

# B1–B2

intermediate to upper-intermediate



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Business English Modules

# Business Impact 1.2



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intermediate to upper-intermediate

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Modules A, B and C

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## Welcome to Business Impact 1.2

### Module A: Making conversation & building rapport

**Business Impact 1.2.A** is the A Module from *Business Impact 1.2*.

This module focuses on **personal encounters in the business world** and will help you handle conversations and social situations in a business context.

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### Module B: Phoning, emails, video calls

**Business Impact 1.2.B** is the B Module from *Business Impact 1.2*.

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## Welcome to **Business Impact 1.2** **Module C: Successful presentations**

**Business Impact 1.2.C** is the C Module from *Business Impact 1.2*.

This module focuses on **business results** and will help you become an expert presenter in English.

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# Opening *gambits*

## Agenda

- › Starting conversations with strangers
- › Joining in & keeping conversations going
- › Responding positively



### › Small talk

Start the session by chatting with a partner for a few minutes about a recent sport or cultural event. Find out if your partner watched or attended the same event, and talk about what you enjoyed or didn't enjoy, etc. Your conversation can, of course, move on to topics that come up naturally. Use the following phrases in your conversation.

Wasn't it amazing?

So, what did you do afterwards?

### Tip

A quick chat at the beginning of every English class is a great opportunity to practise and improve your small talk skills.

### › Down to business

**1a** Look at the photos above. Assume each of the photos was taken in a business context and think about the following questions.

1. When and in what kind of business context might the photos have been taken?
2. How well do you think the people know each other? What gives you this impression?
3. What might the people be talking about? Give ideas.

**1b** In pairs. Choose one of the photos and have a short conversation as if you were two of the people in the photo.

**2a** Do the questionnaire below on your own. Choose all options that apply to you.



*"I'm terrible at making small talk.  
Just scan me".*

## BUSINESS CONVERSATIONS *in English*

**1.** Which work-related events do you or might you attend where you need to make conversation with other participants in English?

- a. ☐ training course
- b. ☐ social get-together, e.g. welcome party
- c. ☐ trade fair or exhibition
- d. ☐ other (Please specify.)

**2.** You're at an international welcome event where the common language is English. You don't know anyone. What do you do?

- a. ☐ I stand near a group and listen to their conversation until I feel ready to join in.
- b. ☐ I go up to a group, introduce myself, and ask if I can join them.
- c. ☐ I wait for someone to approach me and introduce themselves to me.
- d. ☐ other (Please specify.)

**3.** Which of the following statements is closest to how you feel about striking up conversations with people in professional settings?

- a. ☐ I find it easy. I can always think of something to say and I'm not worried about making mistakes.
- b. ☐ I find it challenging because I never know quite what to talk about.
- c. ☐ I find it challenging because I'm worried about making mistakes.
- d. ☐ other (Please specify.)



Enjoy watching this video clip.

**A.1**

**2b** Compare and discuss your answers in class.



## Module A . Session 1

**3a** What are your three favourite 'opening lines' when initiating a conversation in your first language? Write them down, then use an online AI tool to help you work out how to say them in English.

Opening lines in your first language

Equivalent in English

1. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**3b** Compare your opening lines in class. Note down further examples that you would like to use.

**4a** You are going to hear four dialogues in which business partners start conversations over lunch. Which of the following topics do you think are most and least likely to come up as conversation starters? What other topics might come up?

› weather | sports | politics | food | jobs | cultural events | work events | what someone is wearing or holding | entertainment | family ‹

 **A.01-04 4b** Now listen to the dialogues. Which of the topics in task 4a actually came up in the conversations? Which other topics came up?

 **A.01-04 4c** Listen again. How do the speakers strike up the conversation in each case?

Dialogue 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Dialogue 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Dialogue 3: \_\_\_\_\_

Dialogue 4: \_\_\_\_\_

**4d** Which of the following 'tactics' were used in the dialogues to respond and keep the conversation going? Which tactic was used most often?

› agreeing | disagreeing | moving on to another related topic | asking questions | showing interest & enthusiasm ‹

**4e** Read the audio transcripts of the dialogues in pairs. Identify and note down useful words and / or phrases for each of the tactics in task 4d.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

**5a** Match each of the opening lines below to one or more of the responses. (More than one response is sometimes possible.)

**Opening lines**

1. I don't think we've met before. I'm ...
2. I'm glad I'm not the only one here wearing *jeans*.
3. It's so *hot and stuffy* in here, isn't it?
4. Is this seat taken? I'd love to join you. Do you mind?
5. I hear you're an expert on *cybersecurity*. I'd love to hear more about it.
6. Can I have a quick look at your *programme*?
7. I really enjoyed your *presentation* this morning.
8. So, how are you finding *this event* so far?

**Responses**

- a) Feel free!
- b) I know exactly what you mean!
- c) Well, it wasn't quite what I was expecting, but I'm enjoying it anyway.
- d) No, not at all!
- e) Of course not! / Yes, of course!
- f) Pleased to meet you! I'm ...
- g) Really? Is there anything particular you're interested in?
- h) Yes, it's always the same in these *meeting rooms*, isn't it?

**5b** In pairs. Practise the opening lines and responses in short dialogues. Try and adapt the opening lines and the responses to suit situations you might encounter.

**5c** If possible, change partners. Look back at your opening lines from task 3a and think of appropriate responses for each one. Use an online AI tool to help you if necessary.

**Tip**

Add the opening lines and responses to a 'Business conversations' phrase bank.

**6** Move around the class changing partners every few minutes. Start a short conversation with each new partner using tactics and phrases you have practised in this session.

› **Review and AOB**

Review what you have learned in this session:

1. Suggest three safe topics that you could talk about to start a conversation.
2. Suggest three responses that show you agree with what someone has said.
3. Suggest a conversation starter and response for joining a conversation that has already started.
4. Come up with a set of '**Three Top Tips** for starting conversations' in English.

› **Final feedback**

What did you find most useful in this session?  
Tell the class. Any questions?

