

CONVERSATION SKILLS

- **STARTING A CONVERSATION**
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- **Greetings:**
- Hello/ Hi.
- Good morning/afternoon/evening.
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- ***Listening for a response:***
- Hello/ Hi.
- Good morning/afternoon/evening.
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- **Asking how the person is:**
- How are you?
- How are you doing?
- How are things?
- How have you been?
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- **Listening for a response:**
- (I'm) Fine. How are you?
- Not bad. And you?
- Busy, but okay.
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- Note:
- * *When English is spoken, “Good” is often dropped, so you might hear someone greeting you with just “Morning” and you could respond in the same way with “Morning” or just “Fine” in response to “How are you?” Generally we tend to be less formal when we speak as compared to writing.*

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- **If you know the person but**
- **haven't met for some time, say:**
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- It's been a long time...
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- **Listening for a response:**
- Yes, it has.
- Right. Since last July.

- ***INTRODUCING AND IDENTIFYING YOURSELF***
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- *After greeting someone you don't know, you may want to introduce yourself.*
- ***Introducing yourself:***
- *(My name's) Imran.*
- *(I'm) Jenny Ding.*
- *Please call me JD.*
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- ***Listening for a response:***

- *Hello. My name's Shazi.*

- *Nice to meet you, (Izhar). I'm Shazi.*

- *It's a pleasure to meet you (Ms Ling). My name's Bibo.*

- *How do you do Jash? I'm Yob.*

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- ***Giving a basic fact about yourself:***

- *I'm Imran's coursemate.*

- *Imran and I used to study in the same school.*

- *I'm from Johor.*

- ***INTRODUCING OTHERS***
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- **Saying you'd like to make an introduction:**
- Ahmad, there's someone I'd like you to meet.
- Ahmad, let me introduce you to a friend of mine.
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- **Following by the introduction:**
- Yang Arif, this is my colleague En.Husin. Husin, this is Yang Arif Dato'....
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- **Listening for a response:**
- Nice to meet you.
- Pleased to meet you.
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- **Say something about the following:**
- **a. your relationship to the person:**
- Alif and I are staying in the same area.
- I know Alif from school.
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- **b. an interesting fact about the person:**
- Alif is from UK – Ulu Kelang.
- Tasha speaks Japanese.
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- ***Role play introducing your friend to another person whom you know.***
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- **MAINTAINING A CONVERSATION**
- In a conversation, both speakers need to take responsibility for keeping the communication going. Several strategies to encourage conversation include:
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- **a. Asking questions**
- Questions are useful both in getting information and involving others in a conversation. To use questions more effectively, you may find it helpful to understand the difference between closed and open questions.
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- *Examples:*
- Do you like Sarsi? (Closed question)
- What do you think of the English course? (Open question)
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- **Using a short response to show that you are listening**

- I see.
- Of course.
- Really?
- Oh?
- Yes.
- Mmmmm

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- **Repeating a key word of phrase**

- A: The class has been postponed.
- B: *Postponed?*

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- A: En Husni is on leave.
- B: On leave?

- **Making small talk**
- Small talk helps to establish a friendly atmosphere and keeps relations smooth. Small talk could include casual and light everyday topics.
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- **Disclosing personal information**
- I've been working here since 1988.
- All my siblings are already working.
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- ***Using nonverbal communication***
- Nodding
- Smiling
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- **Using an auxiliary to make a question**

- Rina: Our boss wants the report next week.

- Lindy: He does?

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- Rina: I was on medical leave last Friday.

- Lindy: You were?

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- **Asking follow-up information questions**

- Zaini: I saw a terrible accident this morning.

- Chen: Accident? Where did it happen?

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- ✍ **Activity 2**

- ***Work with a partner. The following are questions that people often ask each other in social settings. Identify each as O (open) or C (closed).***

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- 1. _____ Where are you from?
- 2. _____ When did you arrive here?
- 3. _____ Were you drafted for National Service?
- 4. _____ What do you normally do during your free time?
- 5. _____ What are some places you have visited so far?
- 6. _____ What games do you play?
- 7. _____ Is that a genuine ESPRIT?
- 8. _____ Do you think class will be cancelled tomorrow?
- 9. _____ Why are there so many students at Gate 1?
- 10. _____ When is the Hari Raya break?

