BUSINESS ENGLISH COMMUNICATION

FIRST IMPRESSIONS TO FIRST APPLICATIONS

Topics 2-3: Greetings, Introductions & Searching for a Job

1. WARM-UP - FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Discuss with your partner.

Imagine that you arrive at an international business event. You have 30 seconds to introduce yourself to a person who may become your future employer, colleague, or client.

What information would you include? Choose four.

your name	your age
your university	your field of study
your hobbies	your professional interests
your experience	what kind of job you want
where you live	something memorable about yourself

What creates a positive first impression?

Rank these from 1 (most important) to 6 (least important):

confident body language	perfect grammar
clear speech	eye contact
appropriate greeting	asking good questions

> *Is it possible to make a good professional impression with imperfect English? Why?*

2. VOCABULARY WARM-UP - MEETING PEOPLE

Match the expressions (1-10) with the situations (A-J).

1. It's a pleasure to meet you.	A. You want to politely end a conversation.
2. I don't think we've met before.	B. You introduce another person.
3. Let me introduce you to...	C. You want to know someone's profession.
4. What line of work are you in?	D. You meet someone for the first time.
5. I'm currently studying...	E. You explain your current education.
6. I work mainly in...	F. You suggest future contact.
7. It was great talking to you.	G. You think you have never met the person before.
8. I won't keep you any longer.	H. You explain your professional area.

9. Let's keep in touch.	I. You finish a friendly professional conversation.
10. I'll let you get back to it.	J. You recognise that the other person is busy.

3. FORMAL OR INFORMAL?

Mark each expression F (more formal), N (neutral), or I (informal).

1. Good morning. It's a pleasure to meet you.
2. Hi! How's it going?
3. Let me introduce myself.
4. Nice to meet you.
5. How do you do?
6. Great to finally meet you!
7. May I introduce my colleague?
8. Hey, good to see you again.
9. It was a pleasure speaking with you.
10. Catch you later.

Discuss: Which expressions would you use...

- at a job interview?
- during a university conference?
- in an online team meeting?
- when meeting a colleague of your age?
- when speaking to a CEO for the first time?

4. CULTURE CHECK - SAME WORDS, DIFFERENT RULES

Discuss the situations. Could any of them cause misunderstanding?

Situation A. A German manager immediately uses a colleague's first name.

Situation B. A Japanese business partner gives you a business card with both hands.

Situation C. A British colleague says: "We should have lunch sometime."

Situation D. During an online meeting, one participant immediately starts discussing business without small talk.

- Are professional greetings in Ukraine generally formal or informal?
- Do younger professionals communicate differently from older generations?
- Is small talk important in business?
- Which topics are safe for professional small talk?

5. INTRODUCTION UPGRADE

Read this introduction:

> *Hi. I'm Anna. I'm a student. I study management. I don't have a job now. I want to work in an international company.*

It is grammatically correct, but it does not sound very professional. Improve it using some of these phrases:

currently studying	particularly interested in
gaining experience in	looking for opportunities to
develop my skills in	hoping to build a career in

Useful structure

- Hello, I'm...
- I'm currently...
- I'm particularly interested in...
- At the moment, I'm...
- In the future, I'd like to...

Your turn

Prepare a 30-40 second professional introduction. Student A introduces themselves; Student B asks two follow-up questions. Then change roles.

6. JOB SEARCH VOCABULARY

Expression	Meaning	Ukrainian
job vacancy	an available position	вакансія
job advertisement / job ad	information about an available job	оголошення про вакансію
job seeker	a person looking for employment	людина, яка шукає роботу
apply for a position	formally ask to be considered for a job	подаватися на посаду
submit an application	officially send application documents	подати заявку

Expression	Meaning	Ukrainian
meet the requirements	have the qualifications or skills required	відповідати вимогам
relevant experience	experience connected to a particular job	релевантний досвід
transferable skills	skills useful in different jobs	універсальні / переносні навички
job responsibilities	duties connected with a position	посадові обов’язки
essential requirement	something a candidate must have	обов’язкова вимога
desirable qualification	something useful but not obligatory	бажана кваліфікація
tailor an application	adapt an application to a particular job	адаптувати заявку під вакансію
shortlist candidates	select the strongest applicants	відібрати кандидатів
cover letter	letter explaining why you are suitable for a job	супровідний лист
CV / résumé	document presenting education, skills and experience	резюме
career prospects	future opportunities for professional growth	кар’єрні перспективи
entry-level position	job suitable for someone beginning a career	початкова позиція
professional profile	short summary of professional strengths	професійний профіль

7. VOCABULARY CHALLENGE - WHICH WORD DOESN'T BELONG?

Choose the expression that does not logically fit. Then correct it.

