

Meetings dice games

Instructions for teachers

Put students into groups of two to four and give a dice to each group. Each group roleplays various situations, topics, formality levels and kinds of meetings, choosing between the various possibilities with the use of their dice. They then finally roleplay more realistic situations for their own (present, past or future) use of English in meetings. The final personalised speaking stage is the most important, so you need to make sure that they don't take too long on stages 1 to 4, for example by:

- Only doing stages one to four once each (not letting each student roll the dice in each stage)
- Presenting useful phrases for smoothly finishing a meeting like "So, I think we've covered everything" and "I'm afraid I have another meeting in five minutes, so..."
- Skipping any stages which aren't suitable for your students, e.g. Stage 3 if your students don't know much about different levels of formality
- Cutting Stage 4 short when all students have at least looked at the options
- Discussing suitable language after Stage 5 (instead of before as is suggested below)

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Stage 1: Decide who you are speaking to.

Use dice to decide who you are talking to and roleplay a whole meeting with that person, from saying hello to saying goodbye.

1 = Someone who you know well, 2 = Someone who you have never met before but have contacted on the phone or by email, 3 = A colleague, 4 = A customer or client, 5 = Your boss, 6 = A supplier

Stage 2: Decide on the topic of the meeting.

Roll the dice twice to decide on the topic of your meeting – firstly to decide which section below and secondly to decide which topic from that section you must talk about, e.g. speaking about Topic 4 in Section 3 if you roll a 3 and then a 4. Again, roleplay the whole meeting, including greeting people and making small talk before getting down to business. Decide who you are before you start the roleplay, e.g. people from the list in Stage 1 above.

Section 1

1 = Accounts or finance, 2 = Supplies, components or raw materials, 3 = Costs, 4 = Some figures/data, 5 = Staffing, 6 = Progress

Section 2

1 = Delivery/logistics, 2 = IT/technology, 3 = Marketing, 4 = Results, 5 = Sales, 6 = Training

Section 3

1 = Dealing with problems/complaints, 2 = Reorganisation/downsizing, 3 = Payment, 4 = Customer feedback/market research, 5 = Expanding (into new areas of business, etc), 6 = Innovation

Section 4

1 = R&D, 2 = Planning, 3 = Cooperating (joint ventures, etc), 4 = Deciding whether to stick to a plan or change it, 5 = Conclusions of a report, 6 = Team building

Section 5

1 = Administration/documents, 2 = Legal issues; 3 = Mergers and acquisitions, 4 = Investment, 5 = Competitors, 6 = Stocks and shares

Section 6

1 = Resolving conflicts, e.g. between partner companies or different departments, 2 = The media, 3 = PR, 4 = Systems, 5 = Effects of current affairs (political changes, international relations, etc) on your business, 6 = Effects of the (domestic or international) economy on your business

Stage 3: Decide on the level of formality.

Roll a dice to decide on the formality of a meeting which you will roleplay. Your teacher will tell you if you should also use the systems above to decide the topic(s), who the participants are, etc, or if you can decide for yourselves.

1 = Very formal internal meeting, 2 = Medium formality internal meeting, 3 = Informal internal meeting, 4 = Very formal external meeting, 5 = Medium formality external meeting, 6 = Informal external meeting

Stage 4: Decide what you should do during the meeting.

Roll the dice twice (once for the section and second time for the function within it) and then try to do these things during your meeting.

Section 1

1 = Give advice/recommendations/suggestions, 2 = Deal with communication problems, 3 = Give reasons, 4 = Give strong opinions, 5 = Give weak opinions/give opinions politely, 6 = Make requests

Section 2

1 = Interrupt, 2 = Get other people to speak, 3 = Summarise, 4 = Change your position/Compromise, 5 = Check/double-check/clarify, 6 = Give further explanation

Section 3

1 = Brainstorm ideas, 2 = Sound certain, 3 = Sound uncertain, 4 = Help come to an agreement (when people can't agree), 5 = Decide whether something is a good idea or not, 6 = Decide whether to do something or not

Section 4

1 = Choose among two or more options, 2 = Exchange information, 3 = Talk about numbers, data and trends, 4 = Talk about the future (plans, predicting, etc), 5 = Talk about the recent past, 6 = Postpone making a decision

Section 5

1 = Share personal experiences, 2 = Control the meeting, 3 = Talk about cause and effect, 4 = Give instructions on how to do something, 5 = Go off topic, then get back on topic, 6 = Give permission/agree to something

Section 6

1 = Insist/ Refuse to change your position, 2 = Stop other people interrupting, 3 = Demand action, 4 = Give bad news, 5 = Give feedback, 6 = Make an action plan

When you finish the roleplays, ask about anything above which you don't understand or can't think of how to do in English. Then discuss which are most useful for you in your own (present, past or future) English meetings and what language you could use to do or talk about that thing.

Stage 5: Do a personalised roleplay.

Describe one typical meeting conducted in English that you are regularly, have been or will (probably) be involved in. If you never have English meetings, describe a typical meeting in your own language. You can use the lists above to help you if you like. Give as much detail as possible. Then roleplay that conversation with your partner(s), from the very beginning to the very end, with you as yourself and your partner(s) as the other people.