
UNIT 1 GREETINGS AND INTRODUCTION

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1.0 OBJECTIVES

In this Unit you will:

- learn about formal and informal greetings;
- attempt activities based on greetings in other cultures;
- practice formulaic language used in introductions and greetings;
- read about etiquette in India;
- introduce yourself as well as others;
- present a brief profile of yourself;
- analyze the nuances of English pronunciation with regard to sound and spelling;
- know what is small talk;
- learn the importance of small talk in work situations;
- learn how to prepare for small talk;
- select suitable topics for small talk;
- practice building business relationships through small talk;
- select suitable language for small talk;
- learn how to make effective small talk/social conversation;
- use contractions in spoken language; and
- practice negation.

1.1 WARM UP – GREETINGS

Activity 1

- i) How do you introduce yourself to a new colleague at work?
- ii) How do you greet your colleagues when you meet them?
 - a) at home?
 - b) at a party?
 - c) at a get-together?
 - d) in a formal meeting?
- iii) **Find someone who...**

This activity will help you to get introduced to other members of your study group. Your trainer will ask you to pick up slips of paper from a pool. Move around in the group and find someone who does or likes what's written on the slip.

Find someone who has no work experience.	Find someone who likes to live in a joint family.
Find someone who doesn't like cricket.	Find someone who is a member of an environment group.
Find someone whose native place is the same as yours.	Find someone who writes with his/her left hand.
Find someone who knows four languages or more.	Find someone whose name begins with T.
Find someone who plays a musical instrument.	Find someone who is a sportsperson.

1.2 LANGUAGE FOCUS – GREETINGS

Activity 2

- 1) Now listen to these greetings and state whether they are formal, semi-formal or informal. Check your responses with the 'Answers Section'.
 - i) Hi!
 - ii) How do you do?
 - iii) How are you doing?
 - iv) What's up?
 - v) Hello!
 - vi) How are you?
 - vii) Good Morning / Afternoon / Evening
 - viii) Good to see you.
 - ix) How's it going?
 - x) How are things?



2) Match the responses with the greetings:

	Greeting		Response
i	Hi	a	Very well, thank you. And you?
ii	How do you do?	b	Hello / hi
iii	How are you doing?	c	Good to see you too.
iv	What's up?	d	How do you do?
v	Hello	e	Nothing much.
vi	How are you?	f	Good Morning / afternoon / evening
vii	Good Morning / afternoon / evening	g	Alright. How about you?
viii	Good to see you	h	Hi / hello

3) **Introducing Yourself**

*I'm Anjana Iyer..
My name's Anjana Iyer.*

Do not say

Myself Anjana Iyer.

There are a number of phrases that are commonly used to introduce strangers.

For Example:

I don't think you've met Radhika?

Can you think of at least two other ways in which you can introduce someone to the others? Check the 'Answers Section' for more alternatives.

4) Here are some typical **corporate situations** where you need to greet people. Match the situation to the appropriate dialogue box. Now practice the conversation with your partner.

Situations:

- A Receiving a foreign customer at the airport
- B Running into someone you know at a conference
- C After being introduced to someone at a business event e.g. Trade Fair
- D Meeting someone in a restaurant for a business lunch to which you've been invited
- E Receiving an important visitor in your cabin

Dialogue Boxes

i) You: How are you? I hope I didn't keep you waiting too long!
B: Fine thanks. I arrived a couple of minutes ago.
You: Nice place. Have you ordered anything yet?

ii) A: Hello!
You: Oh Hi! Imagine running into you like this.
A: Yes, it's so good to see you after such a long time. How have you been?
You: Great! How about you?

iii)

You: How do you do, Mr. Shwartz?
Shwartz: How do you do?
You: Did you have a comfortable flight?
Shwartz: Not too bad, thank you.

iv)

You: Good morning Mr. Iyer. I've been waiting to see you.
Iyer: It's good to see you too.
You: How are you?
Iyer: I'm fine thank you.

v)

You: It's a pleasure to meet you Mr. Chhabra. How do you do?
Chhabra: Fine thank you. I'm pleased to meet you too.

- 5) When you meet someone the first time in a formal situation, it is common to greet the person with "How do you do?" the correct response to this is also "How do you do." However, the stress pattern is different in both cases. The stress is marked for you in the given box:

A: How do you do?
B: How do you do?

Alternatively the response can be:

A: How do you do?
B: Fine thank you. How do you do?

If you find "How do you do?" too formal you may choose to greet someone straight away with "Pleased to meet you." In this case the response would be "Pleased to meet you too." The stress pattern will be as follows:

A: Pleased to meet you, Mr. Raghavan.
B: I'm pleased to meet you too. OR
B: Pleased to meet you too.

Here is a short introductory conversation:

Victor: Sunil, I'd like you to meet Radhika.
Sunil: Pleasure to meet you.
Radhika: How do you do?
Sunil: Fine thank you. How do you do?
Victor: Radhika works for ...

A variation is also "It's a pleasure to meet you." or "Pleased to meet you." or "I'm glad to meet you."

Victor: Sunil, I'd like you to meet Radhika.
 Sunil: It's a pleasure to meet you.
 Radhika: How do you do?
 Victor: Radhika works for ...

Victor: Sunil, I'd like you to meet Radhika.
 Sunil: Pleasure to meet you.
 Radhika: Pleased to meet you too.
 Victor: Radhika works for ...

Never ask anyone 'What is your good name'. Instead you may say 'May I know your name please' or 'I don't think we've met. I'm Radhika. How about you?'

Can you now complete these expressions?

- i) How you do?
- ii) to meet you.
- iii) It's a to meet you.
- iv) like you to meet Radhika.

Check your responses with the script above to ensure that you've got these expressions right.

It is common to greet people formally according to the time of the day. 'Good morning' is used until noon after which one uses 'good afternoon' until 4 pm. Anytime after 4 pm is 'good evening' even if the time is not evening but night. 'Good night' is used at leave taking after the evening.

