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INTERFACE CANADA

**Role Playing for Consolidation
Student's Book**

Revised Edition

Canada 

INTERFACE ***CANADA***

**Role Playing for Consolidation
Student's Book**

by

WILF MARINER

Series Co-ordinator

and

**Ron Dayman
Margot Gantchev
Marie Major
Vincenza Nazzari**

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Development Managing Editor: Howard Woods (Original Edition)
Production Managing Editor: Spencer Silverman (Original Edition)

Managing Editor: Madeleine Larue (Revised Edition)

Revision, Production: Keven Allen
Cover Design: Barbara Bastien
Layout & Text Processing: Kimberley Roy, Lori McCoy
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CONTENTS

UNIT 1 SMALL TALK

1

Making small talk about:

job, transportation, accommodations, news, weather, holidays

ACTIVITIES 1

LANGUAGE SUMMARY 13

UNIT 2 DESCRIBING YOUR JOB

2

Stating your responsibilities

Describing your job tasks

Commenting on your job

ACTIVITIES 15

LANGUAGE SUMMARY 27

UNIT 3 REQUESTING

3

Making requests

Refusing tactfully

Asking for something

Asking permission/authorization

Asking to meet/speak with someone

Asking someone to do something

ACTIVITIES 29

ROLE PLAYING YOUR OWN SITUATIONS 41

LANGUAGE SUMMARY 47

UNIT 4 **DESCRIBING PEOPLE**

Describing personality and character
Describing physical appearance:
 build, hair, age, height, distinguishing features

ACTIVITIES	51
LANGUAGE SUMMARY	65

UNIT 5 **EXPLAINING HOW**

Giving instructions on how to do things

ACTIVITIES	69
LANGUAGE SUMMARY	77

UNIT 6 **DESCRIBING YOUR WORKPLACE**

Describing your work location:
 building, location, surroundings, facilities, office space
Describing your work area:
 furniture, decor, equipment,...

ACTIVITIES	79
LANGUAGE SUMMARY	87

UNIT 7 GIVING INFORMATION AT WORK**7**

Business greetings
Giving information
Delaying giving information
Referring

ACTIVITIES	89
ROLE PLAYING YOUR OWN SITUATION	100
LANGUAGE SUMMARY	105

UNIT 8 DESCRIBING THINGS AT WORK**8**

Describing things:
size, colour, shape, composition, function, brand,...

ACTIVITIES	109
LANGUAGE SUMMARY	123

UNIT 9 REACHING A CONSENSUS**9**

Making suggestions and responding
Expressing opinions and responding

ACTIVITIES	127
ROLE PLAYING YOUR OWN SITUATION	134
LANGUAGE SUMMARY	137

UNIT

1

Small Talk

Making small talk on different topics.

Activity 1

A. Lead-in

CLASS DISCUSSION

What is small talk?

When do you make small talk?

What are some things you would make small talk about
with someone you know?
with someone you don't know very well?

B. Topics for small talk

You will hear people making small talk.

For each number:

Listen to the conversation and write the topic in the box.

Then listen again and complete the conversation by filling in the blanks.



1.

TOPIC:

A: _____?

B: Oh, I didn't tell you? I've changed jobs.

A: Really? When did that happen?

B: About a month ago. _____ Policy Development now.

2.

TOPIC:

A: _____ ?

B: Not really. There was quite a bit of traffic on the bridge, but it moved along pretty well.

A: _____ finding a place to park?

B: No. I just parked in the garage downstairs.

3.

TOPIC:

A: Where _____ while you're in town?

B: At the Highhat.

A: Oh, I've heard that's a pretty nice place.

B: Oh, it's not bad. _____ convenient to everything and
_____ ten-minute walk from here.

4.

TOPIC:

A: _____ the city's going to make a park on that vacant land
near the railway station?

B: Yeah, I think it's a great idea. We can always use more green spaces, especially
downtown.

A: And _____ start on it right away. Apparently the land already
belongs to the city.

5.

TOPIC:

A: Anything come up since I left?

B: No, it's been pretty quiet. How're things out there?

A: Not bad, except that _____

B: No kidding. Here it's really nice.

A: Well, not here. _____ non-stop since I got here.

6.

TOPIC:

A: So _____ the long weekend?

B: It was great! An extra day makes such a difference!

A: _____ ?

B: Yeah, friends from Toronto came for the weekend and we showed them around.

Activity 2

Making small talk

PAIR WORK

Look at the small-talk openers on the Language Summary pp. 13-14. Then have conversations about each of the topics with a partner.

Activity 3

Small-talk situations

PAIR WORK

Role play the situations.

S1 - p. 4

S2 - p. 8

Before making small talk, be sure to begin by greeting your partner where appropriate.

S1

SITUATION 1

It's the middle of winter. You're standing at the bus stop.

Your neighbour arrives.

Make small talk about the weather.

You begin.

SITUATION 2

You run into someone who used to work with you.

You haven't seen this person since he/she left to work at a different job.

Make small talk about his/her new job.

You begin.

SITUATION 3

You've just moved into a new house in the suburbs.

A friend is visiting you for the first time.

He/she arrives at the front door. Make small talk about how he/she got to your place.

You begin.

S1

SITUATION 4

Someone from a branch office in another city is visiting your office.

Make small talk about where he/she is staying.

You begin.

SITUATION 5

You meet a colleague in the elevator.

He/She's going on Holidays next week.

You begin.

SITUATION 6

You're having lunch in the staff lounge.

An acquaintance from another office joins you.

Make small talk about an event in the news.

You begin.

S1

SITUATION 7

You're attending a conference out of town.

You're waiting for the first meeting to begin.

Someone you don't know sits down next to you and starts a conversation.

Your partner begins.

SITUATION 8

You're particularly busy at work these days.

You're at the coffee shop. You run into someone you know from another office.

Your partner begins.

SITUATION 9

You're flying to Vancouver.

You're in the waiting area at the airport.
You're sitting reading a newspaper.

Someone you know comes up to you.

Your partner begins.

S1

SITUATION 10

You arrive at the subway station.

A colleague from work comes and speaks to you.

Your partner begins.

SITUATION 11

It's your first day back at work after you've been on holidays.

You meet a colleague.

Your partner begins.

SITUATION 12

You're driving a friend home from work.

A light freezing rain has been falling for half an hour. The side streets are becoming more and more slippery. You think the main roads should have some sand or salt by now.

Your partner begins.

S2

SITUATION 1

It's the middle of winter. You arrive at the bus stop.

Your neighbour is waiting for the bus.

Your partner begins.

SITUATION 2

You're walking along the street. You bump into someone you used to work with.

You haven't seen each other since you changed jobs.

Your partner begins.

SITUATION 3

A friend has just moved to a new house in the suburbs.

You're visiting for the first time. You lost your way twice and had to ask for directions.

You arrive at the door.

Your partner begins.

S2

SITUATION 4

You're visiting a branch office in another city.

A colleague speaks to you.

Your partner begins.

SITUATION 5

You're going on holidays next week.

You meet a colleague in the elevator.

Your partner begins.

SITUATION 6

You've just arrived in the staff lounge to have your lunch.

You sit down beside someone you know from another office.

Your partner begins.

S2

SITUATION 7

You're attending a conference out of town.

You're waiting for the first meeting to begin. You sit down next to someone you don't know.

Introduce yourself and make small talk about where he/she's from. Ask about his/her accommodations.

You begin.

SITUATION 8

You're at the coffee shop.

You run into someone you know from another office.

Make small talk about his/her job.

You begin.

SITUATION 9

You're flying to Vancouver.

You're in the waiting area at the airport. You see someone you know reading a newspaper.

You go and talk to him/her.

Find out about his/her trip.

You begin.

S2

SITUATION 10

You're waiting for a subway train.

A colleague from work arrives.

Make small talk about some event in the news.

You begin.

SITUATION 11

A colleague's been on holidays. It's his/her first day back.

Make small talk about his/her holidays.

You begin.

SITUATION 12

A friend is driving you home from work.

It's freezing rain and the road conditions are hazardous.

Make small talk about the weather.

You begin.

Language Summary

SMALL-TALK OPENERS

Job

How's | your job going?
work these days?

How're things going at work?

Are you still working | in personnel?
at the plaza?

Are you still putting in a lot of overtime?

Transportation

Any problems getting here?

Did you find your way OK?

Did you have trouble finding the place?

How did you | get here?
Did it take you long to

Accommodations

Where're you staying while you're in town?

What hotel are you staying | at?
in?

What're your accommodations like?

Is your hotel | nice?
far from here?

News

Did you hear about the robbery?

Did you see that article about the prison escape?

Isn't it extraordinary the way those people were saved?

Have you been following the Stanley Cup play-offs?

What did you think of the election results?

That	fire	was pretty awful, wasn't it?
	earthquake	
	plane crash	
	landslide	

Weather

The weather's sure been	nice	lately, hasn't it?
	awful	

We've had a lot of snow this month.

It's been really warm the last couple of days.

This cold (spell)	can't last forever.
This heat (wave)	

This rain's got to let up soon.

Holidays/Vacation

Are you ready for the holiday season?

How were your holidays?

Did you go away for the holidays?

How did you enjoy the long weekend?

Did you have a good/happy Diwali/Eid-ul-Fitr/Naw Ruz/Pesach/Thanksgiving?

Got any plans for your vacation?

You must be looking forward to your vacation.

UNIT

2

Describing Your Job

Talking about your job in different situations.

Activity 1

Job duties: vocabulary - verb practice

The following competition posters advertise different jobs.

For each poster:

Complete the description of duties by choosing appropriate verbs from the list on the side.

COMPETITION POSTERS

1.

SUPERVISOR, ACCOUNTS PAYABLE
DUTIES: Supervises the work of clerks. _____ and _____ section work; _____ information to various employees and management; _____ various kinds of correspondence; _____ employee selection and development.

check
distribute
participate in
prepare
provide

2.

COMPUTER PROGRAMMER
DUTIES: Operates and _____ the computer system. _____ computer programs and _____ the results; _____ training courses, and _____ his/her professional skills.

analyze
develop
give
maintain
write

3.

FINANCIAL OFFICER
DUTIES: Manages and _____ the Regional Accounting Services Unit; _____ assistance to managers on financial policies and procedures including travel, relocation, and program forecasts; _____ and _____ clerical staff.

control
provide
supervise
train

4.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS OFFICER
<p>DUTIES: Develops and _____ suitable telecommunications systems; _____ studies on the requirements of existing or planned systems; _____ planning new telecommunications systems. _____ public relations.</p>

conduct
handle
set up
take part in

5.

