of greeting change in different situations? Is the greeting different when it is a stranger, or someone of a different gender or an older person? Does the form of the greeting vary from one part of the country to another?

Greetings acknowledge the existence of another human being. Greeting a person means taking the time to relate to a person in a personal way. Greetings may be conveyed through words, spoken or written and through gestures. While a quick “Hello!” or “Hi!” conveys a casual spoken greeting; shaking hands, embracing or hugging a person, kissing people on the cheeks or joining one’s hand in a simple ‘namaste’ are some of the gestures people across the world employ to greet people from different cultures.
While, the shaking of hands in U.S.A. is a fairly formal way to greet people you meet for the first time; in India, you will find that men do not shake hands with women, especially older women. Touching people’s feet, especially, an older person’s, is a more favoured form of greeting, especially in rural India.

Wherever you are in the Arab world, greetings and taking leave are an important part of any Arabic conversation. They tend to be more elaborate than in the West. Even when addressing a stranger, it is customary to greet him/her and take your leave using standard polite expressions.

It is normal when meeting someone socially for the first time; and when meeting anyone you already know (even if you just bump into them in the street), to follow the initial expression of greeting by enquiring after their health.

Check your progress 3

1 Answer the following questions.

i List a few situations from everyday life when we need to greet people.
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................

ii What is the purpose of a greeting?
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................

iii What are some of the ways in which people greet one another in different cultures.
iv If you have to interact with people from a different culture what are some of the things that you may have to learn?

v How are forms of greeting in the western world different from forms of greeting in the Arab world?

2 Complete the following sentences using ideas from the passage given above.

i Some of the people we greet everyday are …………………

ii Some greetings are ……………..………… while others are………………

iii “Hello” and “Hi” are examples of …………………

iv Some examples of gestures used to greet people are…………

v In general, the initial expression of greeting is followed by …………………

3 Find words from the text which are similar in meaning to the words given below:

i Essential

ii Differ

iii Recognize

iv Communicated

v Movements made with hands, head or face
1.4 VOCABULARY

Activity 3

1. Given below are a few gestures and words used for greeting. Complete the table by providing information about them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Greeting /Gesture</th>
<th>Nature of greeting /Gesture</th>
<th>Occasion /Situation</th>
<th>People with whom the greeting may be used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hello</td>
<td>Informal</td>
<td>Common greeting; Used when meeting someone for the first time in the day.</td>
<td>Used for anyone; older, younger or peer group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bon jour</td>
<td>Informal</td>
<td>Hello in French.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Namaste</td>
<td>A form of greeting in India by joining one’s hands together.</td>
<td>Used between friends or equals.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shaking Hands</td>
<td>Formal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Morning</td>
<td>Used only in the morning, before noon.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What’s up?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Match the informal expression in Column A with their more formal matching expressions given in Column B:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Column A</th>
<th>Column B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i) Oh Hi!</td>
<td>a) Good night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii) Shut Up!</td>
<td>b) Good morning, what a pleasant surprise!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii) Hello Dev!</td>
<td>c) Good bye!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv) Lucky fellow!</td>
<td>d) This is indeed a stroke of good luck.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v) So long!</td>
<td>e) Please accept my apology.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vi) Bye then!</td>
<td>f) Would we all maintain a moment’s silence, please?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vii) Sorry!</td>
<td>g) Good morning, Mr. Dev. How do you do?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.5 GRAMMAR: CONTRACTIONS

Contractions are words that have been shortened. This is done by missing out letters. An apostrophe replaces the missing letters.

For example:

- *doesn’t* - for *does not*
- *we’ll* - for *we will*
Contractions are generally used in speech and informal writing. They are also frequently used in e-mails.

Check your progress 4

1. Can you write these words in the contracted from:

   i. I am
   ii. She is
   iii. We are
   iv. We have
   v. You have
   vi. I would
   vii. You would
   viii. Do not
   ix. Are not
   x. Should not
   xi. Should have
   xii. Need not
   xiii. It is
   xiv. That is

We will now see how they are used in **Introductions and Greetings**.

I’m (I am) Pawan Dhingra. I’d (I would) like to introduce you to my colleague, Preeti Shukla. She’s (She is) from Marketing too. We’ve (We have) been working together for two years.

2. Here are some expressions commonly used in Introductions and Greetings. Rewrite them using appropriate contracted forms.

   i. I am Niti Wadhani.
   ii. He is my colleague Rahman Siddiqui.
   iii. We are working together on your project.
   iv. We have almost completed the first phase of the project.
   v. We would like to show you the plan for the second phase.
   vi. My name is Gagan Srivastava.
   vii. What is your name?
   viii. I am pleased to meet you.
   ix. I would like you to meet my colleague Sadhna Suman.
   x. She is my senior in the department.
   xi. We are both from the same college.
   xii. I am very pleased to meet you both.
   xiii. It has been a pleasure.
   xiv. What is your program for the evening?
   xv. Let us meet in the evening for dinner.

1.6 **SPEAKING AND LISTENING**

Check your progress 5
1 Respond to the given instructions and then compare your responses with the audio on the CD.

i   Introduce yourself
ii  Greet someone formally
iii Introduce your colleague / companion
iv  Enquire from your visitor about his / her journey

2 Now imagine that you are talking to a visitor. You will hear her part of the conversation on audio. You must respond to whatever she says. Speak after the beep. After you have spoken you will hear a sample response on the audio.

Visitor: Good morning Mr. Siddiqui.
You: .............................................
Visitor: How are you?
You: .............................................
Visitor: I’m fine too. It’s been long since we last met.
You: .............................................

3 You will now listen to two people talking about themselves and their work. Listen to the audio and complete the blanks.

i  Name: ........................................
   Name of Company: ....................................
   Has been working since ................................
   Job responsibility: ...................................
   Likes: ................................................
   Dislikes: ...........................................

ii Name: ...........................................
   Works as: .......................................... 
   Working hours: .....................................
   Takes care of: .....................................
   Likes: ................................................

Practice your own introduction using the following clues:

Name: ................................................................
What you do: ................................................
Where you study / work: ....................................
What are your job responsibilities (if applicable): ...................
...........................................................................
What you like about your work / studies: ............................

1.7 SAMPLES OF GREETING

Starting a conversation involves making people feel relaxed and comfortable. You may have to start a conversation while welcoming visitors. And, when you don’t know others at a meeting, party or social gathering, you may have to start a conversation.

Starting a conversation involves three steps:-

(a) greeting;
(b) introducing yourself;
(c) asking after the other person’s well-being.

The formulas for these are fixed and usually carry no literal meaning. We say ‘Good morning’ even if it is not a good morning and the answer for ‘How are you?’ is ‘Fine, thanks,’ even if you are not well. No one, expect your close friends, really want to know about your troubles. These are routine courtesies that are followed. The expression you use will vary according to your relationship.

Activity 4
Read the short pieces below and decide on the following for each dialogue:

i) Where is the conversation taking place?
ii) What is their relationship?
   Strangers/friends/family/acquaintances/colleagues/neighbours
iii) Underline the words/expressions that tell you about their relationship.

1 Dixit: What a pleasure to see you, Mr. Sharma. How are you keeping? Sharma: Not bad. How are you doing, Mr. Dixit?

2 Nitoo: Good morning. Welcome to Fergusson College, ma’am. The Seminar is in Room number 16 down this corridor.

3 KK: Mr. Peter Walsh, How do you do? I’m Krishna Kumar, Personnel Officer. Welcome to BHEL. PW: Thank you, Mr. Kumar. How do you do?

4 VS: Good morning, Sir! AR: Good morning, Vikram. I didn’t see you in class yesterday. Are you keeping well? VS: Yes Sir, thank you very much.

5 AG: Hi! I’m Amrita Gill. We’ve just moved into this locality. RK: Hi! I’m RK and this is Anu. Anu’s in the ninth at Springdale’s and I’m in the twelfth at Father Agnel. What about you?

6 Students: Good morning, ma’am. Teacher: Good morning? It’s well past 12 o’ clock.
Social Skills in Business Communication

Students: Good afternoon, ma’am.
Teacher: Good afternoon. Sit down, please.

Visitor: Good evening, I have an appointment with David Lee.
Reception: Good evening, could you sit down for a moment? I’ll find out whether Mr. Lee is in.
Visitor: Of course, I’m Ajay MakeJa from ICICI.

1.8 PRONUNCIATION: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOUND AND SPELLING

It is a well known fact that English spelling does not always indicate how an English word should be pronounced. There is, in other words, no one-to-one correspondence between the letters of the Roman alphabet and the sounds of English. While English has 44 sounds, the alphabet has only 26 letters. So the alphabet is overburdened. And worse still, even in the face of a scarcity of letters, many of them are sometimes squandered in representing the same sound. These two factors together result in a good deal of confusion, as is illustrated below:

1. Listen to the following words in which the same letter stands for many different sounds. Repeat each word:
   - ch: machine, monarch, chief
   - a: late, last, fat, woman, village, water, what
   - ough: though, through, bough, thought, thorough, cough

2. Now listen to some words in which the same sound is represented by different letters or combinations of letters.
   i. The n sound is represented by the letter or letters:
      - n: as in neck
      - nn: as in funny
      - gn: as in sign
      - kn: as in know
      - pn: as in pneumonia
   
   ii. The vowel sound in the word get, is represented by the letter or letters:
      - ea: as in head
      - ei: as in leisure
      - eo: as in leopard
      - a: as in many
      - ai: as in said
      - ie: as in friend
      - u: as in bury
      - ue: as in guess
   
   iii. The vowel sound in the word tea is represented by the letter or letters:
**3. Listen to some words in which one letter stands for a sequence of two sounds. Listen to each word and repeat it.**

**i.** The letter *q* stands for a combination of the *k* sound as in *key* and the *w* sound as in *watch*. Example:

- question
- quiet
- quite
- square
- squash
- queer

**ii.** The letter *x* stands for a sequence of the *k* sound as in *kite*, and the *s* sound as in *sea*. Example:

- excuse
- excite
- excess
- box
- exercise
- exist
- examine
- exert

**iii.** The letter *x* stands for a sequence of the *g* sound as in *go* and the *z* sound as in *zoo*. Example:

- exact
- examine
- exert
- exist
- exist
- exert

**iv.** The letter *u* sometimes stands for the sequence of a consonant followed by a vowel. Example:

- unit
- utilize

The following exercise will help you take a closer look at the difference between spelling and sound.

**Check you progress 6**

Look at the following words, pronounce each word, and then write down the number of letters and the number of sounds it has. Follow the example given below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Call</th>
<th>Number of letters:</th>
<th>Number of sounds:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 colony</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 receive</td>
<td></td>
<td>4 possess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 shelf</td>
<td></td>
<td>5 relax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 possess</td>
<td>6 seize</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 relax</td>
<td>7 command</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 seize</td>
<td>8 plays</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 command</td>
<td>9 college</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 plays</td>
<td>10 surround</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 college</td>
<td>11 philosophy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 surround</td>
<td>12 theory</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It is quite evident from the examples and the exercise given above that if we wish to represent the pronunciation of English words unambiguously, the Roman alphabet is inadequate, and is used inefficiently for spelling English words. To get over this problem, therefore a special set of phonetic symbols has been devised, so that a given symbol represents one, and only one sound, and a given sound is always represented by the same symbol.

Activity 5

Practice these greetings and introductions:

1 A: How are you?
   B: Very well thank you. And you?

2 A: Pleased to meet you.
   B: Pleased to meet you, too.

3 A: How do you do?
   B: How do you do?

4 A: Please call me Anju.
   B: Then you must call me Rahul.

5 A: How’s life?
   B: Not too bad, but rather busy.

1.9 LET US SUM UP

In this unit you practiced how to introduce yourselves and others in formal and informal situations. You also learnt to greet with the right intonation and tone. You learnt some words pertaining to personal, social or professional qualities. In the grammar section, you revised ‘contractions’. In the pronunciation section, you became aware that spelling in English does not indicate the sounds of the language.

1.10 ANSWERS

Activity 1

1 i May I introduce myself, I am Renu Bhardwaj. I am the Director of the School of Humanities, IGNOU.

ii a at home – very informally (hug)
   b at a party – more formally
   c at a get-together – formally
   d formal meeting – very formally

2 The trainer may print out and cut up or make slips and have students pick up one each.

Activity 2
1  i  Informal
   ii  Formal
   iii  Semi-formal
   iv  Informal
   v  Semi-formal
   vi  Semi-formal
   vii  Formal
   viii  Semi-formal
   ix  Informal
   x  Semi-formal

2  | Greeting                   | Response                      |
   |---------------------------|------------------------------|
   xi | Hi                        | b  Hello / hi                |
   xii| How do you do?            | d  How do you do?            |
   xiii| How are you doing?        | g  Alright. How about you?   |
   xiv| What’s up?                | e  Nothing much.             |
   xv | Hello                     | h  Hi / hello                |
   xvi| How are you?              | a  Very well, thank you. And you? |
   xvii| Good Morning /            | f  Good Morning / Afternoon /|
       |  Afternoon / Evening      |                             |
   xviii| Good to see               | c  Good to see you too.     |

3  I don’t think you know Radhika.
   May I introduce you to Radhika?
   I’d like to introduce you to Radhika.
   Sunil, do you know Radhika?
   Sunil, I’d like you to meet Radhika.