6) Greetings are generally followed by introductions where you either introduce yourself or the person/s accompanying you. Choice of appropriate language is important in these situations.

In social situations, a man is traditionally introduced to a woman. However, in the business world introductions are based on a person's rank or position in an organization. The person with highest-ranking position is introduced first and the others follow in order of their position. If you introduce two people of equal rank to each other, introduce the one you know less well to the one you know better.

Look at these dialogues and mark the words used to describe what you or someone else does. Language may vary according to the degree of formality required in a situation. Note the differences in the two given dialogues.

- I) You : I'd like to introduce you to our Managing Director, Mr. Sandeep Mehta.
 Ms. Nigam : How are you, Mr. Mehta?
 Mr. Mehta : Fine thank you. Pleased to meet you.
 Ms. Nigam : I'm pleased to meet you too.
 You : Ms. Nigam is in Sales. She looks after our clients from the South.
- II) You : Benoy, this is Sunita. She's part of our sales team.
 Benoy : Hi! Glad to meet you. I'm assistant to the Finance Manager.

A few helpful tips:

- 1) Americans shake hands when first introduced to new people. Rarely do they shake hands while parting. In India it is customary to shake hands as part of leave taking.
- 2) When someone pays you a compliment, it should be accepted graciously with a thank you rather than a denial. A Westerner would accept the compliment whereas an Indian is normally modest about it.
- 3) Titles are highly valued in some cultures including India. Advanced degrees are listed on business cards and mentioned in introductions. This must be kept in mind during introductions.
- 4) Greetings and leave taking generally follow a hierarchical order in India.
- 5) Indians generally do not use first names in business, even in conversations. This is not the case in the US and England. However, most European countries prefer the formal surname and some, for example Germans, are particular about the use of the business title during greetings and introductions.
- 6) In India 'sir' is frequently used to address someone in authority. It is not so in the US.

1.3 READING COMPREHENSION

Read the text below and then answer the questions that follow:

Indian social etiquette is a strange mix of Western and Indian culture. This is largely because of British influence during the colonial period which continued in post colonial India. Hence India is very much influenced by the British style of etiquette which is rather formal and somewhat conservative.

On the other hand, India is a multicultural society where religion, region, caste, language, tradition and custom play a large role in the kind of social etiquette prevalent in different parts of the country. These have an impact on the nature of greetings and introductions as well as the degree of formality used in social and business situations.

In addition to this is the impact of globalization, which is largely felt in the metropolitan cities. With changes in lifestyles as well as business environment, a synthesized form of social behavior and etiquette has emerged which is more in keeping with international practices.

Having said this, it must be admitted that the influence of native culture continues to have its impact even in these environs. Hence, though a great deal of commonality can be seen in the social etiquette of Delhi, Mumbai, Calcutta, Bengaluru and Chennai, one may also observe many differences in the way people address and greet each other.

One may easily conclude that there is no one correct way of introducing and greeting. To communicate effectively and strike the right note at the very beginning, it is advisable to study the social etiquette of different regions so that you may be able to make a good impression from the word go.

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) The most appropriate title for the passage is:
 - i) The impact of globalization on social etiquette
 - ii) Social etiquette in India
 - iii) Effective communication

- 2) State whether these statements are true or false:
 - i) Indian social etiquette is very different from that of the West.
 - ii) Indians are largely formal in their social etiquette.
 - iii) All Indians greet each other in the same way.
 - iv) The metropolitan cities of India are more influenced by global trends in social etiquette.
 - v) It is advisable to follow your own rules in social etiquette.
 - vi) Appropriate greetings and introductions can help us make a good first impression.

- 3) Find words from the passage which have similar meanings to these:
 - i) traditional
 - ii) part of the British Empire
 - iii) belonging to several cultures
 - iv) large and important
 - v) belonging to a specified region or place

Check Your Progress 2

Here is a passage on the etiquette followed in India while introducing people. Some words are missing in the paragraph. See if you can fill them in. In case of difficulty you may look into the 'Answers Section' to find the right word.



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Indian (i)_____ considers it important to use a person's title wherever it is possible. (ii)_____ such as doctor or professor are always used. Titles are so highly valued that (iii)_____ degrees such as Ph. D. are listed on business cards and may be mentioned in introductions.

It is also advisable to use (iv)_____ titles such as "Mr.", "Mrs.", or "Miss" for those without professional titles. One uses (v)_____ names only when the person you are speaking to invites you to use his / her first name. You may try 'Sir/ Ma'am for (vi)_____ and 'Uncle/ Aunty' (or Chachaji, Mausiji etc.) for (vii)_____ people in social situations. For a stranger who is not very old, it is better to suffix the name with 'ji', as a mark of (viii)_____.

(ix) _____ is often determined by a person's age, university education, caste, and profession. It is not uncommon to find people talking about their educational qualifications as well as the colleges or Universities they come from when they (x) _____ themselves. Government employment is considered to be more (xi) _____ than private business, although the scene is now changing.

As for greetings, men almost (xii) _____ shake hands with other men. Westernized Indian women may (xiii) _____ hands with foreign men, and sometimes with Indian men too. But by and large most women (xiv) _____ the traditional *namaste*.

1.4 LISTENING AND SPEAKING — GREETINGS

Check Your Progress 3

- 1) Respond to the instructions and then compare your responses with the audio on the CD/Audio file (Tape script 1-3).
 - i) Introduce yourself
 - ii) Greet someone formally
 - iii) Introduce your colleague / companion
 - iv) Enquire from your visitor about his / her journey

- 2) Now imagine that you are talking to a visitor. **You will hear her part of the conversation on audio.** You must respond to whatever she says. Speak after the beep. After you have spoken you will hear a sample response on the audio (Tape script 2).

