



# COURSE OUTLINE



This video-rich course, based on a BBC-produced film, follows the story of a company and the challenges it faces bringing a new product to market.

Watch the film, practise with the range of exciting, interactive activities and take your oral business English skills to the next level!

## 1. Socializing, networking and describing your company

In the first module we join Edward on his first day of work at Bibury Systems, a UK based hi-tech toy development company and the focus of the BBC Business English course. As well as Edward we are introduced to all the other key employees at Bibury Systems.

*Communication Skills:*

- Greeting people & making small talk*
- Describing company structure & the office*
- Asking for opinions*
- Reacting to questions and showing interest*



## 2. On the phone: common phrases, apologies and selling

Whilst Edward tries to speak to the elusive Mr Smith, Don sets up a meeting with Phil Watson from RUYJ Advertising. Later, Clive takes a call from the powerful Japanese client Mr Sakai and Edward finally succeeds using some unconventional cold-calling tactics!

*Communication Skills:*

- Answering the telephone*
- Taking telephone messages*
- Making sales calls*

*Grammar/Vocabulary:*

- Apologizing on the phone: "I'm sorry to keep you waiting."*
- Differences between formal & informal telephone language*



## 3. Making arrangements and giving reports

Edward manages to arrange his meeting with Mr Smith, and Derek from R & D is very confident he can meet the deadline he is set. Meanwhile, poor Jenny has a difficult time juggling people's schedules to arrange the meeting that Clive wants with Mr Sakai before Edward returns triumphant!

*Communication Skills:*

- Making requests*
- Talking about dates and times*
- Describing the outcomes of meetings*

*Grammar/Vocabulary:*

- Making arrangements: "Could you ...?"*
- Prepositions of time: at, in & on*
- Simple past tense*
- Future tenses: to be + gerund & will*



## 4. Meeting visitors and giving recommendations

Whilst Clive takes a car to collect Mr Sakai from his hotel, a nervous Kate is making final preparations for the afternoon's presentation. Edward is dispatched instead of Don to meet Phil Watson, with the important job of trying to finalise display unit design. Mr Sakai takes a tour of Bibury Systems with Clive then they go for lunch, but not before Mr Sakai delivers a glimpse of hope...



*Communication Skills:* Greeting a visitor & introducing people  
Making suggestions  
Preparing for a meeting

*Grammar/Vocabulary:* Formal & informal greetings  
Open & closed questions  
Modals of obligation: "must, need to, have to ..."  
Question tags: "... aren't you?"

## 5. Describing products and giving presentations

Don, Kate and Derek run through the presentation one final time whilst Edward is involved in a long meeting at RUYJ Advertising. Despite Derek ignoring Don's instructions the presentation to Mr Sakai seems to go very well, but can they meet his demands? Finally, after an epic struggle, Don and Phil seem to make a breakthrough.



*Communication Skills:* Organising a presentation  
Starting your presentation  
Talking about visuals

*Grammar/Vocabulary:* Signposting during a presentation: "first ... and then ..."  
Verbs to describe trends & graphs  
Marketing terms

## 6. Making travel arrangements

Mr Sakai is excited about doing business with Bibury Systems and even decides to extend his stay in the UK by another day. But meeting his deadline throws everyone into panic. Kate must urgently fly to Atlanta; just as Edward thinks he's finalized details with RUYJ Advertising they'll need to be re-arranged and a worried Derek works into the night on "Big Boss".



*Communication Skills:* Talking about future arrangements  
Making flight arrangements  
Discussing itineraries and schedules

*Grammar/Vocabulary:* Future tenses: "going to" & "will"  
Making polite requests: "Would it be possible ...?"



## 7. Staying at a hotel and dining out

There's a small problem when Kate tries to check-in to her hotel in Atlanta, and once solved with the UK office closed for the night she settles down to a relaxing dinner. Meanwhile, despite his positive meeting with Bibury Systems Mr Sakai is speaking with their competitor JK Toys, who apparently will have their toy "Dealer Dan" available at a cheaper price than "Big Boss".

*Communication Skills:*    *Checking into a hotel*  
                                      *Ordering from a restaurant menu*  
                                      *Leaving telephone messages*  
                                      *Apologising*

*Grammar/Vocabulary:*    *Intonation for telephone phrases*  
                                      *Adjectives: giving positive descriptions*



## 8. Describing a company's services and facilities

Don reports to Clive after making a visit to a supplier, then joins Edward in looking at Phil Watson's designs. Unimpressed, Edward starts to give Phil a tour of Bibury Systems, explaining how the company works. Over in Atlanta Kate takes the chance to look at the conference facilities before checking-out of her hotel.

*Communication Skills:*    *Informal greetings*  
                                      *Comparing products and services*  
                                      *Giving feedback to the service provider*  
                                      *Describing a department's operations*

*Grammar/Vocabulary:*    *Comparatives*  
                                      *Present simple & continuous tenses*  
                                      *Prepositions of direction & place*



## 9. Explaining how something works and solving technical problems

Clive meets with another supplier and as well as talking business shows her his antique toy collection. Continuing with his tour of Bibury Systems, Phil Watson finally meets Big Boss and learns how the toy business can sometimes be hard to understand.

