

Course: Business English (Speaking)

Field of study: Business English (Modern Languages)

Form of classes: traditional/Online

Number of hours: 30 h

Number of ECTS credits: 5

Teaching methods: Conversation, multimodal presentations, individual presentation, group discussion)

Learning outcomes:

This Course is designed for all students to make them familiar with business practices and current environment in enterprises, and equip them with those practices for their professional life. Studying modern languages in this department, students are supposed to specialise either in translations skills or teaching skills developed together with Business English practices.

The course aims to:

- Develop students' speaking skills,
- Develop students' speaking skills in the area of business and economics,
- Develop students' comprehension of business and economics texts,
- Provide opportunities to express business concepts,
- Develop business ideas, and express them in their own words while analysing, discussing, criticising and reformulating.

Methods of verification of learning outcomes (100%):

- Class Attendance (20%),
- Speaking Activities including Discussions (20%),
- Case Study (20%),
- Role Plays (20%),
- Presentation (20%).

Sources

Basic literature on the subject

Mackenzie Ian, *English for Business Studies: A course for Business Studies and Economics students*. Cambridge University Press, UK, 2010.

Emmerson Paul, *Business English Handbook*. Macmillan Education, UK, 2007.

Brook-Hart Guy, *Complete First*. Second Edition, Cambridge University Press, UK, 2014.

Grower R., Bell J., *First Expert Coursebook*. Pearson, India, 2015.

Emmerson Paul, *Business Vocabulary Builder*. Macmillan Education, UK, 2009.

List of websites

<https://2012books.lardbucket.org/pdfs/management-principles-v1.0.pdf>

<http://www.ddegjust.ac.in/studymaterial/mcom/mc-101.pdf>

<https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/project-result-content/9a1c8bee-11f3-48f0-8e25-c86b14cf445a/Business%20Management%20And%20Organization%20Booklet.pdf>

<https://d3bxy9euw4e147.cloudfront.net/oscms-prodcms/media/documents/PrinciplesofManagement-OP.pdf>
<https://www.aeaweb.org/aer/top20/18.1.139-165.pdf>
http://www.guidohulsmann.com/pdf/Structure_Production_Reconsidered.pdf
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Table of Content

1. Introduction
2. Management
 - 2.1. Management
 - 2.2. Work and motivation
 - 2.3. Company structure
 - 2.4. Managing across cultures
 - 2.5. Recruitment
3. Production
 - 3.1. The different sectors of the economy
 - 3.2. Production
 - 3.3. Logistics
 - 3.4. Quality
4. Marketing
 - 4.1. Products
 - 4.2. Marketing
 - 4.3. Advertising
5. Presentations
 - 5.1. Structure and key phrases
 - 5.2. Assigned case study
6. Developing an argument
7. CV (resume) / Job interview
8. Sample Tasks
9. Sample Audit Questions

1. Introduction

This course is designed for the purpose of improving speaking skills. It gives opportunities to students to discuss ideas and issues from the contemporary world focused on the current issues with other learners and develop as well as defend their own views. Such discussions are taking place in pairs, small groups or with a common topic assigned for a whole class.

The given particular topics present an overview of today's life and business interactions in our daily interactions. They'll help students to improve general vocabulary and keep them improving technical vocabularies with comprehensive exercises. Classes are designed to be performed in the form of discussion which will be encouraging students to participate in the class discussion and enhance their command of spoken English to present their own viewpoints. It is also motivating and inspiring to one another to perform better and complete speaking assignments with full enthusiasm. The materials presented in the classes are going to be very latest and taken from newspapers and books dealing with current affairs and business.

2. Management

This chapter deals with the activities and tasks undertaken for achieving the goals of a company. It explains the entire process from planning, decision making, financial and human resource management to the execution of policies efficiently and effectively in order to reach the organisational goals.

2.1. Management

Management is a very important part of an organisation. The success or failure of an organisation often depends on the quality of their managers and the people associated with management. Managers are like drivers, who take the companies in the right direction. If Managers are efficient and productive, companies can be productive and make profit. Therefore the work of managers can be divided into five tasks:

- Planning or setting objectives,
- Organising,
- Integrating (motivating and communicating),
- Measuring performance, and
- Developing employees.