Appropriate and Inappropriate Questions

1. _____ How old are you?
2. _____ Was UPM your first choice?
3. _____ How do you move around campus?
4. _____ How much did your cell phone cost?
5. _____ Do you have a girlfriend/boyfriend?
6. _____ Which college are you staying at?
7. _____ What do you think of The Gardens at MidValley?
8. _____ How many people are there in your family?
9. _____ How much money do you get from your parents?
10. _____ That's a nice watch. Is it genuine?

- **CLOSING A CONVERSATION**

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- In many situations, your conversation will end naturally – when the bus arrives or when the meeting starts. You can end very simply by saying:

- *Oh, here comes my bus.*

- *Looks like the meeting is going to start.*

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- In other situations without a natural closing, you may have to think more carefully about ending a conversation as it's considered impolite to suddenly say goodbye and walk away. Politely ending a conversation involves several steps.

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- The stages of ending a conversation are:
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- **Pre-closing signal**
- Oh, look at the time.
- It's getting late.
- I must be going now.
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- **Reason for ending the conversation**
- I have a meeting with my supervisor at two.
- I have lots of assignments to complete.
- I must say hello to my lecturer over there.

- **Showing appreciation**

- I really enjoyed talking to you.
- It's been really wonderful meeting you.
- I've learnt so much about Spanish customs in the few minutes we've chatted.
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- **Showing interest to meet up again**

- We must meet again to catch up with each other.
- I'm free on Fridays.
- Perhaps we could catch a movie together one of these days.
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- **Actual goodbye and taking leave**

- See you again. Have a nice day.
- So long. Have a safe journey. Drive carefully.
- Bye. Have a good trip back.
- Good night.
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- In the following dialogue, the speakers are ending the conversation.
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- Amaan: Oh my, look at the time! (**Pre-closing signal**) I have a meeting with my supervisor at two. (**Reason for ending the conversation**)
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- Maya: And I have to send this report to the Dean's office.
- (**Reason for ending the conversation**)
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- Amaan: It's been really nice talking to you.
- (**Showing appreciation**)
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- Maya: Yes, we must meet again to catch up with each other. (**Showing interest to meet up again**)
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- Amaan: I'm usually free Friday mornings. Give me a call then. (**Showing interest to meet up again**)
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- Maya: All right. I will.
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- Amaan: See you then. Goodbye. (**Actual
goodbye and taking leave**)
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- Maya: Bye.

- ***You meet a former course mate at Old Town Café. After a chat, it's time to leave. Role- play the part when you say goodbye.***

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- A: _____
- (Give a pre-closing signal and a reason for leaving)

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- B: _____
- (Give an appropriate response or a reason for leaving)

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- A: _____
- (Show appreciation)

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- B: _____
- (Give an appropriate response and show interest to meet up again)

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- A: _____
- (Show appreciation)
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- B: _____
- (Actual goodbye and taking leave)
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- A: _____
- (Actual goodbye and taking leave)

- ***Find a partner and role play the following situations.***
- **Situation 1**
- Speaker A
- You need to make multiple copies of an article for your boss, but you do not know which photocopying shop offers the best deal. Ask your friend to recommend a good shop and directions to get there.
- Speaker B
- Your friend wants to make multiple copies of an article. Recommend a shop that you frequent and give directions to get there.

- **Situation 2**
- Speaker A
- You wish to go shopping at KLCC this Sunday, but you do not want to go alone. Ask your friend to accompany you.
- Speaker B
- You have made plans to meet a friend at MID VALLEY this Sunday. A friend invites you to go shopping with him/her at KLCC. Decline the offer.

- **Situation 3**
- Speaker A
- You are currently at Parcel C bus stop. You want to go to the swimming pool in Precinct 8 for a swim, but you do not know its location and how to get there. Ask a lady at the bus stop about the location and make small talk with him/ her.
- Speaker B
- You are the lady at the bus stop