SECRETARY
<p>DUTIES: Takes and _____ dictation in both official languages; _____ from handwritten notes, shorthand or Dictaphone recordings; _____ and transcribes minutes of meetings; _____, _____ and _____ mail; _____ the telephone, _____ and screens visitors; _____ travel arrangements and prepares e-forms on employees' return; _____ inventory of supplies up to date and in good order.</p>

answer
distribute
keep
make
open
receive
sort
take
transcribe
type

6.

PAY AND BENEFITS CLERK
DUTIES: _____ complete pay and benefits service to employees; _____ advice and guidance in the application of the regulations of the Collective Agreement concerning pay and benefits. _____ problems using established guidelines and _____ file up to date.

give
keep
provide
resolve

Activity 2

A. Vocabulary for your job

Using the following chart as a guide, list words that you will use to talk about your main duties and tasks at work. You will use this vocabulary in the role plays that follow.

It may be helpful to refer to:

- the vocabulary in Activity 1
- your job description (English version)
- a dictionary

MY POSITION TITLE		
Department		
Branch		
Division		
Location		
Hours of work		
Language requirements		
Equipment I use		
Places I go to		
People I see or talk to	Within the government (e.g. departments, divisions, branches)	Outside the government (e.g. general public, private companies)
Things I do (point form)		

B. Describe your job

You receive the following memo at work. Read the memo and then respond to it.

MEMO

TO	The Staff	DATE	September 21
FROM	B. Richardson		
SUBJECT	Reorganization		

In accordance with Directive 15 A-0901, we are undertaking to reorganize the unit and reassign some members of the staff.

In order to facilitate our task, we request that all employees submit in writing a detailed description of exactly what they do in their job. Please complete the attached form and return it to your supervisor by October 3rd.

Thank you for your co-operation.



B. Richardson
Regional Director

Activity 3

Discussion questions

PAIR WORK

The questions below relate to your present job.
Discuss with a partner.

1. Do you work mostly by yourself?
2. Do you ever work in a group?
3. How does your work affect the work of other people?
4. How does other people's work affect what you do?
5. Does your job involve any supervisory duties?
6. How is work assigned in your office?
7. Do you ever have to work overtime? When? Why?
8. Do you ever have to go out of town for your job? When? Why?

Activity 4

Talking about your job

PAIR WORK

Role play the situations.

S1 - p. 23

S2 - p. 25

Be sure to begin by greeting your partner and making small talk.

S1

SITUATION 1

You will talk about your present job.

You won a competition and will be changing jobs soon.

A friend of yours has applied for your present job.

You're having lunch with him/her.

Your partner begins.

SITUATION 2

Your partner will talk about his/her present job.

You work for a "temporary services" unit.

You've been sent to replace a regular employee who is leaving for two months.

Be sure that you understand clearly what the job involves.

Your partner begins.

SITUATION 3

You will talk about your present job and your previous job.

You've applied for a new job.

You're being interviewed for the position.

Your partner begins.

S1

SITUATION 4

You will talk about your present job.

An efficiency expert comes to interview the members of your section.

It's your turn to be interviewed.

Your partner begins.

SITUATION 5

Your partner will talk about his/her present job.

You run into a former colleague.

Invite him/her to have a coffee with you.

Find out about his/her present job.

You begin.

SITUATION 6

You will talk about your previous jobs.

You're talking about work with a friend.

Discuss what you liked or disliked about different jobs you've had.

You begin.

S2

SITUATION 1

Your partner will talk about his/her present job.

You're having lunch with a friend who's going to be changing jobs soon.

You've applied for his/her present job.

You want to be well prepared for your job interview.

Be sure to get all the details you can about the job requirements and duties.

You begin.

SITUATION 2

You will talk about your present job.

You're going on leave for two months.

Your replacement from "temporary services" has arrived and is going to be working with you today.

Explain what the job duties are.

You begin.

SITUATION 3

Your partner will talk about his/her present and previous jobs.

You're interviewing someone for a new position.

Find out about the candidate's present job and about his/her previous job, if applicable.

- time spent at each job
- details about each job

You begin.

S2

SITUATION 4

Your partner will talk about his/her present job.

You're an efficiency expert.

In order to make recommendations on improving efficiency in a certain section, you will go to interview the employees about their jobs.

You meet with an employee. Explain why you're there and get the employee to describe his/her normal workday.

You begin.

SITUATION 5

You will talk about your present job.

You've changed jobs recently.

You run into a former colleague who invites you to have a coffee.

Accept.

Your partner begins.

SITUATION 6

You will talk about your previous jobs.

You're talking about work with a friend.

Discuss what you liked or disliked about different jobs you've had.

Your partner begins.

Language Summary

STATING YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

I'm in charge of word processing.

I'm responsible for the maintenance of radar facilities.

I look after training for new employees.

I take care of all the bookkeeping.

I handle complaints.

DESCRIBING YOUR JOB TASKS

We usually use the **simple present** to describe our job duties.

I design opinion polls.

I occasionally write letters for my boss.

I process job application forms.

We also sometimes use "**have to**".

I have to prepare a report every month.

I have to check the figures the secretary gives me.

COMMENTING ON YOUR JOB

When describing our job we often talk about what we like and what we don't like about it.

I **get to** meet a lot of people.

I (really) **enjoy working** in/on a team.

There's a lot of pressure.

We don't get many perks.

I **don't** (really) **like doing** the same thing every day.

I (really) **hate going** before a competition or review board.

UNIT

3

Requesting

Making different types
of requests.

Activity 1

Types of requests

A. Look at the different types of requests listed below. Write an example for each type in the spaces provided.

a) Asking for help

d) Asking permission/authorization
to do something

b) Asking for something

e) Asking to meet/speak with
someone

c) Asking someone to do something

B. For each number:

Listen to the request on tape and decide what type of request it is, referring to the list in **Part A**.

Indicate your answer by writing the letter corresponding to the **type of request** in the space provided below.

- | | | | |
|---------|---------|---------|----------|
| 1. ____ | 4. ____ | 7. ____ | 10. ____ |
| 2. ____ | 5. ____ | 8. ____ | 11. ____ |
| 3. ____ | 6. ____ | 9. ____ | 12. ____ |

Activity 2
Levels of politeness
**A. For each number:**

You will hear the same request made in two different ways.

Listen to each request and decide which one is more polite.

Indicate your answer by putting a check mark (✓) beside the letter of your choice.

KEY

- | | | | |
|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| 1. A. ____ | 2. A. ____ | 3. A. ____ | 4. A. ____ |
| B. ____ | B. ____ | B. ____ | B. ____ |

Discuss the reasons for your choices. What makes a request more polite or less polite?

CLASS DISCUSSION

- B.** When making a request, what factors determine how polite your request should be? In other words, why would you choose to make your request more polite?

Activity 3
Refusing tactfully
CLASS DISCUSSION

Read the **SITUATION**:

A colleague's always borrowing money from you but often doesn't pay you back promptly. Today the request is for ten dollars.

How would you handle this situation?

How can you refuse tactfully?

Would you make up an excuse?

Look at the Language Summary p. 47 for some different ways of refusing tactfully.

Activity 4

Making requests

PAIR WORK

Role play the situations.

-1-

S1	S2
<p>You need some black binders with dividers. Ask the stockroom clerk for some.</p> <p>You begin.</p>	<p>You are a stockroom clerk. An employee asks for some supplies. They're out of stock at the moment.</p> <p>Your partner begins.</p>

-2-

S1	S2
<p>You always take your car to work. You work downtown and so does your neighbour.</p> <p>Your partner begins.</p>	<p>Your car is at the garage for repairs. Ask your neighbour for a lift to work.</p> <p>You begin.</p>

-3-

S1

Your lawn mower just broke.
Ask to borrow your neighbour's.

You begin.

S2

Your neighbour usually forgets
to bring back borrowed things.
Sometimes they are damaged
when returned.

Your partner begins.

-4-

S1

You have an exam tomorrow and
want to look over your notes.

Your partner begins.

S2

You have an exam tomorrow. You
realize that your notes are incomplete.
Ask to borrow your classmate's.

You begin.

-5-

S1

You have a doctor's appointment
at 3:00 p.m. Ask your supervisor
if you can leave early. The doctor
is a specialist. It is difficult to get
appointments with her.

You begin.

S2

You are a supervisor. One of your
employees constantly asks you for
permission to leave early.

Your partner begins.

-6-

S1

A co-worker asks a favour of you. You'd like to do it, but you're allergic to most dogs. Suggest an alternative.

Your partner begins.

S2

You are going away for three days. Politely ask a co-worker to take care of your dog for you as a favour.

You begin.

-7-

S1

Your office has a new e-form employee attendance sheet. Ask your co-worker to help you fill it out.

You begin.

S2

You know how to fill out the attendance sheet and have time to explain it to your co-worker.

Your partner begins.

-8-

S1

You're a security guard. It's 5:00 p.m. You're locking up the office. Tell the remaining employees to use the side entrance.

You begin.

S2

It's 5:00 p.m. The security guard wants to lock up. Ask him/her to wait a minute. You are about to leave and just have to put your coat on.

Your partner begins.

-9-

S1

You are a supervisor. An employee comes to ask you permission for something. The employee is conscientious.

Your partner begins.

S2

Ask your boss for permission to take a longer break. You have to go to the bank and it'll be closed when you finish work. You almost never make such requests.

You begin.

-10-

S1

You are the manager. Tell the shop steward of the union local that you have to meet with him/her to discuss an employee's grievance.

You begin.

S2

You are the shop steward of your union local. Your manager comes to see you. Tell him/her you can meet at 4:00 p.m.

Your partner begins.

-11-

S1

You have to make an urgent long-distance telephone call at work. Ask your manager for permission.

You begin.

S2

You are the manager. Allow the employee to make the telephone call. Explain that he/she will be billed for it.

Your partner begins.

-12-

S1

Your boss calls you. He wants to see you about your request for a transfer. Ask him/her if 1:30 would be all right.

Your partner begins.

S2

You are the director. Call one of your employees. You want to see him/her about his/her request for a transfer.

You begin.