Though the task of managers can be analysed and modified, it is also a top management who has to consider the future and modify or change the organisational objectives, if necessary. Top managers also maintain or manage business relations with customers, suppliers, distributors, bankers, and public authorities.

2.2. Work and motivation

One of the most important responsibilities of a manager is to motivate his/her employees who are working with him/her or under him/her. Therefore this chapter highlights discussion on the importance of motivation. It'll also discuss various theories of motivation with comparison of various methods. The following motivator factors can be discussed:

- Good working conditions,
- Good working relations with managers, colleagues and inline workers,
- Good remuneration such as salary, commission, bonuses, etc.,
- Job securities,

- A challenging job,
- Promotion opportunities,
- Long holidays or vacations,
- Opportunities to travel,
- A job where you can make a difference,
- Belief in what the organisation does,
- Contact with people,
- Responsibility,
- Just want to be involved in something.

Douglas McGregor divided workers into two categories according to two theories – ‘Theory X’ and ‘Theory Y’. Theory X assumes that people are lazy and will avoid work and responsibility if they can. Therefore, workers have to be closely supervised, controlled, and told what to do. Theory Y assumes that most people have a psychological need to work, and given the right conditions they will be creative, ambitious and self motivated by getting satisfaction from doing a good job. And it is more applicable to skilled professionals.

2.3. Company structure

An organisation or a company should be considered as a combination of many departments such as production, finance, accounting, marketing, sales, human resources, etc. This chapter compares the differences between large and small companies, and also highlights the potential conflicts between different departments.

Discussion will be based on following strategies:

- Factory working at full capacity,
- Large advertising budget,
- Large sales force earning high commission,
- Standard product without optional features,
- Strong cash balance,
- High Profit margins,
- Low Research and Development spending,
- Self financing,
- Strong market share for new products.

2.4. Managing across cultures

This chapter presents the current scenario of people working in different cross-cultural environments. It also discusses the advantages and disadvantages of a multinational company adopting its management methods to the local culture in each country in which it operates. There are possible conflicts between globalisation and localisation considering the importance of cultural differences and local practices – cultural habits, beliefs and principles.

Managing a global multinational company wouldn't be difficult if it had nothing to do with local differences, culture habits and beliefs and only concerned focus on one set of corporate objectives such as goals, policies, practices, products and services. Different countries and regions have different local cultures and practices which affects the businesses practices and creates conflict between ‘globalisation’ and ‘localisation’. Therefore, it is important for the companies that want to be successful in foreign markets to be aware of the characteristics of local cultural practices.

2.5. Recruitment

Recruitment is the most awaited process for the freshers who see their ‘dreams come true’ by getting their dream job at one of the most prestigious organisations. At the same it is an important

factor for a company to be successful by selecting the right candidates for development of the organisation and productivity.

This chapter presents the good and bad practices in preparing a CV and covering letter, and discusses what makes a good CV/resume and covering letter to be considered at different stages of recruitment process. When applying for a job as a business graduate, students who graduated from our faculty are probably only one of many applicants, most of whom will have similar experience and qualifications to our student. Thus can he/she get his/her name onto the shortlist for interviews when applying for a job? What do they have to do during the study period or which kind of training should they receive in order to present themselves properly and be selected by hiring staff?

- Some specifications on CVs/resumes:
 - European and Asian CVs generally include photos; US resumes do not.
 - British CVs include personal details such as date of birth, marital status, number of children, etc.; US resumes do not.
 - British CVs usually include outside work interests such as sports, traveling, etc., US ones don't.
 - CV should be totally honest; students should emphasise their strengths, but not lie about their experience or skills. It should not say anything that contradicts what they put on their Facebook page, LinkedIn, or similar.
 - Leave out information that is irrelevant or that could give some people a chance to discriminate against you.
 - Lay your CV out neatly.
 - Check for grammatical and spelling or typographical errors.
 - Get someone to check your CV before you send it.
- Notes on covering letters:
 - The covering letter explains why you want the job.
 - It should be specific to the job you are applying for, adapted to the target organisation, and show that you know about its activities.
 - It should highlight your skills and achievements, and show how your background, training, work experience and abilities relate to the job you are applying for.
 - It should use formal language, and demonstrate that you have good written communication skills.