*Communication Skills:*    *Explaining how to use something*  
                                      *Dealing with malfunctions*

*Grammar/Vocabulary:*    *Sequencing instructions & procedures*  
                                      *Modal verbs: be able to, may, need to etc.*





## 13. Travelling on business

The battle continues with Kate dispatched to the US again to explain the new strategy to the sales team there and Derek meeting a key supplier to ensure they can deliver. With Don needed at head office to coordinate, Edward is sent on his first overseas trip and returns bearing a gift for Jenny. Is romance in the air?

*Communication Skills:*     *Assigning tasks*  
                                      *Boarding a flight*  
                                      *Getting around a foreign city*  
                                      *Checking out of a hotel*

*Grammar/Vocabulary:*     *Vocabulary for travel: itinerary, passport etc.*  
                                      *American vs British English*  
                                      *Modal verbs: ought to, should, could*



## 14. Advanced presentation and effective PowerPoint techniques

Kate opens her big presentation in the US, unveiling Big Boss to the sales team there. Meanwhile Derek presents Clive with plans that could change the situation entirely. After Jenny informs Phil Watson of another deadline change for designs he meets with Don at Bibury Systems, only to find out he has even less time than he thought.

*Communication Skills:*     *Giving sales presentations*  
                                      *Openings & closings*  
                                      *Capturing the audience's attention*  
                                      *Presenting PowerPoints*  
                                      *Body language & timing*

*Grammar/Vocabulary:*     *Adjusting pitch & tone & using intensifiers*  
                                      *Personalising presentations*  
                                      *Making informal presentations*



## 15. Entertaining clients

With Mr Kazai yet to make a decision Clive and Don hope to treat him to a game of golf. Kate entertains her audience after her presentation in the US with drinks and snacks. The golf goes well and after learning of a shared interest in the theatre Don agrees to accompany Mr Kazai to see a Shakespeare play, further personalising their relationship. Finally, back in the Bibury Systems meeting room there's some good news for everyone.

*Communication Skills:*     *Entertaining clients: creating rapport*  
                                      *Making friends with a client*  
                                      *Formalising a business relationship*

*Grammar/Vocabulary:*     *Good and taboo activities & topics*  
                                      *Speaking more formally*





## 16. Dealing with problems and complaints

A problem in Japan means that Derek must urgently fly to Tokyo and Don has some tough words in a meeting with Bibury System's supplier Southford Components. Kate returns upbeat and refreshed after making great sales in the US and then taking a holiday, but her happiness is short lived. As Clive, Don and freshly returned Derek discuss options an angry Mr Smith arrives at reception demanding to see Edward.



*Communication Skills:* Making and responding to complaints  
Informing colleagues about problems  
Discussing responses to problems

*Grammar/Vocabulary:* Vocabulary for explaining problems & demanding action  
Phrases to explain what you are going to do  
Avoiding emotive language  
Idioms: the last straw, the bottom of the problem ...

## 17. Negotiations and developments

As Kate and Don discuss Big Boss sales Edward arrives with some potentially exciting news. All three then head off to meet with Derek, who wants to present them with his latest development. Edward has set up a meeting with a very important customer, and when Don unexpectedly can't make join him it might be his big chance.

*Communication Skills:* Initiating a negotiation  
Evaluating a development

*Grammar/Vocabulary:* Positive & negative phrases  
Asking questions  
Vocabulary for negotiations  
Tag questions: "haven't you?"



## 18. Negotiating tactics

Edward meets with Danny McNeil from Euromart and finds himself in the toughest negotiation of his short career. Calling Don in a break in proceedings he checks what he's authorised to offer before going back to hopefully set up a big, profitable deal for Bibury Systems.



*Communication Skills:* Negotiating tactics  
Assessing & concluding negotiations  
Strategies to persuade

*Grammar/Vocabulary:* Negotiating phrases: emphasising concessions, benefits etc.  
Phrases for interrupting someone  
Phrases for handling interruptions  
Phrases for concluding a negotiation

## 19. Meetings: persuasive language and chairing

Clive, Derek and Don meet but disagree on costings for Derek's new development. Whilst Jenny is dealing with a problem of her own, Edward is back in with the tenacious Danny McNeil negotiating delivery terms. After an unsuccessful meeting with a potential new supplier for Derek's new toy, Clive and Derek strongly disagree before one of them delivers some news that could send a shock right through Bibury Systems.



*Communication Skills:*

- Chairing a meeting*
- Stating your final position*
- Cancelling a contract*
- Dealing with employee grievances*

*Grammar/Vocabulary:*

- Phrases for controlling a meeting: from openings to closings*
- Sounding firm: "I'm afraid we can't go any lower"*
- Diplomatic language: language to deal with conflict*

## 20. Managing employees and resolving conflict

In the morning Clive and Derek are still trying to resolve their differences, but when a call comes in it turns out that perhaps the solution could come from an unexpected source. Meanwhile, fresh from closing his deal with Euromart Edward meets with Don hoping to renegotiate his own package. Clive and Derek meet again with Hazelford Systems, and it seems like they may have a breakthrough that will bring the two men back together again, as well as promising the two companies great success.



*Communication Skills:*

- Finding solutions*
- Negotiating an employment contract*
- Reviewing staff performance*

*Grammar/Vocabulary:*

- Solving problems: offering concessions, inviting input, emphasizing loss, summarizing agreement*
- Vocabulary & phrases concerning salary & benefits*
- Positive & negative adjectives describing staff*
- Vocab for dealing with human resources*