Activity 5
Situations involving requests

PAIR WORK

Role play the situations.

S1 - p. 35

S2 - p. 38

S1

SITUATION 1

You're a supervisor. One of your employees comes to see you to ask for time off.

The employee is conscientious.

Your partner begins.

S1

SITUATION 2

You're organizing a surprise birthday party for your good friend, Susan.

You call another friend who's offered to help with the party preparations.

Ask him/her to order the cake and to buy the wine.

You begin.

SITUATION 3

You're applying for a new job.

You can't find your copy of last year's performance appraisal.

You go to your new administrative assistant to get a copy made from the one on file.

You speak to the assistant.

Your partner begins.

S1

SITUATION 4

To earn some extra money, you're working weekends as a salesclerk in the sweater department of a large store. A customer asks for your help.

- no larger sizes; was the last one in stock
- no refunds usually on sales merchandise
- Customer Services located on the second floor

Your partner begins.

SITUATION 5

In two weeks you and a colleague are giving a presentation on interviewing techniques. You plan to show a CD-ROM and hand out information sheets.

Call your colleague and arrange a meeting to discuss the presentation.

You want:

- your colleague to bring a copy of the CD-ROM to your meeting
- to discuss the information sheets with your colleague

You begin.

S2

SITUATION 1

Your child's school wants to send him/her home because a bad case of the flu is suspected - sudden fever, aches and pains everywhere.

You want to go home to take care of him/her.

You go to your supervisor to request leave.

You begin.

SITUATION 2

A friend is organizing a surprise birthday party for your mutual friend, Susan.

You've offered to help with the preparations.

Your friend calls you about the party.

Your partner begins.

S2

SITUATION 3

You are the new administrative assistant.

An employee you don't know comes to your desk.

Information about employees' performance appraisals is not allowed to be copied without the managers approval.

Ask the employee to get the personnel manager to send you an e-mail giving approval. You will then be happy to quickly make and deliver the copy.

You begin.

SITUATION 4

You just bought a sweater on sale. When you got home, you found it was too small.

You go back to the store to exchange it or get a refund.

You speak to a salesclerk in the sweater department.

You begin.

S2

SITUATION 5

In two weeks you and a colleague are giving a presentation on interviewing techniques. You plan to show a CD-ROM and hand out information sheets.

Your colleague calls you to arrange a meeting. You have a busy schedule.

Ask your colleague to check the CD-ROM equipment. You have the CD-ROM.

Your partner begins.

Role Playing Your Own Situation

FOCUSSING ON YOUR JOB

Think of six or more situations at work where **YOU** make requests. List them in point form below.

e.g. asking someone to prepare a package and send it out

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

GETTING READY TO ROLE PLAY

1. Preparing the role cards

Choose four situations from your list on page 41. For each situation, fill in a role card. Go over a role card with the Ss. For the "Type of request", refer the Ss back to Activity 1, page 29.

ROLE CARDS

SITUATION 1	
Type of request	
Request for what	
Reason for request	
Person you made the request to	
Response you received	
Other information about the situation	

SITUATION 2	
Type of request	
Request for what	
Reason for request	
Person you made the request to	
Response you received	
Other information about the situation	

SITUATION 3	
Type of <u>request</u>	
Request for <u>what</u>	
Reason for <u>request</u>	
Person you made the request to	
Response <u>you</u> received	
Other <u>information</u> about the situation	

SITUATION 4	
Type of request	
Request for what	
Reason for request	
Person you made the request to	
Response you received	
Other information about the situation	

2. Discussing the situations

PAIR WORK

S1- You will role play yourself giving information on the job.

- Choose one of your situations.
- Give your partner a copy of your role card.
- Explain the situation on the role card to your partner.
- Discuss the attitude of the speakers.

e.g. Were they polite, rude, timid, aggressive, helpful, impatient, co-operative, unreasonable, understanding, condescending, calm, upset,...?

S2- You will play the role of the person requesting information.

As you discuss your partner's situation, add notes to the role card.

To make the conversations more interesting, think of some complications to add to the role you've been assigned.

e.g. ask for further details
complain
ask for alternatives
pretend not to understand

Then switch roles.

DOING THE ROLE PLAYS

PAIR WORK

After discussing each situation, role play it with your partner.

Language Summary

MAKING REQUESTS

POSITIVE ANSWERS

These expressions can be used when making most types of requests.

Can/Could you help me?

Yeah,/Sure,/Yes, what do you want me to do?

Do you think you could lend me your dictionary?

Certainly./ Of course.

Would you mind getting the phone?

Not* at all. / No* problem. /Done.

I was wondering if I could use the lounge for a meeting?

Please, go right ahead.

I wonder if we could get together tomorrow?

Sure, what time?

REFUSING REQUESTS TACTFULLY

When we refuse a request we often apologize and give a reason.

I'm really sorry, but I'm short of cash today.

I wish I could see you right now, **but** I have a meeting in a few minutes.

I'd like to help you, but I'm not supposed to lift anything heavy.

I'd like to accommodate you, but two others have already asked for leave at that time.

I'd gladly give you a hand, **but** I won't be here tomorrow.

* The "negative-looking" answers are actually positive. Full sentence versions could be written:
I do not mind getting the phone for you at all. / I have no problem getting the phone for you.

ASKING FOR SOMETHING

Are there any extra binders?
I need some masking tape.

ASKING PERMISSION/AUTHORIZATION

Do you mind if I open the windows?
Is there any chance I could use your laptop?

Could I take a couple of /few days off?
Would it be possible for me to leave early tomorrow?

Is it all right if I don't attend the meeting this afternoon?
Would it be OK if I didn't go to the reunion?

When asking for permission in more formal situations, we sometimes begin with **an opener** to soften the request.

I have something to ask you. Would it be all right if...?
I'd like to ask you something. May I...?

Could I talk to you for a minute?
Could I see you about something?

ASKING TO MEET/SPEAK WITH SOMEONE

We should |
We have to | **get together to** set up next month's schedule.
We need to |

I've got to talk with Sonia **about** the new policy.

I'd like to see you for a minute.

Any chance of seeing you this afternoon?

ASKING SOMEONE TO DO SOMETHING

Would you watch the phone for me for a while/minute?

I'd appreciate it if you'd get me a coffee while you're at the cafeteria.

Will/Would you do me a favour and |
Would you be good enough to | **have another copy made?**
If it isn't too much trouble, could you |

If you have a chance, would you update the phone list?

If you have (the) time, could you update the addresses too?

Can I get you to check over the figures in the report?

Could I ask you to verify the totals?

Is there any chance you could pick it up from them after work?

Sometimes we ask someone to do something in a more direct way.

I want you to call Mrs. Wesley and cancel my appointment.

I'd like you to reorder the desk; this one is damaged.

Send a copy to Gord as soon as you can, please.

UNIT

4

Describing personality, character
and physical appearance.

Describing People

Activity 1

Personality and character: vocabulary warm up

For each person described in the first column choose a word from the box below that matches the description. Write the word in the second column.

How would you describe someone who:

1. adapts easily and is open to compromise?	
2. is determined and does not get discouraged easily?	
3. is dull and tiresome to listen to?	
4. says things without thinking how they may affect others?	
5. is fully capable of carrying out his or her job?	
6. is difficult to satisfy?	
7. is sure of herself or himself?	
8. takes things calmly and tends not to worry?	
9. can handle problems and new situations easily?	
10. changes quickly from happy to low spirited and vice versa?	

boring competent confident	easygoing flexible hard to please moody	persistent resourceful tactless
---	--	--

Activity 2

Discussion questions

PAIR WORK

Each group of questions below relates to one of the words you wrote in the second column of the chart in Activity 1. Discuss the questions with your partner.

1. _____ flexible _____

- When you are in a new situation, do you adapt easily? Explain what you do?
- Do you always have to have things your own way or are you open to compromise?

2. _____ persistent _____

- When you are working on something and it is not going right, do you leave it or do you keep at it until you get it right? Give an example.
- If you make a complaint and nothing is done about it, do you forget about it, or do you persist until you get satisfaction?

3. _____ boring _____

- Do you know any boring people?
- What makes them boring?
- Do they talk too much or too little? Which behaviour is worse? Explain why.
- Do they "put you to sleep?" If they do, explain how.

4. _____ tactless _____

- Are you sometimes tactless? Do you regret it later? What makes you tactless?
- Do you know some people who are often tactless? Elaborate on their behaviour.

5. _____ competent _____

- Do you think you do your job well? Give examples.
- Are you often consulted by your colleagues about work? Elaborate.
- Do you usually know how to help them? Explain.

6. _____ hard to please _____

- Are you very demanding of other people? ...at home? ...at work? Explain.
- How difficult a time do you have finding things to buy that you really like?
- "Yes, it's nice, but it's not really what I had in mind." Do you often find yourself saying this or something similar? If you do, explain the circumstances.

7. _____ confident _____

- How much do you believe in your ability to do things. Explain your answer.
- Do you ever question the quality of your work? Explain.

8. _____ easygoing _____

- Do you easily get upset if you have to wait for people or things such as service at a bank or store?
- Do you get nervous or upset when things go wrong at work or do you just take things as they come and roll with the punches. Give an example.

9. _____ resourceful _____

- If a problem comes up at work, do you try to find a solution or do you leave it to someone else?
- In an emergency situation, do you usually find a way to help, or do you panic? Explain.

10. _____ moody _____

- Do you sometimes find that you feel on top of the world one day and the next you are down in the dumps? Does this ever happen more than once in a day? Explain.
- Are your reactions to some situations unpredictable? Explain using an example.

Activity 3
Personality traits**PAIR WORK**

OBJECTIVE: To practise vocabulary for describing personality and character.

Discuss desirable personality traits for each of the people listed below and write the traits in the spaces provided.

Hint: Think of particular people that you know in order to help you decide on the desirable traits.

You can also refer to the list of traits in the box on the next page.

Desirable traits

friend

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

doctor

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

boss/supervisor

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

spouse or
significant other

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

co-worker

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Desirable traits

neighbour

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

in-laws

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Some desirable traits

appreciative	easy to get	kind
bright	along with	outgoing
cheerful	efficient	pleasant
creative	fair	practical
competent	friendly	reasonable
conscientious	flexible	reliable
co-operative	fun-loving	reserved
diplomatic	generous	serious
direct	hardworking	sincere
discreet	honest	understanding

Activity 4**Describing physical appearance****CLASS DISCUSSION**

- A.** When describing what someone looks like, what kinds of things do people usually mention?
List them below.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

PAIR WORK

B. Your teacher will give you and your partner some pictures of people.

Describe the people in the pictures. Refer to the categories you listed in **Part A**.