Visitor : Good morning Mr. Siddiqui.
You :
Visitor : How are you?
You :
Visitor : I'm fine too. It's been long since we last met.
You :

- 3) You will now listen to two people talking about themselves and their work. Listen to the audio and complete the blanks (Tape script 3).

i) Name :
Name of Company :
Has been working since :
Job responsibility :
Likes :
Dislikes :

ii) Name :
Works as :
Working hours :
Takes care of :
.....
Likes :

Practice your own introduction using the following clues:

- Name:
- What you do:
- Where you study / work:
- What are your job responsibilities (if applicable):
-
- What you like about your work / studies:.....
- What you don't like about your work / studies:.....

1.5 SAMPLES OF GREETING

Starting a conversation involves making people feel relaxed and comfortable. You may have to start a conversation while welcoming visitors. And, when you don't know others at a meeting, party or social gathering, you may have to start a conversation.

Starting a conversation involves three steps:

- a) greeting;
- b) introducing yourself;
- c) asking after the other person's well-being.

The formulas for these are fixed and usually carry no literal meaning. We say 'Good morning' even if it is not a good morning and the answer for 'How are you?' is 'Fine, thanks,' even if you are not well. No one, except your close friends, really wants to know about your troubles. These are routine courtesies that are followed. The expression you use will vary according to your relationship.

Activity 3

Read the short pieces below and decide on the following for each dialogue:

- Where is the conversation taking place?
 - What is their relationship?
Strangers / friends / family / acquaintances / colleagues / neighbours
 - Underline the words/expressions that tell you about their relationship.
- 1) **Dixit** : What a pleasure to see you, Mr. Sharma. How are you keeping?
Sharma : Not bad. How are you doing, Mr. Dixit?
 - 2) **Nita** : Good morning. Welcome to Fergusson College, ma'am. The Seminar is in Room number 16 down this corridor.
 - 3) **KK** : Mr. Peter Walsh, How do you do? I'm Krishna Kumar, Personnel Officer. Welcome to BHEL.
PW : Thank you, Mr. Kumar. How do you do?
 - 4) **VS** : Good morning, Sir!
AR : Good morning, Vikram. I didn't see you in class yesterday. Are you keeping well?
VS : Yes Sir, thank you very much.

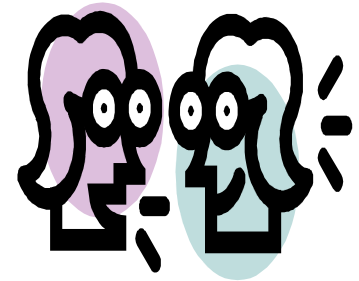
- 5) **AG** : Hi! I'm Amrita Gill. We've just moved into this locality.
RK : Hi! I'm Ravi Kant and this is Anu. Anu's in the ninth at Springdale's and I'm in the twelfth at Father Agnel. What about you?
- 6) **Students** : Good morning, ma'am.
Teacher : Good morning? It's well past 12 o'clock.
Students : Good afternoon, ma'am.
Teacher : Good afternoon. Sit down, please.
- 7) **Visitor** : Good evening, I have an appointment with David Lee.
Reception : Good evening, could you sit down for a moment? I'll find out whether Mr. Lee is in.
Visitor : Of course, I'm Ajay Makeja from ICICI.

1.6 SMALL TALK

1) What is small talk?

Small talk is a short conversation.

No, I think small talk is social talk before you talk shop.



What do you think? Well, move on and find out for yourself.

2) "Every Conversation is an Opportunity for Success"

- Debra Fine

- i) What is the importance of conversation in business?
- ii) How can good conversation lead to higher levels of success and achievement at work?

Think of the answers to these questions. In the course of this unit you will learn about the importance of effective and appropriate social conversation in business.

3) Read the statements given below. Decide which of them expresses your own point of view. Ask a friend or partner to do the same. Then discuss the reasons for your agreement/disagreement.

- i) "I never indulge in small talk. It's such a waste of time."
- ii) "Socializing is the art of breaking the ice and making friends."
- iii) "What we say and how we say is important because this reveals our personality."
- iv) "I love chatting with friends. It's such fun."

4) Here is a picture of two people who are greeting each other. It is evident that they are meeting for some business purpose. When you meet for work, it is important to have a short social conversation before you actually begin to talk shop. This is called small talk.

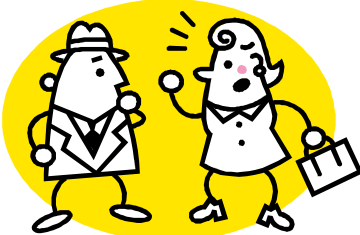
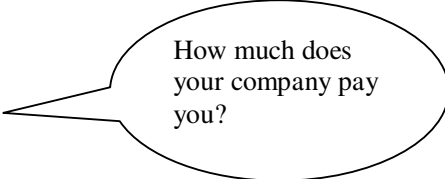


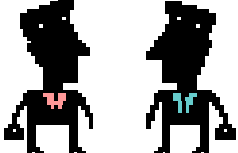
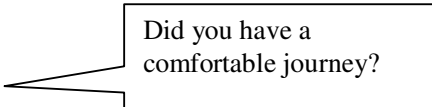
5) **So what do you now think is small talk?**


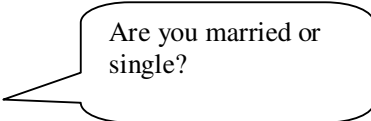
- Small talk is pleasant conversation about common interests.
- It is a prelude to a business conversation. It is meant to put people at ease before they get down to business.
- It helps to create a favourable environment for talking business.
- It may also help you to develop a better understanding of the person that you are doing business with.

Activity 4

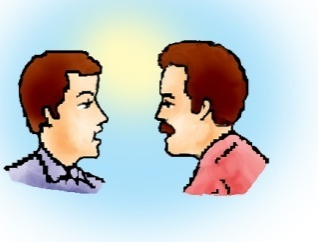
Take a look at these bits of conversation in the speech balloons and consider whether they are appropriate for small talk.

i)  

ii)  

iii)  

iv)



Is this your first visit
to Delhi?

