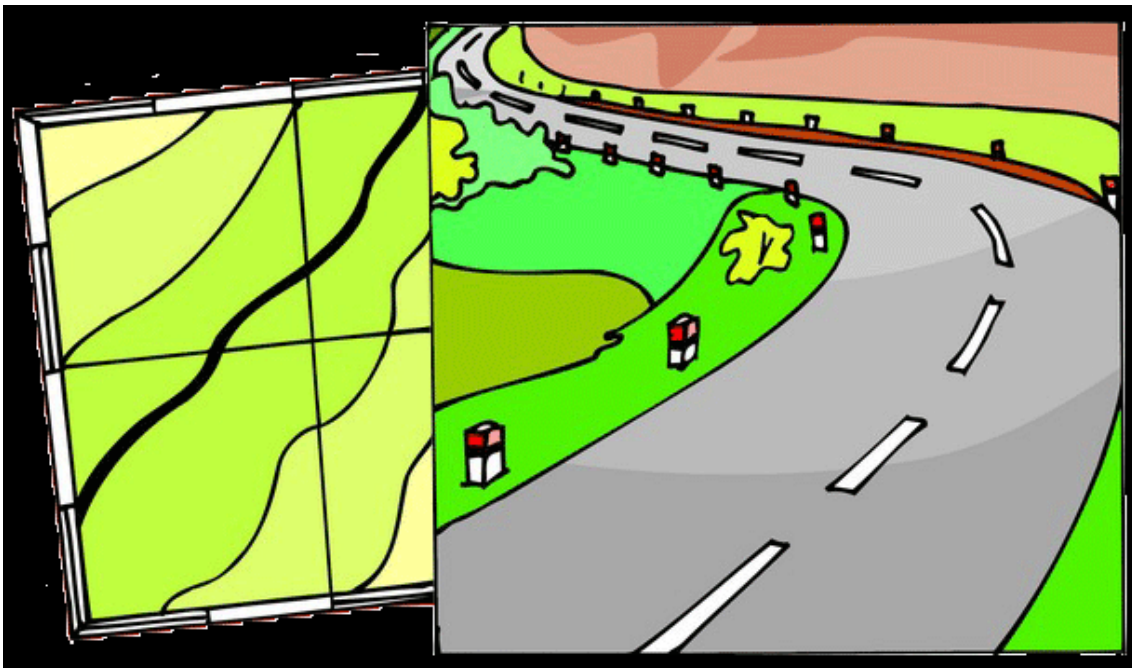


Top 10 techniques

Meeting Skills in English

eBook



IMPORTANT NOTICE:

Copyright © 2010-2011 The Practice Office S.L. and Christopher Wright. All Rights Reserved.

Share this eBook with friends as long as it is left unchanged. The techniques in this eBook have helped many professionals to maximise their Meeting skills.

No portion of this eBook may be reproduced without express written permission and all content remains the sole property of The Practice Office S.L and Christopher Wright.

Contents Page / Checklist

Acerca de / About The Practice Office

How to use this eBook

- 1. Technique 1: The art of persuasion in 5 steps**
- 2. Technique 2: 5 ways to convert needs into questions**
- 3. Technique 3: The art of videoconferencing – part 1**
- 4. Technique 4: The art of videoconferencing – part 2**
- 5. Technique 5: Business storytelling – The 3I's**
- 6. Technique 6: Contrasting; a modern and ancient communication technique**
- 7. Technique 7: Before, during and after meetings**
- 8. Technique 8: How to prevent native speakers dominating**
- 9. Technique 9: Making a proposal**
- 10. Technique 10: Really bad or really good PowerPoint presentations**



El laboratorio de ensayo para practicar un inglés aplicado a la realidad de los negocios

Nuestro valor añadido: Transformar la clase de inglés tradicional por un inglés aplicado a la práctica empresarial.

Acerca de / About The Practice Office

www.thepracticeoffice.com

Inglés de negocios: ¿Teoría o práctica?

