Die wichtigsten Redewendungen für Geschäftstreffen und Small Talk.
Business Talk No. 1

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MEETINGS

ARRANGING A MEETING

2. Dialogue: fixing a date

Jane: Sandra, do you have a minute?
Sandra: Sure, what’s up?
Jane: Oh, I’m just trying to organize a team meeting for next week, and I’m having no success yet fixing a date.
Sandra: I thought you’d decided on Thursday.
Jane: I had, but Joe can’t make it then. So he was wondering about Friday.
Sandra: Oh, Friday’s not at all convenient for me, I’m afraid. I’ll be in London.
Jane: Oh, yes. I forgot. Well, let me see. Monday’s not good for Jane, and Harry’s not available for most of Tuesday. That leaves Wednesday, basically.
Sandra: I think Wednesday suits me just fine — oh, hold on. Didn’t Pete say he’d be in town on Wednesday morning? If he is, I’ll need to meet with him.
Jane: Oh, I forgot. That’s true. Last I heard, he didn’t think he was going to come after all, but I’ll check on that. OK, let’s pencil in Wednesday morning, 10 o’clock, and I’ll call you to confirm when I’ve checked with Pete.
Sandra: Sounds good.
Jane: And if all else fails, we’ll have to postpone the meeting until the following week.
Sandra: That’s fine, too. I’m free that whole week.

3. Exercises: key phrases

a. Listen to key phrases from the dialogue “fixing a date”. Refer to notes 1–5.

b. Create a sentence using the phrase given.

■ How about Wednesday? (No/convenient)
→ I’m afraid Wednesday’s not convenient for me.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>check on sth.</th>
<th>etw. überprüfen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>confirm sth.</td>
<td>etw. bestätigen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>convenient</td>
<td>passend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fix a date</td>
<td>einen Termin festlegen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hold on</td>
<td>warte mal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>if all else fails</td>
<td>wenn alle Stricke reißen</td>
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<tr>
<td>make it</td>
<td>es schaffen</td>
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<tr>
<td>pencil sth. in</td>
<td>etw. vorläufig festhalten</td>
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<tr>
<td>postpone sth.</td>
<td>etw. verschieben</td>
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<tr>
<td>suit sb. (just) fine</td>
<td>jmdm. gut passen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>what’s up?</td>
<td>was gibt’s?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How about Thursday? (No/make it)
→ I'm afraid I can’t make it on Thursday.
How about Friday? (No/available)
→ I'm afraid I won’t be available on Friday.
How about Tuesday? (Yes/suits)
→ Tuesday suits me fine.

Carol: Well let’s get on with it. I’m very pressed for time. Where’s the agenda?
Chair: I thought we could do that together.
Michael: Oh, God!
Carol: Well, I want to talk about the training budget for next year. It doesn’t cover the customer care seminars we’d planned.
Michael: That’s right. We need at least another €10,000, because...

4. Dialogue: getting started

Chair: Hello, everyone...
Carol: So I said, “It’s not good enough. We need two more salespeople to cover the area properly.” And do you know what he said?
Michael: No, but I can imagine.
Chair: Right, so if we’re all here...?
Carol: “No chance!” That’s what he said. And I’m really struggling to cover customers properly, and working a 60-hour workweek.
Chair: OK? Can we...?
Michael: It’s the same for me. I was only talking to Harry last week, ...
Chair: Sorry. Sorry. Can we...?
Michael: Oh, right. Have we started?
Chair: Yes. I suppose so.

5. Exercises: key opening phrases

a. Repeat the following key phrases.
Getting started:
- Right. Shall we get down to business?
- OK. Shall we start?
- I’d like to call the meeting to order.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English (Key Phrase)</th>
<th>German</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>agenda</td>
<td>Tagesordnung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>call the meeting to order</td>
<td>die Versammlung zur Ordnung rufen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chair</td>
<td>Vorsitzende(r)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>customer care</td>
<td>Kundenbetreuung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>get down to business</td>
<td>zur Sache kommen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>get on with sth.</td>
<td>mit etw. weiterkommen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pressed: be ~ for time</td>
<td>unter Zeitdruck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>salespeople</td>
<td>Vertriebsleute</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introducing the agenda:
- Does everyone have a copy of the agenda?
- Has everyone seen the agenda?
- There are five points to be covered on our agenda today.

