

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



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.





10. Arranging meetings and changing plans

Bibury Systems is thrown into chaos as Mr Smith calls Edward and introduces him to Dealer Dan. Edward interrupts Don's meeting to tell him the bad news and Don, Clive and Derek discuss emergency options. Finally, at the end of a bad day, Mr Sakai calls Clive to say he's

heard of a similar product to Big Boss and will be in London the

following day to discuss.

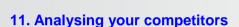
Communication Skills:

Cancelling & rescheduling meetings

Interrupting a meeting

Grammar/Vocabulary: Words & phrases to reassure

Vocabulary for changing plans



Derek has got hold of a Dealer Dan and sits down with Don, Kate and Edward and points out the amazing similarity to Big Boss. Have they been the victim of some dirty tricks? While they are busy analysing the situation, Clive offers a lift to the mysterious Peter, who has done consultancy work for JK Toys, and manages to gain what could be some very important information...

Communication Skills: Comparing products

Talking about now and the future

Explaining that someone is unavailable

Grammar/Vocabulary: Adjectives & comparisons: "as ... as ..."

Present perfect tense

Modal verbs: will, might & shall

12. Making a convincing argument

It's all-out war with JK Toys and Don, Kate, Derek and Edward continue their emergency meeting. Having looked at all options they decide on an aggressive course of action, which is confirmed when Clive returns and joins them. It's still vital that they get Big Boss back in Mr Smith's catalogue and Clive decides to take on this responsibility himself.

Communication Skills: Talking about advantages & disadvantages

Responding to & countering criticism

Grammar/Vocabulary: Revision of future tenses: going to & will be ...

Modal verbs: need to & must Pronunciation – changing stress: re'ject vs reject'





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

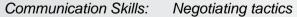
Asking questions

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.



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