4  Corporate situations
   A – iii
   B – ii
   C – v
   D – i
   E - iv

Check your progress 1

1  ii (Social etiquette in India)
2  i – False; ii – True; iii – False; iv – True; v – False; vi – True
3  i – conservative; ii – colonial; iii – multicultural; iv – metropolitan;
   v – native

Check your progress 2

i  etiquette
ii  Titles
iii  advanced
iv  courtesy
v  first
vi  strangers
1. When we wake up in the morning we greet our family members, we greet friends and colleagues at school or at work, we greet strangers who sell us things or give us information, we greet our loved ones on special occasions, we greet people at social gatherings/parties.

Greetings help us relate to people in a personal way and recognize their existence. The specific occasion, the cultural context, the age and gender of the person being greeted, influence how people greet one another.

In the United States of America people shake hands as a formal way of greeting; in India people use the gesture of folding one’s hands in a ‘Namaste’, in many parts of India, people touch the feet of older persons; in Arab countries even strangers are greeted using standard polite expressions.

One of the important things to learn is specific forms of greetings of each culture and how they may vary on specific occasions and according to age, gender, etc.

Greetings and leave taking are more elaborate in the Arab world than in the West.

Some of the people we greet everyday are friends, family members, people at work, people from whom we buy things, etc.

Some greetings are formal while others are informal.

“Hello” and “Hi!” are examples of informal greetings that we use to greet friends and peers.

Some examples of gestures used to greet people are shaking hands, touching feet, joining hands in a namaste, embracing or hugging people, etc.

In general the initial expression of greeting is followed by asking about the person’s health.

3. essential  
   differ  
   recognize  
   communicated  

vital  
vary  
acknowledge  
conveyed
v movements with hands, head or face gestures
vi detailed elaborate

Activity 3

1 Here is the completed table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Greeting/Gesture</th>
<th>Nature of greeting/Gesture</th>
<th>Occasion/situation</th>
<th>People with whom the greeting may be used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hello</td>
<td>Informal</td>
<td>Common greeting; used when meeting someone for the first time that day.</td>
<td>Used for anyone; older, younger or peer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bon jour</td>
<td>Informal</td>
<td>‘Hello’ in French.</td>
<td>Used for anyone; older, younger or peer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Namaste</td>
<td>Formal</td>
<td>A form of greeting in India by joining one’s hands together.</td>
<td>Used as a mark of respect for elders or senior colleagues at work, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shaking Hands</td>
<td>Formal</td>
<td>A fairly formal way of greeting people you meet for the first time. Common in the Western world.</td>
<td>Anyone one meets formally, At work place or socially.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Morning</td>
<td>Formal/Informal</td>
<td>Used only in the morning, before noon.</td>
<td>May be used with anyone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What’s up</td>
<td>Informal</td>
<td>As a response to ‘Hey’, ‘Hello’ or ‘Hi’.</td>
<td>Used between friends or equals.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2 i b) ii f) iii g) iv d) v a) vi c) vii e)

Check your progress 4

1 i I’m ii She’s iii We’re iv We’ve v You’ve vi I’d vii You’d viii Don’t ix Aren’t x Shouldn’t xi Should’ve xii Needn’t
Check your progress 5

1  Tape script:
   i  I’m Rohan Sharma.
   ii How do you do?
   iii Please meet my colleague Ms. Mohita Jain.
   iv Did you have a comfortable journey?

2  Tape script:
   Visitor: Good morning Mr. Siddiqui.
   You:    Good Morning.
   Visitor: How are you?
   You:    I’m fine thank you. And how about you?
   Visitor: I’m fine too. It’s been long since we last met.
   You:    Oh yes. It’s been a few months.

3  Tape script:
   i  I am Sonia Parashar. I work in Phone as a Customer Relation officer. I joined the company in 2006 as a trainee. I got promoted this year. I’m responsible for looking after the customer needs in my area. If the users of our services have any problems, I listen to them and then take the necessary action to solve their problems. I enjoy dealing with different kinds of people and get a lot of satisfaction from being able to help them. What I don’t like about my job is dealing with difficult customers who are not willing to listen to my explanation.

   ii My name is Amit Sen. I work in a private bank as a cashier. The name of my bank is HFRC. My working hours are 9 am to 6 pm, six days a week. I often get late at work and reach home only by 8 pm or so. I
handle a lot of cash. Hence I need to be very alert and careful all the time. However, I like my work. The work environment in my bank is good and my colleagues are very friendly and supportive.

**Answers:**

i  
Name: *Sonia Parashar*
Name of Company: *Phone*
Has been working since: 2006
Job responsibility: *looking after the customer needs, problem solving.*
Likes: *dealing with different kinds of people, helping people*
Dislikes: *dealing with difficult customers*

ii  
Name: *Amit Sen*
Works as: *cashier*
Working hours: *9 am to 6 pm*
Takes care of: *cash*
Likes: *work environment, colleagues who are very friendly and supportive.*

**Activity 4**

1. **Formal** situation like office or neighbourhood, could be colleagues or neighbours, who do not know each other well.
2. **Formal:** College. Student and a teacher.
3. **Formal:** Office. New colleague a visitor.
4. **Formal:** Outside class. Teacher and student.
5. **Informal:** Teenagers-Neighbourhood-Strangers.
6. **Formal:** Classroom-Teacher and class.
7. **Formal:** Office-Meeting for the first time.

**Check your progress 6**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Number of letters</th>
<th>Number of sounds</th>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Number of letters</th>
<th>Number of Sounds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
UNIT 2: IMPORTANCE OF SMALL TALK IN BUSINESS

Structure

2.0 Objectives
2.1 Warm up
2.2 Reading
2.3 Listening and Speaking
2.4 Language Focus
2.5 Vocabulary
2.6 Writing
2.7 Grammar: Simple Present Tense
2.8 Speaking
2.9 Pronunciation: Silent Letters
2.10 Let Us Sum Up
2.11 Answers

2.0 OBJECTIVES

In this unit you will be introduced to:

- What is small talk?
- The importance of small talk in work situations.
- How to prepare for small talk?
- Suitable topics for small talk.
- Taboo topics
- Building business relationships through small talk
- Suitable language for small talk.
- How to make effective small talk/social conversation?
- Use of simple present tense.
- Silent letters.

2.1 WARM UP

1 What is Small talk?

Small talk is a short conversation.

No, I think small talk is social talk before you talk shop.

What do you think? Well, move on and find out for yourself.

2 "Every Conversation is an Opportunity for Success"

- Debra Fine
What is the importance of conversation in business?
How can good conversation lead to higher levels of success and achievement at work?

Think of the answers to these questions. In the course of this Unit you will learn about the importance of effective and appropriate social conversation in business.

3 Read the statements given below. Decide which of them expresses your own point of view. Ask a friend or partner to do the same. Then discuss the reasons for your agreement/disagreement.

i “I never indulge in small talk. It’s such a waste of time.”

ii “Socializing is the art of breaking the ice and making friends.”

iii “What we say and how we say it is important because this reveals our personality.”

iv “I love chatting with friends. It’s such fun.”

4 Here is a picture of two people who are greeting each other. It is evident that they are meeting for some business purpose. When you meet for work, it is important to have a short social conversation before you actually begin to talk shop. This is called small talk.

5 So what do you now think is Small talk?

- Small talk is pleasant conversation about common interests.
- It is a prelude to a business conversation. It is meant to put people at ease before they get down to business.
- It helps to create a favourable environment for talking business.
Social Skills in Business Communication

It may also help you to develop a better understanding of the person that you are doing business with.

Activity 1

Take a look at these bits of conversation in the speech balloons and consider whether they are appropriate for small talk.

i

![Image of conversation](image)

How much does your company pay you?

ii

![Image of conversation](image)

Did you have a comfortable journey?

iii

![Image of conversation](image)

Are you married or single?

iv

![Image of conversation](image)

Is this your first visit to Delhi?

Now check your answers in the answer key and read about why some of these conversations are inappropriate for small talk.

Activity 2

Small talk with foreigners

What would you say in the following situations as part of small talk after you have greeted the visitors? Work with a partner and simulate the conversation.

i

A business visitor has just arrived from the US. You receive him at the airport.
ii You receive an important British client in your cabin.
iii An Australian business associate has just arrived from Sydney. It is 1 am in India when you meet him at the airport.
iv An American business associate has just joined you for lunch in a restaurant?
v An Australian visitor has arrived to take a look at your factory.

Take a look at the samples given in the ‘Answers’ and match them with your topics. Remember that there is no single right answer. The samples in the ‘Answers’ are indicators of what is considered appropriate in each of the given situations keeping in mind the background and culture of the visitor.

**Activity 3**

Take a look at these topics and match them to the flags of the countries where they would be appropriate as topics for small talk:

i Baseball
ii Cricket
iii Theatre
iv Going to the Beach / board riding
v Lawn Tennis
vi Schools (meaning colleges you have studied from)

### 2.2 READING

Read this text on small talk and answer the questions that follow:

1 Small talk requires important social skills which are highly valued at the workplace. It helps to break the ice before important business meetings and events.

2 Many people are comfortable talking about business but do not know how to begin a conversation at business meetings appropriately. This is mostly because they do not know what to talk about. It may also be because they are not confident about their language. Hence both confidence about what to say and how to say it are essential for effective small talk.

3 It is helpful to keep these tips in mind about small talk:

Be aware of the type of person / people you will be meeting. Some prior preparation can be extremely helpful. If the visitor happens to be from a region, state or country other than yours then look up information about the place he / she comes from. This can easily be
done over the Internet. Knowledge of a few words belonging to the
language of the visitor can be of additional help. Your visitor will
appreciate your special interest and your conversation will then be
more meaningful.

4 During your conversation it is advisable to stay away from personal
beliefs and controversial topics. These include your religious beliefs,
value system, political convictions, affiliations and connections.

5 Also do not invade the personal space of the visitor by asking about
personal matters like whether s/he is married or not, how many
children s/he has, what they are doing, his/her salary, age etc. Subjects
like weather, sports, entertainment are safe subjects.

6 In the course of your initial conversation you may be able to identify
some areas of common interest. Once you have a subject that interests
both of you, keep to it! You can do this in a number of ways: talking
about travel, talking about the school or friend you have in common,
talking about the differences between your culture and the new culture,
without passing judgments on which one is better.

7 And most importantly, be a good listener. Don't get so carried away
with your preparation for the meeting and your ability to communicate
that you don't listen. Listening carefully will help you understand and
encourage those speaking to you.

8 In some situations, you might be nervous or uncomfortable and not
know how to begin. In such cases, letting others state their opinions
will improve the quality of the discussion - and give you time to think
of an answer!

Check your progress 1

Now after reading these paragraphs can you answer the following questions?

1 Match these subtitles with the appropriate paragraphs of the reading
passage which are numbered.

   i   common ground
   ii  ideologies
   iii don’t get personal
   iv  objective of small talk
   v   difficulties encountered in small talk
   vi  overcoming anxiety
   vii paying attention to what you are being told
   viii doing your homework

2 Find words / expressions in the text with similar meanings to these.

   i   at ease
   ii  in advance
   iii find out
   iv  intrude upon
   v   harmless
   vi  express
Safe and Unsafe Topics for Small talk

The ability to make ‘small talk’ is highly valued. Though it may appear to be simple, but in reality, many people find it extremely difficult to handle because, unlike business conversations, where you are in control of the content, in small talk you can’t be sure about what may be considered as appropriate. Here are some widely accepted topics:

- Sports - current matches or games, favorite teams, etc. Be careful about the choice of sport though. You cannot talk about cricket to an American just as you cannot discuss baseball within India.
- Any major activities that are going on at the moment.
- Current affairs – recent incidents.
- Hobbies
- Weather – this may sound boring, but it can help to break the ice!
- Family - general questions, not questions about private matters – this is a common topic in India.
- Media - films, books, magazines, websites etc.
- Holidays - where, when, etc.
- Home town - where do you come from / grew up; how is it different/similar to this town.
- Job - once again, general questions not too specific.
- Latest fashion and trends.
- Celebrities.
- Festivals – common in India.

And here are some taboo topics that you’d like to avoid.

- Salary - how much do you make?
- Politics - including political ideologies / philosophies.
- Marital status.
- Age.
- Intimate relationships.
- Religion.
- Death.
- Financial - related to salary or the cost of anything you possess including your house.
- Sales - Don't try to sell something to someone you have just met.

Building Relationships in Business

In a country like India building a relationship is important even in business. Indians tend to deal favourably with those they know and trust - even at the expense of lucrative deals. It is vital that a good working relationship is founded with any prospective partner. Small talk and social conversations can go a long way in helping to build a favourable relationship. In addition to this, demonstrating
Social Skills in Business Communication

strong business acumen, and at a personal level, i.e. relating to your partner and exhibiting the positive traits of trustworthiness and honour would contribute greatly to a conducive relationship.