Introducing discussion points:
- Item one: training budget for next year.
- The first item on the agenda is the training budget for next year.
- The first item we should discuss is the training budget for next year.

b. Use key phrases to open the meeting.
- Right. Shall we get down to business?
- Does everyone have a copy of the agenda?
- The first item is the training budget for next year.

6. Dialogue: managing conflict

Chair: The first item on the agenda is the training budget for next year. The proposed figures are attached to the agenda. Can we agree on this proposal?
Carol: Absolutely not! There’s nothing in here about the customer care training that we were all so keen on before.
Anne: Yes, but the financial situation is not as good as it was then. We need to be a little more careful with our costs.
Carol: Typical finance! You seem to think that it’s all to do with figures. It’s people that count.
Anne: Look, if you in sales were more responsible about your expenses and thought a bit more about the good of the company rather than the good lunches...
Carol: And what’s that supposed to mean? Look, I work 60 hours a week and don’t you forget it. I don’t go home at 5.30 like some people I know.
Chair: Wait a moment. Shouldn’t we....
Anne: That’s totally unfair! I’ve not come to this meeting to be personally insulted.
Carol: Well, you asked for it.
Chair: Please. Please...
7. Exercises: keeping control

a. Repeat the following key phrases.
■ Sorry to interrupt, but can we discuss this reasonably, please?
■ I’m afraid I shall have to call you to order.
■ Order, please! Let’s have a civilized discussion here.
■ Could you address your remarks to the chair, please?

b. Use the instructions given to keep control.
■ Introduce item one.
  ➔ The first item on the agenda is the training budget for next year. The proposed figures are attached to the agenda. Can we agree on this proposal?
■ Ask them to be reasonable.
  ➔ Sorry to interrupt, but can we discuss this reasonably, please?
■ Call her to order.
  ➔ I’m afraid I shall have to call you to order.
■ Now ask for a civilized discussion.
  ➔ Order, please. Let’s have a civilized discussion here.

8. Example: closing a meeting

Chair: Right, ladies and gentlemen, that was the last item on the agenda. Before I close the meeting, is there any other business? No? Good. Well, let me summarize. We’ve agreed a new training budget, got information about two new product ranges, agreed on a new process for evaluating customer satisfaction and, finally, planned our next sales conference. We should be pleased about how much we were able to cover this afternoon. Thank you all for your inputs. We’ll see each other the same time and place next week. OK. The meeting’s closed.

address sth. to sb.  etw. an jmdn. richten
evaluate sth.       etw. auswerten
input               Beitrag
product range       Produktlinie
summarize           eine kurze Zusammenfassung geben
9. Exercise: using closing phrases

Repeat the following.
■ Right, ladies and gentlemen, that was the last item on the agenda.
■ Before I close the meeting, is there any other business?
■ Well, let me summarize...
■ We should be pleased about how much we were able to cover.
■ Thank you all for your inputs.
■ We’ll see each other the same time and place next week.
■ OK. The meeting’s closed.

Interruption in meetings

10. Dialogue: getting your views across

**Brian:** Right, let’s go on to the arrangements for the road show next month. I understand there will be six of us all together and...

**John:** Seven, Brian, if you count Sam the technician.

**Brian:** Right. And the itinerary is decided and everybody knows what...

**John:** Look, sorry for interrupting, Brian, but — how can I put this? — it doesn’t seem very logical to go from Frankfurt to Munich and then back to Hanover, does it?

**Marion:** I think John’s right. Couldn’t we...

**Brian:** Sorry, but it’s already arranged. The invitations have been printed and...

**John:** But hang on a second — who decided to do that? Wasn’t this meeting supposed to be all about confirming arrangements?

