

Useful phrases and vocabulary

MEETING SOMEONE ON ARRIVAL

Greeting a visitor

Hello, I'm Kasia Janiak from BTO Systems.

You must be Raj. Welcome to London.

Nice/Good to see you again. (*when you know sb already*)

– Good to see you too.

It's a pleasure to meet you (at last)./It's great to finally meet you in person. (*meeting sb for the first time*)

– It's a pleasure/Nice/Good/Great to meet you too.

Please, call me Sanne.

– And I'm José María, of course.

Apologizing for a delay

I hope you haven't been waiting long.

– Don't worry. I just got here ten minutes ago.

Sorry to keep you waiting. The train was on time but the traffic here is terrible.

– No problem. I know how it is.

Sorry I'm late. My flight was delayed because of bad weather.

Asking about the journey

How was the/your flight/journey/drive?

– Uneventful, thankfully./Fine, thanks.

– Not so good. The traffic was terrible.

– OK, but there was some turbulence.

You must be exhausted now.

– Oh, I'm OK. I managed to get some sleep, actually.

– I am a bit tired, I have to say.

Offering and accepting help

Can I help you with your bags?/Do you need a hand/any help with that?/Shall I take that for you?

– That would be great/very nice, thanks.

Would you mind taking this?

– Not at all./Of course not.

Let me get that for you.

Freshening up

I'd just like to wash my hands (if that's OK/before we get going).

Is there a toilet (BrE)/bathroom/restroom (AmE) around here/somewhere?

– Yes, there's one just this way ...

Is there a café where we could sit down/get something to drink?

– Yes, there's a nice one just over there.

– I'm not sure, but let's see if we can find one.

Do you mind if we grab/get a quick coffee before we get going?

– Not at all.

– Actually we're in a little bit of a hurry. Maybe we could have one later?

Taking the visitor to their hotel or the company

So, if you'll just come this way ...

The/My car is parked over here.

We can get a taxi over there.

Where are we going from here?

– I thought we could go to the hotel first.

– We should probably go straight to the office, if that's OK.

– I'll take you to your hotel.

Is the hotel/office/conference centre far from here?

– No, it's just 15 minutes away.

– It's probably about a 30-minute drive, but we have plenty of time.

Talking about plans and schedules

It's not far now./We'll be there in five minutes.

I thought you might like to check into your hotel first and drop off your things.

– Sounds good./Sure.

Would you like to check into your hotel first?

– Actually, we can go straight to the office if you prefer.

Then we can grab/get a spot of lunch.

There's a nice Italian place near your hotel.

After that we can go to the company.

We have the meeting with the sales team at two, as you know.

At four we're going to visit the production plant.

That should only take an hour.

Then I'll take you back to your hotel and you can relax for a bit.

I'll pick you up at about seven for dinner.

We're going to a very nice restaurant this evening.

– Sounds good./Great.

LOOKING AFTER A VISITOR TO YOUR COMPANY

Welcoming a visitor

Hello, Ms Heitink. I'm José María Molinero.

Nice to meet you/see you again.

Welcome to Salas Design/our company.

Did you have any trouble finding us?

– No, not at all. The directions on your website/Your directions were very clear/good.

Was the driver there to meet you at the airport?

– Yes, he/she was. Thanks so much for arranging that.

– It's the least I could do (after your long flight).

Thanks for coming down to meet me.

– No problem at all. I wasn't sure you'd be able to find my office by yourself.

Showing a visitor around your offices

You can leave your things/your briefcase/coat here/in my office/at the reception desk.

Would you like to leave your things here?

– That would be nice, thanks.

I'll just leave my bag here, if that's OK with you.
 I'll take you round to meet a few members of the team.
 They're all looking forward to meeting you.
 Would you mind waiting in my office for a few minutes?

– Not at all./Sure, no problem.

I just need to make some copies before the meeting.
 I thought maybe I could just pop by Roger's office and say hello.

Can/Could I use your bathroom (AmE)?

– Of course. I'll just show you where it is.

If you'll just come this way ...

Here's the lift now.

After you. (*when entering a lift or going through a door*)

Offering a guest something to eat or drink

Would you like something to drink? Tea, coffee, water ...?

So, can I get you something to drink?

– A cup of coffee would be great.

– Just a glass of water, thanks.

– I'm OK for the moment, thanks.

Can I get you a coffee?/How about a cup of tea?

– That would be great/wonderful. Thanks very much.

How do you take your coffee?/How would you like that?

– Just black, thanks.

