Advice on business communications
cultural training/ advice, recommendations and suggestions
Market Leader Upper Intermediate Unit 1
Pick one of the situations below, explain the situation in your own words, add other details if you like, ask for and react to your partner's advice, discuss for longer if you like, then take turns doing the same.

- A boss who only has an Elementary level in your shared languages
- A colleague who uses abbreviations and emoticons that you don't understand
- Always mixing up 15 and 50, 16 and 60, etc when people dictate numbers to you
- An American boss who keeps telling you to relax
- Being asked by your American boss "What are you looking so guilty about?" when you are not feeling guilty at all
- Being asked to give a presentation on communication skills to this year's new recruits
- Being blamed for a breakdown in communication that resulted in lost business
- Being naturally reserved but getting a new role that involves lots of networking
- Everyone saying that you are too direct or even rude, even though you exactly followed the new company policy on succinct memos/ group emails
- Latin colleagues who are happy digressing from the agenda of the meeting, which drives you nuts
- Leaving meetings without really getting what the main point was
- Long and rambling emails from your boss
- Not understanding your Australian colleagues' jokes
- Rivals for promotion who are much more articulate than you
- Someone on a technical support helpline who uses loads of technical jargon
- Suddenly finding out that the gesture you have been using for the number two is rude to all your British colleagues
- Working in a French company in which you don't know how to pronounce or spell people's names
- Your boss receiving complaints about your telephone manner
- Your colleagues being too susceptible to persuasive salesmen and so often choosing the wrong suppliers

When your teacher stops you, share a piece of advice that you agreed on and see what the class thinks.

Ask about any situations above you don't understand, would like advice on, etc, discussing good tips as a class each time.

Brainstorm language for asking for advice, giving (positive and negative, strong and weak) advice, and responding to advice.

Change pairs. Do the same asking for and giving advice on business communications activity, but this time with your own ideas, if possible starting with your own real issues with business communications (in English, in L1, and/ or in other languages).

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