

Communicating in Business

A short course for Business English students

- presenting
- negotiating
- telephoning
- meetings
- socializing

Student's Book
Second Edition

Simon Sweeney

Communicating in Business

Student's Book **Second Edition**

A flexible approach that meets the needs of Business English students.

- **Communicating in Business** is for students at the intermediate level who need to improve their skills in the key areas of business communication: taking part in meetings, telephoning, negotiating, presenting and socializing.
- The course provides students with realistic controlled and open-ended activities so that they can build up their fluency and confidence.
- The modular approach allows for flexibility – teachers can customize the course to the needs of their students and do the modules in any order.
- The course is short – each of the fifteen units provides about three hours of classroom work.
- There is a strong emphasis on listening. The audio component provides around two hours of listening input so there is a lot of opportunity for students to improve this skill.
- Authentic reading passages, taken from a variety of sources, introduce the theme of the units and there are integrated writing tasks.
- Language and Skills checklists in each unit provide a useful reference after students have completed the course.
- The course can be used for TOEIC preparation to get students to the

level where they can operate successfully in an English-speaking work environment.

- The Second Edition has been updated and now includes new one-page self-study sections at the end of each unit.

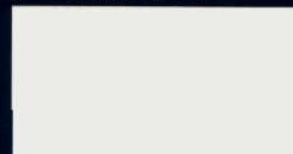
Course components:

Student's Book
Teacher's Book
Audio Cassette Set
Audio CD Set

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Communicating in Business

Second Edition

A short course for Business English students:
Cultural diversity and socializing, Using the telephone,
Presentations, Meetings and Negotiations

Student's Book

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Introduction to the Second Edition

Communicating in Business is based on the same core content as *English for Business Communication*. The main difference is that *Communicating in Business* uses American English as its model whereas *English for Business Communication* uses British English.

Communicating in Business is a short course with two key objectives:

- to develop your technique in five key areas of communication: socializing, using the telephone, presenting information, participating in meetings and negotiations
- to develop your knowledge of the language used in these key areas.

The course is concerned with improving your listening and speaking skills. There is a lot of opportunity to practice understanding from the recorded material. It is important that you try to understand the key message of the extracts, not every word you hear. Similarly, there are several reading texts where again you should try to understand the key messages, not necessarily every word on the page.

There are very many opportunities for discussion and plenty of role plays. The discussion is partly designed to get you to think about what makes communication effective. The practice material and the role plays lead to a Transfer exercise. This is a chance to connect what you have studied with your own daily experience, either as a student or as a professional working in business. The skills learned from this course are useful for those preparing to start work and for those already in work.

As you use the course, practice as much as you can and prepare for meetings, presentations or telephone calls by using the Checklists at the end of each unit. Always refer to these when preparing a communication task. Try to develop the habit of good preparation. Try also to develop the habit of self-assessment to help you to see where improvements can be made. Your teacher will help you with this.

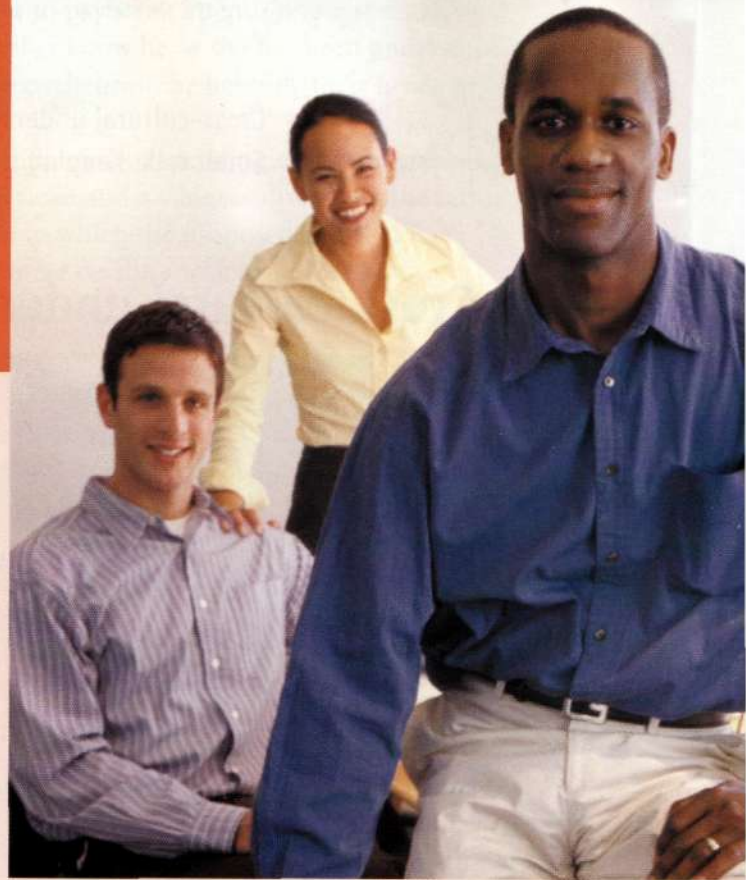
Enjoy the course!