Most meetings start with a great deal of getting-to-know-you talk. In fact, it is quite possible that no business will be discussed at the first meeting. This can be quite problematic for people from other cultures, particularly the West.

Indians are in awe of famous people, particularly from the world of cricket and cinema. Hence celebrities, who are frequently used for advertising goods and services, can make a good topic for social conversations. Also there are close links between sport, films and business. Many business luminaries befriend stars or sponsor events. The recent bidding of cricket teams by business tycoons and film stars amounting to crores of rupees is indicative of the close links between sports, films and business in India.

Check your progress 2

Based on the tips given in the above text, what advice would you give to a foreigner, on doing business with someone in India?

Body Language

Appropriate body language is an essential part of communication. In India the head is considered the seat of the soul. Never touch someone else’s head, not even to pat the hair of a child.

Beckoning someone with the palm up and wagging one finger can be construed as an insult. Standing with your hands on your hips will be interpreted as an angry, aggressive posture. Hence both of these must be avoided.

Whistling is impolite and winking, which is acceptable in some cultures, may be interpreted as either an insult or a sexual proposition in India.

Never point your feet at a person. Feet are considered unclean. If your shoes or feet touch another person, apologize.

Indians are less sensitive to personal space and often use the touch to communicate warmth or intimacy. This is in contrast to many countries where an elbow length or even an arm’s length is considered suitable.

Check your progress 3

Make a list of the do’s and don’ts from the above text on suitable body language in India.

2.3 LISTENING AND SPEAKING

Listen to five speakers telling you about how they prepare and conduct themselves at business meetings or events (Listen to Tape script 1). Pause the CD after each speaker has spoken and express your agreement/disagreement with them by imagining that you are in conversation with them.
Activity 4

1. Now listen to the audios again and match what each speaker says with the statements given below:

i. This speaker displays good social etiquette by being attentive.

ii. This speaker believes that information is the key to effective conversation.

iii. This speaker relies on humour in conversation.

iv. This is the speaker who takes the initiative.

v. This speaker likes to prepare for small talk in accordance with the people he is going to meet.

Activity 5

Now listen to some information on the social etiquette of Australians (Tape script 2) and answer the given questions:

Put a tick mark against the statements that are true according to the speaker.

i. It is important to keep ample time for small talk with Australians.

ii. Taking the trouble to become acquainted with local conditions and issues will help you to win approval and acceptance with them.

iii. Australians have a passion for indoor activities.

iv. Australians are easy going and often take the initiative to start a conversation.

v. It is best to avoid personal questions with them.

Activity 6

Listen to Conversation 1 and identify what is wrong with the conversation here.

Now listen to Conversation 2 and state why the second one is better than the first.

Match your analysis with the one given in the ‘Answers’.

2.4 LANGUAGE FOCUS

When you meet people you can begin a conversation with them by doing any one of these three things.

You can make an observation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lovely weather! Isn’t it?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It’s too cold for this time of the year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The trains usually run late this season because of the fog.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance for the event seems better than last year. (at a business event)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
You can ask a question.

- What do you like best about living here?
- Which is the best place you have travelled to?
- How often do you come to Meerut?
- Is this your first visit here?
- Did you have a comfortable journey?
- What do you think of…..?
- What is your take on…………..?
- Have you heard of .................?

You can reveal something about yourself.

- I’ve worked at several places in M.P.
- I like watching reality shows. How about you?
- I enjoy playing / watching cricket? How about you?

Activity 7

Now can you complete these questions / statements which have been begun for you?

i. How often do you……………………..?
ii. Do you like ……………………………?
iii. What is your favourite……………….? 
iv. Where did you first…………………….? 
v. Would you like some………………………….? 

2.5 VOCABULARY

Activity 8

1. Match the key words in the left column with the words/phrases on the right.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a</th>
<th>b</th>
<th>c</th>
<th>d</th>
<th>e</th>
<th>f</th>
<th>g</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Start</td>
<td>Keep</td>
<td>Remember</td>
<td>Use</td>
<td>Avoid</td>
<td>Revive</td>
<td>Develop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Names</td>
<td>social functions with confidence</td>
<td>a dying conversation</td>
<td>&quot;active&quot; listeners</td>
<td>business relationships and social friendships</td>
<td>a conversation</td>
<td>rapport building skills</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Small talk is _________ in any relationship. Everyday conversation can make or _________ relationships in our personal and _________ lives. Unfortunately, most people don’t realize how important small talk is, and hence do not do anything to _________ or improve this skill. Developing the ability to make small talk is not as _________ as many other work related skills once we _________ its importance and worth.

A Stanford University School of Business study showed its _________ on business success. It tracked MBA’s 10 years after graduation, and _________ that grade point averages had no bearing on their success – but _________ did. Most _________ were those who could make conversation with anyone – from strangers, to secretaries, to bosses to customers.

Small talk has a great impact on your success in 'personal' relationships, because it _________ how others see you in terms of intelligence and confidence. Most people _________ good conversationalists as more intelligent and confident.

Despite the importance of small talk, most people don't do it well. One major reason is _________ and another common reason is not knowing how to _________ a conversation. There are also some who do not have anything to say. All of these difficulties can be _________, once you decide to _________ this art.
2.6 WRITING

Check your progress 4

1 Expand these tips on small talk into paragraphs of at least 4 to 5 sentences. This will also serve as a revision for some of the hints that you have come across in the earlier part of the unit. Now compare your answers with the sample answers given in the Key.

i Think ahead
ii Have something to say
iii Observe and listen

2 Write about 100 words each on at least one of these topics.

i Conversation is an art
ii The burden of conversation
iii Building relationships through small talk

2.7 GRAMMAR: SIMPLE PRESENT TENSE

We use the simple present tense in the following situations:

a to show an action that happens daily or very often. It represents habits, hobbies and daily events.

Example. The verbs in the following sentences are in the present tense

I never indulge in small talk.
The trains usually run late this season because of the fog.
My office work begins at 9 am.

b to show likes and dislikes.

I love chatting with friends. It’s such fun.
Do you like socializing with friends?

c to show events that are scheduled to happen in the near future.

The train leaves this afternoon at three.
When do we begin the meeting?

d to show permanent truths.

It is important to have a short social conversation before you actually begin to talk shop.

Small talk requires important social skills.
Check your progress 5

1. Now complete these sentences with verbs in the simple present:

   i. I _________ to office everyday.
   ii. I _________ my house at 8 o’clock in the morning.
   iii. I _________ my office by 8.30 am.
   iv. I _________ my lunch in the office canteen.
   v. I _________ home by 6 pm.
   vi. In the evening I _________ for a walk.
   vii. On weekends I __________ badminton in the club.
   viii. Once a year I _________ out on a holiday with my family.

2. Complete the following questions using suitable verbs in the simple present tense:

Q1. How …..?
   A. I am fine.

Q2. Where ……………………..?
   A. I live in Bhopal.

Q3. What …………………………?
   A. I like reading and watching TV?

Q4. What …………………………?
   A. I like to read books on self improvement.

Q5. What kind of TV programmes …………………………?
   A. I like to watch reality shows.

Q6. How often …………………………?
   A. I travel out of Bhopal once in two months?

Q7. How …………………………?
   A. I usually travel by train.

Q8. What …………………………?
   A. On weekends I watch movies?

Q9. What …………………………?
   A. I like to watch action movies.

2.8 SPEAKING

Activity 9

1. Imagine that you are B and A is having a conversation with you. Complete this dialogue with suitable questions / statements.
Social Skills in Business Communication

A: How are you?
B: ....................................................

B: ....................................................
A: I’m fine too.
A: It’s good to see you after such a long time.
B: ....................................................

A: So did you have a comfortable journey?
B: ....................................................

A: ....................................................
B: I last visited this place six months ago.
A: Have you been following the cricket series?
B: ....................................................
A: True. I’ve been enjoying the matches too.

You may match your answers with the ones given in the answers key.

Activity 10

Discuss the importance of these tips on small talk with your study partner:

- Be yourself
- Smile
- Be a good listener
- Do not force the conversation

2.9 PRONUNCIATION: SILENT LETTERS

In English you generally do not pronounce all the letters in a word. Some letters in words are silent. In other words, they are not pronounced. Listen to them carefully and repeat each word.

i  \( b \) is silent in the spelling \( mb \) and \( bt \) occurring in the final position in words. Example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>word</th>
<th>pronunciation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>thumb</td>
<td>th( m )mb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>comb</td>
<td>k( m )mb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tomb</td>
<td>( m )mb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bomb</td>
<td>b( m )mb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>climb</td>
<td>cl( m )mb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>doubt</td>
<td>d( m )b</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ii \( d \) is silent in the spelling sequence \( dj \). Example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>word</th>
<th>pronunciation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>adjective</td>
<td>adj( j )ctive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>adjust</td>
<td>adj( j )ust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>adjourn</td>
<td>adj( j )ourn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>adjoin</td>
<td>adj( j )oin</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

iii \( g \) is silent in the spelling sequences \( gm \) or \( gn \). Example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>word</th>
<th>pronunciation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>phlegm</td>
<td>phl( e )gm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gnarl</td>
<td>gn( l )rl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>champagne</td>
<td>ch( m )m( p )n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sign</td>
<td>( n )g</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
iv  $h$ is silent in the spelling sequence $gh$ and in the word final position. Example:

- ghost
- aghast
- ghetto

v  $k$ is silent in these words:

- knee
- knob
- know
- knock
- knife

vi  $l$ is silent before $k$ and in the word – final spelling sequences $lk$ and $lm$. Example:

- walk
- balm
- talk
- palm
- folk
- calm

vii  $n$ is silent in the word – final spelling sequence $mn$. Example:

- column
- condemn
- solemn

viii  $p$ is silent in the word – initial spelling sequences $pu$ and $ps$. Example:

- pneumonia
- psalm
- pseudonym
- pneumatic
- psychology

- $p$ is also silent in the final spelling sequence $pt$, e.g. unkempt.

ix  $t$ is silent when it occurs between $s$ and $l$, and $s$ and $e$. Example:

- castle
- listen
- wrestle
- fasten
- bustle
- glisten
- wrestle

x  $w$ is silent in the final position, in the initial spelling sequence $wr$ and sometimes the initial spelling sequence $wh$. Example:

- saw
- write
- who
- raw
- wrest
- whole
- claw
- wrist
- whose
- blow
- wreck
- whom
- snow
- wrap
- show
2.10 LET US SUM UP

In this unit on small talk you realized the importance of engaging in social interaction before talking shop. Successful people are those who can go beyond business to establish relationships with people. We gave you some frozen phrases in Language Focus which will help you in carrying out a conversation. The Writing section as well as the Listening gives you further tips in this area. To improve your accuracy in the language, we revised the Simple Present Tense. In the section on Pronunciation, we made you aware of the silent letters of English.

2.11 ANSWERS

Activity 1

(i) and (iii) are inappropriate for small talk. Topics like salaries and marital status invade the personal territory of people and hence are too personal to be asked.

Activity 2  Small talk with foreigners

i  I hope you had a comfortable flight. / How was the flight? Were you able to get some sleep?
ii  It is wonderful to see you again. I hope you are enjoying the sunshine of India, or is it too warm for you?
iii  You must be tired after the long flight. Would you like to have some coffee or would you prefer to go to the hotel right away?
iv  Have you tried any of the Indian cuisine so far? What would you like to have for lunch?
v  Would you like something to drink before we set out? It’s going to be a rather big tour of the work shop.

Activity 3

i  Australia
ii  Australia and England
iii  England and maybe Australia
iv  Australia
v  England, Australia and US in that order
vi  USA, England

Check your progress 1

1  Subtitles matched with the appropriate paragraphs of the reading passage.

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>common ground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii</td>
<td>ideologies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Indians like to invest time in building up a relationship with the person they do business with. Knowing a person helps them to build trust. Hence one must be willing to invest time with people in India, instead of hurrying them through business negotiations or deals.

It is also essential to understand the interests of Indians in areas like cricket, films etc, so that people know what topics are favourable for social conversations.

Check your progress 3

Do’s:
• You may use the touch to communicate warmth
• Apologize if you touch someone with your foot by mistake

Don’ts:
• Do not touch anybody’s head
• Do not call anyone with your palm up or by wagging your finger
• Do not stand upright with your hands on the hips
• Do not whistle or wink
• Do not point your feet at someone

2.3 Listening and Speaking: 

Speaker 1 - I usually keep a few short items - anecdotes, jokes, news stories or other interesting tidbits handy so that I can share them with others. I may or may not use them but at least I can draw upon this stock if the need arises.

Speaker 2 – Whenever I have to go to a business event or a meeting, I spend at least 10 minutes thinking about what I have in common with the people who are going to be there. This helps me to think up topics for small talk.
Social Skills in Business Communication

3 Speaker 3 – I think it is important to be well read. I like to take a look at local and national newspapers, magazines and trade publications. That gives me topics for small talk and conversation while entertaining business visitors.

4 Speaker 4 – I’m usually the first to say "Hello." If I’m not sure the other person remembers me, I offer my name to ease the situation. For example, "Meera Shah? Simrat Khanna – good to see you again." I make sure I smile when I do this.

