

Business English- Starting Presentations Politeness Competition Game

Work in twos or threes. Choose one of the phrases below and take turns making it more and more formal/ polite, until you both can't take it any further. Then do the same with other phrases.

Getting people's attention/ Starting the introduction/ The first few words before you really get started

1 *(cough cough cough/ tap tap tap). Quiet please./ Listen to my presentation*

Greeting

1 *Hiya!/ Wassup?/ Yo!/ Alright?/ How's it going boys and girls?/ Hey guys and gals!*

Showing awareness of the audience/ Connecting with the audience

1 *You all look really bored, so.../ You all look really tired, so.../ I'm sure you know absolutely nothing about my topic, so.../ Wow! Ten people!/ Good to see all the usual faces!*

Giving your name

1 *(just say your first name, pointing to your chest with both thumbs)/ You all know me, right?*

Giving other personal information (and linking it to the topic)

1 *I already told some of you that I... but you probably don't remember that.*

Giving the topic

1 *This is the topic (pointing at the screen).*

Explaining your aim

1 *What the hell could I possibly hope to achieve by presenting this? Well,.../ Why would I choose such an idiotic topic? Well, my goal is...*

Hooking the audience

1 *Hands up if you own fewer than five pairs of underpants./ It's a bit of a dirty joke, but.../ I bet you ten dollars you can't guess.../ Look at this number. Amazing, right?/*

Explaining the structure (= organisation) of the presentation

1 *I'll cover this, this and this./ After all that boring stuff, I'll.../ Then at last I'll...*

Explaining your policy on asking questions

1 *Please don't interrupt.*

Ending the introduction and moving onto the body of the presentation

1 *Right! Everything clear? So, let's go!/ First, look at this.*

Try to put the lines below into order by formality by putting numbers next to them, starting with "1" for the very informal one that was above. To start with, try to do it without looking above.

Getting people's attention/ Starting the introduction/ The first few words before you really get started

- ✧ *(cough cough cough/ tap tap tap)*. Quiet please./ Listen to my presentation
- ✧ I'd like to get started, if I may.
- ✧ If everyone is ready, I'd like to get started, if at all possible.
- ✧ Okay. Can I have your attention, please?
- ✧ Please listen to my presentation.
- ✧ Right. Can I have your attention?
- ✧ So. Let's make a start./ Can I start?
- ✧ Well then. Let's make a start, shall we?/ Can we get started?

Greeting

- ✧ A very good morning to you one and all./ Greetings to you all.
- ✧ Good morning/ afternoon/ evening (everyone).
- ✧ Good morning/ afternoon/ evening ladies and gentlemen.
- ✧ Good morning/ afternoon/ evening ladies and gents.
- ✧ Hello everyone
- ✧ Hi everyone
- ✧ Hi/ Hi guys
- ✧ Hiya!/ Wassup?/ Yo!/ Alright?/ How's it going boys and girls?/ Hey guys and gals!

Showing awareness of the audience/ Connecting with the audience

- ✧ I'm flattered that you would come here on such a nice sunny day./ I'm honoured that so many people have come to my presentation today.
- ✧ I'm sure you are all a little sleepy after lunch, but.../ I know some of you have heard my presentation before, but.../ I guess you are probably thinking about lunch, so...
- ✧ It's nice to see so many familiar faces./ Thank you so much for taking to time to come to my presentation.
- ✧ You all look really bored, so.../ You all look really tired, so.../ I'm sure you know absolutely nothing about my topic, so.../ Wow! Ten people!/ Good to see all the usual faces!

Giving your name

- ✧ *(just say your first name, pointing to your chest with both thumbs)*/ You all know me, right?
- ✧ *(just say your first name, pointing to your chest with the fingers of an open hand)*
- ✧ As some of you already know, my name is (name)./ I think you all know my face but perhaps not my name, which is.../ I think most of you know me, but I'll start by introducing myself anyway.
- ✧ As you should know, I'm (name)
- ✧ I'm (name).
- ✧ My name is (name).
- ✧ Please allow me to introduce myself./ I'll begin with a brief personal introduction.

Giving other personal information (and linking it to the topic)

- ✧ I already told some of you that I... but you probably don't remember that.
- ✧ I think you already know..., but you may not know that I.../ Today's topic is a good one for me because...
- ✧ You might not be aware of the fact that I...

