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Inbox

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Hi everyone,

I hope everyone's doing alright. This is just a quick one to set up a meeting. We need to make some decisions regarding our budget for the next quarter, and there are some things we need to discuss before that. I'd like to know if everyone's available next Wednesday at 11:00 AM. Please let me know if you are or aren't.

Talk to you soon,
Jenn

ONLINE MEETINGS

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LANGUAGE FOR ONLINE MEETINGS

English phrases for virtual meetings

gira mon do

SOUND ISSUES

Is your mic plugged in? I can't hear you.
I think we have a bad connection.
Your volume is too loud, could you turn it down?
I hear a lot of static.
There's an echo.

OTHER ISSUES

You're cutting out.
Sorry, we were cut off.
Your screen has frozen.
The video lags.

ASKING FOR CLARIFICATION

Could you repeat that last bit please?
I didn't catch what you said, could you repeat that?
Could you speak up?
I'm sorry I didn't get that, could you say it again?

OTHER

I'll mute my mic for a while now.
Can you have David send the minutes?

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Online Meetings business English online lesson

level: intermediate (B1)+

time: 60 min.

class: one-to-one

skills: speaking, listening, vocabulary

Warm up

1. To begin with, play this underline video to your student and let them guess the lesson's topic.

Pros and cons

2. Ask your student: '*How many online meetings have you had over the past two months? What were they about? How comfortable are you having your business meetings online?*' Encourage them to explain what makes them feel like that.

3. Using the arguments from the previous point as a trigger, make a **list of pros and cons** of online meetings together, ideally drawing a chart on a virtual whiteboard.

Email invite

4. Every online meeting starts with an invite. Scan the **email** in worksheet 1 and ask: '*How formal is it?* (friendly but not very formal) *How do you know?*' If you want to make the student really scan, not read, give them a time limit of 10 sec to look at the email.

5. Now take more time to read the email and have the student **underline phrases** (on a virtual whiteboard again?) to:
   1. start the email (I hope everyone's doing alright./This is just a quick one to…)
   2. suggest a time (I'd like to know if everyone's available…)
   3. invite a response (Please let me know if you are or aren't.)

6. Finally, ask: '*What does* one *in* This is just a quick one to… *mean?*' (email/message)

Useful phrases

7. Move the **infographic** from worksheet 2 to a virtual whiteboard and ask the student to put the phrases into 3 categories:
   I know this one./I didn't know this one but I understand./I don't understand.
   Explain anything the student isn't familiar with.

8. Play an **online game of jeopardy** to practise the phrases.

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9. Watch this **video** and ask the student to write a **list of problems** they're having.
(Paul can't hear the others; Tayler's picture is blurred because he has a bad connection; there's an echo; Beth is late because she had to download a new version of the platform; Beth's camera is tilted upwards; John is calling in from his car; Tayler's picture and sound are asynchronous, then he's frozen; Beth's notifications are not set to mute; Tripp's kid bursts in; Beth is busy doing other stuff; Paul accidentally turns on his iTunes; John doesn't know which platform the meeting's on; John's picture is over-lit; David's been in the meeting without the others knowing; Tripp's not wearing his pants)
10. Ask: *'What's a good English phrase to use in each situation? Could any phrases from worksheet 2 work?'* Then watch again and compare with what they actually say.
11. Ask: *'Have you ever had similar problems? How did you solve them?'*

Role-play

12. Explain that you're going to **role-play** a business video call. First of all, the student decides what the meeting is about and what role you're going to play.
13. While you role-play, **draw a line** on the virtual whiteboard for each phrase from worksheet 2 that the student uses (pretend a number of technical issues so that the student has to use as many of the phrases as possible). How many lines are there by the end of the activity?

Cooler

14. Say a technical problem that might occur during an online meeting, the student comes up with an appropriate reaction.

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