1. apply for a position | submit an application | meet an application | tailor an application

2. relevant experience | professional experience | hands-on experience | experienced qualification

3. essential requirement | desirable qualification | job requirement | required experience

4. shortlist candidates | interview candidates | hire candidates | apply candidates

5. career prospects | career development | career opportunities | career vacancy

8. READING

Hiring is changing - but the first impression still matters

For decades, starting a career followed a relatively predictable pattern. Graduates searched newspaper advertisements, prepared a standard CV and sent almost identical applications to several employers. Today, the process is faster, more digital and, in some ways, more demanding.

A candidate may discover a vacancy on LinkedIn in the morning and submit an application before lunch. Employers can receive hundreds of applications within days. Technology has made recruitment more efficient, but it has also made individual candidates easier to overlook.

As a result, career advisers increasingly tell job seekers to stop thinking of a CV as a complete autobiography. Its purpose is not to document everything a person has ever done. It is to show why that person may be relevant to one particular employer.

This means that successful applicants increasingly tailor their applications. If a company wants someone who can manage projects, communicate with clients and work independently, the strongest CV will provide evidence of those abilities. A general statement such as 'I am a hardworking and responsible person' gives an employer little useful information.

Evidence is more persuasive. A student who writes 'Organised a university event for 150 participants' demonstrates organisational ability. Someone who says 'Managed social media content for a student organisation' provides evidence of communication experience.

The same principle applies to cover letters. A strong cover letter does not simply repeat the CV. It connects the candidate's skills and experience to the employer's needs.

But recruitment has not become entirely digital. Human interaction still matters. A candidate may first encounter an employer at a university event, career fair, conference or online meeting. A confident introduction and a short professional conversation can create an impression long before an application arrives.

This is why employability is partly about documents and partly about communication. Candidates need to know how to write about their experience, but they also need to explain it naturally in conversation.

Technology may be changing how people find jobs. The basic challenge, however, remains surprisingly traditional: convince another person that you can solve a problem for their organisation.

9. READING - FIND THE MESSAGE

1. What is the main argument of the article?

- A. Online recruitment is replacing human communication.
- B. Modern candidates need both effective applications and strong communication skills.
- C. CVs are becoming less important.
- D. Graduates should apply for as many jobs as possible.

2. Why can candidates be easier to overlook today?

- A. They have less experience.
- B. Companies advertise fewer positions.
- C. Employers may receive very large numbers of applications.
- D. CVs are shorter.

3. According to the article, a CV should primarily...

- A. include every activity a person has completed.
- B. demonstrate relevance to a specific employer.
- C. describe the candidate's personality.
- D. repeat information from a cover letter.

4. Which sentence provides stronger evidence?

- A. I am an excellent communicator.
- B. I communicated with clients during my internship.

5. What should a cover letter do?

- A. repeat the CV.
- B. describe the applicant's personal life.
- C. connect the applicant's experience with the employer's needs.
- D. list academic subjects.

10. LANGUAGE FROM THE ARTICLE

Find expressions in the text meaning:

change an application for a specific employer -> _____

abilities useful in professional life -> _____

show proof of a skill -> _____

people who are trying to find employment -> _____

an impression created during the first interaction -> _____

11. JOB ADVERTISEMENT - READ LIKE A CANDIDATE

JUNIOR PROJECT ASSISTANT

BrightPath Consulting

BrightPath is looking for a motivated Junior Project Assistant to support our international team.

Responsibilities

- assist with project planning
- communicate with clients and partners
- prepare short reports and presentations
- organise meetings
- maintain project documentation
- support social media and online communication

Essential requirements

- good written and spoken English
- strong communication skills
- good organisational skills
- ability to work independently
- confidence using Microsoft Office / Google Workspace

Desirable

- internship or volunteering experience
- experience organising events
- knowledge of another foreign language
- basic knowledge of social media tools

12. READ THE JOB AD LIKE A RECRUITER

Create three categories: MUST HAVE, WOULD HELP, and SHOW ME THE EVIDENCE.

> *Requirement: organisational skills | Weak: I am organised. | Strong: I coordinated a university event for 80 students.*

Now create strong evidence for:

communication skills: _____

English: _____

independent work: _____

social media: _____

teamwork: _____

13. CV CLINIC - STRONG OR WEAK?

Rate each sentence from 1 (very weak) to 5 (very strong). Be ready to explain your score.

A	I am responsible and hardworking.	___ / 5
B	Helped organise three university events.	___ / 5
C	I have good communication skills.	___ / 5

D	Communicated with international students during a university exchange programme.	___ / 5
E	Good at social media.	___ / 5
F	Created weekly Instagram content for a student organisation for six months.	___ / 5

Strong CV language usually combines an action + _____.

14. ACTION VERBS FOR CVS

Replace weak verbs with stronger ones.

organised	coordinated
created	managed
supported	communicated
prepared	delivered
assisted	developed
researched	analysed

Upgrade these sentences:

1. I helped with a university conference.

_____

2. I did social media posts.

_____

3. I worked with international students.

_____

4. I was responsible for a presentation.

_____

5. I helped our team with a research project.

_____

15. TAILOR THE APPLICATION

You are applying for the Junior Project Assistant position. Choose the five most relevant points for your CV.