– With milk/cream (AmE), please.

– Milk and sugar, please.

Could I have a glass of water as well, please?

– Coming right up./Of course.

Here you are./Here's your coffee. (*giving a drink*)

Thank you.

– You're welcome./No problem.

– Not at all./Don't mention it.

Shall we get some lunch?

– Sounds good. It's been a long time since breakfast.

– Maybe I'll just have a coffee. I'm not actually that hungry.

Giving directions

Where are you now?/Where is your office now?

– On the fourth floor./Just down here.

Which floor is your office on?

– The eighth! Don't worry – we'll take the lift/elevator (AmE).

Where is the toilet/bathroom (AmE)/Mike's office?

It's just down the hall/round the corner on the left/right.

It's the first/second/third door on the left/right.

It's next to the toilet/front door/kitchen.

Just go out of the door and turn left to get to the lift.

– That's very clear, thanks./Thanks, I'm sure I'll find it.

– Sorry, could you explain that again?

Come with me and I'll show you where it is!

I'll meet you back here in ten minutes, OK?

– Sounds good. See you soon!

Introducing a visitor to your colleagues

The first person I'd like you to meet is Valérie Dufour.

She's our marketing manager.

Valérie, this is Sanne Heitink.

– It's a pleasure to meet you, Sanne./It's great to finally meet you.

– Nice to meet you too.

And this is Mary Chan, our product designer.

I'd like to introduce Mr Sánchez. He's the new head of production.

Have the two of you met before?

– No, we haven't, but we've exchanged a lot of emails.

– Yes, (I think) we actually met once at a trade fair.

It's nice to put a face to a name, isn't it?

– It certainly is.

I think you've had contact with her.

She'll be your contact person on the IT side of the project.

You'll have a chance to get to know everyone a bit better at this afternoon's meeting.

I'm afraid I'm not very good with names.

– I know what you mean!

At a meeting

Sorry, it always takes a few minutes for everyone to arrive.

– Not to worry./No problem.

Hi, everyone, sorry I'm a bit late. I just needed to gather some files for our meeting.

So, if everyone would like to take a copy of today's agenda ...

Well, I suppose we should make a start.

So, shall we get down to business?

Right, let's make a start, shall we?

So, shall we start again at, say, 3.30? (*before a break*)

– Sounds good.

ENTERTAINING A VISITOR

Showing a visitor around your town or city

This is the old town square/cathedral (here).

Let me show you the museum/town hall.

This kind of architecture is typical of our region.

That's the castle I was telling you about earlier.

It was built/designed by ...

It's really impressive/beautiful.

I've never seen a building like this before.

How old is it?

– I think it's from the 15th century but I'm not totally sure.

Asking for/Giving recommendations for sightseeing

I've actually got the afternoon free tomorrow.

I was wondering if you had any recommendations for things to do.

I know what you can do.

There's a(n) great/fantastic/interesting art gallery/shop/park/street.

There's a nice exhibition of photos on at the town hall at the moment.

There's a fantastic art gallery just an hour from here. If we have time we can maybe show you one of the lakes nearby.

– That would be nice./Sounds great.

It's/They're very interesting/beautiful/amazing.

I can take you if you like.

It's really/definitely worth visiting/seeing/a visit.

I'd really like to do that./I'd love to see that.

Asking for/Giving directions in a town or city

Where is the town hall/station/museum exactly?
 How do I get there?/What's the best way to get there?
 It's next to/near/just around the corner from/on the
 same street as your hotel/the town hall/square.
 Just go along this street, then turn left/right.
 Take the second/third street on the left/right.
 Keep going until you see the church/bank.
 You can walk there from here.

Invitations*Making an invitation*

I was wondering if you might like to join us for dinner tonight?
 How about meeting for a coffee next week?
 I have a spare ticket for the opera tonight. Would you like to come?
 My partner and I are having a party next Saturday. We were hoping you could come.

Accepting an invitation

That sounds really nice/great. Thanks very much.
 Thanks, I'd like that very much.
 That would be lovely.
 Good idea. Let's do that.

Turning down an invitation

I'd love to, but I'm actually away at a trade fair all next week.
 That's very kind of you, but I'm supposed to be meeting a friend for dinner this evening.
 I'd love to come, but I'm afraid I just don't have time today.

Making an alternative suggestion

How about the week after that?
 Maybe you can let me know next time you're going?
 Maybe we could go for dinner tomorrow instead?
 How about having lunch sometime next week?