Now check your responses with the ‘Answers Section’ and read about why some of these conversations are inappropriate for small talk.

Activity 5

Small talk with foreigners

What would you say in the following situations as part of small talk after you have greeted the visitors? Work with a partner and simulate the conversation.

- i) A business visitor has just arrived from the US. You receive him at the airport.
- ii) You receive an important British client in your cabin.
- iii) An Australian business associate has just arrived from Sydney. It is 01.00 am in India when you meet him at the airport.
- iv) An American business associate has just joined you for lunch in a restaurant?
- v) An Australian visitor has arrived to take a look at your factory.

Take a look at the samples given in the ‘Answers Section’ and match them with your topics. Remember that there is no single right answer. The samples in the ‘Answers Section’ are indicators of what is considered appropriate in each of the given situations keeping in mind the background and culture of the visitor.

Activity 6

Take a look at these topics and match them to the flags of the countries where they would be appropriate as topics for small talk:



- i) Baseball
- ii) Cricket
- iii) Theatre
- iv) Going to the Beach / board riding
- v) Lawn Tennis
- vi) Schools (meaning colleges you have studied from)

1.7 READING – SMALL TALK

Read this text on small talk and answer the questions that follow:

- 1) Small talk requires important social skills which are highly valued at the workplace. It helps to break the ice before important business meetings and events.

2) Many people are comfortable talking about business but do not know how to begin a conversation at business meetings appropriately. This is mostly because they do not know what to talk about. It may also be because they are not confident about their language. Hence both confidence about what to say and how to say it are essential for effective small talk.

3) It is helpful to keep these tips in mind about small talk:

Be aware of the type of person / people you will be meeting. Some prior preparation can be extremely helpful. If the visitor happens to be from a region, state or country other than yours then look up information about the place s/he comes from. This can easily be done over the Internet. Knowledge of a few words belonging to the language of the visitor can be of additional help. Your visitor will appreciate your special interest and your conversation will then be more meaningful.

4) During your conversation it is advisable to stay away from personal beliefs and controversial topics. These include your religious beliefs, value system, political convictions, affiliations and connections.

5) Also do not invade the personal space of the visitor by asking about personal matters like whether s/he is married or not, how many children s/he has, what they are doing, her/his salary, age etc. Subjects like weather, sports, entertainment are safe subjects.

6) In the course of your initial conversation you may be able to identify some areas of common interest. Once you have a subject that interests both of you, keep to it! You can do this in a number of ways: talking about travel, talking about the school or friend you have in common, talking about the differences between your culture and the new culture, without passing judgments on which one is better.

7) And most importantly, be a good listener. Don't get so carried away with your preparation for the meeting and your ability to communicate that you don't listen. Listening carefully will help you understand and encourage those speaking to you.

8) In some situations, you might be nervous or uncomfortable and not know how to begin. In such cases, letting others state their opinions will improve the quality of the discussion - and give you time to think of an answer!

Check Your Progress 4

Now after reading these paragraphs can you answer the following questions?

1) Match these subtitles with the appropriate paragraphs of the reading passage which are numbered.

- i) common ground
- ii) ideologies
- iii) don't get personal
- iv) objective of small talk
- v) difficulties encountered in small talk
- vi) overcoming anxiety
- vii) paying attention to what you are being told
- viii) doing your homework

- 2) Find words / expressions in the text with similar meanings to these.
- i) at ease
 - ii) in advance
 - iii) find out
 - iv) intrude upon
 - v) harmless
 - vi) express

Safe and unsafe topics for small talk

The ability to make 'small talk' is highly valued. Though it may appear to be simple, but in reality, many people find it extremely difficult to handle because, unlike business conversations, where you are in control of the content, in small talk you can't be sure about what may be considered as appropriate. Here are some widely accepted topics:

- Sports – current matches or games, favorite teams, etc. Be careful about the choice of sport though. You cannot talk about cricket to an American just as you cannot discuss baseball within India.
- Any major activities that are going on at the moment.
- Current affairs – recent incidents.
- Hobbies
- Weather – this may sound boring, but it can help to break the ice!
- Family – general questions, not questions about private matters – this is a common topic in India.
- Media – films, books, magazines, websites etc.
- Holidays – where, when, etc.
- Home town – where do you come from / grew up; how is it different/ similar to this town.
- Job – once again, general questions not too specific.
- Latest fashion and trends.
- Celebrities.
- Festivals – common in India.

And here are some taboo topics that you'd like to avoid.

- Salary - how much do you make?
- Politics - including political ideologies / philosophies
- Marital status
- Age
- Intimate relationships
- Religion
- Death
- Financial - related to salary or the cost of anything you possess including your house
- Sales – Don't try to sell something to someone you have just met

Building relationships in business

In a country like India building a relationship is important even in business. Indians tend to deal favourably with those they know and trust – even at the expense of lucrative deals. It is vital that a good working relationship is founded with any prospective partner. Small talk and social conversations can go a long way in helping to build a favourable relationship. In addition to this,



demonstrating strong business acumen, and at a personal level, i.e. relating to your partner and exhibiting the positive traits of trustworthiness and honour would contribute greatly to a conducive relationship.

Most meetings start with a great deal of getting-to-know-you talk. In fact, it is quite possible that no business will be discussed at the first meeting. This can be quite problematic for people from other cultures, particularly the West.

Indians are in awe of famous people, particularly from the world of cricket and cinema. Hence celebrities, who are frequently used for advertising goods and services, can make a good topic for social conversations. Also there are close links between sport, films and business. Many business luminaries befriend stars or sponsor events. The recent bidding of cricket teams by business tycoons and film stars amounting to crores of rupees is indicative of the close links between sports, films and business in India.

Check Your Progress 5

Based on the tips given in the above text, what advice would you give to a foreigner who wants to do business with someone in India?