This second edition not only provides improvements to the overall appearance and design of the book, but also responds to users' requests for more practice material. There is now an additional page of exercises summarising key language from each unit (Quick Communication Check), designed for self-study use. Some of the listening material has been re-recorded. Together with various small changes, much of the practice material has also been updated.

Simon Sweeney

MODULE 1

CULTURAL DIVERSITY AND SOCIALIZING



Building a relationship

AIMS

- Cross-cultural understanding [1]
- Welcoming visitors
- Small talk: Keeping the conversation going

1 Cross-cultural understanding [1]



- 1 Look at the photo. In groups, discuss the situation. Decide what you think the people are talking about. Suggest various topics. Say what you think they are definitely *not* talking about. Then spend a few minutes acting out the conversation.
- 2 Read the text below. Identify the basic message implied by the text.

Eye contact

In many Western societies, including the United States, a person who does not maintain “good eye contact” is regarded as being slightly suspicious, or a “shifty” character. Americans unconsciously associate people who avoid eye contact as unfriendly, insecure, untrustworthy, inattentive and impersonal. However, in contrast, Japanese children are taught in school to direct their gaze at the region of their teacher’s Adam’s apple or tie knot, and, as adults, Japanese lower their eyes when speaking to a superior, a gesture of respect.

Latin American cultures, as well as some African cultures, such as Nigeria, have longer looking time, but prolonged eye contact from an individual of lower status is considered disrespectful. In the US, it is considered rude to stare – regardless of who is looking at whom. In contrast, the polite Englishman is taught to pay strict attention to a speaker, to listen carefully, and to blink his eyes to let the speaker know he or she has been understood as well as heard. Americans signal interest and comprehension by bobbing their heads or grunting.

A widening of the eyes can also be interpreted differently, depending on circumstances and culture. Take, for instance, the case of an American and a Chinese discussing the terms of a proposed contract. Regardless of the language in which the proposed contract is carried out, the US negotiator may interpret a Chinese person's widened eyes as an expression of astonishment instead of as a danger signal (its true meaning) of politely expressed anger.

Adapted from *Managing Cultural Differences, Fourth Edition*, by Phillip R. Harris and Robert T. Moran.
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3 If necessary, read the text again. Then comment on the following:

- a) observations about many people from the United States
- b) observations about the English
- c) an observation about Japanese children
- d) the meaning of lowering one's eyes in Japan
- e) why looking at someone for a long time may be considered disrespectful
- f) the meaning of widened eyes in Chinese culture.

4 Before receiving a visitor from a foreign country – or before travelling abroad – you need to think about the cultural issues that may affect the relationship.

- a) Suggest some basic research that you should do before receiving your visitor, or before traveling. What issues should you think about?

Note: After suggesting your own ideas, compare your list with the Skills Checklist at the end of this unit.



- b) Listen to the recording. An American, Peter Wasserman, who is the CEO of an international company, talks about what he thinks is important in preparing for business contacts with people from other cultures. He mentions several key areas to find out about. Identify six of them. Did you think of any of the same issues?

Discussion

In what way is the advice in this section useful when doing business? Look again at the Skills Checklist on page 12.

2 Welcoming visitors



What happens when a visitor arrives with an appointment to visit a company? What are the typical stages of the first meeting? What conversations take place?



1 Listen to the recording in which Len Ewing arrives for a meeting with Jack Caruso and Luisa Caldos of Evco, an advertising agency in Seattle, Washington.

- a) Is the meeting between Len Ewing and Evco formal or informal? Give reasons for your answer.
- b) Do they know each other quite well?
- c) Len has a problem. What is it?



2 Listen again. Think again about how Luisa and Jack talk to Len.

- She interrupts him at the start. Is this acceptable?
- They use first names. Is this right, given the situation?
- Jack begins to talk about the program for the day. Is this appropriate at this stage?