EATING OUT**Restaurant small talk**

This looks a really nice place.
 It's very typical.
 I'm a bit hungry/absolutely starving.
 Do you come here often?
 – Oh yes. I was here last week actually.
 – Usually when I have guests.
 I used to eat here a lot when I worked in this part of town.
 What do you recommend?

Helping with the menu

I'm afraid they don't have English menus here.
 Just say if you need help with anything.
 I might need help with some of this.
 Is that some kind of meat?
 So what's ...?
 – It's a kind of fish/meat/vegetable/pasta/dumpling.
 – It's (a bit) like an omelette.
 – It's made with eggs, milk and sugar.
 – It's a local speciality.
 – It's typical of/a speciality of our region.
 – It's a spicy/savoury/sweet dish.
 – It's made with meat/fish/vegetables.
 You have to try that/those.

Ordering

Do you know what you're having?
 Have you decided yet?
 – Yes. I think I'll have the steak.
 – I'm still trying to make up my mind. It all looks so good.
 – I think I need a couple more minutes, if that's OK.
 (I think) I'll have that for my main course (then).
 I'm going to have the special.
 Let's see if we can catch the waiter's attention.
 I'd like/I'll have the pasta, please. *(to the waiter)*
 Have you still got room for dessert?

Paying for the meal

Shall we get the bill?
 I'll see if I can catch the waiter when he goes past.
 Can we have the bill, please? *(to the waiter)*
 Could you bring us the bill, please?
 Let me get this./This is on me./I'll get this.
 – No, it's OK. I'll get it.
 – Are you sure? That's very kind/generous of you.
 That was lovely, thank you./Thanks for the meal. It was really nice.
 – You're very welcome.
 – It was my/a pleasure.
 What do I do about tipping?
 – You just round up the total.
 – I normally leave ... per cent.
 I don't have any cash on me.
 Do they accept credit cards here?

AT A TRADE FAIR**Starting a conversation with a stranger**

I'm sorry, but I couldn't help noticing you've got a Chipper bag. Do you work for them?
 Excuse me, do you know if this is the stop for the trade fair?
 Excuse me, do you mind if I join you?
 – Not at all.
 Are you here for the trade fair?
 – Yes, exactly.
 I'm Ute Adena, by the way.
 – Lloyd Roberts. Nice to meet you.

Talking about the trade fair

Are you looking after a stand at the fair?

- Yes, we have a stand here.
- I'm actually just here to look around and do some networking.

When did you get here?

- On Wednesday./Just today, actually.

So, what do you think of the fair so far?

- I'm enjoying it a lot.
- It's quite good. Certainly better than last year.
- I'm a bit disappointed, to tell the truth.

Have you seen anything interesting?

- Yes, one company has developed a really nice .../some interesting new ...
- Not really, to be honest.

That sounds like something worth checking out.

If you want to take a look, just go to section/hall B.

The stand is right near the door.

Thanks for the tip!

Talking about your company

What company are you with?

- I'm the head of purchasing at Pixdorf.
- I'm with a French company called Plein Air.

And what about you? What do you do?

And who do you work for?

What does your company do (exactly)?

- We make software for retail POS systems.

I've heard of your company before. Where are you based?

- In Toulouse. Do you know it?

Am I right in thinking you're based in Frankfurt?

- Yes, that's right.
- Well, just outside Frankfurt actually.

Talking to a person at a stand

So you see we really have some very exciting new products/services.

It's really one of our most interesting developments.

I absolutely have to show you/demonstrate our new ...

It'll only take a minute.

It's/They're certainly very interesting.

Ending a conversation

Anyway, let me give you my card.

Listen, do you have a card?

Why don't I come back afterwards to take a look?

Sorry, I really have to go now.

I should really get going. I have another appointment in a couple of minutes.

I'm actually supposed to be meeting someone in ten minutes.

Listen, I've just seen Chris over there. Excuse me a moment, I really need to catch him.

MISCELLANEOUS COMMUNICATION SKILLS**Reacting to what someone says**

That must be very stressful/an interesting job.

You must be very proud of her.

That must have been very exciting/nice.

That must have been a difficult time for you.

Asking for clarification

(I'm) sorry, I didn't quite catch that.

(I'm) sorry, could you tell me your name again?

Sorry, could you say that for me again?

I'm sorry, I don't quite follow you.

I'm not totally sure what you mean.

Did you say 15 or 50?

Keeping a conversation going

Have you ever been to Hong Kong?

- No, I haven't. What about you?

- Yes, I have. I was there two years ago on business.

This is actually my second visit.