3. Production

The aim of this chapter is to present different sectors of the economy. And discuss changes that have taken place in the different sectors in the economy.

3.1. The different sectors of the economy

In the 20th century, the economy was described as consisting of three sectors:

- The primary sector: agriculture, and the extraction of raw materials from earth;
- The secondary sector: manufacturing industry, in which raw materials are turned into finished products;
- The tertiary or service sector: the commercial services that help industry produce and distribute goods to their final consumers, as well as activities such as education, healthcare, leisure, tourism, and so on.

3.2. Production

It presents the process of industrial production by considering the global impact of international supply chains.

3.3. Logistics

The chapter compares different strategies for stock control and manufacturing. It also discusses potential supply chain risks. In the manufacturing business there are many advantages and disadvantages of simply satisfying current demands, and planning to meet future demand.

- Risk analysis: companies might choose not to use suppliers from a particular country if they are unsure about its future political or financial stability, or about future industrial relations, or the condition of its infrastructure (roads, railways, power supplies, etc.), or possible changes in the climate, etc.

3.4. Quality

It presents the different managerial approaches and quality of managers that should be considered for ensuring the quality of a company and company's products.

4. Marketing

Marketing is one of the most influential ways of presenting a company's activities, product's specifications, communication with its valuable customers, and delivering to its clients, partners, and society at large.

4.1. Products

This chapter presents the importance of researching product concepts as well as brand value and its recognition. Briefly, it presents discussion about the following issues:

- The product concept: what exactly would the business offer, and how would it differ from similar, competing businesses?
- The location: what would the ideal location be, bearing in mind that the closer to the town centre and the busier the street, the higher the rent?
- The name of the business, and the image it wants to project. What kind of design would be used?
- Pricing: would the business try to get involved in price wars, by being cheaper than competitors, or should it try to be better or different, and charge a higher price?

4.2. Marketing

Discuss pricing and distribution strategies by considering the product life cycle and an effective role of marketing. The following discussion topics can be organised based on pricing and marketing strategies:

- Under what circumstances would manufacturers either set prices that try to maximise profits, or deliberately charge a low price?
- Give examples of products for which demand is elastic, and which you would only buy (or buy more of) if the price went down.
- Which products are not price sensitive for you, so that you would buy them even if the price increased significantly?
- If you see a price that is just a little less than a round number, e.g. \$1.99 PLN 99.90, does it make you think of a lower number, e.g. \$1 instead of \$2, and encourage you to buy the product? If not, why do you think most retailers use 'psychological pricing'?

4.3. Advertising

Advertising informs consumers about the existence and benefits of products and services, and attempts to persuade them to buy them. This chapter analyses different kinds of sales promotions, and presents a strategic discussion about what makes a successful advertising campaign. It tries to address the following influential activities from an advertisement:

- To what extent do you think your purchases are influenced by advertising?
- How many advertising messages do you think you see or hear on an average day?
- How many times do you have to see an ad or a brand name before you remember it?
- When has advertising ever persuaded you to buy things you don't need, or even things you don't want?
- Discussion: advertising and promotion

How responsive are you to advertising and sales promotions? Classify the following techniques.

