



SMALL TALK



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Expemo code:

15QR-B6C9-D9F4



1

Warm-up

What typical topics of conversation do people in your country talk about with strangers to be polite?

2

Social exchanges

Match the expressions on the left with the definitions on the right:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| 1. make small talk | a. to have a conversation about unimportant things with someone you don't know very well |
| 2. talk shop | b. to start to talk with someone you don't know |
| 3. have a chat | c. to talk about business with people you work with when you are not at work |
| 4. exchange words | d. to talk to someone in a friendly, informal way |
| 5. strike up a conversation | e. to talk with someone for a very short time |

In pairs, describe when you last engaged in the activities above, e.g. *I exchanged words with our sales director after the meeting last Monday.*



3 Making conversation

Match the following conversation openers with the responses on the right:

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Haven't we met somewhere before? | a. I've found it very practical so far. I can't wait to implement some of the ideas that have been discussed. |
| 2. Mind if I join you? | b. Not at all. Be my guest. |
| 3. How do you like our new location? | c. That's right. It's good to see you again. You haven't changed a bit. |
| 4. How are you enjoying the conference? | d. Well, it's certainly a nice change. I see you have a splendid view of the cathedral from your conference room. |
| 5. What are you having? | e. Whatever you're having is fine. |
| 6. Daniel, long time no see. It must be 6 years or so. | f. Yes, I think so. I can't quite remember where though. |
| 7. Do you two know each other? | g. Yes, we're old friends. We go back about seven years. |



Audio



Match the openers and responses to the situations below. Listen to check you answers.

- a. introducing yourself to someone you think you have met before **1**
- b. greeting someone you already know **6**
- c. asking if you can sit with someone **2**
- d. making small talk (x3) **3, 4, 7**
- e. offering someone a drink at a bar or restaurant **5**



Now listen again and complete the rest of the mini dialogues:

Dialogue 1

A: A _____, my name's Helen Rice, from Global Training Solutions.

B: Oh r _____, it was probably at the management skills development conference in London last year. Nice to meet you, I'm Sam Clarke.

Dialogue 2

A: Wonderful cafeteria you have here.

B: Yes, we just remodeled. I s _____ you've ordered the mushroom soup. G _____ c _____!

Dialogue 3

A: Yes, it c _____ b _____ all those gray apartment blocks that surrounded our previous headquarters. W _____ are you located?

Dialogue 4

A: Yes, we've c _____ had our f _____ share of marketing experts today. S _____ of marketing, how's your new campaign c _____ along?

Dialogue 5

A: Right, two beers i _____ is t _____.

Dialogue 6

A: Neither h _____ you. I'm t _____ that you are now the regional manager.

B: Yes, that's right. It's quite a challenge, you know.

A: I bet!

Dialogue 7

C: Actually it's m _____ l _____ eight. We first started working together during the company merger.



4 Making small talk

Complete the table below with words and expressions from the dialogue extracts on Page 2:

Asking questions:

Whereabouts are you located?

Changing the topic:

anyway

Using background knowledge:

I'm told that

Which categories do the following expressions belong to?

By the way,

I understand that

What are your plans for the summer break?

I hear that

When was the last time you visited this city?

5 Role play

Imagine you are at a conference. Go around the class greeting and making small talk with other people using language from this lesson.



Transcripts

3. Making conversation

Dialogue 1

A: Haven't we met somewhere before?

B: Yes, I think so. I can't quite remember where though.

A: Anyway, my name's Helen Rice, from Global Training Solutions.

B: Oh right, it was probably at the management skills development conference in London last year. Nice to meet you, I'm Sam Clarke.

Dialogue 2

A: Mind if I join you?

B: Not at all. Be my guest.

A: Wonderful cafeteria you have here.

B: Yes, we just remodeled. I see you've ordered the mushroom soup. Good choice!

Dialogue 3

A: How do you like our new location?

B: Well, it's certainly a nice change. I see you have a splendid view of the cathedral from your conference room.

A: Yes, it certainly beats all those gray apartment blocks that surrounded our previous headquarters. Whereabouts are you located?

Dialogue 4

A: How are you enjoying the conference?

B: I've found it very practical so far. I can't wait to implement some of the ideas that have been discussed.

A: Yes, we've certainly had our fair share of marketing experts today. Speaking of marketing, how's your new campaign coming along?

Dialogue 5

A: What are you having?

B: Whatever you're having is fine.

A: Right, two beers it is then.

Dialogue 6

A: Daniel, long time no see. It must be 6 years or so.



B: That's right. It's good to see you again. You haven't changed a bit.

A: Neither have you. I'm told that you are now the regional manager.

B: Yes, that's right. It's quite a challenge, you know.

A: I bet!

Dialogue 7

A: Do you two know each other?

B: Yes, we're old friends. We go back about seven years.

C: Actually it's more like eight. We first started working together during the company merger.



Key

2. Social exchanges

1. a 2. c 3. d 4. e 5. b

3. Making conversation

Conversation openers - responses:

1. f 2. b 3. d 4. a 5. e 6. c 7. g

Play the audio file or use your mobile device to scan the QR code (make sure you have installed a QR code reader app and can access the internet on your device).

Openers/responses - situations:

- a. 1 b. 6 c. 2 d. 3,4,7 e. 5

Dialogue 1: anyway, right

Dialogue 2: see, good choice

Dialogue 3: certainly beats, whereabouts

Dialogue 4: certainly, fair, talking, coming

Dialogue 5: it, then

Dialogue 6: have, told

Dialogue 7: more like

4. Making small talk

Asking questions: How's your new campaign coming along? What are your plans for the summer break? When was the last time you visited this city?

Changing the topic: Speaking of, by the way

Using background knowledge: I hear that, I understand that