- Oh really? When were you here before?

SMALL TALK**Talking about the weather**

How was the weather when you left?

- It was raining, as usual!/It was very nice, actually.

I can't believe it's so sunny/hot/cold here.

What a beautiful day!

- It is, isn't it?

It was actually snowing when I left home.

This summer/winter has been terrible/OK/lovely/great.

The last couple of weeks have been very warm/cold.

Do you normally get good summers here?

- Usually we get at least a few hot days, but sometimes it rains a lot.

- Not really!

I imagine the winters here must be pretty cold.

- Oh yes. Sometimes it goes down to minus 15.

- Actually they're not as cold as you might think.

Talking about travel

Is this your first time here?

- Actually, no, I've been here a few times.

- Actually, I was here once before, in 2001.

- Yes, it is. I'm really enjoying it.

Have you been here before?

- No, this is my first time.

- Yes, I've been here a couple of times.

When were you here before?

- I was here two years ago/in 2005.

Have you ever been to England?

- Just once, when I was a teenager. I did a school exchange to London.

- No, never. I've always wanted to go there.

Was that for business or pleasure?

- It was a business trip.

- I was just there on holiday. It was very relaxing!

- A bit of both.

Did you enjoy your visit to ...?

- Yes, very much. Especially the food!
 - It was OK, but the weather wasn't so great.
- What did you think of ...?
- It's an amazing city. Pity about the weather though!
- Where did you stay when you were there?
- We found this fantastic hotel right next to the river.

Talking about a company's offices

- This is a lovely space you have here.
 It's a really nice building – very bright and airy.
 It's a huge improvement on our previous building.
 To be honest, I liked the old building better.
 It's a great neighbourhood – lots of green space and some nice cafés.
 The only problem is there are no restaurants nearby/it's difficult to park here.
 Have you been in this location long?
- No, we actually just moved into this building six months ago.
 - Yes, we've been here for more than ten years.

Talking about a company

- How long has your company been around?
- It was founded by Rafael Salas ten years ago.
 - We've been going for almost 50 years.
- How many people are in the company now?
- We currently have 31 employees.
 - We have about 200 staff at the moment.
- We've really expanded over the last few years.

Talking about mutual acquaintances

- How's Marita these days?
 What's Carol up to?
 Have you heard anything from Josef recently?
 What about Chris? How's he doing these days?
- He's doing fine.
- Is Anja still with the company, by the way?
- She's not, actually. She left last July.
 - Yes, she's still here.
- As a matter of fact she's in Utrecht now.
 Do you know what she's doing there?
 I heard from him/her a couple of weeks ago.
 He/She was promoted to product manager recently.
 Is that Chris Bennett you're talking about?
- Exactly.
- He/She says hello, by the way.
 I should send him/her an email.
 Say hi to Maria for me. *(informal)*
 Give my regards to Maria. *(neutral/formal)*
 Should I tell him/her hi from you?
- Could you? That would be nice.

Talking about personal possessions

- That's an interesting painting/picture/photograph you've got there.
 I like that painting/picture/photograph. Where did you get it?
 It's very colourful/beautiful/interesting/different.
 I couldn't help noticing your new Blackberry.

Talking about where you are from

- Are you from Paris originally?
- Yes, I am.
 - No, I'm actually from Brussels.
- I'm actually from a little village just outside Rome.
 I was born in Barcelona, but I grew up in Madrid.
 I used to live in Krakow.
 I went to university in Michigan.
 I graduated from university in 1995.
 Where did you live before that?
 Did you go to college/university/vocational school in [name of town/city]?
 What did you study?
 Do you ever miss America?
- Yes, I do. Especially the food!
 - Not really, but I do miss my family.
 - Not at all! I'm very happy here.

Talking about where you live

- I live in/near/not far from ...
 How long have you lived here?
 Do you like living here?
 It's maybe a bit on the small side.
 The cultural life is really good.
 There's a lot going on.
 It's quite expensive to live here.
 It's really nice that you can be out in the countryside in just thirty minutes.

Talking about free-time activities

- So, what do you like doing in your free time?
 Do you have any hobbies?/Do you do any sports?
 I love/like/don't like/hate cooking/reading.
 I often go to the gym/play tennis/do yoga after work/at the weekend.
 I like swimming/sailing/going to the theatre but I never have the time.
 I try to play football/squash at least once a week.
 If I had more time, I would go to more concerts/eat out more.