**Marion:** Yes. I thought...

**Brian:** Look, time was getting short, so I had to make a quick decision. I was under pressure from the printers.

**Marion:** But I don’t think this is right. I think...

**Brian:** Look, what’s done is done. Sorry and all that. But let’s get on with a content discussion now, shall we?

| confirm sth. | etw. bestätigen |
| content | Inhalt; hier: inhaltlich |
| hang on a second | Augenblick mal |
| itinerary | Reiseroute |
| put sth. | etw. formulieren |
| road show | Verkaufstournee |
| technician | Techniker(in) |
Marion: But I do think...
John: You’re right. It’s no use crying over spilt milk.
Brian: Good. So let’s look at the programme details and see if we can...

11. Exercise: the INSET method

Repeat the following phrases.
I: Interrupt clearly
- Excuse me, but...
- Can I just say something here?
- Forgive my interrupting, but...

N: Need to think
- So what is the question here?
- How shall I put this?
- Now, let me get this straight.

S: Show what the issue is
- The problem we have to deal with is...
- This is a question of...
- I think the issue here is...

E: Explain your proposal
- I think we should...

- It seems to me that...
- Why don’t we...?

T: Test agreement
- Does this make sense to you?
- Wouldn’t you agree?
- Can we agree on this?

12. Dialogue: using INSET

Brian: Look, time was getting short, so I had to make a quick decision. I was under pressure from the printers.
Marion: Can I just say something here? Now how shall I put this? This is a question of keeping your colleagues informed. I think you should have called or e-mailed us and got our opinions. Wouldn’t you agree?
John: Well, I agree with Marion. You should have informed us and...
13. Exercises: key phrases using INSET

a. Listen to key phrases from the dialogue “using INSET”.

I: Can I just say something here?
N: Now how shall I put this?
S: This is a question of keeping your colleagues informed.
E: I think you should have called or e-mailed us and got our opinions.
T: Wouldn’t you agree?

b. Use the instructions given to make a suggestion. You would like the meeting to take place on Wednesday because you’re busy on Friday.

Speaker 1: So I suggest Friday next week for our follow-up meeting.
Speaker 2: Yes, that’s fine by me. So what time do you suggest?

I: Explain your proposal.
➔ I’m busy on Friday, so I suggest the following Wednesday when I know we’re all free.

➔ Test agreement.
➔ Can we agree on that?

➔ Can we agree on that?

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➔ Can we agree on that?
SOCIALIZING

GREETINGS

15. Dialogues: ways to greet and respond

Greeting 1: How do you do?
Response 1: How do you do?

Greeting 2: Nice to meet you.
Response 2: Nice to meet you, too.

Greeting 3: How are you?
Response 3: Fine, thanks. And you?
Reply 3: Fine, thanks.

Greeting 4: Hi there!
Response 4: Hi!

16. Exercise: replying to greetings

Respond with the same level of formality.
- How are you?
- How do you do?

17. Examples: introducing yourself

- Nice to meet you.
- Hi there!

18. Dialogues: greetings and introductions

- Nice to meet you. My name is Michael Thon.
- My name is Bond. James Bond.
- Hello. I’m James, James Bond.

John Mason: Good morning. My name is John, John Mason from Abacom.
George West: Nice to meet you, John. I’m George West from ATG.
John: Nice to meet you, George.

Helen Wolf: How do you do, Mr Matthews? I’m Helen Wolf from ETS.
Matthews: Nice to meet you, Ms Wolf.
Mike: John! How are you?
John: Fine, thanks, Mike. And how are you?
Mike: Great.
John: Mike, this is one of my colleagues, Roberta Jones.
Mike: Nice to meet you, Ms Jones.
Roberta Jones: Nice to meet you too. And please call me Roberta.
Mike: And I’m Mike.