5 Speaker 5 - I make sure I stay focused on my conversational partner by actively listening and giving feedback. I also keep my eye contact and never glance around the room while someone is talking to me.

Activity 4

Speaker 1 - iii
Speaker 2 - v
Speaker 3 - ii
Speaker 4 - iv
Speaker 5 - i

2.3 Listening and Speaking: Tape script 2

Australians are forthright and direct and prefer to get down to business quickly, although some pleasantries can be exchanged at the beginning of a meeting so that the atmosphere is relaxed and some personal bonds are established. Most of them especially enjoy hearing appreciative comments about their country. Australians relish outdoor life and sport is a national obsession at all levels of society. Hence these are common topics for small talk or social conversation.

Australians are known for having an easygoing attitude and treating people in an informal manner. Whilst they may have an informal way of talking to one another, most would respect other people’s privacy. Therefore, Australians may not necessarily talk to you first, as they would not like to intrude. It may be up to you to make the first approach. They are also reluctant to ask personal questions, or offer advice unless they have been asked.

Activity 5

(ii) and (v) are right. The rest are wrong statements.

2.3 Listening and Speaking: Tape script 3

Conversation 1

Mr. Singh: Is this your first visit to India?

Mr. Burns: No, it isn’t. I first came here five years ago for a Trade Fair.

Mr. Singh: Should we get started with the meeting?
Conversation 2

Mr. Singh: Is this your first visit to India?

Mr. Burns: No, it isn’t. I first came here ten years ago for a Trade Fair. It was much smaller than I expected.

Mr. Singh: Is that so. Well, Mr. Burns. You will find a lot of changes in India now, including big Trade Fairs.

Mr. Burns: I’m sure that’s true.

Mr. Singh: Should we get started with the meeting?

Activity 6

In the first conversation Mr. Singh asks a question to which Mr. Burns answers. However, Mr. Singh does not respond to the answer and abruptly suggests that they get down to business. This is socially unacceptable.

In the second conversation Mr. Singh gives a suitable response to Mr. Burns’ answer and then they get down to business. In small talk it is important to not change topics abruptly and to complete a conversation that’s been initiated.

Activity 7

This is only a sample:

i. How often do you travel out of Delhi?
ii. Do you like going to the cinema?
iii. What is your favourite food / cuisine?
iv. Where did you first start work?
v. Would you like some tea or coffee?

Activity 8

1. a. Start a conversation.
b. Keep a conversation going.
c. Remember names.
d. Use icebreakers and conversation starters that work every time.
e. Avoid conversation “killers” like negative remarks.
f. Revive a dying conversation.
g. Develop business relationships and social friendships.
h. Approach social functions with confidence.
i. Become "active" listeners.
j. Mingle with confidence.
k. Improve rapport building skills.
l. Make sure your body language is inviting and natural.
m. Overcome communication barriers.
n. Make the most of networking opportunities.
o. Handle awkward social situations carefully.
p. Exit conversation with grace.
Turn every conversation into an opportunity for success.

Come across as composed and self-assured when talking to people or entertaining clients

2 Missing words are given in bold.

Small talk is crucial in any relationship. Everyday conversation can make or break relationships in our personal and professional lives. Unfortunately, most people don't realize how important small talk is, and hence do not do anything to develop or improve this skill. Developing the ability to make small talk is not as difficult as many other work related skills once we recognize its importance and worth.

A Stanford University School of Business study showed its impact on business success. It tracked MBA's 10 years after graduation, and discovered that grade point averages had no bearing on their success -- but conversation did. Most successful were those who could make conversation with anyone – from strangers, to secretaries, to bosses to customers.

Small talk has a great impact on your success in 'personal' relationships, because it influences how others see you in terms of intelligence and confidence. Most people perceive good conversationalists as more intelligent and confident.

Despite the importance of small talk, most people don't do it well. One major reason is shyness and another common reason is not knowing how to start a conversation. There are also some who do not have anything to say. All of these difficulties can be overcome, once you decide to master this art.

Check your progress 4

1 Expand these tips on small talk into paragraphs:

i Think ahead

One must not go to a business meeting or event without any prior preparation. Even if the meeting is a one-to-one face-to-face meeting with a visitor; it is advisable to think and plan ahead. A good way to start is by finding out about the person you are going to meet. Accordingly, on the basis of some preliminary information that you have gathered, you can decide what topics would be good conversational topics in the given situation. Advance thinking will enhance your comfort level and help you to make a good impression on the visitor.

ii Have something to say

For any conversation you must have something sensible to say. If you are extremely well read or well informed, you will always have something to talk about. All you need to do is to choose from your stock according to the people or situation. However, if this is not the
case, it is a good idea to do some information gathering before all important meetings or events where you need to make social conversation.

iii Observe and listen

An important aspect of small talk is to be a good listener. This is an essential part of good social etiquette. Be a keen observer. This also helps you to understand better and to respond adequately to others.

Check your progress 5

1 Completed sentences:

i I __walk_______ to office everyday.
ii I __leave_______ my house at 8 o’clock in the morning.
iii I __reach_______ my office by 8.30 am.
iv I __have_______ my lunch in the office canteen.
v I __return / come back____ home by 6 pm.
vi In the evening I __go_______ for a walk.
vii On weekends I __play_______ badminton in the club.
viii Once a year I __go_______ out on a holiday with my family

2 Q1. How are you?
   A. I am fine.

Q2. Where do you live?
   A. I live in Bhopal.

Q3. What do you do in your free time?
   A. I like reading and watching TV?

Q4. What kind of books do you like to read?
   A. I like to read books on self improvement.

Q5. What kind of TV programmes do you like to watch?
   A. I like to watch reality shows.

Q6. How often do you travel out of Bhopal for work?
   A. I travel out of Bhopal once in two months?

Q7. How do you usually travel?
   A. I usually travel by train.

Q8. What do you do on weekends?
   A. On weekends I watch movies?

Q9. What kind of movies do you enjoy?
   A. I like action movies.
Activity 9

1. Completed dialogue with suitable questions / statements;

A: How are you?
B: I’m fine, thank you.

B: How about you?
A: I’m fine too. Thank you.

A: It’s good to see you after such a long time.
B: Yes. It’s been so long since we met up.

A: So did you have a comfortable journey?
B: Yes I did. Thanks.

A: When did you last visit this place?
B: I last visited this place six months ago.

A: Have you been following the cricket series?
B: Oh yes. We’ve had some great matches.
A: True. I’ve been enjoying the matches too.
UNIT 3: LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

Structure

3.0 Objectives
3.1 Warm up
3.2 Reading
3.3 Grammar: Linkers
3.4 Listening
3.5 Language Focus
3.6 Speaking
3.7 Writing
3.8 Pronunciation: Foreign Words
3.9 Let us sum up
3.10 Answers

3.0 OBJECTIVES

In this Unit we will take a look at the relationship of language and culture and develop an understanding of the role of language in multicultural settings. To facilitate this you will learn about:

- Popular languages of the world and the relative positioning of the English language
- The role and importance of the English language
- Language and culture
- The importance of language and culture in the context of BPOs
- Indianisms in English
- Foreign words / terms popularly used in English
- American and British English
- Culturally appropriate language
- Politeness and culture
- Preparing for cross cultural communication

3.1 WARM UP

“Those who know nothing of foreign languages know nothing of their own.”

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Language is the roadmap of a culture. It tells you where its people came from and where they are going.

Rita Mae Brown

We work today in multicultural settings. Here are some questions that this brings to mind.

- Do you think it is important to know the language of the people you work with?
Social Skills in Business Communication

- To what extent does an understanding of the cultural background of people around you help in better communication with them?

- Have you noticed that even when people use a common language for communication, for example English, the way they use the language differs because of their native culture?

In this unit we will take a close look at how culture impacts upon the way people from different countries use the English language.

### 3.2 READING

**Activity 1**

1. Read the following text on languages and fit the suitable information into the table below:

   There are about 200 languages that have a million or more native speakers. Mandarin Chinese is the most common, being spoken by around 874,000,000 people as a native language. About 366,000,000 people speak Hindi in India. English is a distant third with approximately 341,000,000 native speakers. Spanish is spoken by approximately 322-358,000,000 people. If the 15 major variants of Arabic are considered one language, Arabic is the 6th most common language in the world having 198-201,000,000 native speakers with substantial numbers in at least 46 countries.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Language</th>
<th>Approximate number of speakers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i Mandarin Chinese</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Now match your table with the one given in the key. Were you surprised by what you learnt about the number of people who use English in the world? Is it more or less than what you expected? If English is not the language spoken by majority of the people in the world why is it the international language of trade and commerce?

2. **Language of comparisons**
Take a close look at the completed table and make use of these words of comparison to talk about the given information. The first one is done for your.

i Most: Most people in the world speak mandarin Chinese.

ii Least

iii More than

iv Less than

v The highest number

Now match your sentences with the ones given in the answer key.

3.2.1 You may find the answers to some of the above questions here. Read the text on the English language that follows and answer the questions given at the end.

English is far more world wide in its distribution than all other spoken languages. It is an official language in 52 countries as well as many small colonies and territories. In addition, 1/4 to 1/3 of the people in the world understand and speak English to some degree. It has become the most useful language to learn for international travel and is now the de facto language of diplomacy. In 2001, the 189 member countries in the United Nations were asked what language they wish to use for communication with embassies from other countries. More than 120 chose English, 40 selected French, and 20 wanted to use Spanish. Those who wanted English to be the common language included all of the former Soviet republics, Vietnam, and most of the Arab world. English is also the dominant language in electronic communication, particularly on the Internet. However, the percentage of Internet users who are not native English speakers is increasing rapidly, especially in Asia.

Activity 2

1 Pick the sentence that best describes the theme of the passage.

i The usefulness of the English Language for international travel.

ii The popularity of the English language across the globe.

iii The competition of the English language with other world languages.

2 What do these numbers refer to? Write out your answers in complete sentences and ensure that your sentence construction is right. You can do this by matching your answers with the ones given in the answer key.

i 52

ii 189

iii 120
Social Skills in Business Communication

3  List the areas of work / communication in which English is popularly used in the world.

4  What do you understand by *de facto*? Consult a dictionary, if necessary. Were you also able to get some information about the origin of the word? To which language does it belong?

Activity 3

Read the passage:

**Para 1** Although there is no official global language at this time, English is becoming the preferred language for international communication. English is the mother tongue of 380 million people, out of a world population of 6.803 billion, but it is the language used worldwide by the academics, press, newspapers, magazines, scientists, businessmen, and politicians. Over 80 percent of the Internet is in English. i)………

**Para 2** There are several reasons why English language dominates over other languages. Two main ones are: geography of the world and social / cultural factors. ii) ……………………………………………………………...

……………………………………………………………Although English is the language of choice in many countries and amongst many people, there is serious concern that countries will lose their cultural heritage along with their native tongue on account of the dominating position of English language in their countries and societies.
Para 3 It is certain that English will continue to be the choice for global business and commerce, but those who speak English should be wary of presuming that it is the preferred language. Chances are that they will choose to use English to conduct business with you, but by showing respect to their language and culture you would have already taken the first step to a successful business relationship.

1 Now insert these sentences into appropriate gaps to complete the passage: English as a Global Language.

A With the rise and expansion of British colonialism began the spread of English language around the world.
B The key thing is to respect other countries and their language and culture, during social and business interaction with them.
C No one language in the history of man has been so widely spoken and by so many.

2 Think of paragraph headings or sub-themes for each of the 3 paragraphs. Now match them with the ones given in ‘Answers’.

a Voluntary choice of English as a medium of global communication
b The importance of English language
c The reasons for the domination of English language

3 Find words in the text which mean the same as these:

i Supersede
ii Anxiety
iii Cautious

3.3 GRAMMAR: LINKERS

In any piece of writing the ideas, the arguments, details and facts are logically related by using certain words and phrases called linkers or connectors. The words/phrases that most often function as linkers/connectors are:

i The definite article the.
ii Personal pronouns: we, our, you, he, his, her, it, they, etc.
iii Demonstrative pronouns: these, that, etc.
iv Conjunctions: and, or, but, yet, etc.
v Other words and phrases: first, meanwhile, later, on the other hand, as a result, therefore, in fact, etc.

Check your progress 1

Some important link words are missing from this text on ‘Culture and Communication’. Try to complete the text on your own by inserting the missing words. If necessary, you may take help from the words given in the box at the end.
People from different cultures speak the same language differently. 1__________ they encode and decode messages differently, the chances of misunderstanding are higher. 2__________ it becomes essential to recognize and understand cultural differences. It is wrong to assume 3__________ everyone’s thoughts and actions should be just like ours. 4__________ attitude is harmful for both, the communicator 5__________ the receiver of the message.

The way people communicate varies widely between, 6________ within, cultures. 7________ aspect of communication style is language usage. Across cultures, some words and phrases are used in different ways. 8________, even in countries that share the English language, the meaning of "yes" varies from "maybe, I'll consider it" to "definitely so," with many shades in between.

