

Lesson Plan: Business English: meetings, presentations, negotiations

Level	Intermediate / Advanced (B1–C1)
Time	60–90 minutes
Skills	Speaking, vocabulary
Focus	Meeting language; presentation signposting; negotiation phrases; professional assertiveness

OBJECTIVES

By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- Open and manage a meeting professionally in English
- Present an idea or proposal using clear signposting language
- Use negotiation language to make offers, respond, and reach compromise
- Balance assertiveness and diplomacy in professional contexts

TARGET LANGUAGE & EXAMPLES

Meeting language

- Opening: Shall we get started? / Let's get down to business. / The purpose of today's meeting is...
- Agenda: There are three items on the agenda today.
- Turn-taking: I'd like to add something. / Could I come in here? / If I could just finish my point...
- Summarising: To summarise, we've agreed that... / So the next steps are...

Presentation signposting

- Opening: I'd like to take you through... / The aim of today's presentation is...
- Sequencing: First... Moving on to... Let me turn now to... Finally...
- Visuals: As you can see from the chart... / This graph illustrates...
- Closing: To sum up... / I'd welcome any questions.

Negotiation language

- Offering: We could offer... / What if we...? / How about...?
- Responding: That sounds reasonable. / I'm not sure that would work for us.
- Compromising: We'd be willing to... if you could... / Could we meet halfway?
- Agreeing: I think we can work with that. / Let's go with that.

Meaning & Nuance

Function	Assertive phrase	Diplomatic phrase
Disagreeing	That's simply not workable.	I'm not sure that would work for us at this stage.
Requesting change	You need to improve your offer.	We were hoping you might be able to...
Declining	No, we can't do that.	I'm afraid that won't be possible.

Pushing back on price	That's too expensive.	We had a lower figure in mind.
Agreeing conditionally	OK, but only if...	We could work with that, provided that...

LESSON PROCEDURE

1. Warm-up: Meeting room language check (10 min)

Task: What do you say to interrupt politely? To get back on track? To close the meeting?

- Elicit what students already know, then present the full set.

2. Presentation: signposting structure (15 min)

Task: Students practise opening a 1-minute mini-presentation on any topic.

- Focus on the opening sentence and the first signpost word.

→ *Small, achievable speaking task builds confidence.*

3. Negotiation roleplay (30 min)

Task: Two companies negotiate a contract — different briefing sheets for each side.

- Company A wants: longer delivery time, lower price.
- Company B wants: faster payment, higher price.
- Goal: reach a written agreement within 15 minutes.

4. Mock meeting (25 min)

Task: Run a meeting with an agenda: propose a new project, discuss budget, agree on timeline.

- Assign roles: chair, note-taker, two stakeholders.
- Chair must open, manage turns, and summarise.

TEACHER NOTES

- Meetings and negotiations are consistently the most-requested topics from corporate ESL clients.
- The assertive vs. diplomatic contrast table is particularly useful for learners who are either too direct or too vague.

EXTENSION / HOMEWORK

Choose one or more:

1. Write a brief email confirming meeting outcomes using professional language.
2. Prepare a 2-minute mini-presentation on any topic and practise signposting.
3. Write a negotiation dialogue (10 lines) where both sides reach a conditional agreement.