**SMALL TALK**

19. Dialogue: using small talk

Nick: Nick Johnson. Good morning.
Pauline: Hello, Nick. It’s Pauline Matthews here.
Nick: Hello, Pauline.
Pauline: I wasn’t sure if you were back from your holidays this week — the south of France, wasn’t it?\(^1\)
Nick: Yes, we were in a place called Collioure. Do you know it?
Pauline: No. Not really.
Nick: It’s a lovely small harbour town filled with artists and galleries. I even bought two paintings.
Pauline: Funny you should say that, but we were in Cornwall a couple of weeks ago, in St Ives, and it’s the same. But we didn’t buy anything. Just looked. And went to the small Tate Gallery there.\(^2\) Anyway, the reason I’m calling is to ask about last month’s sales figures. Are they available yet?\(^b\)
Nick: Not completely. Is it urgent?
Pauline: It is, rather. John’s on my back to get the quarterly report done by Friday.
Nick: Give me a couple of hours and I’ll see what I can do. Shall I mail them when they’re ready?
Pauline: Please. I’d be really grateful. Although our computers might be down for a while this afternoon. We’re having an upgrade done. You can probably hear the IT people chattering in the background.\(^3\)
Nick: Good luck! These things usually take a lot longer than they say they will.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>back: be on sb.’s ~</th>
<th>jmdm. im Nacken sitzen</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>chatter</td>
<td>sich unterhalten</td>
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<tr>
<td>down: be ~</td>
<td>außer Betrieb sein</td>
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<td>Kunstgalerie</td>
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<td>EDV-Leute</td>
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<td>Quartalsbericht</td>
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<td>rather</td>
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<td>sales figures</td>
<td>Umsatzzahlen</td>
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<tr>
<td>upgrade: do an ~</td>
<td>hier: neue Software-</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>versionen installieren</td>
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<tr>
<td>urgent</td>
<td>dringend</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Pauline: That’s right. By the way, have you heard anything from Ali about how his new job is going in Planning?4c
Nick: Haven’t heard a word. I must give him a call.
Pauline: Well, give him my best. So, I’ll expect a mail from you this afternoon — and I’ll keep my fingers crossed our system is up and running when you send it.
Nick: OK. Nice talking to you, Pauline. Bye.
Pauline: Bye, Nick.

20. Exercises: small talk techniques

a. Listen to key phrases for making small talk from the dialogue “using small talk”. Refer to notes 1–4.

b. Listen to key phrases for switching topics from the dialogue “using small talk”. Refer to notes a–c.

c. Use the instructions given to switch topics in the following conversation.
Rebecca: Trial Systems, Rebecca Sheldon speaking.
Pauline: Hello, Rebecca. This is Pauline.
Rebecca: Hello, Pauline.

Say you weren’t sure if she was going to be there.
➔ I wasn’t sure if you were going to be there.
You had said something about taking some time off work.
Rebecca: Oh. No, that’s next week. I can’t wait!
I’m going to spend three days on my balcony, reading that nature book you lent me.
Pauline: I think you’ll enjoy it, Rebecca. It’s a very good read.

Ask for the contract she typed up.
➔ Anyway, the reason I’m calling is that I need that contract you typed up.
Rebecca: I’ll put the contract in the mail tomorrow.
Pauline: Thanks, Rebecca. I appreciate it.

Ask about Rebecca’s brother,
➔ By the way, have you heard from your brother lately?

give him my best grüß ihn von mir
I appreciate it das finde ich wirklich nett
keep one’s fingers crossed die Daumen drücken
read Lektüre
type sth. up etw. komplett abtippen; hier: maschinell erstellen
up and running: be (wieder) laufen
21. Dialogues: welcoming visitors

**Step one: greeting visitors**
**Host:** Come in.
**Visitor:** Hello.
**Host:** Mr Matthews? Nice to meet you. I’m Heather Miller. Welcome to Artan.
**Visitor:** Thank you. Nice to meet you too.