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Body language

Appropriate body language is an essential part of communication. In India the head is considered the seat of the soul. Never touch someone else’s head, not even to pat the hair of a child.

Beckoning someone with the palm up and wagging one finger can be construed as an insult. Standing with your hands on your hips will be interpreted as an angry, aggressive posture. Hence both of these must be avoided.

Whistling is impolite and winking, which is acceptable in some cultures, may be interpreted as either an insult or a sexual proposition in India.

Never point your feet at a person. Feet are considered unclean. If your shoes or feet touch another person, apologize.

Indians are less sensitive to personal space and often use the touch to communicate warmth or intimacy. This is in contrast to many countries where an elbow length or even an arm's length is considered suitable.

Check Your Progress 6

Make a list of the do's and don'ts from the above text on suitable body language in India.

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1.8 LISTENING AND SPEAKING – SMALL TALK

Listen to five speakers telling you about how they prepare and conduct themselves at business meetings or events (Tape script 1). Pause the CD after each speaker has spoken and then express your agreement/ disagreement with them by imagining that you are in conversation with them.

Activity 7

- 1) Now listen to the audios again and match what each speaker says with the statements given below:
 - i) This speaker displays good social etiquette by being attentive.
 - ii) This speaker believes that information is the key to effective conversation.
 - iii) This speaker relies on humour in conversation.
 - iv) This is the speaker who takes the initiative.
 - v) This speaker likes to prepare for small talk in accordance with the people he is going to meet.

Activity 8

Now listen to some information on the social etiquette of Australians (Tape script 2) and answer the given questions:

Put a tick mark against the statements that are true according to the speaker.

- i) It is important to keep ample time for small talk with Australians.
- ii) Taking the trouble to become acquainted with local conditions and issues will help you to win approval and acceptance with them.
- iii) Australians have a passion for indoor activities.
- iv) Australians are easy going and often take the initiative to start a conversation.
- v) It is best to avoid personal questions with them.

Activity 9

(Tape script-3) Listen to **Conversation 1** and identify what is wrong with the conversation here.

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Now listen to **Conversation 2** and state why the second one is better than the first.

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Match your analysis with the one given in the 'Answers Section'.

1.9 LANGUAGE FOCUS – SMALL TALK

When you meet people you can begin a conversation with them by doing any one of these three things.

You can make an observation.

Lovely weather! Isn't it? It's too cold for this time of the year. The trains usually run late this season because of the fog. Attendance for the event seems better than last year. (at a business event)

I've worked at several places in M.P. I like watching reality shows. How about you? I enjoy playing / watching cricket? How about you?
--

You can ask a question.

What do you like best about living here? Which is the best place you have travelled to? How often do you come to Meerut? Is this your first visit here? Did you have a comfortable journey? What do you think of.....? What is your take on.....? Have you heard of.....?
--

You can reveal something about yourself.

Activity 10

Now can you complete these questions / statements which have been begun for you?

- i) How often do you.....?
- ii) Do you like
- iii) What is your favourite.....?
- iv) Where did you first.....?
- v) Would you like some.....?

Activity 11

1) Complete this paragraph by filling up the gaps with suitable words from the box.

develop	impact	overcome	conversation	influences
shyness	master	professional	difficult	crucial
recognize	break	discovered	successful	perceive
start				

Small talk is _____ in any relationship. Everyday conversation can make or _____ relationships in our personal and _____ lives. Unfortunately, most people don't realize how important small talk is, and hence do not do anything to _____ or improve this skill. Developing the ability to make small talk is not as _____ as many other work related skills once we _____ its importance and worth.

A Stanford University School of Business study showed its _____ on business success. It tracked MBA's 10 years after graduation, and _____ that grade point averages had no bearing on their success – but _____ did. Most _____ were those who could make conversation with anyone – from strangers, to secretaries, to bosses to customers.

Small talk has a great impact on your success in 'personal' relationships, because it _____ how others see you in terms of intelligence and confidence. Most people _____ good conversationalists as more intelligent and confident.

Despite the importance of small talk, most people don't do it well. One major reason is _____ and another common reason is not knowing how to _____ a conversation. There are also some who do not have anything to say. All of these difficulties can be _____, once you decide to _____ this art.

1.10 WRITING – SMALL TALK

Check Your Progress 7

- 1) Expand these tips on small talk into paragraphs of at least 4 to 5 sentences. This will also serve as a revision for some of the hints that you have come across in the earlier part of the unit. Now compare the paragraphs prepared by you with the sample answers given in the 'Answers Section'.

- i) Think ahead
- ii) Have something to say
- iii) Observe and listen

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2) Write about 100 words each on at least one of these topics.

- i) Conversation is an art
- ii) The burden of conversation
- iii) Building relationships through small talk

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1.11 SPEAKING – SMALL TALK

Activity 12

Imagine that you are B and A is having a conversation with you. Complete this dialogue with suitable questions / statements.

- A: How are you?
B:
- B:
A: I'm fine too.
- A: It's good to see you after such a long time.
B:
- A: So did you have a comfortable journey?
B:
- A:
B: I last visited this place six months ago.
A: Have you been following the cricket series?
B:
A: True. I've been enjoying the matches too.

You may match your answers with the ones given in the 'Answers Section'.

Activity 13

Discuss the importance of these tips on small talk with your study partner:

- i) Be yourself
- ii) Smile
- iii) Be a good listener
- iv) Do not force the conversation

1.12 GRAMMAR

In this unit, we will learn Contractions and Negatives.

A) Contractions

Contractions are words that have been shortened. This is done by missing out letters. An apostrophe replaces the missing letters.

For example:

doesn't	for	<i>does not</i>
we'll	for	<i>we will</i>
it's	for	<i>it is</i>
they're	for	<i>they are</i>

Contractions are generally used in speech and informal writing. They are also frequently used in emails.