Activity 5

INDIVIDUAL/ ROLE PLAY - PAIR WORK

Describing someone you know

To review the vocabulary for describing physical appearance.

In **Part A** you will prepare role cards that you will use in **Part B**.

A. Preparing the role plays

For each role card:

Read the situation carefully. Then think of someone you know that you can describe.

Write down notes on the role card about the person.

S1's - Situations 1 and 2 - p. 57

S2's - Situations 3 and 4 - p. 58

S1

SITUATION 1

A member of your family has been missing for 48 hours.

You go to the police station to file a report.

DESCRIPTION:

You begin.

SITUATION 2

The new director general for your division came to your office recently to meet the staff.

Describe her or him to a colleague who was away.

DESCRIPTION:

Your partner begins.

S2

SITUATION 3

Somebody has just robbed you in the parking lot.

Report the incident to the security guard by describing the suspect.

DESCRIPTION:

You begin.

SITUATION 4

You are a supervisor. You have just received information that there is a suspicious person in the building.

Describe him/her to the staff so they can be on the lookout. Also get descriptions of any strangers seen by staff.

DESCRIPTION:

You begin.

B. Doing the role plays**PAIR WORK**

S1 - For Situation 1 and Situation 2 - p. 57

For Situation 3 and Situation 4 - p. 59

S2 - For Situation 1 and Situation 2 - p. 60

For Situation 3 and Situation 4 - p. 58

S1

SITUATION 3

You work for the building security force. Someone comes to you to report he/she has just been robbed in the parking lot. You have already reported the incident to police as it was caught on your video monitor. Another guard was sent to help the victim and is now following the suspect at a safe distance.

Unfortunately, the suspect was back-on to the camera. Ask for a description of the suspect to have ready for the police.

Your partner begins.

SITUATION 4

Your supervisor wants to see you immediately.

Your partner begins.

S2

SITUATION 1

You are a police officer. A local citizen comes to the station to report a missing person.

Get a detailed description.

Your partner begins

SITUATION 2

You were on vacation when the new director general of your division came to meet the staff.

Ask for a description of the DG.

You begin.

Activity 6

Choosing appropriate vocabulary

To practise describing physical appearance and personality

For **Parts A, C, and D** you can use a dictionary or a thesaurus to help you.

- A.** The words below are quite direct and could be considered tactless, even insulting, when describing people. Try to think of other words that would be less direct and more acceptable. Write them in the second column.

Direct

Less Direct

fat

skinny

narrow-minded

nosy

picky, fussy

touchy

weird

CLASS DISCUSSION

- B.** The kind of vocabulary we choose to describe physical appearance and personality depends on several factors.

In what situations would you choose to use:

- the words in the first column?
- the words in the second column?

- C. Below is another list of words. These are used to describe someone informally. Try to think of other words that would be more formal and polite. Write them in the second column.

Informal**More formal**

crabby

down-to-earth

laid-back

phony

pushy

spaced, a space cadet

stuck-up

uptight

CLASS DISCUSSION

- D. Try to think of other informal words for describing someone in English and their more formal equivalents.

Informal**More formal**

Activity 7

Describing people

PAIR WORK

- A. You will role play two different situations in which you describe your boss. You will talk about his or her physical appearance and personality traits.

To prepare for the role plays, think of some words or expressions you would use to describe him or her in these situations and write them in the spaces provided.

SITUATION 1

A good friend is curious about what your boss looks like.

physical appearance

personality traits

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

SITUATION 2

A new employee has not met the boss yet and wants to know what he/she is like.

physical appearance

personality traits

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Take turns role playing the above situations using the notes you have prepared to help you. Try to use language appropriate for the person you are speaking to, as well as appropriate to the situation, when describing your boss.

- B.** You will role play two other situations in which you describe a colleague or employee that you have a **poor opinion** of. You will talk about **personality traits** only.

To prepare for the role plays, think of some words or expressions you would use to describe this person in the two situations below. Write the information in the spaces provided.

SITUATION 1

Your boss needs someone for a special project. You are asked for your opinion of an employee. You do not think this person is the best one for the job.

personality traits

SITUATION 2

An acquaintance wants to know more about a colleague you often complain about.

personality traits

Take turns role playing the above situations using your prepared notes.

Language Summary

DESCRIBING PERSONALITY AND CHARACTER

Vocabulary

appreciative	fair	picky
boring	flexible	phony
bright	friendly	pleasant
cheerful	fun-loving	practical
competent	fussy	pushy
confident	generous	reasonable
conscientious	hard to please	reliable
co-operative	hardworking	reserved
crabby	honest	resourceful
creative	kind	serious
diplomatic	laid-back	sincere
direct	moody	strange
discreet	narrow-minded	stuck-up
down-to-earth	nice	tactless
efficient	nosy	understanding
easygoing	outgoing	uptight
easy to get along with	persistent	weird

In describing personality and character, we often mention preferences, tendencies, or habits.

He likes to be on time.

She doesn't like people sitting around doing nothing.

He becomes/gets upset **when** things don't go his way.

She tends to get nervous **when** under a lot of pressure.

Mrs. Brooks **always** gets to work early in the morning.

My boss never seems to take a break.

DESCRIBING PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

BUILD
stocky
heavyset
chubby
plump
Rubenesque
fat
overweight
on the heavy side
a lardo*
slim
thin
skinny
well-built
muscular
broad-shouldered
a hunk**
a babe**

HAIR		
colour		
Tom has	blond red brown black grey salt-and- pepper	hair.
Tom is a blond. Tom and Monica are blonds. Josh and Zane are red heads. Zara and Trish are brunettes.		
Monica is	(a) blonde. fair-haired. going grey.	
.....		
style		
straight		wavy
shoulder-length		curly
short		frizzy
.....		
He's***	partly bald. (completely) bald. got a shaved head.	

We often use the expressions that follow to make our descriptions more vague or less direct.

She's **kind of** blond.
Her hair's **sort of** curly.
He's **a bit** on the heavy side.

* Slang: Do *not* call a person a **lardo** to their face. Use only when speaking with people you know very well.

** Familiar: Use only with people you know well when describing someone else.

*** Note that '**s**' equals **is** in the first two items and **has** in the last.

AGE

He's		about thirty (years old).
		in his 50's.
		middle-aged.
		getting on.
		(rather) young.
		(fairly) old.
		24 (years old). [exact age]

HEIGHT

She's		on the short side	
		(of) average	height.
		(of) medium	
		(rather) tall.	

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES

He has		sideburns.
		a beard.
		a mustache.
		thick/bushy eyebrows.
		He's clean-shaven.

a scar
a mole
dimples
freckles
dark skin
fair skin
olive skin
a cleft chin
a fair complexion

She		has	gold Granny glasses*.
		wears	

He dresses well.
She's a good dresser.

When we describe someone's physical appearance, we often compare the person to ourselves or to someone else.

He's (about) my age.
She's (about) your build.
He's built like Marco/ his father.
He's the same height as John.
She has (got) about the same hair colour as me.
Her hair is straight like yours, only/but a little longer.

* We sometimes describe the glasses when describing the person.

UNIT

5

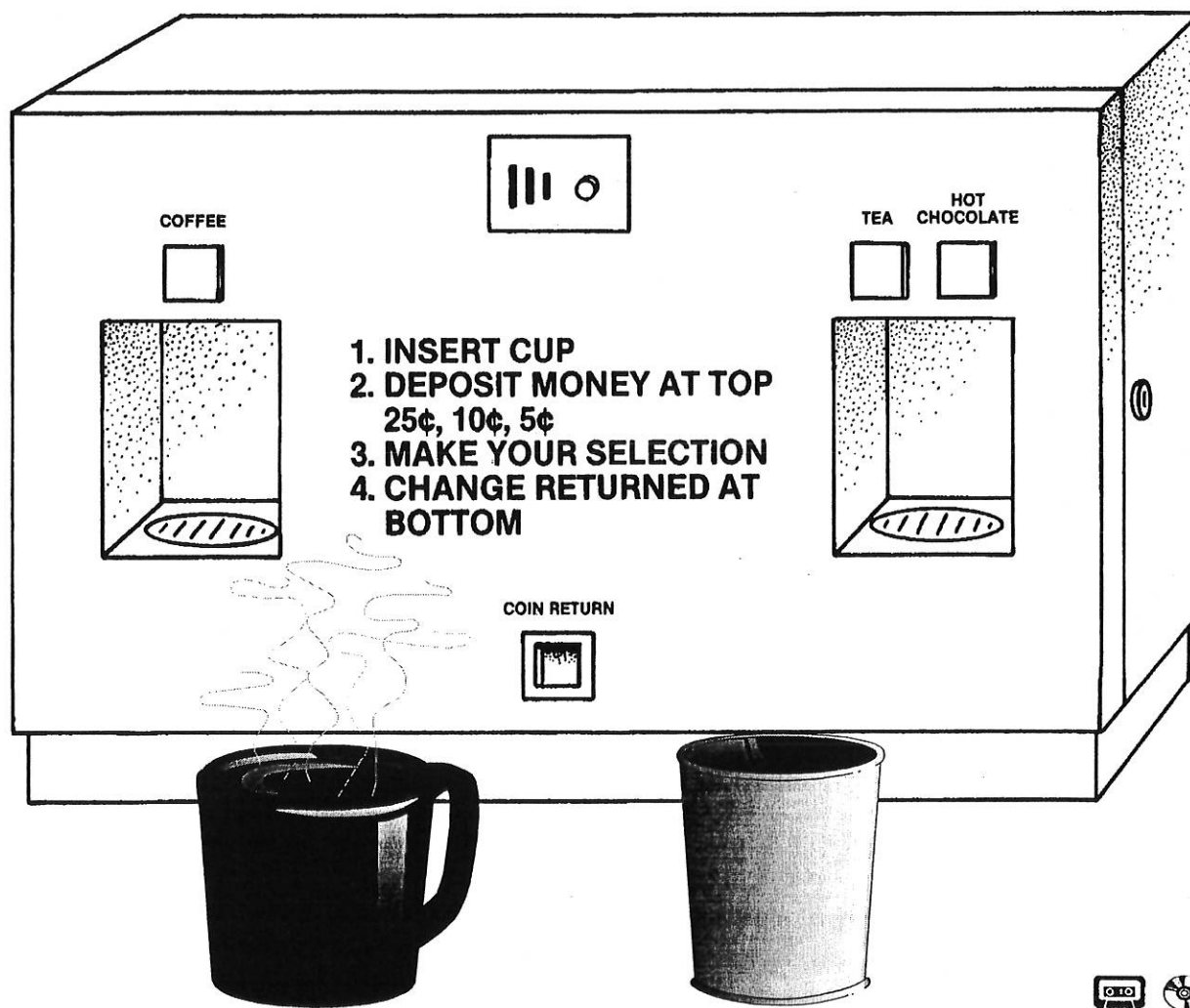
Giving instructions on
how to do something.