It is essential that people research the cultures and communication conventions of those 9________ they propose to meet, interact with over the telephone or write to. 10________ will minimize the risk of making the elementary mistakes. 11________ language skills are unequal, clarifying one’s meaning in these ways will improve communication:

i  avoid using slang and idioms, choosing words 12________ will convey only the most specific meaning
ii  listen carefully and, 13________ in doubt, ask for confirmation of understanding (particularly important if local accents and pronunciation are a problem)
iii  recognize 14________ accenting and intonation can cause meaning to vary significantly
iv  respect the local communication formalities and styles, 15________ watch for any changes in body language.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>that</th>
<th>whom</th>
<th>and</th>
<th>because</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>when</td>
<td>if</td>
<td>hence</td>
<td>this</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>as well as</td>
<td>one</td>
<td>for example</td>
<td>and even</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.4 LISTENING

Activity 4

1  Listen to speaker talking to you about the use of English language in multicultural settings. What does he illustrate with the help of these two examples? You may listen to the audio twice if needed.
2 Now listen to the audio again and do as directed:

i Why is it essential for people in the BPO sector to be culturally sensitized?

ii Why is there a possibility of misunderstanding even when people speak the same language?

iii Who according to the speaker is more direct and to the point, an Indian or a Westener?

3.5 LANGUAGE FOCUS

3.5.1 Indianism

Indians speak countless languages and each of these languages has its own grammar. Accordingly, Indians from different parts of India, especially those who learnt another language before English, speak English as a translation of their own mother tongue using the same grammatical rules. Hence we have a host of so-called Indianisms that are popularly used. Some of these are given in the next activity.
Activity 5

Write the correct form of these expressions in the adjoining column so that they are correct and acceptable particularly in societies and cultures where English is the first language. The first one is done for you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indianism</th>
<th>Correct expression</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i Are you liking it?</td>
<td><em>Do you like it?</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii Let us discuss about this.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii He does this always.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv I only told him to come early.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v Do it fast fast.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vi May I know your good name?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vii I simply love to watch cricket.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>viii My mother is in the teaching line.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ix I am cent percent sure.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x Can you repeat it again please.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.5.2 Words of Indian Origin in the English Language

With a culture and heritage as variegated and rich as India is, it is not surprising that the English language absorbed as many as five hundred words and continues to do so even today. Many of these words have now found their way into English dictionaries because they have become an accepted part of the English language.

Activity 6

The Oxford English Dictionary currently has 700 words of Indian origin. Can you think of at least 10 such words? You could look for them in a dictionary or on the Internet. Now compare your find with what is given in the key! How many common words did you find?

3.5.3 Foreign Words in the English Language

A number of foreign words are frequently used in English. This is because of the impact of one culture on another. Take a close look at the table and note the
origin and meaning of these expressions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Foreign words</th>
<th>Origin</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 ad hoc</td>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>unplanned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 ad infinitum</td>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>Endlessly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 bete noire</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>something that you hate or find annoying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 bona fide</td>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>genuine or real</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 carte blanche</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>complete power to do exactly as you wish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 faux pas</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>socially embarrassing action or mistake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 status quo</td>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>situation that exists at a particular time without any changes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 rendezvous</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>any type of meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 aficionado</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>a person who likes a particular sport, activity or subject very much and knows a lot about it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 chic</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>very fashionable and elegant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Activity 7**

Now complete these sentences with suitable expressions from the above table.

i She was perfectly dressed and looked very _________________.

ii You will need a ________________ document from your organization stating your tenure of work with them.

iii Her’s is an ________________ appointment. She is presently under observation.

iv The Darjeeling tea is regarded by ________________ as the very best in the world.

v If you have no understanding of another’s culture you could easily make a ________________ which could be extremely embarrassing.

vi If you cannot resolve the issue the ________________ will continue.

vii They set up a ________________ at a far away resort where nobody would disturb them.

viii He was given ________________ to deal with the matter as he found suitable.

ix My particular ________________ is people smoking in public places even after the ban.

x You cannot stay in a foreign country ________________ on a visitor’s visa.

**3.5.4 American vs. British English**

**Activity 8**

Here are some sentences that Americans may find difficult to understand. Can you identify the words that they may be unfamiliar with and substitute them with the ones they commonly use?
i Go down the corridor and turn to the left. You will find the lifts to your right.
ii The head office is on the crossing of Baker Street and Freeman Avenue.
iii Brinjals are rich in iron.
iv You can issue books from the library on all seven days of the week.
v People in US mostly travel by private vehicles.
vi In India the railway tracks usually have manned crossings.
vii I need to use your bathroom please.
viii I think we should serve some biscuits with tea.
ix I need to go to a chemist store to buy some medicines.
x Can I have the bill please?

Did you know that:

i The first floor in England / India is the second floor in USA. That is because they refer to the ground floor as the first floor.
ii Sweet biscuits are cookies in America whereas thin ones are crackers! And you thought crackers were fireworks!
iii In America you don’t stand for a public office but run for it.
iv The 1st year undergraduates in the US are called freshman, 2nd year – sophomore, 3rd year - junior and the 4th year – senior.
v In a restaurant you ask for a cheque and not a bill.
vi In the US you receive mail and not post, and the man who brings it is the mailman and not a postman.

Activity 9

Now write down the American equivalents of these words. You may need to use them while talking to / dealing with American visitors or clients in business or social situations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>British</th>
<th>American</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Sweets</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Spring onion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Capsicum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Trousers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Vest</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Dinner jacket</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Dressing gown</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Cupboard</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 City centre</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Diversion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Lorry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Postal code</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Imagine that an American client is talking to you about her car which was repaired in your garage after she had an accident. In your conversation, you have made some slip ups by using words that she might be unfamiliar with. Substitute them with suitable words. Practice this conversation with a partner.

Client: Good Morning, this is Amanda Rox.
You: Good morning Ms Rox. What can I do for you?
Client: I’m calling about my Honda Accord which was with you for repairs last week.
You: Yes, I hope the (i) **vehicle** is doing well. What would you like to tell me about it?
Client: The trunk of the car doesn’t always lift up when I push the button. What do I need to do to get it fixed?
You: I’m sorry to hear about the problem. If you can reconfirm your address, we will have someone come over and fix it for you.
Client: It’s 14 Jor Bagh in South Delhi. Can you tell me when I should expect the person? I need to be around at the time.
You: Would Wednesday afternoon suit you? Say between 3 and 4 pm.
Client: That should be alright.
You: And what about the (ii) **bonnet** and the (iii) **windscreen**? Are they doing alright now?
Client: Yes, thank you.
You: Good bye then, Ms Rox. And have a nice day.
Client: Goodbye.
Note that the client uses the word **trunk** instead of **boot** (British) or **dickey** (Indian).

The right combination of courtesy and professionalism are an important part of communication in the West. Here are some statements that may sound alright in the Indian context but would not be suitable while talking to a person from the West. First of all write the appropriate statements in the spaces below and then practice them with a partner.

**Activity 11**

i  This is not my work. Subhash looks after it.

ii  Subhash, this is Ms. Weston. She would like to ask you something.

iii  It will take me about two minutes to get you this information.

iv  Can you wait in the lobby for two minutes?

v  Sorry, I took too long.

**3.7 WRITING**

**Activity 12**

1  Write down at least three tips on preparation that would be helpful before you begin interacting with someone from a different culture.

Now match your tips with the ones given in the key.
In his book ‘The Cultural Politics of English as an International Language’ Alastair Pennycook (1994) writes - English media from ‘developed’ countries have penetrated the media of developing nations. This essentially one-way flow of information erodes the national sovereignty, cultural identity, and political independence of developing nations.

Write an analysis of this statement. To what extent do you agree with Pennycook.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Foreign words</th>
<th>Origin</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 ad hoc</td>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>unplanned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 ad infinitum</td>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>Endlessly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 bete noire</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>something that you hate or find annoying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 bona fide</td>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>genuine or real</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 carte blanche</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 chic</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>very fashionable and elegant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.9 LET US SUM UP

In this Unit you learnt about:

- Statistics on popular languages of the world and the relative positioning of the English language;
Social Skills in Business Communication

- The reasons for the choice of the English language by the International community;
- The importance and complexity of the relationship between language and culture;
- The significance of an understanding of language and culture in the context of BPOs;
- Indianisms in English and the need for correction;
- Foreign words/terms popularly used in English;
- Some popularly used American vocabulary and British equivalents;
- The need for culturally appropriate language for effective communication;
- Polite language and its association with culture;
- How to prepare for cross-cultural communication.

3.10 ANSWERS

Activity 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Name of Language</th>
<th>Approximate number of speakers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>Mandarin Chinese</td>
<td>874,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii</td>
<td>Hindi</td>
<td>366,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>341,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>322 - 358,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>198-201,000,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Most people in the world speak Mandarin Chinese.
2. Out of the six languages enlisted in the passage, Arabic is spoken by the least number of people.
3. The number of Hindi speaking people in the world is more than those who speak English.
4. The number of people who speak Spanish is less than those who speak Hindi.
5. The highest number of people speak Mandarin Chinese.

Activity 2

1. The popularity of English language across the globe.
2. i 52 is the number of countries in which English is used as the official language.
   ii 189 refers to the number of member countries of the United Nations who were asked in the year 2001 about the language they would like to use for communication with embassies of other countries.
   iii 120 countries chose English as the language they would like to use for communication with embassies of other countries.
English is popularly used in the world for international travel, diplomacy and electronic communication.

De Facto means existing as a fact although it may not be legally accepted as existing. It comes from formal Latin.

For example: The General took de facto control of the country. He continued to rule the country de facto.

Activity 3

1  i) C  ii) A  iii) B

2  a  Paragraph 3  b  Paragraph 1  c  Paragraph 2

3  i) dominate  ii) concern  iii) wary

Check your progress 1

The missing words are given in bold.

People from different cultures speak the same language differently. 1 Because they encode and decode messages differently, the chances of misunderstanding are higher. 2 Hence it becomes essential to recognize and understand cultural differences. It is wrong to assume 3 that everyone’s thoughts and actions should be just like ours. 4 This attitude is harmful for both, the communicator 5 as well as the receiver of the message.

The way people communicate varies widely between, 6 and even within, cultures. 7 One aspect of communication style is language usage. Across cultures, some words and phrases are used in different ways. 8 For example, even in countries that share the English language, the meaning of "yes" varies from "maybe, I'll consider it" to "definitely so," with many shades in between.

It is essential that people research the cultures and communication conventions of those 9 whom they propose to meet, interact with over the telephone or write to. 10 This will minimize the risk of making the elementary mistakes. 11 When language skills are unequal, clarifying one’s meaning in these ways will improve communication:

i  avoid using slang and idioms, choosing words 12 that will convey only the most specific meaning

ii  listen carefully and, 13 if/ when in doubt, ask for confirmation of understanding (particularly important if local accents and pronunciation are a problem)

iii  recognize 14 that accenting and intonation can cause meaning to vary significantly
3.4 Listening

Tape script

These days we work in multicultural settings all the time. A great deal of communication happens across the globe without the speakers or correspondents even realizing it. For example, a health insurance company in Texas sells an insurance policy; it is likely that the back office paperwork is processed in Pune or Hyderabad. Indian BPOs have emerged as the leading companies for back office tasks required by the US insurance companies.

In this changed work environment, it becomes vital for those in the BPO sector to be culturally sensitive to the use of appropriate language in countries they deal with. Language is arguably the most important component of culture. It is impossible to understand the subtle nuances and deep meanings of another culture without knowing how they use language.

Even when two people from two different cultures speak the same language, the chance of error is high. Usages and contextual inferences may be completely different between cultures. So selecting the most appropriate words, with the correct intonation and stress are all critical even before one considers the propriety of the content of the conversation.

Similarly in written communication, the degree of formality, the directness or indirectness of the approach, the choice of words and phrases is crucial to effective communication. As an Indian corresponding with clients in America you cannot afford to use language such as “You will be intimated shortly” or “We sincerely hope that you will do the needful at your earliest possible convenience”. You would need to be more specific and less wordy. “We will let you know in two days” and “Please send us your documents by the end of the week so that we can process them early next week” might be more appropriate substitutes.

Activity 4

1 The sale of a health insurance policy in Texas for which the paperwork is done in India.

The importance of the Indian BPO employees to be able to communicate with people in America appropriately, with an understanding of the differences in culture.

An Indian corresponding with clients in America in writing.

The need for Indians to use specific, concise and direct communication when writing to clients in America.

2 This is so because they need to interact with people from other cultures globally all the time. They can do this effectively only
if they have some understanding of the culture of people they need to deal with and the way they use language.

ii  Misunderstandings may happen because the usage of language and the context in which it is used varies with cultures.

iii  The Westerners happen to be less wordy and more direct and to the point.