Una nueva metodología basada en la práctica para ganar confianza y mejorar simultáneamente:

- tu inglés en el trabajo
- tu desempeño en inglés (*Business English* y *Business Skills*)

En The Practice Office utilizamos role-plays y dinámicas de grupo que ofrecen a los profesionales **una inmersión trabajando en inglés en España**. Es decir la práctica real de tus funciones en inglés y en equipo.

Recreamos situaciones internacionales de negocios para que los profesionales practiquen y mejoren su inglés de negocio a medida que trabajan en este idioma y en grupo.

Funciones como reuniones, negociaciones, presentaciones, llamadas telefónicas, teleconferencing, técnicas comerciales, networking, redacción empresarial (email e informes), trabajo en equipo, servicio al cliente, etcétera.

*Nuestros programas son para profesionales con un nivel intermedio (B1 y B2) y/o avanzado (C1).

"I can work in English because I practice working in English".
Israel Valcarcel, Banco Santander.

"I feel comfortable in my job because I practice real business situations"
Aneta Waldon, Hertz Equipment Rental

What is High Performance working?

<i>High performance working</i>		
✓ Cómodo	✓ Con Confianza	✓ Efectivo
<i>utilizando tu inglés y tus habilidades de negocio</i>		

How to use this eBook?

Top 10 techniques provide 10 top techniques (simple, practical and easy to use) to improve your Meeting Skills in English.

As with all The Practice Office training products the goal is simple;

<i>High performance working</i>		
✓ Comfortable	✓ Confident	✓ Effective
<i>using your English and Business Skills</i>		

Best wishes,

Christopher Wright

Director & Trainer
The Practice Office S.L.
www.thepracticeoffice.com

TECHNIQUE 1

The art of persuasion in 5 steps

You're in a meeting and you need to persuade a colleague, a client or a supplier. What technique do you use?

Monroe's Motivated Sequence (MMS) is a simple and highly effective technique to logically order your ideas to persuade. There are 5 steps.

1) Get their attention – ask a question or use an usual fact.

Have you ever wondered why...?
What if...? If I told you we could..., would you be interested?
It's hard to believe but... Did you know that...

2) Explain the other person's need

The problem is due to...
The problem is because of...
The problem is caused by...

3) Solution

Doing (solution)....will give us... (benefit).
(Solution).... ensures we can... (benefit).
(Solution).... will help us to do...(benefit).

4) Visualize benefits – positive & negative

Under this plan, we could see as much as a 35% increase in...
Imagine this, with a...
By implementing this plan immediately the company will see...
Without quick action the situation could...
If we don't do anything the situation is going to...
If we don't adopt this proposal there's no telling what could happen.

5) Take action

We need quick action and we need it now. I recommend that we...
I need your help to implement a winning solution for all of us.
The first thing we need to do is....

TECHNIQUE 2

5 ways to convert needs into questions

To provide solutions we need to understand needs and until we perfect mind reading we need to learn to ask good questions. Let's focus on needs based questions.

First we need to identify 5 needs our services / products satisfy. For example:

Here are 5 needs for an Air-Conditioning Repair and Check-up Service for offices:

1. To keep equipment operating efficiently
2. To maintain value of equipment
3. To keep your office cooled
4. To keep objects cooled in the office
5. To guarantee visitors feel comfortable

Before reading the examples below practice converting these 5 needs into 5 Questions (1 question per need). Write one question per need. Make your questions clear, simple and concise.

Here are our 5 questions.

1. What experience have you had with Air-Conditioning equipment that is not well maintained?
2. In this area how does good air-conditioning equipment affect office prices?
3. How often do you or your colleagues find your office uncomfortable?
4. What objects in your office need to be kept at 20C or below?
5. How much of a role does efficient Air-Conditioning equipment play in making your visitors feel comfortable?

TECHNIQUE 3

The art of videoconferencing – part 1

Is videoconferencing that different to normal meetings? Well the answer is yes and no. Over 500 managers from different multinationals were asked to give their best tips.