Explaining How

Activity 1

Giving instructions

A. Read the instructions on how to operate the coffee vending machine.



CLASS DISCUSSION

B. Now you will hear someone explaining how to operate the vending machine. Listen to the language the speaker uses.

Is it the same as the written language?

How is it different?

Is it different from similar instructions in your first language or other languages you might know?

Some of the words in the written instructions in the picture in **Part A** are listed below. Listen to the oral instructions again and write down what the speaker says to express these words.

1. **INSERT**

2. **DEPOSIT**

3. **MAKE YOUR SELECTION**

4. **CHANGE RETURNED AT BOTTOM**

PAIR WORK

- C. Take turns giving instructions on how to get a coffee, tea or chocolate from the vending machine in **Part A**.

Activity 2

ROLE PLAY / PAIR WORK

Things you know how to do

- A. Think of three or four things that you can explain how to do. List them in the space below.

Here are some suggestions:

- change a tire
- write a CV
- record CDs
- use an ATM (automated teller machine)
- repot a plant
- apply for a passport
- find a telephone number in another city
- wash a sweater
- help someone who is choking (Heimlich Maneuver)
- give mouth-to-mouth resuscitation
- pack a suitcase so things won't wrinkle
- buy real-estate
- make a cup of tea or a pot of good coffee
- transfer images from your camera to your computer
- make beer or wine from scratch
- make bread
- quit something that is hard to quit
- cook something

ROLE PLAY / PAIR WORK

- B.** Write your list on the whiteboard. Look at the items you and your classmates have put on the board. Put your initials beside the items you would like to have explained to you.

Explain any items from your list to those students who are interested.

Activity 3
Explaining what to do

**GROUP WORK**

- A.** Read the SITUATION:

**Allan is going to replace Grace, his supervisor, for a few months.
Grace explains what to do with the employees' time sheets.**

Look at the questions below. Then listen to the conversation and jot down answers to the questions.

1. When do the time sheets have to be done?

2. Who keeps the monthly record of absences?

3. Who should Allan give the time sheets to after he's checked them?

4. What should Allan do if there is a mistake?

5. What should Allan do if an employee is not present to hand in the time sheet?

- B.** Look at the script of what the speaker said. Listen to the tape or CD-ROM again and fill in the blanks.

Grace: Another thing you'll have to do is look after the time sheets at the end of the month.

Allan: Yeah, you'll have to explain that to me, too.

Grace: It's not that complicated. _____ everybody has handed in their time sheets, _____ check to see that everything is filled out correctly. You do that by _____ on the time sheets against the monthly record of absences.

Allan: Monthly record of absences. Who do I get that from? From the secretary?

Grace: Yeah, just ask Sharon for it.

Allan: OK.

Grace: Now, let me see. Oh, yeah, _____ check that the leave application forms have been filled out OK. You know, if it's certified sick leave, _____ the doctor's certificate is attached and things like that.

Allan: Right.

Grace: Oh yeah, and if there's a mistake or a problem, _____ go talk to the employee to straighten it out. _____ you sign the forms and give them to Peter. He'll enter the information into the computer.

Allan: What if somebody's away the day I do the time sheets?

Grace: Oh, _____ you should fill it in for the employee and sign it for him too. If there's a mistake, it can go in later as an amendment.

Activity 4

Explaining tasks you do at work

- A.** List in point form some tasks that you perform at work, or that you performed in a previous job.
e.g. operate a machine, do the monthly report, prepare a purchase order,...

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

- B. Choose two tasks from your list in Part A and fill in a card for each task.**

You will use this information to explain some of your tasks to the class. See **Part C**.

TASK:**How to do it:****Possible problems:****C.** Explain your tasks to the class.

Language Summary

GIVING INSTRUCTIONS

First of all, you set the margins.
After that you insert your paper.
Next, choose the number of copies you need.
Then you push this button.
Finally, remove the copies.

EMPHASIZING CERTAIN INSTRUCTIONS

You should always proofread your letters.
You have to get the people to sign their forms.

Remember to use capital letters for the important words.
Don't forget prepositions of over three letters have capitals too.

Be sure to check the postal codes.

WARNING WHAT NOT TO DO

Be careful not to turn off this switch.
Make sure you don't lock the keys inside.

Never remove the back plate, it will void the warranty.
Whatever you do, don't write in this space.

REASSURING SOMEONE

It's really easy to use.
All you (have to) do is push this button.
It's not that difficult.

EXPLAINING WHAT TO DO IF THERE IS A PROBLEM

If there's not enough paper, this button will light up.
If the machine gets stuck, you'll have to get the technician.
If you need help, call the secretary.

UNIT *Describing Your Workplace*

6

Giving descriptions of location and work area.

Activity 1

Describing a work location

A. Read the **SITUATION**:



Ian Russell has been seconded to another division for a year. He comes back to visit his former colleagues. They ask him about his new work location.

You will hear the conversation between Ian and his colleagues.

Listen and write down answers to the questions below.

1. Where is the building located?

2. How does Ian get to work in the morning?

3. What facilities are there in the building?

4. What floor of the building does he work on?

5. What kind of work space is there?

- B.** Look at the script of what the speakers said.
Listen to the tape or CD-ROM again and fill in the blanks.



Abby: So, how do you like working in the Canada Complex?

Ian: Oh, I like it a lot. It's nice working in a _____
downtown.

Ben: It's that large glass building on Simpson Street, isn't it?

Ian: Yeah, that's the one.

Abby: Must be hard to find parking around there.

Ian: Yes, it is. _____ in the building, but it's
very expensive. So I usually take the bus. It stops right in front of the complex.

Abby: Well, that's really convenient. And _____
in that building too, isn't there?

Ian: Yeah, there're a few stores, a post office, a drugstore, ... you know, the usual.

Abby: What about the restaurants?

Ian: Well, there're mostly _____ but there're a couple of
good restaurants too.

Ben: What floor are you on?

Ian: Our office occupies the whole 10th floor.

Ben: So it must be quite big then.

Ian: Yes, it is. _____ get off the elevators, there's a large
reception area. _____ some glass doors and
you're in the work area.

Abby: Do you have closed offices or is it all open like here?

Ian: Actually _____ an open work area with dividers like here but
then we've got quite a few closed offices too. _____
two large conference rooms and a lunchroom for the staff.

Activity 2

Your work location

A. Referring to the categories below, write down points about your work location.

THE BUILDING

name
description of exterior
entrance hall or lobby

LOCATION

district/area of town

SURROUNDINGS

landscaping
neighbourhood

FACILITIES

parking
shopping
banking

YOUR OFFICE SPACE

floor number
type of office - open
- closed

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is no handwriting or other markings on the paper.

82

Activity 3**PAIR WORK****Discussing your work location**

A. Discuss the building where you work with your partner, referring to the questions below.

THE BUILDING

1. What do you think of the location of the building where you work?
2. Is it easy for you to get there from where you live?
3. Is it near public transportation?
4. Is it easy to find parking? Is the parking in the area expensive?
5. Are there good restaurants within walking distance?
Is the food good?
Is the service fast?
Are the prices reasonable?
6. Is there a post office nearby?
7. Are there stores in the area?

B. Discuss your office space with your partner, referring to the questions below.

THE OFFICE SPACE

1. What floor of the building do you work on?
Do you have to wait a long time for elevators?
2. Do you think you have enough space for the number of employees?
3. Are the work stations in an open area?
Do you have closed offices?
Do you have both open and closed?
4. Do you have a staff lounge?
5. Are there conference rooms for meetings, training,...?

Activity 4

Your work area

A. For each of the categories below make a list of items you have in your work area.

Use your dictionary to help you.

FURNITURE

e.g. swivel chair

DECOR

e.g. potted plants

EQUIPMENT

e.g. computers

OTHER

e.g. safe

B. Prepare a description of your work area for class. Use the information you wrote in Part A.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

C. Describe your work area to the class.

Activity 5

PAIR WORK

Discussing your work area

Discuss your work area with a partner, referring to the questions below.

1. Do you like the location of your office or work station?
2. Do you feel you have enough space?
3. Are the lighting and ventilation good?
4. Is the furniture you have in good condition?
Is it modern and ergonomic or 'ancient'?
5. Is the equipment you use for your job up-to-date or outdated?
Is it in good working condition?
6. Do you find your office or work area pleasant to work in?

Language Summary

DESCRIBING YOUR WORK LOCATION

Building

brick
concrete
glass
stone
wood/wooden

old
new
modern

Location

downtown
in the town centre
in a suburb
in the west end
on a commercial street
in the financial district
in a residential area
in the outskirts
in the boonies/boondocks

Surroundings

garden
courtyard
park

shopping/stores nearby

Facilities

cafeteria
good restaurants
fast-food places

indoor/inside	parking
outdoor	
underground	
free	

Office Space

on the		main/ground/top floor
		first/third/ninth floor
		10th/11th/23rd floor

on Floor 3 / Floor 10 / Floor 44

in the basement

reception area	open area
staff lounge	cubicles
lunchroom	partitions
conference room	closed offices

DESCRIBING YOUR WORK AREA

Furniture

metal bookcase
modular desk
storage cabinet

ergonomic swivel straight-back upholstered leather	 chair
--	-----------

armchair

stool

coffee work drafting light	 table
-------------------------------------	-----------

three-drawer five-drawer	 (filing) cabinet
-----------------------------	----------------------

coat rack
coat tree

Decor

fluorescent/halogen lighting
floor/table lamp
desk light/lamp

picture
painting
poster
calendar
(wall) clock

(potted) plant

carpet
waste basket

blinds
curtains
drapes
Venetian blinds

Equipment

computer
printer
scanner
cell phone
photocopier
fax (machine)
digital camera
calculator
shredder
electric pencil sharpener
3-hole electric punch
postage machine
(conference) telephone

Other

bulletin/message board
flipchart
safe
cash box
vending machine
air conditioning

fire-safety equipment
sprinkler system
fire escape

thermometer

Internet access, e-mail
software

UNIT Giving Information at Work

7

Making inquiries and responding by giving information, delaying and referring.

