Starting meetings and interrupting
turn taking/ starting and ending meetings

What topics from this list are most suitable for the chit chat at the start of a meeting, do you think? What other topics of conversation are and aren't suitable in this situation?

A recent sports match The weather The news
Recent celebrity gossip A recent movie/ Going to the cinema
This week/ This weekend/ This morning/ Last night Travelling here
How well you all know this city or area How you've all been since last time you met
The last time you met Colleagues or friends that you know
Appearance/ clothes Holidays and travel Days off

Chat with your partner about one of the topics that you decided was good, then when the time seems right, use a phrase from the box below to get the meeting started. Then take turns doing the same with different good small talk topics.

<table>
<tr><th colspan="5">Useful language to get a meeting started</th></tr>
<tr>
<td>(Right)

(Well)

(So)

(Okay)</td>
<td>(You must tell me more about that later/ after the meeting/ another time)

(It's been nice to catch up)

(It's been great to chat)

(I'm afraid we have to be out of here by 12)

(I know you're keen to get out of here)

(We've got a lot to get through)</td>
<td>Let's…

Shall we…

Perhaps we should…

This might be a good time to…

We really should...

It about time to…

If we could…

I guess it's time to…

I'll…</td>
<td>…get down to business.

…start.

…get started.

…begin.

…make a start.

…discussing the point at hand

…have a look at the agenda.</td>
<td>(shall we?)

(if you don't mind)

(if that's okay)

(?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Actually)</td>
<td colspan="4">That brings me onto why we are here today, which is…
That's connected to what I wanted to talk about today, which is…</td>
</tr>
</table>

When your teacher stops you, ask about anything above you are not sure about, using those topics to chat about and/ or using those getting down to business phrases as a class each time.

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What are the differences between the phrases in the top section the phrases in the and bottom one? Which are best, do you think? Why might other people prefer different ones?

Do the same as above, but this time with two people chatting about something and a third person interrupting them and getting the meeting started.

Useful language for interrupting				
Can I Could I If I might Sorry to Would it be okay to Perhaps I could	(just)	interrupt (you there) come in here butt in stop you (there)	(for a moment) (before you go on)	(but) (?)

Once you have got the meeting started, what can you then say?

Which of these things might you want to include in your introduction?

- ✧ Making sure all the participants know each other
- ✧ Saying how long the meeting is going to take
- ✧ Saying how the meeting will be organised
- ✧ Explaining when questions should be asked
- ✧ Getting the discussion started
- ✧ Explaining the reasons for the meeting and the expected outcomes
- ✧ Mentioning the agenda
- ✧ Talking about the minutes
- ✧ Greetings, welcome and thanks for coming
- ✧ Introducing the first topic on the agenda

What order would you do those things in? What language could you use to do so?

Compare your ideas with the next page below.

Compete to give the longest introduction that you can. Your partner will time you and take away time for pausing before telling you how long you spoke.

Do the same, but with your partner trying to interrupt you again and again.

Do the same, but for an introduction to an online meeting.

What things would you want to include in such an introduction? How is it similar to and different from the introduction to face to face meetings above?

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Useful language for introductions to a meeting

Greetings, welcome and thanks for coming

- Welcome to Elkem. Thanks for coming all this way (on such a cold/ rainy day)
- It's a great pleasure to welcome you to our Boston office today.

Making sure all the participants know each other

- I think you've met each other before, haven't you?

Saying how long the meeting is going to take

- There will be another meeting in here at half past eleven
- John has to go to another meeting at 2, so hopefully we'll be finished by then
- We're scheduled to finish at 3, so hopefully it won't go on much longer than that

Saying how the meeting will be organised

- We'll present our ideas one by one and then see which one we all like best
- We'll take a break around the midway stage

Explaining when questions should be asked

- Please interrupt me at any time if anything isn't clear
- There will be time for questions at the end (of each stage)

Explaining the reason for the meeting and the expected outcomes

- (As you all know), we've recently (found that/ had problems with…)
- As you are aware, the reason I called this meeting is so that…
- Our main aim today is to (find a way to…)
- I've arranged this meeting to…
- The main purpose/ objective of this meeting is to…

Mentioning the agenda

- The first thing we are going to discuss is…
- We will finish off by…
- You should have all received a copy of the agenda
- Before we start discussing the first point, does everyone agree on the agenda?
- If anyone didn't bring their copy of the agenda, I have extra copies

Talking about the minutes

- Shane, I believe it's your turn to take minutes
- Whose turn is it to take notes?
- We'll start off by agreeing on the minutes to the last meeting

Getting the discussion started

- Would you like to open the discussion, Gabby?
- Perhaps you'd like to get the ball rolling, George?
- Who would like to kick off the discussion of the first point?

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