Activity 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indianism</th>
<th>Correct expression</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Are you liking it?</td>
<td>Do you like it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Let us discuss about this.</td>
<td>Let us discuss this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 He does this always.</td>
<td>He always does this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 I only told him to come early.</td>
<td>I told him to come early.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Do it fast fast.</td>
<td>Do it fast.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 May I know your good name?</td>
<td>May I know your name?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 I simply love to watch cricket.</td>
<td>I love to watch cricket.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 My mother is in the teaching line.</td>
<td>My mother is in the teaching profession.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 I am cent percent sure.</td>
<td>I am hundred percent sure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Can you repeat it again please?</td>
<td>Can you repeat it please?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Activity 6

Words of Indian Origin in the English Language:

i  Bangle
ii  Cheetah
iii Chutney
iv  Guru
v   Karma
vi  Khaki
vii Yoga
viii Pundit
ix  Nirvana
x   Sari

Activity 7

The missing words are given in bold.

i  She was perfectly dressed and looked very chic.
ii  You will need a bona fide document from your organization stating your tenure of work with them.
iii  Her’s is an ad hoc appointment. She is presently under observation.
iv  The Darjeeling tea is regarded by aficionados as the very best in the world.
If you have no understanding of another’s culture you could easily make a **faux pas** which could be extremely embarrassing.

If you cannot resolve the issue the **status quo** will continue.

They set up a **rendezvous** at a far away resort where nobody would disturb them.

He was given **carte blanche** to deal with the matter as he found suitable.

My particular **bête noire** is people smoking in public places even after the ban.

You cannot stay in a foreign country **ad infinitum** on a visitor’s visa.

---

**Activity 8**

i. Go down the **hallway** and turn to the left. You will find the **elevators** to your right.

ii. The head office is on the **intersection** of Baker Street and Freeman Avenue.

iii. **Eggplants** are rich in iron.

iv. You can **check out** books from the library on all seven days of the week.

v. People in US mostly travel by private **automobiles**.

vi. In India the **railroads** usually have manned crossings.

vii. I need to use your **washroom** / **rest room** please.

viii. I think we should serve some **crackers** / **cookies** with tea.

ix. I need to go to a **drugstore** to buy some **drugs**.

x. Can I have the **cheque** please?

---

**Activity 9**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>British</th>
<th>American</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Sweets</td>
<td>Candy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Spring onion</td>
<td>Scallion / green onions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Capsicum</td>
<td>Bell pepper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Trousers</td>
<td>Pants / slacks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Vest</td>
<td>Undershirt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Dinner jacket</td>
<td>Tuxedo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Dressing gown</td>
<td>Robe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Cupboard</td>
<td>Closet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 City centre</td>
<td>Downtown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Diversion</td>
<td>Detour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Lorry</td>
<td>Truck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Postal code</td>
<td>Zip code</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Torch</td>
<td>Flashlight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Bank note</td>
<td>Bill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Autumn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Goggles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Petrol station</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Tap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Pavement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Rubbish</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Activity 10

i  car / automobile  
ii  hood  
iii  windshield  

Activity 11

i  I’m afraid I don’t deal with this. Let me introduce you to Subhash. I’m sure he can help you out.  
ii  Subhash, please meet Ms. Weston. She is looking for some help.  
iii  I’m afraid it will take me about two minutes to get you this information.  
iv  Would you mind waiting in the lobby while I do this?  
v  I’m extremely sorry to keep you waiting so long. Unfortunately there was a snag in the system and it took longer than I expected to retrieve this information.  

Activity 12

i  Read literature about the culture of the people you need to associate with.  
ii  Learn some vocabulary of the other person’s language.  
iii  Becoming more aware of our cultural differences, as well as exploring our similarities, can help us communicate with each other more effectively.
UNIT 4: BUSINESS ETIQUETTE

Structure

4.0 Objectives
4.1 Warm up
4.2 Reading Comprehension
4.3 Listening
4.4 Language Focus: Polite Expression
4.5 Vocabulary
4.6 Writing
4.7 Grammar: Subject-Verb Agreement
4.8 Pronunciation: Consonant Sounds
4.9 Let Us Sum Up
4.10 Answers

4.0 OBJECTIVES

It is important to know about business etiquette because it helps you to socialize, communicate and deal with people in a manner that is polite and appropriate professionally, situationally and culturally. Business etiquette is imperative for building up good business relationships that are important for achievement and success.

In this unit you will learn about:

- what is business etiquette
- the importance of business etiquette in International and Global Business
- business etiquette in India, USA, England, Australia, Japan & China
- Infinitives & gerunds
- polite expressions in business etiquette
- how to write an email about business etiquette

4.1 WARM UP

"America and Britain are two nations divided by a common language" *George Bernard Shaw* was once quoted as saying.

Think of what Shaw could mean by this. Can the same language be used differently in different countries? How does this affect business etiquette?
Activity 1

1. Take a look at some of these traits and identify whether they would be prevalent in India or the USA.
   
i. friendly banter between men and women
ii. standing up when an elder or guest enters the room
iii. offering a glass of water to anyone who enters the office
iv. preference for doing business with those they know
v. asking personal questions
vi. shaking hands with women in all business situations
vii. using ‘sir’ while talking to a senior
viii. using first names in business conversations
ix. arriving late for a business meeting
x. preparing thoroughly for all business meetings / situations

4.2 READING COMPREHENSION

Reading Passage 1

1. Etiquette is a very important factor in determining the success or failure of a business or a person. It refers to norms and standards of behaviour that are socially acceptable. The etiquette of business is the set of written and unwritten rules of conduct that make social interactions run more smoothly.

2. If people don’t feel comfortable in an environment, they cannot possibly function to their best capabilities. A minimum level of comfort is required in any business meeting, negotiation or transaction. It is here that business etiquette is put to the test. Learning about business etiquette could help you to be socially competent and
accepted or appreciated, which is the first step towards your business goal. Business Etiquette is the key to good relationships with clients, customers and employees.

3 Research conducted by Harvard University shows that technical skills and knowledge accounts for only 15% of getting, keeping and advancing in a job; 85% of the job success is connected to people skills. This research is significantly indicative of the importance of etiquette which is a vital social skill. Business etiquette includes courtesy, the image you project of yourself, the trust you generate in people who interact with you and your reliability factor. Appropriate and impressive social behavior increases opportunities for new business, fosters congenial business relationship, builds confidence and creates goodwill.

4 Our behavioral patterns and etiquette is dependent on culture; what is highly appreciated in one society may be considered rude or shocking in another. Etiquette can vary widely between different cultures and nations. For example, in China, a person who takes the last item of food from the serving plate or bowl without first offering it to others at the table may be seen as a greedy person and insulting the generosity of the host. In America a guest is expected to eat all of the food given to them, as a compliment to the host and her quality of cooking. Hence an understanding of the culture of the person or country you are doing business with is essential.

5 Etiquette, manners, and cross cultural, or intercultural communication have become critical elements required for all International and Global Business executives, managers, and employees. As international, multinational, transnational, multi domestic, and global business continues to expand and bring people closer, it is becoming increasingly important for people to be understanding and appreciative of people from different regions and countries. This is imperative for successful business outcomes.

6 India is one of the largest and most definitely a multi-cultural country. Therefore, defining business culture and etiquette can be a little problematic. For people in India cultural sensitivity and awareness is necessary not only in dealing with foreigners, but also with people from different states and regions of India.

Check your progress 1

Read the text above and then attempt these questions:

1 Match the topic sentences to the appropriate paragraphs:

A An understanding of cultures is imperative to appropriate business etiquette.
B Business etiquette is an important social skill.
C What is business etiquette?
D The importance of business etiquette.
E Business etiquette in the Indian context.
F An understanding of business etiquette
Here are some words, the opposites of which can be found in the above text. Can you identify them?

i  Uncaring  
ii  Ignorance  
iii  Condemned  
iv  Stipulated  
 v  Unfavorable  
vi  Domestic  
 vii  Unsuitable  
viii  Polite  
 ix  Rejected  
x  Guest

Reading passage 2

Check your progress 2

In this section you will read about Business Etiquette in India, USA, England and Australia. Read through the points carefully and identify:

1  Four distinctive traits of the four given countries.  
2  Differences between the listed countries.  
3  How India compares with USA, England and Australia in:
   i  Greetings  
   ii  Dress code  
   iii  Punctuality  
   iv  Body language

Now match your answers with the sample answers in the ‘Answers’.

Business Etiquette in India

1  Handshake is the common way of greeting, particularly amongst men. Some women in the bigger cities also shake hands. It is advisable to wait and see whether a woman moves her hand forward for a handshake or not. Otherwise the traditional ‘namaste’ is suitable. You may sometimes find people embracing each other. This happens only when they are friends or extremely well acquainted. In rare cases a younger person may be seen touching the feet of someone elderly. This is not part of corporate culture in India, but may occur in the Indian business environment otherwise.

2  It is not considered appropriate to look straight into the eyes of seniors or the elderly. Out of respect, people tend not to do so. However, in some foreign cultures this may be construed as being evasive or dishonest.
Indians are always conscious of social order and their status relative to other people. All relationships, whether social or professional involve hierarchies.

The boss is seen as the source of ultimate responsibility in business.

Business cards are generally exchanged at the first meeting. Cards are formally presented, with the right hand, often with the left hand placed beneath the elbow of the right hand to suggest respect. The card is also received with the right hand.

Indians prefer to do business with those they know hence it is useful to spend some time building up a relationship with a prospective client or associate. Business relationships are usually built upon mutual trust and respect. In general, Indians prefer to have long-standing personal relationships prior to doing business. It may be useful to go through a third party introduction. This gives you immediate credibility.

Indians are generally flexible with time, even in business situations, though notions of punctuality vary with place and occasion. Corporate India is more time conscious and punctual.

However, for social events Indians tend to be lax.

A ‘yes’ in India may not necessarily mean so. People could back out. It is common to hear expressions like ‘We’ll see’, ‘Let’s see’, ‘We’ll work something out’, which are non committal.

It is not uncommon to be informed about something at the last minute, or be given a short notice.

Indians don’t believe too much in preparation – the attitude of playing it by the ear / cross the bridge when they come to it is common.

In Indian business culture, hierarchy plays a key role. In most cases, those in authority are averse to manual labour or to doing something which is meant to be done by a subordinate. For example, they will not do anything that’s done by a "peon" even if this causes delay or inconvenience.

Hierarchy is more visible in the Public sector than the Private sector.

Late mornings and early afternoons are usually preferred for appointments and meetings. Although most Indians are early risers, they do not begin work very early. In the case of some, the work begins only after adequate prayer or ‘puja’. The customer can wait.

It is also a good idea to confirm your appointment as they do get cancelled at short notice.

Meetings are not scheduled during India's numerous religious holidays.
It is not unusual to find that a person at the counter or on a desk deals with people out of turn or outside the queue, or deal with more than one customer or query at a time.

**Business Etiquette in USA**

1. Business suit and tie are appropriate in all major cities. Dark colored business suits in classic colors of gray and navy are the general practice. For formal meetings a white shirt is advisable, whereas for less formal business occasions a light blue shirt is acceptable.

2. Women wear suits or dresses with jacket in major cities. Wearing classic clothing and classic colors of navy, gray, ivory, and white will ensure you give a confident and conservative appearance.

3. Business conversation may take place during meals. However, many times you will find more social conversation taking place during the actual meal.

4. Business meetings may be arranged as breakfast meetings, luncheon meetings, or dinner meetings depending on time schedules and necessity. Generally a dinner, even though for business purposes, is treated as a social meal and a time to build rapport.

5. Gift giving is discouraged or limited by many US companies. A gracious written note is always appropriate and acceptable.

6. An invitation for a meal or a modest gift is usually acceptable.

7. If you are someplace with a line or queue, go to the end and wait your turn. Americans are particular about personal space and do not like people standing too close to them. An arm’s length distance is considered appropriate.

8. Do not try to speak across to someone or speak out of turn. If you are dealing with someone who is seated at a counter or on a desk, be patient and wait for your turn. Once it is your turn you will be given full attention and suitable time.

9. Offer a firm handshake, lasting 3-5 seconds, upon greeting and leaving. Maintain good eye contact during your handshake. If you are meeting several people at once, maintain eye contact with the person you are shaking hands with, until you move on to the next person.

10. Good eye contact during business and social conversations indicates interest, sincerity and confidence.

11. Business cards are generally exchanged during introductions. However, they may be exchanged when one party is leaving.

12. Ask permission to smoke before lighting a cigarette or cigar. Due to health concerns, you may or may not be given permission.
Business Etiquette in England

1. Business attire rules are somewhat relaxed in England, but conservative dress is still very important for both men and women.

2. Dark suits, usually black, blue, or gray, are quite acceptable. Men's shirts should not have pockets; if they do, the pockets should always be kept empty.

3. Men wear laced shoes, not loafers.

4. Businesswomen are not as limited to colors and styles as men are, though it is still important to maintain a conservative image.

5. Always be punctual in England. Arriving a few minutes early for safety is acceptable.

6. Decision-making is slower in England than in the United States; therefore it is unwise to rush the English into making a decision.

7. A simple handshake is the standard greeting (for both men and women) for business occasions and for visiting a home.

8. Privacy is very important to the English. Therefore asking personal questions or intensely staring at another person should be avoided.

9. Eye contact is seldom kept during British conversations.

10. Personal space is important in England, and one should maintain a wide physical space when conversing. Furthermore, it is considered inappropriate to touch others in public.

