

Talking about meetings interrupting practice

Work in groups of three or four. Choose one of the topics below, tell your partners which one you chose and start talking about it straightaway. You can talk about its meaning, your opinions on that topic, related experiences and knowledge, etc. Your partners will (politely) interrupt you and ask you questions about that topic, comment on what you said and/ or add their own points. You should then politely interrupt back, then continue what you were saying before you were interrupted or ask your partner about what they said. The person who has politely interrupted most often when your teacher stops you wins, but you must use different phrases each time that you interrupt. Your teacher will tell you if/ how you can use the cards and/ or the list of phrases to help.

Interrupting and... cards

Place down or cross off one of these cards each time that you politely interrupt someone using at least slightly different language to what anyone has used before.

Interrupt and...	Interrupt and...	Interrupt and...	Interrupt and...
Interrupt and...	Interrupt and...	Interrupt and...	Interrupt and...
Interrupt and...	Interrupt and...	Interrupt and...	Interrupt and...
Interrupt and...	Interrupt and...	Interrupt and...	Interrupt and...
Interrupt and...	Interrupt and...	Interrupt and...	Interrupt and...
Interrupt and...	Interrupt and...	Interrupt and...	Interrupt and...
Interrupt and...	Interrupt and...	Interrupt and...	Interrupt and...
Interrupt and...	Interrupt and...	Interrupt and...	Interrupt and...
Interrupt and...	Interrupt and...	Interrupt and...	Interrupt and...
Interrupt and...	Interrupt and...	Interrupt and...	Interrupt and...
Interrupt and...	Interrupt and...	Interrupt and...	Interrupt and...

Useful language for interrupting

Interrupting	Things to do after interrupting
Before you carry on/ Before you go on,... Can I just interrupt for a minute? I hate to interrupt (you) (in full flow), but... I'll let you finish in a minute, but... If I can just (interrupt) (for a moment),... Sorry to butt in/ Sorry to interrupt, but... Sorry to stop you (in full flow), but... Sorry, can I just ask something (about...)? Sorry, can I (just) check...? Sorry, can I stop you there? Sorry, can you run that by me again? Sorry, I didn't catch... Sorry, I'm not familiar with... Sorry, I'm not really following you. Sorry, I've never heard of... Sorry, just to (double) check... Sorry(, but...)	Checking/ Clarifying what they said Are you saying that...? Can you explain... (another way)? Can you write (down)...? Can you give me an example of...? Can you spell/ Can you dictate...? Do you mean...? Does... mean...? How do you spell...? Is there another way to say...? Is... (exactly) the same as...? So, in other words...? So, that is to say that...? What does... mean (in this context)? What does... stand for? What's the difference between... and...? What you are saying is...? You said...
Sorry, can I stop you there? Sorry, I think you misunderstood (me). Sorry but that's not (quite) what I said.	Confirming what you said What I meant to say was... My point was... What I was trying to say was...
Really? Are you sure? Do you think? Sorry to butt in/ Sorry to interrupt, but...	Disagreeing Do you (really) mean to say that...? Isn't it also true that...? But wouldn't you say that...?
Absolutely. Quite right. No kidding.	Adding arguments on the same side And/ What is more... I'd go further and say...
So,... Well,... Anyway,... Okay,...	Saying you've finished that topic I think we (both/ all) agree on that. I think you've about covered that. I think that about says it all.
So,... Well,... Anyway,... Sorry,... Sorry, we seem to be getting a bit off track. Sorry to interrupt you (in full flow), but...	Getting back on track Getting back to the main topic,... Getting back on track,... We were supposed to be discussing... Where were we? We were talking about... As I was saying...
Before you carry on/ go on,... I'll come back to you in a moment, but... Sorry to butt in/ Sorry to interrupt, but...	Giving other people a chance to speak I think John wants to say something. Can we hear from...?