Check Your Progress 8

- 1) Can you write these words in the contracted form:
- i) I am
 - ii) She is

- iii) We are
- iv) We have
- v) You have
- vi) I would
- vii) You would
- viii) Do not
- ix) Are not
- x) Should not
- xi) Should have
- xii) Need not
- xiii) It is
- xiv) That is

We will now see how they are used in **Introductions and Greetings**.

I'm (I am) Pawan Dhingra. **I'd** (I would) like to introduce you to my colleague, Preeti Shukla. **She's** (She is) from Marketing too. **We've** (We have) been working together for two years.

- 2) Here are some expressions commonly used in introductions and greetings. Rewrite them using appropriate contracted forms.
- i) I am Niti Wadhvani.
 - ii) He is my colleague Rahman Siddiqui.
 - iii) We are working together on your project.
 - iv) We have almost completed the first phase of the project.
 - v) We would like to show you the plan for the second phase.
 - vi) My name is Gagan Srivastava.
 - vii) What is your name?
 - viii) I am pleased to meet you.
 - ix) I would like you to meet my colleague Sadhna Suman.
 - x) She is my senior in the department.
 - xi) We are both from the same college.
 - xii) I am very pleased to meet you both.
 - xiii) It has been a pleasure.
 - xiv) What is your program for the evening?
 - xv) Let us meet in the evening for dinner.
 - xvi) Sonu is ill.
 - xvii) What is the matter?

B) Negatives

- To make negatives, we put *not* or *n't* after an auxiliary verb. (be, have, may etc.). Example:
They are *not* (*aren't*) confident about their language.

- If there is no other auxiliary verb, we use *do*. Example:
 Positive: They *know* what to talk about.
 Negative: They *do not (don't)* know what to talk about.
 Negative: He *does not (doesn't)* know what to talk about.
- Another type of negation is called affixal. Here we add a prefix or an affix to a word, which makes the sentence negative. Example:
 Positive:your conversation will then be more meaningful.
 Negative: ...your conversation will then be *meaningless*.
 Negative: ...in some situations, you might be nervous or *uncomfortable*.
 Negative:whistling is *impolite*.

Check Your Progress 9

1) Make negatives of the following sentences using not:

- i) Vinay opened the door.
.....
- ii) You should reply to her email.
.....
- iii) She is writing a novel these days.
.....
- iv) He works every Sunday.
.....
- v) Subhash became a dentist.
.....
- vi) Sudha has time.
.....
- vii) He has a cold.
.....
- viii) Mohan has a chance of winning this match.
.....

2) Add prefixes to the following words to make them negatives. You may use any of these prefixes (un-, in-, dis-, non-, ir-, it-, im-)

i)	Legal	
ii)	Regular	
iii)	Balance	
iv)	Complete	
v)	Able	
vi)	Equality	
vii)	Equal	

viii)	Just	
ix)	Justice	
x)	Similar	
xi)	Unity	
xii)	Violence	

1.13 LET US SUM UP

In this unit you practiced how to introduce yourselves and others in formal and informal situations. You also learnt to greet with the right intonation and stress. You learnt some words pertaining to personal, social or professional qualities. In the grammar section, you revised 'contractions' and negation.

In this unit you also realized the importance of engaging in social interaction before talking shop. Successful people are those who can go beyond business to establish relationships with people. We gave you some phrases in Language Focus which will help you in carrying out a conversation. The Writing section as well as the Listening and Speaking sections gives you further tips in this area. Please listen to the CD / audio file (available on our IGNOUs' website under BCA programme) when attempting the listening and speaking activities.

1.14 ANSWERS

Activity 1

- 1) i) May I introduce myself, I am Reeta Rani Paliwal. I am the Director of the School of Humanities, IGNOU.
- ii) a) at home – very informally (hug)
 b) at a party – more formally
 c) at a get-together – formally
 d) formal meeting – very formally

iii) **Find someone who.....**

The trainer may print out and cut up or make slips and have students pick up one each.

Activity 2

- 1) i) Informal
 ii) Formal
 iii) Semi-formal
 iv) Informal
 v) Semi-formal
 vi) Semi-formal
 vii) Formal
 viii) Semi-formal
 ix) Informal
 x) Semi-formal

2)

	Greeting		Response
i)	Hi	b	Hello / hi
ii)	How do you do?	d	How do you do?
iii)	How are you doing?	g	Alright. How about you?
iv)	What's up?	e	Nothing much.
v)	Hello	h	Hi / hello
vi)	How are you?	a	Very well, thank you. And you?
vii)	Good Morning / Afternoon / Evening	f	Good Morning / Afternoon / Evening
viii)	Good to see you	c	Good to see you too.

- 3) I don't think you know Ridhima.
May I introduce you to Ridhima?
I'd like to introduce you to Ridhima.
Sunil, do you know Ridhima?
Sunil, I'd like you to meet Ridhima.

4) Corporate situations

- A – iii
- B – ii
- C – v
- D – i
- E – iv

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) ii (Social etiquette in India)
- 2) i – False; ii – True; iii – False; iv – True; v – False; vi – True
- 3) i – conservative; ii – colonial; iii– multicultural; iv – metropolitan;
v – native

Check Your Progress 2

- i) etiquette
- ii) Titles
- iii) advanced
- iv) courtesy
- v) first
- vi) strangers
- vii) familiar
- viii) respect
- ix) Status
- x) introduce
- xi) secure
- xii) always
- xiii) shake
- xiv) prefer

1.6 Listening and Speaking - Greetings

Tape script 1

- i) I'm Rohan Sharma.
- ii) How do you do?
- iii) Please meet my colleague Ms. Mohita Jain.
- iv) Did you have a comfortable journey?