Giving the topic

- ✧ As I think you are already aware, today my presentation topic is...
- ✧ I'm gonna chat about.../ I'm not sure if this is a good topic, but.../ The only thing I could think of to talk about is...
- ✧ I've been invited here today in order to share with you...
- ✧ This is the topic (pointing at the screen).
- ✧ Today's topic is.../ My presentation is about.../ The subject of this presentation is.../ I'm going to discuss...
- ✧ What I'd like to talk about today is.../ What I'd like to explain in my presentation is...

Explaining your aim

- ✧ After this presentation, I really hope most of you will.../ By presenting this, I hope I can convince you that...
- ✧ By the end of my presentation, I want to prove to you that.../ My goal is to change your mind about...
- ✧ To set out the goals of today's presentation,.../ My mission in presenting this to you is...
- ✧ What the hell could I possibly hope to achieve by presenting this? Well,.../ Why would I choose such an idiotic topic? Well, my goal is...
- ✧ Why would I choose such a strange topic? Well, my aim is to...

Hooking the audience

- ✧ Hands up if you own fewer than five pairs of underpants./ It's a bit of a dirty joke, but.../ I bet you ten dollars you can't guess.../ Look at this number. Amazing, right?/
- ✧ How many people here...?/ Have you ever wondered...?/ Did you know that...?/ ... once said.../ I can't overemphasize the importance of this topic...
- ✧ I'd like to commence with a quotation, if I may./ To pique your interest,.../ I'd like to begin with some data of particular interest, specifically...
- ✧ Just yesterday this topic was in the news because.../ I think this is an important topic because.../ There's an interesting quote on this subject, which is that.../ There's an amazing statistic that...
- ✧ Please raise your hand if.../ Few people know that...
- ✧ There is a famous joke on this topic which goes.../ ... said something funny about this... / Did you see yesterday in the news that...?/ Can you guess...?/ You won't believe what... said about this, which was...



Explaining the structure (= organisation) of the presentation

- ✧ Having finished that,.../ My presentation will conclude with...
- ✧ I'll cover this, this and this./ After all that boring stuff, I'll.../ Then at last I'll...
- ✧ I've divided my presentation into... parts./ First of all,.../ Second,.../ Then,...
- ✧ My presentation is divided into... parts./ Secondly,.../ After that section,...
- ✧ The presentation will commence with.../ Initially,.../ That will be followed by.../ In the penultimate part,...
- ✧ Topic one is.../ I'll finish up with...

Explaining your policy on asking questions

- ✧ If anything at all that I say isn't 100% clear, then please do not hesitate to interrupt my presentation and ask me for clarification.
- ✧ If anything isn't clear, it is of course okay to interrupt./ Please feel free to ask questions at any time.
- ✧ Please don't interrupt.
- ✧ Please leave questions until the end./ Ask me questions at the end.
- ✧ There will time for questions at the end./ There will be a Q&A session at the end.

Ending the introduction and moving onto the body of the presentation

- ✧ Right! Everything clear? So, let's go!/ First, look at this.
- ✧ Well then. If there are no questions at this stage, my presentation will commence with...
- ✧ Well, getting started with the first of those topics,.../ So, let's really get started with.../ If there are no questions so far, let's have a look at...

Suggested answers

Compare your ideas with the list below. Many other answers are possible, so please share any other things you said in the first stage with the class.

Getting people's attention/ Starting the introduction/ The first few words before you really get started

- 1 (cough cough cough/ tap tap tap). Quiet please./ Listen to my presentation
- 2 Please listen to my presentation.
- 3 Right. Can I have your attention?
- 4 Okay. Can I have your attention, please?
- 5 So. Let's make a start./ Can I start?
- 6 Well then. Let's make a start, shall we?/ Can we get started?
- 7 I'd like to get started, if I may.
- 8 If everyone is ready, I'd like to get started, if at all possible.

Greeting

- 1 Hiya!/ Wassup?/ Yo!/ Alright?/ How's it going boys and girls?/ Hey guys and gals!
- 2 Hi/ Hi guys
- 3 Hi everyone
- 4 Hello everyone
- 5 Good morning/ afternoon/ evening (everyone).
- 6 Good morning/ afternoon/ evening ladies and gents.
- 7 Good morning/ afternoon/ evening ladies and gentlemen.
- 8 A very good morning to you one and all./ Greetings to you all.

Showing awareness of the audience/ Connecting with the audience

- 1 You all look really bored, so.../ You all look really tired, so.../ I'm sure you know absolutely nothing about my topic, so.../ Wow! Ten people!/ Good to see all the usual faces!
- 2 I'm sure you are all a little sleepy after lunch, but.../ I know some of you have heard my presentation before, but.../ I guess you are probably thinking about lunch, so...
- 3 It's nice to see so many familiar faces./ Thank you so much for taking to time to come to my presentation.
- 4 I'm flattered that you would come here on such a nice sunny day./ I'm honoured that so many people have come to my presentation today.