11. Gifts are generally not part of doing business in England.

12. A business lunch will often be conducted in a pub and will consist of a light meal and perhaps a pint of ale.

13. When socializing after work hours, do not bring up the subject of work.

14. When dining out, it is not considered polite to toast those who are older than yourself.

15. In England, English is the official language, but it should be noted that Queen’s English and American English are very different.

16. Ordinary words can be different in the two nations, e.g. petrol (British English) and gas (American English).

17. Loud talking and disruptive behavior should be avoided.
If a man has been knighted, he is addressed as "Sir and his first name" example: Sir John. If writing a letter, the envelope is addressed "Sir First name and Last name" example: Sir John Roberts.

**Business Etiquette in Australia**

1. Men wear a conservative dark business suit and tie. Women may wear a dress, or skirt and blouse, for business.

2. Informal clothing is appropriate when not attending business functions. Casual pants are fine for both men and women.

3. Being punctual is critical.

4. A single, male passenger using a taxi should sit in the front seat.

5. Giving gifts is not a common practice in business. You may bring a small gift of chocolate, wine or flowers if invited to someone's home.

6. When paying for a round of drinks, do not pick up the tab out of turn, and make sure to pay when it is your turn.

7. Should you approach a line/queue, go to the end/back and wait your turn.

8. Shake hands when meeting and when leaving.

9. Australians are friendly and open, but directness and brevity are valued.

10. Do not exaggerate or overrate yourself, your company or your information. This is likely to have a negative impact.

11. Sightseeing and sports are good conversation topics

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**4.3 LISTENING**

**Check your progress 3**

You will now listen to Ms. Saba Karim from our studio who is interviewing an expert on Japanese culture and business Etiquette, Ms. Natsuki Takahashi. Pay attention to the interview and answer the questions below:

1. What are these?
   i. Shinto
   ii. Meishi
   iii. Karaoke

2. Make notes on the do’s and don’ts based on the interview.
### 4.4 LANGUAGE FOCUS: POLITE EXPRESSION

Politeness is an essential ingredient of Business Etiquette.

Look at the speech balloons on the left. The expressions in these are not polite enough. Could you rewrite the more polite forms in the empty balloons to the right?

**Activity 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Do’s</th>
<th>Don’ts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>Give me your coat.</td>
<td>Give me your coat!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii</td>
<td>Sit down!</td>
<td>Sit down!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii</td>
<td>I want to use your phone.</td>
<td>I want your phone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv</td>
<td>No, I don’t like Chinese food.</td>
<td>I don’t like Chinese food.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v</td>
<td>What is the time?</td>
<td>What’s the time?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vi</td>
<td>Where is the washroom?</td>
<td>Where is the washroom?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vii</td>
<td>We should order the food now.</td>
<td>We should order the food now.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Activity 3

Now look at these odd situations. How would you improve the language used in each situation to make it more polite and acceptable?

i. I don’t accept gifts.

ii. I can take you for sightseeing.

iii. Come to my house for dinner in the evening.

iv. I have no idea who you are?

v. I can’t stand this fast food!

vi. Can’t you see? You can’t smoke in here.

vii. I’m just not in the mood to go out with...
4.5 VOCABULARY

Activity 4

Polite Expressions

1. Match the beginning of the sentences in the first column with the correct ending from the second column. After you have checked your answers, pay special attention to how expressions like ‘I was wondering’, ‘I’m afraid’, ‘Would you like to’, ‘Is it possible to’, ‘Do you fancy’ etc bring the required politeness in communication.

| i | I was wondering if you’d like | a | going out for a boat cruise this evening. |
| ii | I’m afraid | b | can you help me? |
| iii | Would you like to | c | to try Thai food? |
| iv | Can I have | d | I’m busy this evening. |
| v | Is it possible to | e | to go to the cinema this evening. |
| vi | Do you fancy | f | to book a taxi to take me around in the evening? |
| vii | Excuse me, | g | change for Rs 500? |
| viii | I’d like | h | go sightseeing after a tour of the factory? |

2. Now match the two halves of the given sentences to make appropriate responses to the above sentences.

| i | That’s | a | do that for you. |
| ii | Maybe, | b | but I’m busy this evening. |
| iii | Sure, I’d | c | can I do for you? |
| iv | Sure, here | d | very kind of you. |
| v | Yes, it’s | e | very much possible. |
| vi | I’d love to, | f | another time. |
| vii | Sure, what | g | like that very much. |
| viii | I could | h | you are |

4.6 WRITING

Activity 5

Your friend who works in Bangalore is visiting China for business. This is his first visit, whereas you have been to China several times. He has written an email to you asking for tips.

Based on your experience you had made notes on Chinese business Etiquette in your diary. Make use of your notes to write a response to the email you have received from him.
Social Skills in Business Communication

Notes from your diary:

• Wear sober or neutral colours. No jeans.
• Arrive early or on time.
• Avoid giving gifts.
• No business during meals.
• Do not start eating before the host. As courtesy, taste all dishes offered.
• Do not drop your chopsticks! It’s unlucky.
• Chinese take time to make decisions.
• Present and receive business cards with both hands.
• Let the seniors speak first.
4.7 GRAMMAR: SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

Read the following sentences:

A Some women in the bigger cities also shake hands.
B It is advisable to see whether a woman moves her hand forward…

In sentence A, the subject some women is in plural form. The verb shake is also in the plural form.

In sentence B, the subject a woman is in the singular form, therefore, the verb moves which has been used, is also in the singular form.

In both the sentences give above, the verbs agree with their subject.

1 It is important to make verbs agree with their subject.
2 The verb form can change depending on whether the subject is singular or plural.
3 The verb must always agree with its subject.
4 A Singular Subject – Singular Verb, Plural Subject = Plural Verb
5 In English, the only subject that affects agreement is the ending of the main verb or auxiliary in the third personal singular.

A finite verb in a sentence always agrees with its subject in number and person. When the subject is singular, the verb must be singular. When the subject is plural, the verb must be plural. In English, the only subject that affects the ending of the main verb or auxiliary is the third person singular.

| 1st person singular | I work. |
| 2nd person singular | You work. |
| 3rd person singular | He/She/It works. |
| 1st person plural | We work. |
| 2nd person plural | You work. |
| 3rd person plural | They work. |

Let us now look at some rules of subject-verb agreement:

Singular Subjects that look Plural

1 There are certain verbs which end in s and look plural, but they are singular in number. They take singular verbs.

   Physics is one of the most interesting subjects.
   The news that everyone survived the crash is good to hear.
   Gulliver’s Travels is a famous book.
When a proper noun is plural in form but stands for one ‘thing’ or ‘company’ it takes a singular plural.

Bahri and Sons is a famous book store in Khan Market. 
_Singapore Airlines_ is my favourite book of short stories.

When two nouns are joined with _and_, and refer to the same person or thing or concern one idea, they take the singular verb.

_Rice and fish curry_ is my favourite dish.  
_Slow and steady wins_ the race.

When two singular subjects are joined by _or_, _either-or_, _neither-nor_, they take a singular verb.

_Neither Australia nor England_ is going to win the cricket match. 
I’m sure _he or his brother_ is to blame. 
_Either Sunita or Sumit_ has done it.

The following pronouns are always singular and they take singular verbs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nobody</th>
<th>anyone</th>
<th>anything</th>
<th>each</th>
<th>either</th>
<th>nobody</th>
<th>no one</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>every/body/one/thing</td>
<td>neither</td>
<td>someone</td>
<td>something</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>somebody</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

_Nobody_ is allowed to enter the building after office hours.  
_Everyone_ in our society _has_ paid the money.  
_Neither of the managers_ is going on the trip.

When the subject is a unit of measurement or a mathematical unit, the verb used is singular.

_Six months_ is a long time to wait.  
_Three kilometres_ is quite a long walk.

**Subject which are plural:**

1. These nouns are always plural in form and take plural verbs like: trousers, pants, shorts, scissors, pliers, socks, spectacles.

   My new _spectacles_ are lost.  
   Your blue _socks_ are in the drawer.  
   The _trousers_ need repair.  
   Your new _shorts_ look really cool.

2. Two and more singular nouns joined by _and_ make a plural subject. They take a plural verb.

   _Jack and Jill_ are coming.  
   _India and Pakistan_ are neighbours.

3. The following pronouns are always plural and take plural verbs:
Both the twins look alike.
Many children participated in the Science Talent Contest, but few have passed.
Several of the paintings were destroyed in the fire.

Check your progress 4

1 Fill in the blanks with the correct form of the verb given in brackets.

i The cars ______ parked on the street ahead. (is / are)

ii The carpet ___________ a lot of stains. (has / have)

iii The Trade Union Members’ Meeting _____ being held in the Conference Room. (is / are)

iv Fifteen years ____ a very long time! (is / are)

v Neither her father nor her mother ______ very tall. (is / are)

vi Either this woman or that man ______ stolen the watch. (has / have)

vii At the party, everyone ______ well dressed. (was / were)

viii Baked beans and toast _____ my favourite dish for breakfast. (is / are)

ix Many children _____ injured in the accident. (was / were)

x Something ______ amiss in this room. (seem /seems)

2 Spot the Mistakes: Read the text given below. There are 12 verbs that are wrong. Rewrite the passage with the correct form of the verb in the space provided.

Some jobs is very demanding but nevertheless, someone have to do them. Recently, I saw an advertisement in the newspaper where Brown & Polson were looking for a Chocolate Purchase Manager. The Company were offering to pay $ 40,000 per year for the right candidate.

The nature of the job are also very interesting. The applicant are expected to travel to Africa to selects the right cocoa to be used in the making of chocolate.

The company are expecting a lot of applications for the job. They is looking for someone who work hard, enjoy travelling and who love chocolate.
4.8 PRONUNCIATION: CONSONANT SOUNDS

English has 24 consonant sounds in all. Listen carefully to the following consonant sounds and look at the symbol that represents each sound. Repeat the key word.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Key Word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/p/</td>
<td>as in pen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/b/</td>
<td>as in bed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/t/</td>
<td>as in tea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/d/</td>
<td>as in deed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/k/</td>
<td>as in cat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/g/</td>
<td>as in get</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/t∫/</td>
<td>as in chin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ʤ/</td>
<td>as in June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/m/</td>
<td>as in man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/n/</td>
<td>as in net</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ŋ/</td>
<td>as in bring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/f/</td>
<td>as in fun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/v/</td>
<td>as in veil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/θ/</td>
<td>as in think</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ð/</td>
<td>as in then</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/s/</td>
<td>as in sale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/z/</td>
<td>as in zoo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ʃ/</td>
<td>as in ship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ʒ/</td>
<td>as in pleasure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/h/</td>
<td>as in hat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/l/</td>
<td>as in lake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/r/</td>
<td>as in rest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/j/</td>
<td>as in yard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/w/</td>
<td>as in watch</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.8.1 Learning the Consonant Symbols

Notice that of these symbols only seven - /t∫, ʤ, ŋ, š, ʒ/ are not familiar and need to be learnt. The other symbols are the same as the letters of the alphabet. Though the symbol /j/ is the same as the letter j of the alphabet, it is pronounced as in the first letter of the word yard.

4.8.2 Consonant Distinctions

* The slanting lines are used to differentiate the sound from the spelling.
So far we have practiced associating the symbols for the consonants with the sounds they represent. Now we shall concentrate on those consonants that constitute problems for Indian learners. In order to make our speech intelligible and acceptable to native and other non-native speakers of English we need to distinguish between one consonant and another. For example, if we use the consonant /s/ in place of /ʃ/ in the word sheet then we produce the word seat which has an entirely different meaning. Similarly, if the consonant /tʃ/ is used instead of /ʃ/ in the word shop it will result in the word chop which has a different meaning. The substitution of one sound for another in a word makes it unacceptable to a proficient speaker of English, even though the meaning may become clear from the context in which that word occurs. Our learners, must therefore, make a distinction between those sounds which are linguistically significant.

We shall therefore concentrate on those sounds and sound distinctions that constitute problems for Indian learners from different parts of the country.

i  Consonants /f/ and /v/

Generally, Indians from the eastern and western regions and Kashmir have difficulty in producing the consonant /f/. They replace it by the sound फ़ as in फ़ल (fruit) in Hindi.

Listen to the following words with /f/ and repeat them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>/f/</th>
<th>/v/</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>fallacy</td>
<td>afford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>favour</td>
<td>prefer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fertile</td>
<td>refine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fiend</td>
<td>refuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>photo</td>
<td>trophy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is necessary to maintain a distinction between /f/ and /v/ and /v/ and /b/. To practice the difference between them, listen to the following pairs of words and repeat each pair.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>/f/</th>
<th>/v/</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>fail</td>
<td>veil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fine</td>
<td>vine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>file</td>
<td>vile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>foil</td>
<td>voile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leaf</td>
<td>leave</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

/ʃ/ and /b/  
To practice the difference between /ʃ/ and /b/, listen to the following pairs of words on the CD and repeat them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>/ʃ/</th>
<th>/b/</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>vet</td>
<td>bet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vote</td>
<td>boat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vow</td>
<td>bow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>curve</td>
<td>curb</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ii Consonants /s/ and /z/, /s/ and /ʃ/, /s/ and /θ/ and /ʤ/ are contrastive and we must make a distinction between each pair.