- completed a university course in marketing
- worked part-time in a café
- organised a student charity event
- has B2 English
- enjoys photography
- created presentations for university projects
- volunteered at an international conference
- has a driving licence
- managed Instagram for a student organisation
- likes travelling
- regularly works on group projects
- completed an online Excel course

Discuss

- Why did you choose these five?
- Which information is less relevant?
- Could some apparently irrelevant experience still be presented professionally?

16. COVER LETTER - WHICH OPENING WORKS?

Compare the two openings.

> *A. Dear Sir/Madam,*
> *I am writing because I saw your job and I want to apply. I think I am a good person for this work.*
>
> *B. Dear Hiring Manager,*
> *I am writing to apply for the Junior Project Assistant position at BrightPath Consulting. As a university student with experience in event organisation and international volunteering, I am particularly interested in the opportunity to support your project team.*

Which version is stronger? Find three differences.

17. COVER LETTER LANGUAGE BANK

Opening

- I am writing to apply for...
- I was interested to see your vacancy for...
- I would like to be considered for...

Connecting experience to the role

- My experience in... has helped me develop...
- Through my studies, I have developed...
- I believe my experience in... would allow me to...
- This experience taught me how to...

Showing motivation

- I am particularly interested in this position because...
- I am attracted to the opportunity to...
- The role would allow me to develop...

Closing

- I would welcome the opportunity to discuss my application further.

- Thank you for considering my application.
- I look forward to hearing from you.

18. MINI APPLICATION CHALLENGE

Using the BrightPath vacancy, complete the mini cover-letter pitch.

I am writing to apply for _____.

My experience in _____ has helped me develop _____.

One example of this is _____.

I am particularly interested in this position because _____.

I would welcome the opportunity to _____.

Read your version aloud. Your partner is the recruiter and asks one follow-up question.

19. ROLE-PLAY - FROM HELLO TO OPPORTUNITY

You are attending a university career event.

STUDENT A - COMPANY REPRESENTATIVE	STUDENT B - STUDENT
You represent BrightPath Consulting. You are looking for students who may be interested in internships or entry-level positions.	You are a university student interested in international business and future career opportunities.

Your conversation should include:

- a greeting
- an introduction
- professional small talk
- an explanation of studies/interests
- one question about the company
- one question about job opportunities
- an appropriate closing

Useful expressions

- I don't think we've met before.
- Let me introduce myself.
- What kind of projects do you work on?
- I'm particularly interested in...
- Are there any opportunities for students or recent graduates?
- It was great speaking with you.
- Would it be all right if I connected with you on LinkedIn?
- I hope we can stay in touch.

Then switch roles.

20. VIRTUAL INTRODUCTION

Imagine the same meeting happens online. Start the conversation naturally. Include a greeting, a quick sound/video check, your introduction, one sentence of small talk, and a transition to business.

- Good morning. Can you hear me clearly?
- Thanks for taking the time to meet with me.
- It’s great to finally meet you.
- Shall we get started?
- Before we begin, let me briefly introduce myself.

> *What changes between face-to-face communication and virtual communication?*

21. PROFESSIONAL GOODBYES

Choose the best closing for each situation.

1. You finish a job interview.

- A. Anyway, bye!
- B. Thank you for your time. It was a pleasure speaking with you.
- C. OK, I’m leaving.

2. You have been talking to someone at a networking event for ten minutes.

- A. It was great speaking with you. I’ll let you continue networking.
- B. Stop talking now.
- C. See ya.

3. You finish an online meeting with a new colleague.

- A. Thank you. I look forward to working with you.
- B. Bye-bye!
- C. That’s all.

22. FINAL SPEAKING CHALLENGE - YOUR 60-SECOND PROFESSIONAL PITCH

Imagine you have one minute with an employer. Build a short professional pitch using the structure below.

WHO YOU ARE: I'm currently studying...

WHAT YOU CAN DO: Through my studies / experience, I have developed...

EVIDENCE: For example, I...

WHAT YOU WANT: I'm particularly interested in...

CLOSE: I'd be very interested in learning more about...

Each student speaks for 45-60 seconds. The listener asks two professional follow-up questions.

HOMEWORK - FIND A REAL VACANCY

Choose one real job or internship vacancy that you could realistically apply for now or within the next few years.

Bring:

- the job title and company
- 3 main responsibilities
- 3 key requirements
- 5 useful expressions from the vacancy

Then write 100-120 words answering:

> *Why could this position be suitable for me?*

Use at least:

- 4 expressions from today's Job Search Vocabulary
- 3 strong CV action verbs
- one sentence explaining your relevant experience
- one sentence explaining what you still need to develop