Activity 1

Business greetings

Do you give information at work? How do you normally give this information?

in person?

by telephone?

in writing - memo, letter, e-mail, ...?

Now read the business greetings below. Decide if they can be used on the phone, in person or in both situations. Put a check in the appropriate box(es).

BUSINESS GREETINGS

on the phone in person

1. Good morning*. Human Resources, Mike Roberts speaking.

--	--

2. Yes, sir. May I help you?

--	--

3. Can I help you with anything, madam?

--	--

4. Allan Smith here. Can I help you?

--	--

5. Printing department.

--	--

6. Yes, Mrs. Jacobs, what can I do for you?

--	--

7. Is there anything I can do for you, sir?

--	--

8. Suzanne Carrier, good afternoon.

--	--

* To indicate that the person answering is bilingual, many offices suggest that you answer "Bonjour, Human Resources, Mike Roberts speaking" or "Good morning, Ressources humaines, Mike Roberts à l'appareil".

Activity 2

Requests for information

Think of specific examples of requests for information that you receive at work. Write them in the chart below.

People who ask you for information:	What information do they ask for?
The public	
People from other divisions, branches, departments	
Your superiors	
Colleagues	

Activity 3

CLASS DISCUSSION

A. Lead-in

When people ask you for information at work, how do you respond?

- give the information?
- delay giving the information?
- ask someone to wait?
- promise to call back?
- refer the people to someone or somewhere else?

B. Responding to requests for information

Read the situation:

**Bob wants to take a two-week holiday soon. He's thinking of going south.
He calls Sun Travel to get some information.**

Now listen to the tape or CD-ROM and fill in the chart.

Question	Bob wants information about:	How does the travel agent respond?
1		
2		
3		
4		

Activity 4
Giving information
PAIR WORK

Role play the situations.

S2 - p. 96

When you **ASK** for information, write the information your partner gives on your card.

S1

SITUATION 1

On the phone

You would like a list of all the federal members of Parliament.

Call the government information number and ask where you can get one.

Your partner begins.

SITUATION 2

On the phone

Call Environment Canada to order a copy of "The Canadian Weather Trivia Calendar".

Ask about a bilingual version.

Your partner begins.

S1

SITUATION 3**On the phone**

You work for staff training.

You receive a call.

Your section offers courses in various areas, including:

- auditing
- informatics
- management

A calendar describing all the courses is available.

Ask for the caller's address.

You begin.

SITUATION 4**On the phone**

You are in charge of appeals.

You receive a call.

Appeals dealing with job appointments must be made in writing and must include:

- the grounds for your appeal
- the appointment that you are appealing
- the name of your section
- your name and address

You begin.

Now change partners.

S1

SITUATION 5

On the phone

Call the National Parks Division for information about wilderness camping.

You are especially interested in camping in northern Ontario.

Your partner begins.

SITUATION 6

In person

You have lost your work identification card.

Ask a clerk in Administration Services about getting a new one.

Your partner begins.

S1

SITUATION 7**On the phone**

You work for human resources in employment insurance (EI).

You receive a call.

- people on EI who are leaving the province or country for any period of time for whatever reason must notify their local employment insurance office
- payments are suspended during the absence
- you must reapply for benefits upon your return

You begin.

SITUATION 8**On the phone**

You work with Morris and Danson in the personnel office.

Someone calls you about a job application that was sent in.

- application was received
- there will most likely be some job openings in the informatics section within a month or two
- no information yet re when interviews will take place

Your begin.

S2

SITUATION 1

On the phone

You work on the government's information line.

You receive a call.

- list of federal member of parliament available from:
 - House of Commons
Administrative Office
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A9
 - Telephone: (613)996-0485
 - www.parl.gc.ca/common/SenatorsMembers_house

You begin.

SITUATION 2

On the phone

You work for Environment Canada.

You receive a call.

- the item can be ordered from
 - Canadian Government Publishing
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0S9
 - publications.communication.gc.ca/pubindex-e.html
- available in English or French, there is no bilingual version
- price: \$15.95 plus \$1.95 shipping and handling charge
- Visa, MasterCard accepted (e-mail orders), or cheque (mail orders)
 - cheques should be made out to the Receiver General for Canada

You begin.

S2

SITUATION 3**On the phone**

You are a manager. Call staff training to get information for employees.

Ask about:

- courses in general
- informatics

Your partner begins.

SITUATION 4**On the phone**

Someone in your section has just been given the promotion that you had expected to get.

You want to appeal the appointment.

Get in touch with the person in charge of appeals re the procedure.

Your partner begins.

Now change partners.

S2

SITUATION 5

On the phone

You are an information officer for National Parks Division.

You receive a call.

- pamphlets on wilderness camping are available
- no national parks in norther Ontario, only provincial ones
- information on provincial parks available from:
 - Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources

You begin.

SITUATION 6

In person

You are a clerk in Administrative Services.

An employee from your section comes to you with a problem.

- procedure for replacement of a lost ID card:
 - fill out Renewal - Lost Card form
 - have your picture taken - Room 1333, Floor 13
- card will be sent to your office in a few days

You begin.

S2

SITUATION 7**On the phone**

You are collecting employment insurance benefits.

You are thinking of leaving the country for a month to look for a job.

You want to continue receiving your benefits.

Call your local employment counsellor to ask what to do.

Your partner begins.

SITUATION 8**On the phone**

You have been looking for a job.

Call Morris and Danson re an application you sent to them.

Find out if there are any openings in informatics. Ask when interviews will take place.

Your partner begins.

GETTING THE ROLE PLAY READY**1. Preparing the role cards**

Choose three situations from your list and fill in a role card for each one.

ROLE CARDS

SITUATION 1	
Person who asks you for information	<hr/>
How the request is made (in person or by phone)	<hr/>
Kinds of information the person asks for	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Other details about the situation	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

SITUATION 2	
Person who asks you for information	<hr/>
How the request is made (in person or by phone)	<hr/>
Kinds of information the person asks for	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Other details about the situation	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

SITUATION 3

**Person who asks you for
information**

**How the request is made
(in person or by phone)**

**Kinds of information the
person asks for**

**Other details about the
situation**

2. Discussing the situations

PAIR WORK

- S1** - You will role play yourself giving information on the job.
- Choose one of your situations.
 - Give your partner a copy of your role card.
 - Explain the situation on the role card to your partner.
 - Discuss the attitude of the speakers.
e.g. Are they polite, rude, timid, aggressive, helpful, impatient, co-operative, unreasonable, understanding, condescending, calm, upset,...?

- S2** - You will play the role of the person requesting information.

As you discuss your partner's situation, add notes to the role card that your partner gave to you.

To make the conversation more interesting, try to think of some complications to add to the role you have been assigned.

- e.g. ask for further details
complain
ask for alternatives
pretend not to understand
show an additional attitude not discussed

Now switch roles.

DOING THE ROLE PLAYS

PAIR WORK

After discussing each situation, role play it with a partner.

Language Summary

BUSINESS GREETINGS

On the phone

Jim Meyers, **good morning.**

Customer Service, **good afternoon.** Mike Lang **speaking.**

Joanne Murray **here.**

Stockroom, **can I help you?**

Accounting Department.

In person

Yes, madam. What can I do for you?

Good afternoon, sir. Can I be of any help?

Can I help you with anything/something?

Is there anything I can do for you?

GIVING INFORMATION

According to the new regulations, you have to sign it in triplicate.

As far as I know, you have nothing to worry about.
From what I can see, there is nothing really wrong.

Our records shown that exports were up significantly last year.

The latest information I have is that the plane landed safely.

DELAYING GIVING INFORMATION

Asking someone to wait on the telephone

One moment, please.	I'll just get your file.
Just a moment, please.	
Excuse me for a minute.	

If you'll (just) hold the line a minute/moment, I'll check that out.

Informal

Hold on a moment/minute/second. I'll see if the figures have come in yet.
Hang on a second. I'll pull the file.

Could/Can you hold/ hang on a moment/ mo/sec? I'll get Josh; he knows.

Promising to call back

Give me your name and number and I'll look up the information
and call you (right) back.

I'll have to	check on that and get back to you.
Maybe I could	
I think I'd better	

I don't have the information right now, but I'll try and find it **and call you**
back today.

I'll get back to you ASAP*.

Could I call you back on that?

* as soon as possible

REFERRING

Giving specific information

You'll have to go to | **Head Office for that information.**
You'll need/have to call

You can get that information from the Accounting Department.

Go to the fifth floor. **Someone there (at reception) will look after you.**
Go to Personnel and ask for Ms. Singh.

See Mr. Fakhar. **He'll be able to give you all the information you need.**
I'll give you Angela's number. **She'd know that (for sure).**
Brenda Carpenter **can help you with that.**
Brent's **the one to see for that.**

Suggesting possible help

You might be able to get some information from Library Service.

You could always check with Johanna. **She might know.**
You might try our suburban office.

Have you tried | **the main office?**
Why don't you try

The best thing to do might be to call Steve Molnar.

Have you been to our other location? **I can call and see if** they know/ have it?



UNIT *Describing Things at Work*

8

Describing objects in
the workplace.

Activity 1

Language for describing things at work

A. You will hear conversations in which objects in the workplace are described.



For each conversation:

Listen to the tape or CD-ROM and write down what the object is in the chart.
Listen again and write down the features that are described in the appropriate
spaces in the chart.

Conversation	1	2	3	4	5
Object					
Size					
Colour					
Composition					
Function					
Brand					
Other Features					

B. Fill in the blanks as you listen to the conversations below.

CONVERSATION 1

A: Do you have the metal ones that flip open?

B: You mean the ones _____ on the side that slides up and down to get the right page?

A: Yeah, those are the ones. They're really _____ phone numbers quickly.

B: Yeah, I think I have a couple of those left someplace.