I find these advertising and sales promotions techniques:	Interesting and effective	Interesting but not effective	Both irritating and ineffective
Advertisement in the cinema			
Radio commercials			
Television commercials			
Advertisements in newspapers and magazines			
Posters on advertising hoardings or billboards			
Advertisement inside or outside buses			
Backlit posters in display boxes			
Neon signs on walls in city centres			
Direct mail (or junk mail) you find in your letter box			
Flyers handed out on the street			
Discount coupons in newspapers to cut out and present at a supermarket checkout			
Points-of sale displays next to checkout counters in stores			
Free samples of products given away in public places			

I find these advertising and sales promotions techniques:	Interesting and effective	Interesting but not effective	Both irritating and ineffective
Free promotional items like T-shirts, caps, pens, mouse pads or mugs, with a company's name or logo or slogan on them, given away at sporting events, etc.			
Telephone marketing: people phoning you at home trying to sell you things			
Text or picture messages received on your mobile device or cell phone			
Banner advertisements at the top or bottom of a web page			
Pop-up pages on the internet			
Spam emails			

5. Presentations

Students will be learning about how to make an effective presentation. Presentations are also depending on the speaker's confidence and personality, the topic, and the expectations of the audience. It might be formal and structured in European style or more informal, spontaneous in American style or in a quasi style, somewhere between these two.

5.1. Structure and key phrases

Presentation can be followed step by step by the given checklist:

- Bang – something that you say or do at the beginning that gets the attention of the audience: a visual aid, a story, a joke, a surprising fact, a reference to 'here and now'.
- Opening – thanking the organisers for inviting you, a few words about yourself, telling the audience the topic and structure of your presentation, making it clear whether questions should be kept to the end or not.
- Message – the main point of your presentation. Decide on just three key points at the planning stage and write them down as three short sentences. This will focus your mind. And the more points you will present the harder it will be for the audience to remember. Perhaps use these three sentences as the final slide in your presentation.
- Bridge – make it clear to the audience how your message connects to their needs/interests.
- Examples – use practical, easy-to-understand examples to make your points clear.
- Recap – short for 'recapitulation', a summary of your main points.
- Bang – a link to your first Bang! To give a sense of closure.

5.2. Assigned case study

Students will be assigned for a case study either individually or in small groups. They'll have to prepare for the assigned case and present it in the class in the form of a powerpoint presentation. For an example, the senior managers of a car manufacture sense an increasing level of dissatisfaction

Business English (speaking)

among most of the different categories of staff. The company has the following groups of employees, with different benefits:

- Senior management – high salaries, free company cars, company restaurant, 25 days of annual leave.
- Designers – high salaries, free company cars, company canteen, 20 days of annual leave.
- Production Line workers – fixed salary, company canteen, 20 days of annual leave.
- Secretarial and administrative staff – salary based on experience, company canteen, 20 days of annual leave.
- Sales Representatives – low fixed salary plus commission on sales, 20 days of annual leave.
- Canteen and restaurant staff – 20 days of annual leave, free meals in the canteen.
- Cleaners – hourly wages, plus 8.33% extra as holiday pay, no other benefits.

The managers meet to consider ways of increasing staff morale. They have to decide whether any of the following suggestions would be appropriate for different groups of employees:

- Building sports facilities e.g. a gymnasium, tennis courts, etc.,
- Establishing a profit-sharing scheme,
- Giving longer paid holidays,
- Offering cars at discount prices,
- Offering Career training,
- Offering early retirement,
- Paying a high salary,
- Paying productivity bonuses,
- Reducing the working week,
- Setting up a creche for the employees' pre-school-age children,
- Spending some money on decorating the organisation's premises,
- Subsidising the staff canteen.

In small groups, decide whether to implement any of these suggestions.

6. Developing an argument

Any speaker or writer who is developing an argument has to show that they have considered several points of view, including those that go against their own argument. As in our real life things are not black and white and there are exceptions to any general rule. By dealing with these contradictory points students demonstrate more complex thought, and the listeners are more likely to be impressed and persuaded. Therefore, it is important for the students to keep space for contradictory points and counter them with their own point of views by developing an argument.

7. CV (resume) / Job interview

There are two different types of CVs:

- A. An American style resume. Its key features are: one side of A4 only, focus on achievements (what you have actually done) as well as skills and responsibilities, no personal information.
- B. European Style CVs are longer, and can include other things such as personal interests, courses/conferences attended.