1. **Have a realistic agenda:** Managers suggested organizing agenda points into “Priority” and “Optional”. And putting a time limit for each agenda point.
2. **Start positively:** Give all participants the opportunity to introduce themselves and their role in the project or company.
3. **Smile and make good eye contact:** Again sounds obvious but smiling helps to make a good first impression and relaxes people. Good eye contact helps build trust....but don't stare!
4. **Agree meeting rules together:** If all the participants agree on 3 basic rules before you start, your international meetings will run more effectively. For example...how to interrupt, the role of the moderator or meeting chair, how to participate, how to follow the agenda and what to do if an argument occurs.
5. **Monitor progress:** When preparing a meeting agenda, time limits for each agenda point need to be estimated. This helps monitor the progress of the meeting.

TECHNIQUE 4

The Art of Videoconferencing – part 2

Is videoconferencing that different to normal meetings? Well the answer is yes and no. Over 500 managers from different multinationals were asked to give their best tips.

1. **Take notes:** Take notes during the meeting enables you to contribute better at the appropriate time. Especially when the meeting is conducted in English.
2. **Use your voice:** Vary your voice (volume, tone, speed) helps to make you more interesting to listen to. Monotonous voices are the quickest way to make other participants switch off (stop listening).
3. **Visual aids:** Images and pictures communicate key messages quicker and are retained for longer...so use them! Use internet tools like “slideshare” or email your presentation before the meeting. Nothing is worse than seeing PowerPoint full of text with no visuals, graphs, images or pictures.
4. **Know when to finish:** Who has time to waste at work? Nobody, so respect people’s time and keep to time limits. Participants should always ask the question if a point should be discussed now or in a later meeting.
5. **Summarize:** At the end of the meeting, the meeting moderator summarises key points and concludes. This helps us to feel we used time well and what we all need to do next.

TECHNIQUE 5

Business storytelling – The 3I's

In an age of information overload, how can we get people to remember what we say?

Easy, we need to think and act like our ancestors. They used storytelling to help the tribe remember customs.

Here are three techniques (3 I's) to improve your business storytelling abilities.

Invitation – We need to stimulate people's curiosity. We can do this by asking them to share an exciting experience with you. We need to invite them to share something exciting with us. For example:

“We are going to explore.....”

“Do you want your customers to have a bad experience, or do you want them to have an experience they will tell their friends about?”

Imagination – Our imaginations are more powerful than power point or flash. When we use our imagination we remember for longer. We just need to help people access their imagination. For example:

“Picture this....”

“Imagine you're working onwhen....happens. How would you feel?”

Impact – The audience wants impact they want to be entertained to know what they are listening to do is important. For this we need impact. To create impact we need a human connection. Human connections can be achieved using sounds, images, unusual facts or famous quotes. For example:

Change is difficult but progress happens with the first step. As Neil Amstrong said. “One small step for man, one giant leap for mankind”.

TECHNIQUE 6

Contrasting; a modern and ancient communication technique

Contrasting is what the ancient Greeks called antithesis or saying 'not this, but that'.

How? The speaker creates a contrast between the first and second phrase. Use clear, simple and strong contrasts.

Why? It causes the brain to think about and evaluate the contrast. Once the brain starts thinking about the contrast, you can guarantee your message has reached the audience.

Plato: *Wise men talk because they have something to say; fools, because they have to say something.*

Barack Obama: *My budget does not attempt to solve every problem or address every issue. It reflects the stark reality of what we've inherited – a trillion dollar deficit, a financial crisis, and a costly recession.*

John F. Kennedy: *Ask not what your country can do for you; Ask what you can do for your country.*

TECHNIQUE 7

Before, during and after meetings

Get the most out of international meetings and view them as a three part process.

1. Before – clarify objectives

Save time by exchanging emails before the meeting with meeting participants. Get to know each other, clarify meeting objectives and intended outcomes (results). Arriving to meetings not knowing leads to misunderstandings.

2. After – ensure implementation

Often we agree actions in meetings that are never completed or not completed on-time. Phone participants after the meeting to clarify their level of understanding of agreed actions and test their commitment to what was agreed in the meeting.