Listen to the difference between /s/ and /z/ in the following pairs of words and repeat them in pairs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>/s/</th>
<th>/z/</th>
<th>/s/</th>
<th>/z/</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sip</td>
<td>zip</td>
<td>peace</td>
<td>peas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sue</td>
<td>zoo</td>
<td>rice</td>
<td>rise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seal</td>
<td>zeal</td>
<td>place</td>
<td>plays</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Make a list of other pairs to distinguish between /s/ and /z/.

Note: The plural forms of nouns, the 3rd person singular forms of verbs and the 3rd person possessive forms of nouns are pronounced in the following three ways.

a /iz/ after the consonants /s, z, ʃ, θ, ʤ/

| kisses | bushes | messages |
| horses | garages | Raj’s |
| Alice’s | watches | judges |
| Dickens’s | witches’ | fetches |

b /s/ after the consonants /p, t, k, f, θ/.

| caps | Dick’s |
| stops | chiefs |
| it’s | laughs |
| pats | Ruth’s |
| pots | cat’s |
| hits | |

c /z/ after all other consonants and all vowels

| boys | man’s | loves |
| rags | China’s | plums |
| leaves | officers’ | runs |
| buds | employees’ | saves |
| goes | she’s | flies |

Listen to the words in (a), (b) and (c) carefully and repeat each word.

4.9 LET US SUM UP
In order to be successful in any business venture, it is important to have good interpersonal skills and an understanding of and sensitivity to other people and cultures. In other words to have the right business etiquette. In this unit we give you an understanding of some of the nuances of Indian, American, British, Australian and Japanese culture. This will help you in your business dealings. We also give practice in some polite expressions which you can use at the workplace. In the grammar section we deal with subject-verb agreement, an area which is often problematic to Indian students. In the pronunciation section we have described consonants in English. Please go through the unit carefully and complete all the activities.

4.10 ANSWERS

Activity 1

i USA
ii India
iii India
iv India
v India
vi USA
vii India
viii USA
ix India
x USA

Check your progress 1

1 Para 1 : C
Para 2 : F
Para 3 : B
Para 4 : A
Para 5 : D
Para 6 : E

2
i Sensitive
ii Awareness
iii Appreciated
iv Unwritten
v Conducive
vi Global / international
vii Appropriate
viii Rude
ix Accepted
x Host

Check your progress 2

1 Four distinctive traits of the four given countries: It is possible that traits you have enlisted are different from the ones given below. The purpose of this exercise is not to ensure that you list all the traits, but to make sure that you are familiar with the dominant traits.
### Social Skills in Business Communication

#### India
- **a** A handshake may not work with women in all work situations.
- **b** Social order and hierarchy are very important.
- **c** Indians like to build a relationship with someone they do business with.
- **d** Indians are flexible with time.

#### USA
- **a** American businessmen usually wear dark colored business suits like black, navy blue or grey with white shirts.
- **b** Business meetings can be fixed during breakfast or luncheon. Dinner is more social.
- **c** An arm’s length is considered appropriate distance between people in a queue.
- **d** Eye contact is important.

#### England
- **a** It is impolite and unacceptable to be late.
- **b** The English take their time to make decisions.
- **c** The English do not like to discuss work while socializing after work.
- **d** Knighted men must be addressed with ‘Sir’.

#### Australia
- **a** Informal clothing is acceptable outside of business functions.
- **b** Australians pay for drinks by turn. Pay when it is your turn but do not offer to pay when it is someone else’s turn.
- **c** Australians are brief and to the point.
- **d** They like to talk about sports and sightseeing.

### Differences between the listed countries
You may spot more differences than these.

- Indians are lax about time whereas the other three countries are very punctual.
- Dark business suits are preferred in USA and England whereas Indians and Australians are less conservative in choice of colour for business suits. Casual clothing is acceptable in Australia outside of business events.
- A ‘yes’ in India may not necessarily mean agreement whereas this is not the case in the other 3 countries.
- Indians prefer to do business in later part of the day whereas the Americans like to have an early start.
- Although English is the native language of both England and America, there is a lot of difference in the way the two
countries use the language in terms of pronunciation, usage and propriety.

3 How India compares with USA, England and Australia in

i Greetings

In India greetings will vary according to places, people and cultures. Also they may greet foreigners differently from the way they greet local people. Handshakes are common amongst businessmen almost all over India, however, this may not be the case with ladies. In many places ladies prefer the traditional ‘namaste’. A lady touching a stranger is not culturally acceptable in many parts of India.

ii Dress code

Dress code is formal in USA, England and Australia, although the choice of colors may vary. Generally speaking, dark color business suits in black, navy blue and classic grey are popularly worn. In the case of India, most businessmen wear formal suits but the range of colors used in India is much more. Besides, some businessmen choose to wear safari suits or formal shirts because the climate of India is not conducive to wearing suits all the year round.

iii Punctuality

USA, England and Australia are extremely particular about punctuality, particularly on formal business occasions. In India some laxity with regards to time is observed in most places. In England, even for social occasions people tend to be absolutely on time, whereas in US they may be a few minutes late. In India social occasions are treated with even less seriousness in terms of keeping time.

iv Body language

People in US value eye contact, whereas in India it is considered rude to look into the eyes of an elder, senior or superior. Britshers also do not maintain continuous eye contact.

4.3 Listening

Tape script

To begin with I’d like to give you a brief introduction to Japan. Japan has a population of approximately 125 million people packed tightly into a rather small geographic area. The official language in Japan is Japanese. Japanese is spoken only in Japan. The literacy rate in Japan is very close to 100 percent and 95 percent of the Japanese population has a high school education.

Japan’s form of government is parliamentarian democracy under the rule of a constitutional monarch. The Prime Minister is the chief government officer.
The dominant religion is Shinto, which is exclusive to Japan. However, the Japanese have no official religion.

Culturally, the Japanese tend to be somewhat introverted in their ways. When conducting business in Japan, relationships and loyalty to the group is critical for success. The Japanese tend to be rather direct in their questioning of foreigners. You may be asked personal questions such as how much money do you earn or how large is your house?

Saba: We have with us today Natsuki Takahashi, an expert on Japanese culture. We will be talking to her about business etiquette in Japan. Ms. Takahashi, first of all let me welcome you to our show. Thank you very much for accepting our invitation to be here today.

Ms. Takahashi: Thank you very much for your invitation. I’m pleased to be here.

Saba: First of all could you tell us something about how the Japanese greet their guests or visitors?

Ms. Takahashi: In Japan people greet each other with a bow. If you are greeted with a bow, return with a bow as low as the one you received. How low you bow determines the status of the relationship between you and the other individual. When you bow keep your eyes low and your palms flat next to your thighs. The business card should be given after the bow. This is very important to remember.

Saba: We’d also like to know about the business card etiquette in Japan.

Ms. Takahashi: Yes sure. Business cards are given a lot of importance in Japan. We call them ‘meishi’. Japanese give and receive meishi with both hands. It should be printed in your home language on one side and Japanese on the other. Present the card with the Japanese language side up. In a business situation, business cannot begin until the meishi exchange process is complete.

Saba: How do the Japanese usually dress for business?

Ms. Takahashi: Men should wear dark conservative suits. Japanese are particular about appearance and like people to dress according to their status or position. For them casual dress is never appropriate in a business setting.

Saba: And what about women?

Ms. Takahashi: Women usually dress conservatively. Accessories should be minimal. Women do not wear pants in business situations, as the Japanese men tend to find it offensive. They are also expected to wear low-heeled shoes.

Saba: What about footwear?

Ms. Takahashi: Shoes should be easy to remove, as you will do so often. Slip-ons are the best choice.
Saba: Can you tell our listeners something about body language?

Ms. Takahashi: Oh yes! The Japanese do not talk with their hands. Also you should avoid using large hand gestures, unusual facial expressions and any dramatic movements. These could distract them since they are not accustomed to using them.

Saba: What about women in business? Would you suggest any do’s or don’ts for them?

Ms. Takahashi: Oh yes! Most business entertaining is done in restaurants or bars after business hours. Often in karaoke or “hostess bars.” Businesswomen should not attend “hostess bars.”

Saba: I’ve heard that it is common to give and receive gifts in Japan. Is that true?

Ms. Takahashi: Sure it is. In fact it is a very important part of business and there is a lot of ceremony that goes with it. The packaging of the gift is also very important. And remember, gifts are given and accepted with both hands. Gifts in Japan are usually given at the end of the visit.

Saba: Can you tell us about some social language that could be useful during entertainment. A few Japanese expressions?

Ms. Takahashi: If you wish to be polite and appreciative during meals you could learn "itadakimasu" at the beginning of dinner, and "gochisou-sama-deshita" at the end. It will show to your host that you have enjoyed the meal.

Saba: Ms Takahashi, thank you very much for sharing your expert inputs with us. I’m sure our listeners will be extremely benefitted from learning about Japanese business Etiquette.

Ms. Takahashi: You are most welcome. Goodbye.

Saba: Goodbye.

Check your progress 3

1 What are these?
   i Shinto – dominant religion in Japan
   ii Meishi – the business card
   iii Karaoke – hostess bars

2 Do’s and don’ts based on the interview.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do’s</th>
<th>Don’ts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bow as low as your host to greet.</td>
<td>Do not present your business card before the greeting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present and receive business cards with both hands.</td>
<td>Do not begin to talk about business before presenting the business card.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Both men and women dress formally.

Shoes should be easy to remove as you may be required to take them off.

Japanese like to give and receive gifts. A lot of attention is given to the packaging and presentation of the gift.

If you wish to please your Japanese hosts you could learn a few polite Japanese expressions.

Women do not wear pants.

Do not use dramatic gestures or overuse hand gestures.

Businesswomen do not attend hostess bars.

Activity 2

i  Can I take your coat? / Would you like me to take your coat?

ii  Would you like to sit down? / Do sit down.

iii  May I use your phone? Could / can I use your phone?

iv  I’m afraid I’m not fond of Chinese food.

v  Can you tell me what the time is?

vi  Could you tell me where the washroom is?

vii  I think we should order the food now.

viii  I’m afraid I don’t accept gifts.

ix  Would you like me to take you sightseeing?

x  Would you like to come to my house for dinner this evening? / I’d like to invite you to my place for dinner this evening.

Activity 3

i  I’m afraid I don’t enjoy fast food.

ii  I’m afraid you cannot smoke here. / I believe you’re not supposed to smoke here.

iii  Could you tell me your name again, please?

iv  I don’t think I will be able to accompany you now. / I’m afraid I cannot go out with you now.

Activity 4

1  Match the sentences:
1. I was wondering if you’d like to go to the cinema this evening.
2. I’m afraid I’m busy this evening.
3. Would you like to try Thai food?
4. Can I have change for Rs 500?
5. Is it possible to go sightseeing after a tour of the workshop?
6. Do you fancy going out for a boat cruise this evening?
7. Excuse me, can you help me?
8. I’d like to book a taxi to take me around in the evening.

Match the two halves of the sentences:

i. That’s very kind of you.
ii. Maybe, another time.
iii. Sure, I’d like that very much.
iv. Sure, here you are.
v. Yes, it’s very much possible.
vi. I’d love to, but I’m busy this evening.
vii. Sure, what can I do for you?
viii. I could do that for you.

Activity 5

Dear Sumit

It was good to know that you are going to China on business. It is a very interesting place. Here are some tips for you based on my observations and experiences.

First of all, the Chinese are sober and neutral in their choice of business clothes. They do not wear jeans to work, especially for any formal business occasion or meeting. You need not carry any gifts for them as they by and large do not give or take gifts.

You need to be particular about time as most of them are very punctual. However, they take time over their decisions so don’t expect immediate or quick results. If you are in the company of your seniors or superiors, let them do the speaking first.

As for entertainment, I must say they are good hosts and usually have a variety of dishes in their meals. You are expected to taste everything that is offered to you. Please don’t start your meal before the host. And never drop
Social Skills in Business Communication

your chopsticks while eating with them, it’s considered unlucky. This might need some practice if you are not used to them. Also the Chinese don’t like to discuss business during meals.

I wish you all the best for your trip. Enjoy yourself.

Warm regards
Karuna

Check your progress 4

1 Missing words are in bold.

i The cars are parked on the street ahead.
ii The carpet has a lot of stains.
iii The Trade Union Members’ Meeting is being held in the Conference Room.
iv Fifteen years is a very long time!
v Neither her father nor her mother is very tall.
vi Either this woman or that man has stolen the watch.
vii At the party, everyone was well dressed.
viii Baked beans and toast is my favourite dish for breakfast.
ix Many children were injured in the accident.
x Something seems amiss in this room.

2 Text with correct form of the verbs:

Some jobs are very demanding but nevertheless, someone has to do them. Recently, I saw an advertisement in the newspaper where Brown & Polson was looking for a Chocolate Purchase Manager. The Company was offering to pay $ 40,000 per year for the right candidate.

The nature of the job is also very interesting. The applicant is expected to travel to Africa to select the right cocoa to be used in the making of chocolate.

The company is expecting a lot of applications for the job. They are looking for someone who works hard, enjoys travelling and who loves chocolate.