Job Interview: preparation for the job interview is very simple based on your CV, and students can prepare themselves for few typical interview questions such as:

- Tell me about yourself.
- Why do you want to leave your current job?
- What attracted you to this company?
- What qualities or experiences do you think you would bring to this job?
- What would you find most difficult about this position? How would you handle that challenges?
- How your colleagues describes you?
- What are your strong points?
- What are your weak points?
- How do you deal with criticism and direction?
- In career terms, where do you want to be in five years time?
- And finally, why should we hire you rather than one of the other candidates?

8. Sample Tasks

- *Class attendance*: to make sure that students are aware about the current topics and following the right path of learning.
- *Active participation*: active participation in class discussions confirms the students understand current assigned topics and they can present their viewpoints. It also shows their interpretation skills and used vocabulary. The purpose is to track student's progress and check their knowledge on an ongoing basis.
- *Individual presentation*: students are supposed to create presentations on the basis of the course material and present them in class.
- *Group Discussion*: Group discussions are designed for the purpose to involve students in a small or large groups and encourage them to participate in speaking parts with assigned assignments.
- *Oral examination*: the main goal of the exam is to assess the skills of critical thinking, abilities to take a new look at and interpret well known facts, intellectualise and speculate about main problems covered by the course, and to assess the use of English.

9. Sample Audit Questions

- *Case Study*
 - Selecting a Chief Executing Officer.
 - Three companies are looking for a Chief Executing Officer (CEO) – the CEO who will be responsible for managing the company's day-to-day operations and making sure that company is performing well.
 - Company A is a Mobile Phone manufacturer that has to retrofit its production units in order to sustain in the current competitive market.
 - Company B is a BPO (Business Process Outsourcing) company that provides highly competent young talents for call centres for an American company.
 - Company C is a private Newspaper whose objective is to increase number of readers and generate revenue through advertisements.
- *Discussion questions*
 - Give example of ads that you have enjoyed.
 - Give example of ads that have persuaded you to buy the product.

Business English (speaking)

- Have you ever passed on advertising material by email, or discussed products in blogs or on message boards, thereby helping advertise an organisation's product or services?
- What do you think makes an advertisement memorable: Humour? Originality? The use of famous actors or celebrities? Endless repetition? Nudity? Other elements?
- Do you find the advertisements on television are generally: Informative? Persuasive? Amusing? Well made? Artistic? Worth watching? An annoying interruption to the programmes? Sometimes better than the programmes?
- In your working experience, even if it is only weekend or temporary summer holiday job, have your supervisors seemed to believe in theory X (theory X assumes that most people are incapable of taking responsibility for themselves and have to be looked after) or Theory Y (assumes that most people have psychological need to work, and given the right conditions they will be creative, ambitious and self-motivated by getting satisfaction from doing a good job)?
- What would you do to try to motivate subordinates who did not want to take responsibilities at work, and who had uninteresting, repetitive jobs?
- Why is it important for companies to be aware of local culture?
- Who is more likely to say: 'Oh, you can't trust them; they wouldn't even help a friend'?
- To what extent do you agree that it is possible to sum up national characteristics in a few words? Is there usually some (or a lot of) truth in such stereotype? Or, on the contrary, do you find such stereotyping dangerous?
- Would you say that you, personally, were individualist or collectivist?
- Particularist or universalist?
- Which of the following working practices would be effective or damaging in your country? Why?
 - The principle of 'pay-for-performance' for sales representatives – the more they sell, the more they get paid.
 - Having a competition in place for the 'Employee of the month'.
 - Having a matrix management system.
 - Extensive teamwork.
- When applying for your first job as a business graduate specialised in teaching/translation, you are probably only one of many applicants, most of whom will have similar experience and qualifications to your own.
 - How can you get your name onto the shortlist for interviews when applying for a job?
 - What can you do to impress the organisation which is hiring staff?
- Why is it normal in some countries not to include photos or personal details on a CV/resume?
- Should a CV really be totally honest? Do you think most people are completely honest?
- Why might an employer want to know about your hobbies and interests?
- Would you customise each covering letter to target each company if you were applying for a job in 30 separate companies?
- How accurate do you think your first impressions about people usually are?
- How could interviewers be trained to be less biased?

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