Tape script 2

- Visitor: Good morning Mr. Siddiqui.
You: *Good Morning.*
Visitor: How are you?
You: *I'm fine thank you. And how about you?*
Visitor: I'm fine too. It's been long since we last met.
You: *Oh yes. It's been a few months.*

Tape script 3

- i) I am Sonia Parashar. I work in Phone as a Customer Relation officer. I joined the company in 2006 as a trainee. I got promoted this year. I'm responsible for looking after the customer needs in my area. If the users of our services have any problems, I listen to them and then take the necessary action to solve their problems. I enjoy dealing with different kinds of people and get a lot of satisfaction from being able to help them. What I don't like about my job is dealing with difficult customers who are not willing to listen to my explanation.
- ii) My name is Amit Sen. I work in a private bank as a cashier. The name of my bank is HFRC. My working hours are 9 am to 6 pm, six days a week. I often get late at work and reach home only by 8 pm or so. I handle a lot of cash. Hence I need to be very alert and careful all the time. However, I like my work. The work environment in my bank is good and my colleagues are very friendly and supportive.

Check Your Progress 3

3) Completed exercise:

- i) Name: *Sonia Parashar*
Name of Company: *Phone*
Has been working since: *2006*
Job responsibility: *looking after the customer needs, problem solving.*
Likes: *dealing with different kinds of people, helping people*
Dislikes: *dealing with difficult customers*
- ii) Name: *Amit Sen*
Works as: *cashier*
Working hours: *9 am to 6 pm*
Takes care of: *cash*
Likes: *work environment, colleagues who are very friendly and supportive.*

Activity 3

- 1) **Formal** situation like office or neighbourhood, could be colleagues or neighbours, who do not know each other well.
- 2) **Formal:** College. Student and a teacher.
- 3) **Formal:** Office. A BHEL personnel and a visitor.
- 4) **Formal:** Outside class. Teacher and student.
- 5) **Informal:** Neighbourhood. Teenagers, neighbours.
- 6) **Formal:** Classroom. Teacher and class.
- 7) **Formal:** Office. Meeting for the first time.

Activity 4

(i) and (iii) are inappropriate for small talk.

Topics like salaries and marital status invade the personal territory of people and hence are too personal to be asked.

Activity 5 Small talk with foreigners

- i) I hope you had a comfortable flight. / How was the flight? Were you able to get some sleep?
- ii) It is wonderful to see you again. I hope you are enjoying the sunshine of India, or is it too warm for you?
- iii) You must be tired after the long flight. Would you like to have some coffee or would you prefer to go to the hotel right away?
- iv) Have you tried any of the Indian cuisine so far? What would you like to have for lunch?
- v) Would you like something to drink before we set out? It's going to be a rather big tour of the work shop.

Activity 6

- i) Australia, USA
- ii) Australia and England
- iii) England and maybe Australia
- iv) Australia
- v) England, Australia and USA in that order
- vi) USA, England

Check Your Progress 4

- 1) Subtitles matched with the appropriate paragraphs of the reading passage.
 - i) common ground - para 6
 - ii) ideologies - para 4
 - iii) don't get personal - para 5
 - iv) objective of small talk - para 1
 - v) difficulties encountered in small talk - para 2
 - vi) overcoming anxiety - para 8
 - vii) paying attention to what you are being told - para 7
 - viii) doing your homework - para 3

2) Words/expressions in the text with similar meanings:

- i) at ease - **comfortable**
- ii) in advance - **prior**
- iii) find out – **look up**
- iv) intrude upon - **invade**
- v) harmless - **safe**
- vi) express - **communicate**

Check Your Progress 5

Indians like to invest time in building up a relationship with the person they do business with. Knowing a person helps them to build trust. Hence one must be willing to invest time with people in India, instead of hurrying them through business negotiations or deals.

It is also essential to understand the interests of Indians in areas like cricket, films etc., so that s/he may know what topics interest people in social conversations.

Check Your Progress 6

Do's:

- You may use the touch to communicate warmth
- Apologize if you touch someone with your foot by mistake

Don'ts:

- Do not touch anybody's head
- Do not call anyone with your palm up or by wagging your finger
- Do not stand upright with your hands on the hips
- Do not whistle or wink
- Do not point your feet at someone

1.10 Listening and Speaking (tape script-1) – Small Talk

- 1) **Speaker 1** – I usually keep a few short items - anecdotes, jokes, news stories or other interesting tidbits handy so that I can share them with others. I may or may not use them but at least I can draw upon this stock if the need arises.
- 3) **Speaker 2** – Whenever I have to go to a business event or a meeting, I spend at least 10 minutes thinking about what I have in common with the people who are going to be there. This helps me to think up topics for small talk.
- 4) **Speaker 3** – I think it is important to be well read. I like to take a look at local and national newspapers, magazines and trade publications. That gives me topics for small talk and conversation while entertaining business visitors.
- 5) **Speaker 4** – I'm usually the first to say "Hello." If I'm not sure the other person remembers me, I offer my name to ease the situation. For example, "Meera Shah? Simrat Khanna – good to see you again." I make sure I smile when I do this.
- 6) **Speaker 5** – I make sure I stay focused on my conversational partner by actively listening and giving feedback. I also keep my eye contact and never glance around the room while someone is talking to me.

Activity 7

Speaker 1	-	iii,	Speaker 2	-	v
Speaker 3	-	ii	Speaker 4	-	iv
Speaker 5	-	i			

1.10 Listening and Speaking (tape script-2) – Small Talk

Australians are forthright and direct and prefer to get down to business quickly, although some pleasantries can be exchanged at the beginning of a meeting so that the atmosphere is relaxed and some personal bonds are established. Most of them especially enjoy hearing appreciative comments about their country. Australians relish outdoor life and sport is a national obsession at all levels of society. Hence these are common topics for small talk or social conversation.

Australians are known for having an easygoing attitude and treating people in an informal manner. Whilst they may have an informal way of talking to one another, most would respect other people's privacy. Therefore, Australians may not necessarily talk to you first, as they would not like to intrude. It may be up to you to make the first approach. They are also reluctant to ask personal questions, or offer advice unless they have been asked.

Activity 8

(ii) and (v) are right. The rest are wrong statements.