Talking about family relationships

- Are you married (as well)?
- Yes, I just got married last year, actually.
 - No, I live with my partner.
 - I'm actually single at the moment.
- Let me show you some photos.
 Do you have any brothers or sisters?
 Is [name] married?
 Does [name] have any children?
 How old is [name]?
 [Name] got married in 2002.
 He/She has ... children.
 They are married/separated/divorced.
 He/She is ... years old.
 My husband/wife is a meteorologist/an analyst.
 My son/daughter has just got a place at university.

Vocabulary banks

THE WEATHER

words describing weather in general

good
great
fantastic
lovely
OK
changeable
depressing
miserable
terrible

words describing temperature

freezing
cold
chilly
mild
warm
hot
boiling
roasting

words describing the sky

cloudy
grey
overcast
clear
sunny

words to do with water

wet
damp
drizzling
humid
pouring
rainy

weather verbs

to rain
to pour
to drizzle
to freeze
to hail
to snow
to shine
to cloud over/to clear up (sky)

COMPANIES

talking about the building

location
(first/second/third) floor
reception (area)
lift/elevator (AmE)
stairs
neighbourhood
toilet/bathroom/restroom (AmE)
kitchen
photocopier room
meeting/conference room
car park

talking about the company structure

employees
staff
personnel
colleagues
department
division
branch
subsidiary
parent company
head office

verbs to do with the history of the company or building

to found
to set up
to expand
to open a new office
to close an office/a department
to restructure
to downsize
to move (into/out of)
to take on new staff
to lay off staff

adjectives for rooms and buildings

bright
sunny
airy
light
dark
crowded
spacious
old
modern
beautiful
ugly

types of furniture and office equipment

(office) chair
stool
table
desk
reception desk
cupboard
notice board
whiteboard
flipchart
overhead projector
projector

company departments

administration
book keeping/accounts
purchasing
sales & marketing
production
legal
research & development (R&D)
logistics
customer services
technical support
IT
human resources (HR)

FREE-TIME ACTIVITIES

sport

playing football/squash/tennis/
golf
(going) sailing/swimming/
skiing/jogging/cycling/inline
skating
keeping fit
going to the gym
doing yoga/karate/tai chi

relaxing at home

listening to music
reading
watching television
cooking
visiting friends
doing nothing

going out

eating out/going to restaurants
going to the cinema/theatre/
opera/museums/concerts/
pubs/bars
(going) shopping
going clubbing
meeting friends

hobbies and pastimes

playing cards/board
games
doing crosswords/
puzzles/Sudoku
photography/
drawing/painting
DIY/home
improvements

TOWNS AND CITIES**places in a town/city**

airport
harbour
railway station
bus station
art gallery
museum
castle
cathedral
mosque
synagogue
park
sports/leisure centre
swimming pool
old town centre
town/city hall
shopping centre/mall (AmE)
university

words to describe towns/cities

beautiful
historic
important
industrial
thriving
fashionable
growing
large
small
ancient
old
modern
cheap
expensive

phrases to describe relative size and location

a bit bigger than
much smaller than
about the same size as
(not that) close to
near
right next to
part of
on the (name of river)
not far from

FOOD**parts of the meal**

aperitif
starter
main course
dessert/pudding
(BrE)
digestif

types of meat

bacon
beef
chicken
ham
lamb
pork
rabbit
veal
venison

types of vegetable

aubergine/
eggplant
(AmE)
pepper
(red) cabbage
courgette (BrE)/
zucchini
(AmE)
onion
cucumber
lettuce
sweetcorn
mushroom
turnip
parsnip

side dishes

chips (BrE)/
French fries
(AmE)
potato wedges
rice
salad
noodles

ways of cooking

to bake
to fry
to deep fry
to grill (BrE)/to
broil (AmE)
to roast
to toast
to sauté
to microwave

describing food

heavy
light
rich
savoury
spicy
sweet
fatty
fattening
salty
sugary
tasty
delicious
disgusting

dairy products

milk
cheese
yoghurt
cream cheese

describing hunger

hungry
peckish
starving
ravenous
full

FAMILY AND RELATIONSHIPS**words to describe marital status**

single
engaged
married
separated
divorced
widowed

words for talking about family members and friends

mother-in-law
father-in-law
brother-in-law
sister-in-law
step-daughter
step-son
only child
ex-wife
ex-husband
best friend
acquaintance
partner

verbs connected to families and relationships

to be born
to meet someone
to make sb's acquaintance
to introduce sb to sb
to get to know sb
to get engaged
to get married
to separate
to get divorced
to be pregnant
to have a baby