

Business meetings in English: Part 1 – Introductions and Review



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Conducting or participating in a business meeting can be daunting, especially if English is not your native language. Have you ever been in a situation where you are in a meeting and you are unable to say what you mean clearly and concisely, or where you have been unable to interrupt others to make a point? In the first of this three-part series on business meetings, we will focus on introductions and reviewing past business.

Start the meeting by introducing yourself and welcoming any guests who are also participating in the meeting. As part of the introduction you should also articulate the purpose of the meeting by stating its aims. The first item of business is usually listing those who are unable to attend in the form of apologies.

Introductions

If we are all here, let's get started/ start the meeting

Good morning / Good afternoon

May I introduce myself? I'm / My name is... from [department/company]

First of all, I'd like you to / please join me in welcoming...

I'll like to introduce... from [company]

Meeting objectives

We're here today to discuss...

The purpose of this meeting is to...

I've called this meeting in order to...

By the end of this meeting, I'd like to have...

Apologies

I'm afraid..., [name] couldn't make it today. She/He is in...

I have received apologies for the absence of [name], who is in [place]

[List of names] send their apologies for their absence.



The next part of the meeting is used to review minutes from the last meeting to recap on what items were discussed and to check on the progress of any projects or developments. Those responsible for following-up on particular items should be prepared to give a short briefing on the latest developments or whether something has been finalized when the chair of the meeting asks about them. Also, it is usual practice for the chair of meeting to enquire whether there is any other business that was not raised during the review before moving on to the agenda for the current meeting.

Reviewing minutes

First let's review the report from the last meeting, which was held on [date]

The minutes from our last meeting, which was on [date], covered...

Some of the highlights from our last meeting on [date] include...

Asking about recent developments

[Name], can you tell us how ABC project is coming along?

[Name], what are the latest developments on ABC project?

[Name], have you completed the report on the new proposal for XYZ?

Has everyone received a copy of the company's annual report for 2009?

Other business

Is there any other business?

Does anyone else have anything they want to raise?

If there are no further developments, I'd like to move on to today's topic.

So, if there is nothing else we need to discuss, let's move on to today's agenda.

Right then, let's get down to business.

In the next issue, we will focus on discussing the items on the agenda, providing opinions, requesting information and asking for clarification.