1.10 Listening and Speaking (tape script-3) – Small Talk

Conversation 1

- Mr. Singh: Is this your first visit to India?
Mr. Burns: No, it isn't. I first came here five years ago for a Trade Fair.
Mr. Singh: Should we get started with the meeting?

Conversation 2

- Mr. Singh: Is this your first visit to India?
Mr. Burns: No, it isn't. I first came here ten years ago for a Trade Fair. It was much smaller than I expected.
Mr. Singh: Is that so. Well, Mr. Burns. You will find a lot of changes in India now, including big Trade Fairs.
Mr. Burns: I'm sure that's true.
Mr. Singh: Should we get started with the meeting?

Activity 9

In the first conversation Mr. Singh asks a question to which Mr. Burns answers. However, Mr. Singh does not respond to the answer and abruptly suggests that they get down to business. This is socially unacceptable.

In the second conversation Mr. Singh gives a suitable response to Mr. Burns' answer and then they get down to business. In small talk it is important to not change topics abruptly and to complete a conversation that's been initiated.

Activity 10

This is only a sample answer:

- i) How often do you **travel out of Delhi**?
- ii) Do you **like going to the cinema**?
- iii) What is your favourite **food / cuisine**?
- iv) Where did you first **start work**?
- v) Would you like some **tea or coffee**?

Activity 11**1) Missing words are given in bold.**

Small talk is **crucial** in any relationship. Everyday conversation can make or **break** relationships in our personal and **professional** lives. Unfortunately, most people don't realize how important small talk is, and hence do not do anything to **develop** or improve this skill. Developing the ability to make small talk is not as **difficult** as many other work related skills once we **recognize** its importance and worth.

A Stanford University School of Business study showed its **impact** on business success. It tracked MBA's 10 years after graduation, and **discovered** that grade point averages had no bearing on their success – but **conversation** did. Most **successful** were those who could make conversation with anyone – from strangers, to secretaries, to bosses to customers.

Small talk has a great impact on your success in 'personal' relationships, because it **influences** how others see you in terms of intelligence and confidence. Most people **perceive** good conversationalists as more intelligent and confident.

Despite the importance of small talk, most people don't do it well. One major reason is **shyness** and another common reason is not knowing how to **start** a conversation. There are also some who do not have anything to say. All of these difficulties can be **overcome**, once you decide to **master** this art.

Check Your Progress 7**1) Sample answer:****i) Think ahead**

One must not go to a business meeting or event without any prior preparation. Even if the meeting is a one-to-one face-to-face meeting with a visitor; it is advisable to think and plan ahead. A good way to start is by finding out about the person you are going to meet. Accordingly, on the basis of some preliminary information that you have gathered, you can decide what topics would be good conversational topics in the given situation. Advance thinking will enhance your comfort level and help you to make a good impression on the visitor.

ii) Have something to say

For any conversation you must have something sensible to say. If you are extremely well read or well informed, you will always have something to talk about. All you need to do is to choose from your stock according to the people or situation. However, if this is not the case, it is a good idea to do some information gathering before all important meetings or events where you need to make social conversation.

iii) Observe and listen

An important aspect of small talk is to be a good listener. This is an essential part of good social etiquette. Be a keen observer. This also helps you to understand better and to respond adequately to others.

Activity 12

1) Completed dialogue with suitable questions / statements;

A: How are you?

B: **I'm fine, thank you.**

B: **How about you?**

A: I'm fine too. Thank you.

A: It's good to see you after such a long time.

B: **Yes. It's been so long since we met up.**

A: So did you have a comfortable journey?

B: **Yes I did. Thanks.**

A: **When did you last visit this place?**

B: I last visited this place six months ago.

A: Have you been following the cricket series?

B: **Oh yes. We've had some great matches.**

A: True. I've been enjoying the matches too.

Activity 13

i) **Be yourself**

It is important to be yourself as you cannot put up pretense for long. People will see through your act. Genuine people are respected as well as trusted. When it comes to business people will want to associate only with those who are trustworthy. So being genuine person shows that you are reliable and other can build a good business relationship you.

ii) **Smile**

A smiling face is welcome anytime than an ill-tempered expression. When engaging in small talk people will feel comfortable in talking to you when you approach them with a smile on your face. It helps breaking the ice and setting the stage for a favorable business relationship.

iii) **Be a good listener**

Listening carefully will help one understand others better and encourage them to interact better. If one keeps on talking without giving others a chance to speak, this may intimidate others and spoil any chances of establishing a business relationship.

iv) **Do not force the conversation**

If one is nervous or uncomfortable or isn't prepared to initiate a conversation, one should not attempt doing so. Otherwise one might make a fool of oneself by saying something inappropriate.

Check Your Progress 8

1) i) I'm

ii) She's

iii) We're

iv) We've

- v) You've
 - vi) I'd
 - vii) You'd
 - viii) Don't
 - ix) Aren't
 - x) Shouldn't
 - xi) Should've
 - xii) Needn't
 - xiii) It's
 - xiv) That's
- 2) i) I'm
- ii) He's
 - iv) We're
 - v) We've
 - vi) We'd
 - vii) name's
 - viii) What's
 - ix) I'm
 - x) I'd
 - xi) She's
 - xii) We're
 - xiii) I'm
 - xiv) It's
 - xv) What's
 - xvi) Let's
 - xvii) Bobby's ill.
 - xviii) What's

Check Your Progress 9

Vinay didn't open the door.

- 1) i) You shouldn't reply to her email.
- ii) She is not writing a novel these days.
 - iii) He doesn't work every Sunday.
 - iv) Subhash didn't become a dentist.
 - v) Sudha has no time.
 - vi) He doesn't have a cold.
 - vii) Mohan doesn't have a chance of winning this match.
- 2) Illegal, irregular, imbalance, incomplete, unable, inequality, unequal, unjust, injustice, dissimilar, disunity, non-violence