**Step two: making visitors feel comfortable**
**Host:** May I take your coat?
**Visitor:** Oh yes, thank you.
**Host:** Please take a seat. Would you like some tea or coffee?
**Visitor:** I’d love a glass of water if I may.
**Host:** Certainly.

**Step three: asking about travel and hotel**
**Host:** How was the flight?
**Visitor:** Oh there were the usual hold-ups at Heathrow, but I was only 45 minutes late in the end.
**Host:** Oh, dear. But it could have been worse, I suppose. Where are you staying?

**Visitor:** Right in the centre of town, at the Sheraton.

**Step four: asking about travel experience, offering help**
**Host:** Is this your first time here?
**Visitor:** Yes it is, actually.
**Host:** If you have time, I could show you around the city a little after our meeting.
**Visitor:** Oh, that would be nice!

**Step five: discussing general business**
**Host:** So how’s business going?
**Visitor:** We can’t complain. But the strength of the pound has hit us a bit.
**Host:** John Myers, your local sales rep, was saying the same thing last month.
**Visitor:** Oh, John. Yes, right. John and I worked together in purchasing for a couple of years. Nice guy.
**Host:** Yes, he is.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>guy</th>
<th>Typ</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hold-up</td>
<td>Verzögerung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>host</td>
<td>Gastgeber(in)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>if I may</td>
<td>bitte</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oh, dear</td>
<td>oje</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>purchasing</td>
<td>Einkaufsabteilung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sales rep(representative)</td>
<td>Außendienstmitarbeiter(in)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Step six: getting down to business

Host: OK. Shall we get started, then? We’ve got quite a lot to get through this afternoon. Then perhaps we could have a look around town and have a bite to eat together.

Visitor: Sounds good to me. Shall we agree on the agenda and then get going?

Step three: asking about travel and hotel

■ Ask Mr Matthews about his flight.

→ How was the flight?

Visitor: Oh there were the usual hold-ups at Heathrow, but I was only 45 minutes late in the end.

■ Show empathy and ask Mr Matthews where he’s staying.

→ Oh, dear. But it could have been worse, I suppose. Where are you staying?

Visitor: Right in the centre of town, at the Sheraton.

22. Exercise: using the six steps

Use the instructions given to welcome visitors.

Step one: greeting visitors

■ Say hello to your visitor, Mr Matthews, and welcome him. Use your own name and your company’s name.

→ Mr Matthews? Nice to meet you. I’m Heather Miller. Welcome to Artan.

Visitor: Thank you. Nice to meet you too.

Step two: making visitors feel comfortable

■ Make your visitor feel comfortable by offering to take his coat.

→ May I take your coat?

Visitor: Oh yes, thank you.

■ Invite Mr Matthews to sit down, and offer him refreshments.

→ Please take a seat. Would you like some tea or coffee?

Visitor: I’d love a glass of water if I may.

Table:

- agenda: Tagesordnung
- bite to eat: kleiner Imbiss
- empathy: Mitgefühl
- get going: loslegen
- get started: anfangen
- refreshments: Getränke
Step four: asking about travel experience, offering help
■ Ask Mr Matthews if he has been here before.
→ Is this your first time here?
Visitor: Yes it is, actually.
■ Offer to act as a guide.
→ If you have time, I could show you around the city a little after our meeting.
Visitor: Oh, that would be nice!

Step five: discussing general business
■ Ask a general question about business.
→ So how’s business going?
Visitor: We can’t complain. But the strength of the pound has hit us a bit.
■ Say you have heard the same thing recently from John Myers, the local sales rep.
→ John Myers, your local sales rep, was saying the same thing last month.

Step six: getting down to business
■ Suggest you start the meeting.
→ OK. Shall we get started then? We’ve got quite a lot to get through this afternoon.

Offer to look around town afterwards and get something to eat.
→ Then perhaps we could have a look around town and have a bite to eat together.
Visitor: Sounds good to me. Shall we agree on the agenda and then get going?
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