Meetings vocabulary to talk about/ Meetings topics to talk about

- Active listening
- (Drawing up/ Sticking to/ Dealing with things not on/ Item on) the agenda
- AGM (= Annual general meeting)/ Shareholders meeting
- Agreeing on things/ Coming to agreement
- Agree to do things
- Aims/ Goals/ Objectives
- (Dealing with/ Scheduling) AOB
- Arguments/ Conflicts/ Quarrels/ Rows
- Bargaining power
- Bargaining/ Haggling
- (Call someone's) bluff
- Board meetings
- The board room
- Brainstorming/ Mind maps
- (Comfort/ Toilet/ Fag/ Loo) breaks
- Breaking the ice
- Bringing meetings forward
- Bring meetings to a close/ Calling it a day/ Wrapping things up
- Casual meetings/ Informal meetings
- (Choosing/ Being) the chair(man/ person)/ Chairing a meeting
- (Double-)checking/ Clarifying
- Chitchat/ Small talk
- Coming up with ideas (brainstorming, etc)
- (Finding) common ground
- Compromising
- Conceding/ Making concessions
- (Achieving) consensus
- Counterproposals
- Deadlocks/ Impasses
- (Making/ Dealing with) demands
- Digressing/ Rambling
- Diplomacy/ Being diplomatic/ Being tactful/ Being indirect
- Directness/ Frankness/ Tactlessness
- Fall-back position/ Plan B
- Flexibility
- Follow up (meetings/ after the meeting)
- Formality/ Politeness
- Getting back to people
- Getting back to the point
- Getting the ball rolling/ Kicking off
- Goodwill gestures
- Greetings
- (Playing) hardball
- Hierarchy/ Status/ Seniority in meetings
- Humour/ Jokes in meetings
- Insisting

- Interrupting/ (Dealing with) interruption/ Turn taking
- (Agreeing on the/ Drawing up the/ Taking/ Action/ Running through the) minutes
- Moving on/ Turning (your attention) to other points
- Off the point/ Off topic
- One-off meetings
- Outstanding issues
- Being persuasive/ Persuading people
- (Initial/ Bargaining) position
- Postponing meetings/ Putting back meetings/ Putting off meetings
- Productive meetings/ Worthwhile meetings
- Progress check meeting
- (Putting forward) proposals
- Quorum
- Recapping
- Reconvening meetings
- Regular meetings
- Renegotiating
- Rubber stamp meetings
- Meetings running over
- Sending your apologies
- Shaking on it
- Show of hands
- Splitting the difference
- (Dealing with) sticking points
- Stressing (your point)
- Summing up
- Unanimous decisions
- (Making/ Dealing with) ultimatums
- Venues for meetings
- (Casting/ Split) votes
- Win-win (solution)

When your teacher stops you, ask about any interrupting phrases above you are not sure how to use, etc.

Ask about any vocabulary above which you don't understand or topics above which you'd like to discuss as a class. Listen to your teacher speak about them, and interrupt when you want to ask or add something.

Without looking above, write as many interrupting phrases as you can in the boxes below.

Brainstorm as many interrupting phrases as you can. Some can go in more than one box.

Interrupting	Other function after interrupting
	Checking/ Clarifying what they said
	Confirming what you said
	Disagreeing
	Adding arguments on the same side
	Saying you've finished that topic
	Getting back on track
	Giving other people a chance to speak

Meetings vocabulary collocations

Firstly without help, join words on the left and right of each section to make collocations.

- Action + business
 - Agree + forward/ to a close
 - Annual general/ Shareholders + ice
 - Any other + meeting
 - Bargaining + meeting/ room
 - Board + minutes/ plan/ points
 - Brain + on/ to...
 - Breaking the + power
 - Bring + -storming
-
- Call it + a day
 - Call someone's + bluff
 - Casting/ Split + break
 - Catching + chat
 - Chair + ground
 - Chit + -man/ -person/ -
 - Cigarette/ Coffee/ Comfort/ Loo/ Toilet + up (with someone's news)
 - Come up + vote
 - (Seek/ Find) common + with new ideas
-
- Counter + in touch (with...)/ going
 - Dead + -lock (over...)
 - External/ Internal/ Regular + meeting
 - Fall-back + over (what we agreed)
 - Follow + -part/ proposal
 - Get + position
 - Get back + rolling
 - Get the ball + to the point/ to...
 - Go + up (meeting/ after the meeting/ on...)
-
- Go + ahead/ on
 - Go/ Run + gesture
 - Goodwill + off (the meeting)
 - Have + position
 - In + the agenda
 - Initial + through (the agenda/ agreement)
 - Item on/ Point on/ Topic on + -top (computer)
 - Kick + writing (by the end of the week)
 - Lap + your say