Giving your name

- 1 (just say your first name, pointing to your chest with both thumbs)/ You all know me, right?
- 2 (just say your first name, pointing to your chest with the fingers of an open hand)
- 3 As you should know, I'm (name)
- 4 I'm (name).
- 5 My name is (name).
- 6 As some of you already know, my name is (name)./ I think you all know my face but perhaps not my name, which is.../ I think most of you know me, but I'll start by introducing myself anyway.
- 7 Please allow me to introduce myself./ I'll begin with a brief personal introduction.

Giving other personal information (and linking it to the topic)

- 1 I already told some of you that I... but you probably don't remember that.
- 2 I think you already know..., but you may not know that I.../ Today's topic is a good one for me because...
- 3 You might not be aware of the fact that I...

Giving the topic

- 1 This is the topic (pointing at the screen).
- 2 I'm gonna chat about.../ I'm not sure if this is a good topic, but.../ The only thing I could think of to talk about is...
- 3 Today's topic is.../ My presentation is about.../ The subject of this presentation is.../ I'm going to discuss...
- 4 What I'd like to talk about today is.../ What I'd like to explain in my presentation is...
- 5 As I think you are already aware, today my presentation topic is...
- 6 I've been invited here today in order to share with you...

Explaining your aim

- 1 What the hell could I possibly hope to achieve by presenting this? Well,.../ Why would I choose such an idiotic topic? Well, my goal is...
- 2 Why would I choose such a strange topic? Well, my aim is to...
- 3 By the end of my presentation, I want to prove to you that.../ My goal is to change your mind about...
- 4 After this presentation, I really hope most of you will.../ By presenting this, I hope I can convince you that...
- 5 To set out the goals of today's presentation,.../ My mission in presenting this to you is...

Hooking the audience

- 1 Hands up if you own fewer than five pairs of underpants./ It's a bit of a dirty joke, but.../ I bet you ten dollars you can't guess.../ Look at this number. Amazing, right?/
- 2 There is a famous joke on this topic which goes.../ ... said something funny about this... / Did you see yesterday in the news that...?/ Can you guess...?/ You won't believe what... said about this, which was...
- 3 How many people here...?/ Have you ever wondered...?/ Did you know that...?/ ... once said.../ I can't overemphasize the importance of this topic...
- 4 Just yesterday this topic was in the news because.../ I think this is an important topic because.../ There's an interesting quote on this subject, which is that.../ There's an amazing statistic that...
- 5 Please raise your hand if.../ Few people know that...
- 6 I'd like to commence with a quotation, if I may./ To pique your interest,.../ I'd like to begin with some data of particular interest, specifically...

Explaining the structure (= organisation) of the presentation

- 1 I'll cover this, this and this./ After all that boring stuff, I'll.../ Then at last I'll...
- 2 Topic one is.../ I'll finish up with...
- 3 I've divided my presentation into... parts./ First of all,.../ Second,.../ Then,...
- 4 My presentation is divided into... parts./ Secondly,.../ After that section,...
- 5 Having finished that,.../ My presentation will conclude with...
- 6 The presentation will commence with.../ Initially,.../ That will be followed by.../ In the penultimate part,...

Explaining your policy on asking questions

- 1 Please don't interrupt.
- 2 Please leave questions until the end./ Ask me questions at the end.
- 3 There will time for questions at the end./ There will be a Q&A session at the end.
- 4 If anything isn't clear, it is of course okay to interrupt./ Please feel free to ask questions at any time.
- 5 If anything at all that I say isn't 100% clear, then please do not hesitate to interrupt my presentation and ask me for clarification.

Ending the introduction and moving onto the body of the presentation

- 1 Right! Everything clear? So, let's go!/ First, look at this.
- 2 Well, getting started with the first of those topics,.../ So, let's really get started with.../ If there are no questions so far, let's have a look at...
- 3 Well then. If there are no questions at this stage, my presentation will commence with...

Underline useful words and expressions for being more polite/ formal above.

How would you define formal and informal language?

Label the things below as formal (F) or informal (I):

- ✧ Abbreviations
- ✧ Idioms and slang
- ✧ Like everyday speech
- ✧ Long sentences
- ✧ Long words
- ✧ Polite language
- ✧ Short sentences
- ✧ Short words
- ✧ Unlike everyday speech

Play the first game again.

Circle all the phrases above which could be suitable for your own presentation.

Draw a star next to the best phrases above for you.