CONVERSATION 2

A: I need the business kind with a window to show the address. _____ you get bills in.

B: What size do you want?

A: _____ would be fine.

B: White or brown?

A: White ones if you have them.

CONVERSATION 3

A: Is this the one you're looking for?

B: No, I need the heavy-duty one with the three holes for punching documents. You know, the one that's _____ steel. _____ a silver knob _____ push down on.

CONVERSATION 4

A: Did you finally find one that you like?

B: Yes. I got one at Tubular Design, you know that new office furniture store downtown. It's really nice...all black leather _____ and padded arms. It's the swivel type and it's on casters.

CONVERSATION 5

A: Are you ordering another one?

B: Yeah, but this time I'm ordering an electric one. They're so much _____

_____.

A: Really. I didn't know they made electric ones.

B: Yeah, it can take up to half an inch of paper. OfficeTech makes them. They're _____

_____ stapling large booklets.

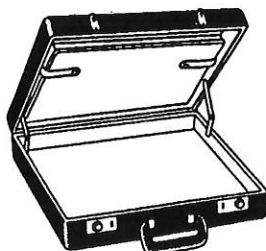
Activity 2**Preparing descriptions**

A. Below are some objects you are likely to find in an office.

For each number:

Describe the object, referring to the picture and the cues.
Write the description in the space provided.

1.

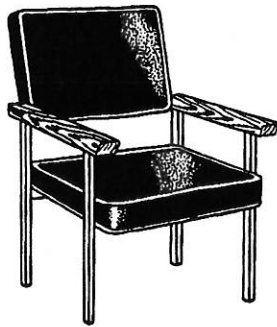


Cues:

- fibreglass body
- covered with black leather
- two locks
- tan leather lining
- compartments for storing files and things
- handle - leather

briefcase

2.



armchair

Cues:

- seat and back - black vinyl
- legs - chrome
- arms - rosewood

3.

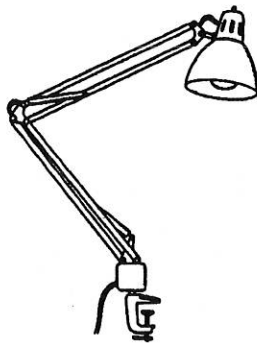


desk-top calculator

Cues:

- electric
- roll of paper to print out calculations
- made by Benson

4.

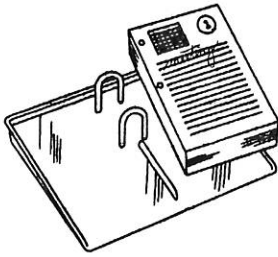


desk lamp

Cues:

- clamp-on type
- adjustable arm
- good for doing detailed work

5.

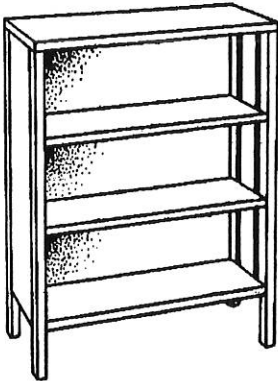


desk calendar

Cues:

- used for writing down appointments
- sheet for every day
- two rings to hold pages in place

6.



bookcase

Cues:

- made of wood
- about four feet / one and a quarter metres high
- two adjustable shelves
- no doors

B. Now practise these descriptions with a partner.**PAIR WORK**

Activity 3

Describing things at the office

PAIR WORK

Role play the situations.

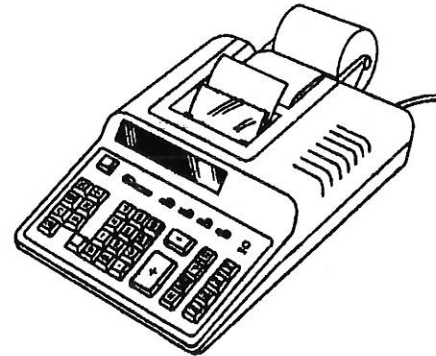
S1 - p. 114

S2 - p. 116

SITUATION 1

You want a better calculator.

Call the storeroom clerk to ask for a calculator like the one on the right. **Your partner begins.**

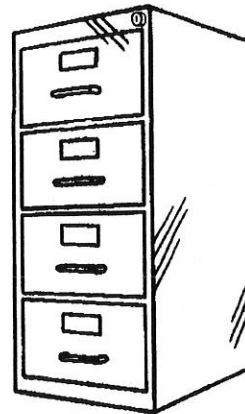


- desk-top calculator
- with paper tape

SITUATION 2

You're in charge of the office furniture. An employee phones you asking for a filing cabinet.

You only have this type.
You begin.



- four drawers
- legal-size
- with a lock

S1

SITUATION 3

You come back from vacation to find your desk chair has disappeared.

You're trying to find out if someone has seen it.

Call a colleague. **You begin.**



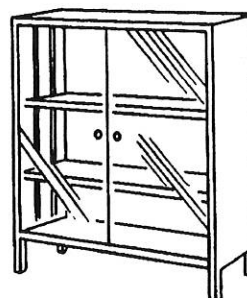
- black fabric
- walnut arms
- swivel chair
- casters

SITUATION 4

You find the bookcase on the right very practical. You would like one just like it.

Phone the person in charge of office furniture and ask if they are still available.

Your partner begins.



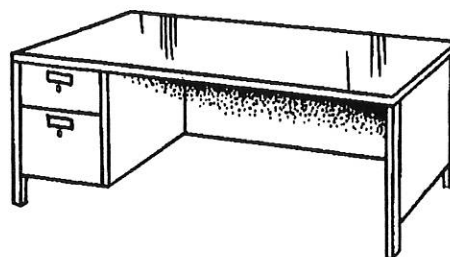
- made of wood
- two adjustable shelves
- glass doors

SITUATION 5

You're in charge of office furniture.

You receive a call about an item.

It's not available. Suggest the item on the right. **You begin.**



- black/brass/steel metal frame
- grey/black/blue/beige panels
- oak/walnut/mahogany top
- two lockable drawers left side

S2

SITUATION 1

You're a storeroom clerk.

An employee phones you for an item
It's out of stock.

Suggest this item as an alternative.
You begin.



- pocket size
- solar

SITUATION 2

You want a filing cabinet like
the one on the right.

Call the person in charge of
office furniture.
Your partner begins.



- two drawers
- wide
- low
- with a lock

SITUATION 3

A colleague has misplaced her or his chair.

You found an extra one in your office.

Describe it to her/him.
Your partner begins.



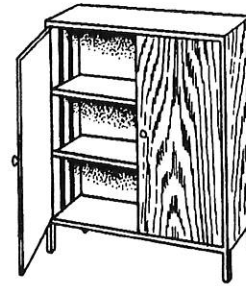
- black vinyl
- swivel
- casters
- no arms

S2

SITUATION 4

You're in charge of office furniture.

You receive a call about an item.
It's out of stock. You can offer
this item in its place. **You begin.**

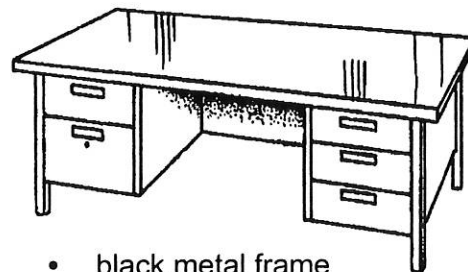


- made of wood
- two adjustable shelves
- wood doors, brass knobs
- no lock

SITUATION 5

You saw this desk in a colleague's office.

Call the person in charge of office furniture
to see if they are still available.
Your partner begins.



- black metal frame
- grey or black top
- drawers on both sides
- with a lock for file drawer

Activity 4
Things in the school

Your teacher will ask you to describe things in your classroom or around the school, for example:

- furniture
- decor
- office equipment
- forms you fill out

Activity 5
Things in your work area

A. Prepare your descriptions

To prepare for this activity, list six items there are in your work area and write down their features in point form. You will use this information in the exercise in **Part B**. Do not tell anyone in the class what items you have chosen.

Item	Features
1. _____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____
2. _____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____

3.

4.

5.

6.

B. Guess the item**PAIR WORK**

Use the notes you prepared in **Part A** to practise describing items to each other.

S1 - Describe an item on you sheet without mentioning its name.

S2 - Try to guess the item.

Take turns doing this until all the items on your list have been described.

Activity 6**PAIR WORK****Describing things at your workplace**

Role play the situations.

For those situations where you give a description, imagine an object in your own workplace.

- 1 -

S1	S2
A colleague just got a new phone in his/her office. Ask for a description of it, and then compare it to yours. Your partner begins.	You just got a new phone in your office. tell a colleague. You begin.

- 2 -

S1	S2
You go to the doctor's because your eyes have been unusually sore lately. Your partner begins.	You are a doctor. A patient comes to see you about sore eyes. Ask for a description of the lighting at work and at home. You begin.

- 3 -

S1	S2
Your manager has asked you to get information about the types of desks and chairs everyone on staff has. Ask a colleague for this information. You begin.	Someone comes to see you for some information about your office furniture. Your partner begins.

- 4 -

S1	S2
<p>You notice that the potted plant that was next to your desk is missing. You go to see the building maintenance people to find out what happened to it. Your partner begins.</p>	<p>You work for building maintenance. Someone comes to your office to ask about a missing item. Ask for a description of it. You begin.</p>

- 5 -

S1	S2
<p>The social committee where you work bought a gift for a co-worker who is leaving. You are curious to know what they got. Ask a member of the committee for a description. You begin.</p>	<p>You are a member of the social committee where you work. You bought a briefcase recently for someone who is leaving. One of your co-workers asks you about it. Your partner begins.</p>

- 6 -

S1	S2
<p>You are a security officer in an office building. Someone lost an item. Ask for a description of it. Your partner begins.</p>	<p>You have lost your wallet/purse. You go to the security officer to ask about it. You begin.</p>

Language Summary

DESCRIBING THINGS

Size

About four **by** nine would be fine.

Around ten centimetres / four inches **wide** and (about) this **long**.

It's (really) **quite** big.

It's rather small.

tiny

medium-sized

enormous

huge

humongous

Colour

I'd like **the yellow ones**.

It's bluish.

It's reddish brown.

I like **the grey-coloured ones**.

silver

gold

navy

rust

beige

pink

lime

Shape

I need **a round*** one.

I need **some square*** ones.

It's star-shaped**.

It's shaped like a saucer**.