3 Listen to the recording of Peter Marwood's arrival at SDA Ltd., in Sydney, Australia. He has to wait a few minutes and asks Stephanie Field for some assistance. Identify two things he needs and three things he does not need.



Needs

a)

b)

Does not need

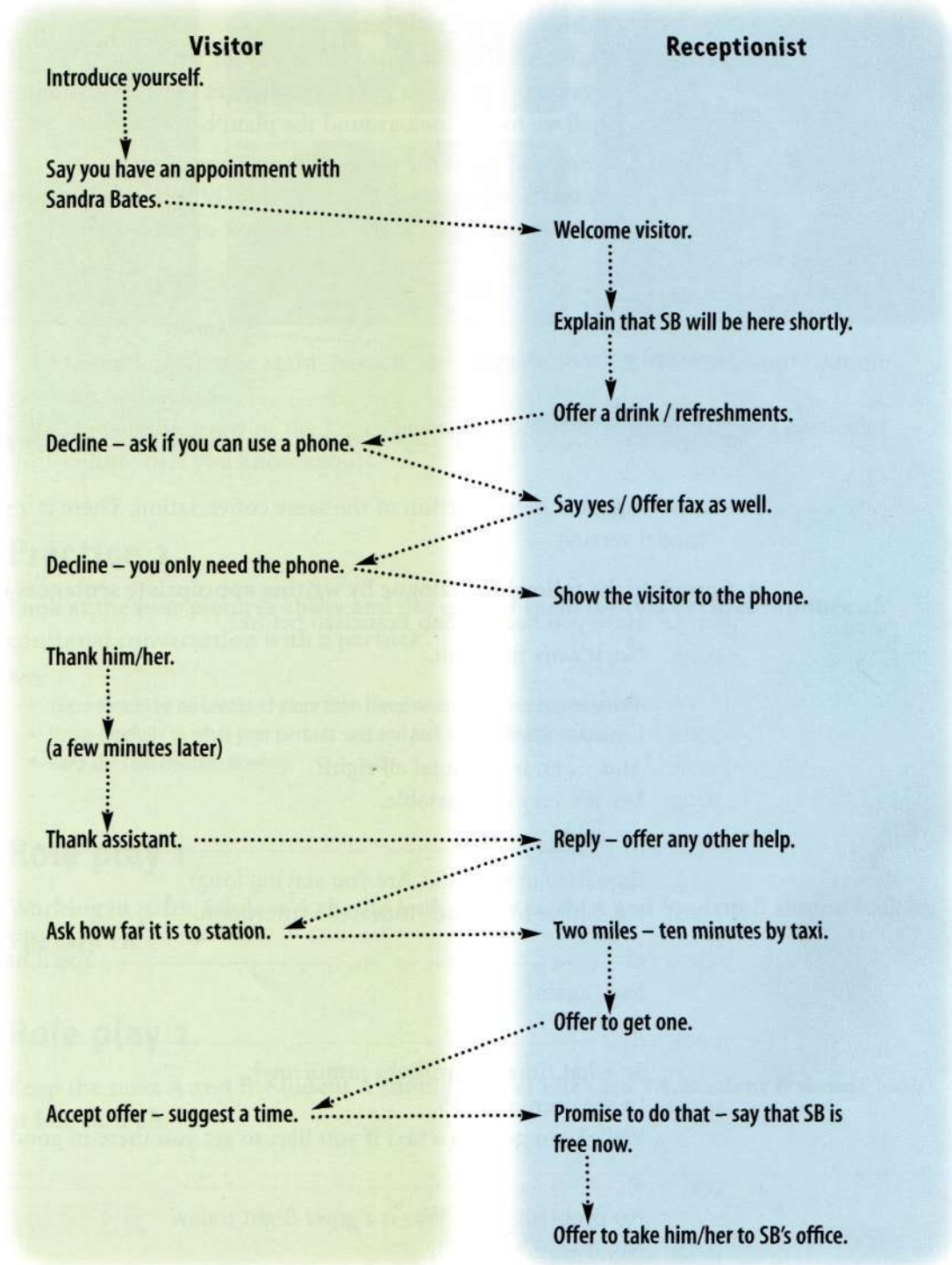
c)

d)

e)

Practice 1

Make a dialogue based on the following flow chart. If you need help, look at the Language Checklist on page 12.



Now listen to the recording of a model answer.