3. During – meeting type

People enter a meeting with very different expectations. They may know the objective but not what type of meeting it is. Clarify in the beginning of the meeting if the meeting is for...

- ...structured and polite discussion?
- ...for creative and challenging discussion?
- ...for top-down briefing or bottom-up brainstorming?
- ...analysis or action?
- ...taking fixed decisions or a preliminary discussion?

TECHNIQUE 8

How to prevent native speakers dominating in international meetings

Native English speakers often dominate international meetings because they have a linguistic advantage. So what can you do to prevent this happening?

1. **Ask them to explain expressions.** Most people often don't realise their dominating a meeting until someone points it out to them. If you don't understand a business expression, ask them to explain, "Sorry Paul, what does making headway mean? If you ask more than once they will probably speak simpler.
2. **Ask them to repeat something.** If they speak too quickly, ask them to repeat things, "Sorry Sarah, I didn't catch that, can you repeat it please?" Try to do this two times and the other person will soon realise that they're not helping communication.
3. **Learn business expressions.** Some business expressions are universal because they're taught during MBAs. Try to practice using a few for your work <http://www.businessdictionary.com/>

Have self-confidence. If you have been invited to a meeting, it's for a reason. People will be listening to your knowledge, know-how and experience and NOT your grammar mistakes. Clearly communicating your ideas is key. Remember nobody ever left an international meeting saying "her English grammar skills really helped solve our problem!!"

TECHNIQUE 9

Making a proposal

In meetings and presentations, what makes a proposal effective?

Use these 6 steps to make an effective proposal:

1. Describe the current situation
2. Describe any negative problems of current situation
3. What do you want to achieve
4. List the benefits
5. State your proposal
6. Introduce the details of your proposal.

Here is an example from a supplier offering an IT solution for sharing know-how and information in the whole company.

1. As you know, the custom service department regularly deals with complex client problems.
2. Due to a lack of sharing of know-how in the company most of the customer service team can only solve 45% of these problems.
3. We want to solve 100% of these problems by greatly increasing know-how sharing in the whole company.
4. The benefits of this will be solving 95% of client problems instead of 45% and reducing the monthly loss of clients from 13% to 1%.
5. I'd like to propose that we implement the IT solution for know-how sharing for the entire company.
6. What will this involve? How much will it cost? Let me explain in more detail.

TECHNIQUE 10

Really bad or really good PowerPoint Presentations?

Here at The Practice Office we're big fans of Seth Godin's blog. His blog offers a common sense approach to marketing and communication.

Here is an extract from one of his most well read blog posts....

We've all sat in meetings where people have given terrible PowerPoint presentations. Try to save the rest of us from death by PowerPoint by following these 5 simple rules.

5 key rules to follow to produce great PowerPoint presentations.

- 1. No more than six words on a slide. EVER. There is no presentation so complex that this rule needs to be broken.*
- 2. No bad images. Use professional stock photo images.*
- 3. No slide effects such as dissolves, spins or other transitions.*
- 4. Sound effects can be used a few times per presentation, but never use the sound effects that are built in to the program. Instead, take sounds and music from CDs and leverage the effect this can have. If people start bouncing up and down to the Grateful Dead, you've kept them from falling asleep, and you've reminded them that this isn't a typical meeting you're running.*
- 5. Don't give print-outs of your slides. They don't work without you there.*

The home run is easy to describe: You put up a slide. It triggers an emotional reaction in the audience. They sit up and want to know what you're going to say that fits in with that image. Then, if you do it right, every time they think of what you said, they'll see the image (and vice versa). Why? We remember the combination of images and words 5 times longer than just words.

Sure, this is different from the way everyone else does it. But everyone else is busy defending the status quo (which is easy) and you're busy championing brave new innovations, which is difficult.

To read the full blog post here

http://sethgodin.typepad.com/seths_blog/2007/01/really_bad_powe.html

The
End

Relax and celebrate!!

“We are what we repeatedly do.” - Aristotle

Relax and celebrate your achievement!!

You have just completed:

Top 10 techniques
Meeting Skills in English

Read more about The Practice Office at www.thepracticeoffice.com