The box above is (almost) square, **with** rounded corners.

round ● ○ ○


oval ◐ ○ ○

square ■ □

rectangular ▮

oblong ▮

triangular ▲ ▽

cylindrical 

heart ♥ ♡

diamond ◇ ◆

crescent ☾ ☽

star ☆ ★

* Adjective

** Noun

Composition

It's made (out) of clear plastic.
It's painted wood **with** a frosted glass door.
It's corrugated cardboard.
They're made from recycled tires.

metal
leather
fabric- cotton
silk
polyester
wool
plaster
brick
cement
stone
rubber
paper

Function

They're good for sketching.
It's great for drawing.
They're used for painting.

We use this to clean the furniture.

Brand

It comes from Tubular Design.
OfficeTech makes them.
It's a Brown-Wesler.

Other features

It's got a knob that you turn.
There's a window to show the address.
It's the swivel kind/type.
It's green with a push-button dial.
It can take about five centimetres of paper.
It comes with a (built-in) flash.
It's handy for finding phone numbers quickly.

OTHER WAYS OF DESCRIBING THINGS

Comparisons

I need some envelopes **like** the ones you gave me yesterday.

The Anik E-1 satellite **looks something like** a(n open) soup can. (See p.126)

They're **bigger than** the notebooks we usually get.

I need the **biggest** ones you can find.

This kind is **easier to** use.

When we do not know a precise term or description, we often use expressions such as the ones below.

It has **a kind of** button that you push.

It's got **kind of a** knob that you turn.

It's **sort of** beige.

It's **kind of** rough.

It's **kind of a** burning feeling.

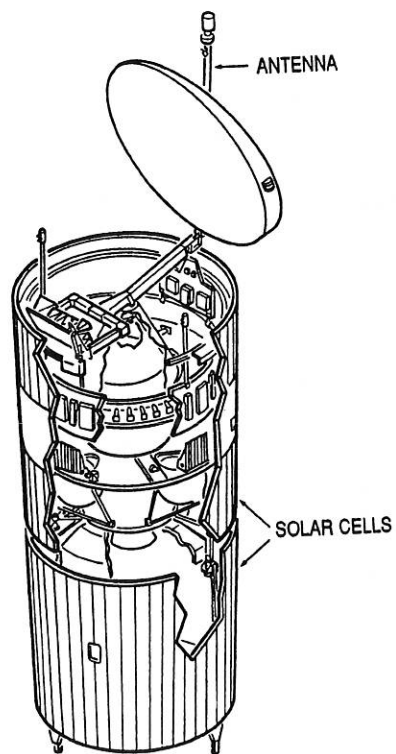
It's **sort of a** strange brown.

It has a

It's got a

thing
thingy
thingamabob
thingamajig
doohickey
doodad
gizmo

that you turn.



Anik E-1



Soup can with the lid open

UNIT *Reaching a Consensus*

9

Making suggestions and giving opinions.

Activity 1

CLASS DISCUSSION

The consultation process at your workplace

Do you ever have to make decisions at work that effect others?

Are you encouraged to consult other employees when making decisions?
Give a few examples.

Do your supervisors consult you when making decisions that affect you?
Give some examples.

Activity 2



To practise listening to people making suggestions and responding

A. Read the SITUATION:

**There's a problem with absenteeism in the accounting department.
Three supervisors have a meeting to discuss possible solutions.**

You will hear the part of the meeting in which the supervisors present their suggestions.

Listen to the tape or CD-ROM and write down each speaker's suggestion in the chart below.



Speaker	Suggestions
A	
B	
C	

CLASS DISCUSSION

B. Which suggestion do you agree with?

Which solution do you think the speakers will agree on?

C. What's the consensus?



You will now hear the end of the supervisor's meeting where they reach a consensus as to what to do about the problem of absenteeism.

What do the supervisors agree to do about the problem?

Activity 3

Reaching a consensus

To practise making suggestions and responding

In **Part A**, you will prepare role cards. In **Part B**, you will use these cards to make suggestions and try to reach a consensus.

A. Preparing the role cards

For each role card:

Read the situation.

Write your opinions, ideas and suggestions in point form on the card.

SITUATION 1

You and your colleagues just won \$2000 in the lottery.
Decide what to do with the money.

SITUATION 2

Things are being stolen from employees in your office.
Decide what to do about the situation.

SITUATION 3

A few people are not respecting the no-smoking policy in
front of the main entrance. Most smokers do use the
designated areas. Decide on what to do about the problem.

SITUATION 4

Employees in your section are showing signs of burnout. The project is not finished. Decide on a plan to improve morale.

B. Doing the role plays**GROUP WORK / PAIR WORK**

For each role card in **Part A**:

Role play the situation with your partner or group.

Try to come to an agreement on what to do; i.e. reach a consensus.

Activity 4**GROUP WORK****Who's the best person for the job?**

To practice expressing opinions

Read the ad.

DORVAL AIRPORT**BILINGUAL TELLERS**

Responsible, sales-minded persons with aptitude for figures to work rotating shifts. Must be bondable. Own transportation required. Experience in handling cash a definite asset. Please call Mr. Donnelly at the Currency Exchange main office 555-636-0055.

Listen to the three conversations that Ted Donnelly has about different applicants for the job and fill in the chart.

	Candidate 1	Candidate 2	Candidate 3
Name			
Experience			
Good with figures	✓	✓	✓
Own transportation			
Bondable	✓	✓	✓
Speaks French			
Will work shifts	✓	✓	
Other information			

Using the information that you wrote in the chart, decide on which candidate is best suited for the job.

Activity 5

Wilderness camping

GROUP WORK

A. Read the SITUATION:

It's mid-August. You and some friends are on a wilderness camping expedition. A member of the group has been injured and someone has to go get help at the nearest ranger station, which is an overnight hike away — about seven hours. The person has to travel light, so he or she can only take a limited number of items.

As a group:

Go through the list of items below and discuss each one to determine if it's absolutely essential.

Agree on **12 items** of the 30 listed that the person should take. Check them off below.

BACKPACKER'S CHECKLIST

<input type="checkbox"/>	Stove and fuel	<input type="checkbox"/>	Extra socks
<input type="checkbox"/>	First-aid kit	<input type="checkbox"/>	Insect repellent
<input type="checkbox"/>	Fishing hooks and light line	<input type="checkbox"/>	Water purification tablets
<input type="checkbox"/>	Dehydrated food	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lightweight tarpaulin
<input type="checkbox"/>	Cooking utensils	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sleeping bag
<input type="checkbox"/>	High-energy snack packs	<input type="checkbox"/>	Topographical map
<input type="checkbox"/>	30-foot nylon cord	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poncho
<input type="checkbox"/>	Candles	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hat
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matches in waterproof container	<input type="checkbox"/>	Foam pad
<input type="checkbox"/>	Eating utensils	<input type="checkbox"/>	Flashlight and batteries
<input type="checkbox"/>	Water filter	<input type="checkbox"/>	Knife
<input type="checkbox"/>	Toothbrush	<input type="checkbox"/>	Small axe
<input type="checkbox"/>	Lightweight warm jacket	<input type="checkbox"/>	Toilet paper
<input type="checkbox"/>	Compass	<input type="checkbox"/>	Water bag
<input type="checkbox"/>	Tent	<input type="checkbox"/>	I.D.

CLASS DISCUSSION

B. Compare your group's list with that of the other groups in the class.

Think of two or three situations at work that require "problem-solving". List them in point form.
e.g. setting up a schedule for shared work

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is no handwriting or other markings on the paper.

GETTING READY TO ROLE PLAY

1. Preparing the role cards

Choose your favourite situation from your list and fill in the role card below.

ROLE CARD

The problem:

Persons involved

Their suggestions

1.

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2.

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3.

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4.

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The solution agreed on

2. Discussing the situations

GROUP WORK

S1- You will role play yourself in the problem-solving situation.

- Give the other members of your group a copy of your role card.
- Explain the situation on the role card to the members of your group.
- Assign roles and discuss the attitudes of each of the speakers.

e.g. Are they polite, rude, timid, aggressive, helpful, impatient, co-operative, unreasonable, understanding, condescending, calm, upset,...?

S2, S3,... - You will play the roles of the other people involved.

As you discuss the situation, add notes to the role card.

To make the conversation more interesting, think of some complications to add to the role you have been assigned.

e.g. ask for further details
complain
ask for alternatives
pretend not to understand
ask for clarification

DOING THE ROLE PLAYS

GROUP WORK

After discussing each situation, role play it with your group.

Language Summary

MAKING SUGGESTIONS	AGREEING	DISAGREEING
<p>Since this concerns everyone, maybe we could set up a committee.</p> <p>This is important, I suggest we take a vote.</p> <p>I say we should reprimand them.</p> <p>In my opinion we ought to play tough.</p> <p>If you want my opinion, we (should) act.</p> <p>If you ask me, I think we (should) move on.</p> <p>Let's (just) speak to them.</p> <p>Why not get their input first?</p> <p>Why don't we have a meeting?</p> <p>What if we met each person individually?</p> <p>Since this is an important issue, it might be a good idea to send out a memo.</p>	<p>OK./Right. Good idea. I agree with you.</p> <p>That's what I think (too). I was thinking the same thing.</p> <p>That sounds like a good idea.</p> <p>I'd be in favour of that. I'm for that. I could/would'd go for that.</p> <p>That makes sense.</p>	<div>When we disagree with a suggestion, we often suggest an alternative.</div> <p>I'm not sure that's a good idea. What about talking to the people involved?</p> <p>I don't think that would work. It might be better to (just) wait and see.</p> <p>Wouldn't it be better (for us) to adopt flexible work hours? I don't know (about that), maybe we should go for flexible hours instead.</p> <p>Mmm, I don't know. Calling a meeting might work better. It might make more sense to call a meeting.</p> <p>I disagree. I'd rather talk to someone.</p>

EXPRESSING OPINIONS

AGREEING

DISAGREEING

Frankly, I think we should hire Caroline.
Personally, I'd say we send Frank.

I agree (with you).
I couldn't agree with you more.

I disagree.
I don't agree with you.

In my opinion, Rafe is the best for the job.
If you ask me, Luong is the one.
As far as I'm concerned, Matt's it.
If you want my opinion, I'd go for Joe.

That's exactly what I think.

I'm not so sure.

My sentiments exactly.

I wouldn't say that.