- Laser + agreement/ contract
- Leave it + issue (for the next meeting)
- Long+ map
- (Brainstorm onto a) mind + off (meeting)
- Move + on (to the next point)
- Off + pointer
- One + the point/ topic
- Oral/ Verbal + there (until...)
- Outstanding + -winded

- Over + agreement (with.../ on...)
- (Annual/ Semi-annual) performance + B
- Plan + back/ off/ forward
- Play + cap/ convene/ negotiate
- PowerPoint + check (meeting)
- Progress + hardball
- Put + page/ slide/ presentation
- Re- + review
- Reach + -view (of the present situation)

- Rubber + apologies (for his/ her absence)
- Run + difference (between ... and...)
- Send his/ her + hands (on our agreement)/ on it
- Shake + hands (to decide...)
- Show of + over (by... minutes)/ out of time
- Small + point
- Split the + print (of the contract/ of the agreement)
- Sticking + stamp (meeting/ the decision)
- Stress + your point

- Sum + arranged/ confirmed/ decided
- Take + conference
- Tele-/ Video + it up/ things up (here/ there)
- To be + minutes/ notes/ part in
- Turn + solution
- Waste of + time
- (Find a) win-win + to the next point of the agenda
- Worth + up (what we agreed)
- Wrap + -while

Maybe after looking at previous worksheets to help, check as a class or with the answer key.

Take turns choosing topics from above and sharing your opinions on them, experiences of them, cultural differences related to them, etc.

Suggested answers

Other matches may be possible, but this is probably the only way to match all of them.

- Action + minutes/ plan/ points
- Agree + on/ to...
- Annual general/ Shareholders + meeting
- Any other + business
- Bargaining + power
- Board + meeting/ room
- Brain + -storming
- Breaking the + ice
- Bring + forward/ to a close

- Call it + a day
- Call someone's + bluff
- Casting/ Split + vote
- Catching + up (with someone's news)
- Chair + -man/ -person/ -
- Chit + chat
- Cigarette/ Coffee/ Comfort/ Fag/ Loo/ Toilet + break
- Come up + with new ideas
- (Seek/ Find) common + ground

- Counter + part/ proposal
- Dead + -lock (over...)
- External/ Internal/ Regular + meeting
- Fall-back + position
- Follow + up (meeting/ after the meeting/ on...)
- Get + in touch (with...)/ going
- Get back + to the point/ to...
- Get the ball + rolling
- Go + over (what we agreed)

- Go + ahead/ on
- Go/ Run + through (the agenda/ our agreement)
- Goodwill + gesture
- Have + your say
- In + writing (by the end of the week)
- Initial + position
- Item on/ Point on/ Topic on + the agenda
- Kick + off (the meeting)
- Lap + -top (computer)

- Laser + pointer
- Leave it + there (until...)
- Long+ -winded
- (Brainstorm onto a) mind +map
- Move + on (to the next point)
- Off + the point/ topic
- One + off (meeting)
- Oral/ Verbal + agreement/ contract
- Outstanding + issue (to discuss in the next meeting)

- Over + -view (of the present situation)
- (Annual/ Semi-annual) performance + review
- Plan + B
- Play + hardball
- PowerPoint + page/ slide/ presentation
- Progress + check (meeting)
- Put + back/ off/ forward
- Re- + cap/ convene/ negotiate
- Reach + agreement (with.../ on...)

- Rubber + stamp (meeting/ the decision)
- Run + over (by... minutes)/ out of time
- Send his/ her + apologies (for his/ her absence)
- Shake + hands (on our agreement)/ on it
- Show of + hands (to decide...)
- Small + print (of the contract/ of the agreement)
- Split the + difference (between... and...)
- Sticking + point
- Stress + your point

- Sum + up (what we agreed)
- Take + minutes/ notes/ part in
- Tele-/ Video + conference
- To be + arranged/ confirmed/ decided
- Turn + to the next point of the agenda
- Waste of + time
- (Find a) win-win + solution
- Worth + -while
- Wrap + up/ things up (here/ there)