

How to say it

In this section, you'll find a collection of the phrases and expressions used in the extracts on the previous pages (pp. 6–11). The numbers (1–12) after each of the phrases refer to the extract it was taken from.

Discovering problems

- How are things going? [2]
- What's wrong? [2]
- What are you dealing with right now? [4]

Stating the problem

- This is supposed to be a trendy cafe, but there's no almond milk. [1]
- It sounds like the ultimate first-world problem, but I'm lactose intolerant. [1]
- The problem is I missed an important email. [2]
- It's a real nuisance when... [3]
- My biggest challenge right now is personal. [4]
- We've hit a snag with the new offices. [5]
- What's at issue here is the budget. [5]
- We need more space. [5]

Asking questions about the problem

- How could that happen? [2]
- What's the worst thing about the situation? [3]
- Why is this happening now? [3]
- What are the underlying causes? [3]
- Can you give me some background on this? [10]

Clarifying success criteria

- The best outcome would be if we could... [6]
- Ideally, we want to be able to... [6]
- We need a solution that covers all aspects. [11]
- How do we know it will work out? [12]
- How do we measure our success? [12]

Brainstorming

- I have a suggestion. [3]
- Could you simplify your emails? [3]
- We should keep an open mind. [7]
- No idea is too stupid! [7]
- How about we convert the conference room into an open-plan office? [7]
- Would it be possible to combine the conference room with reception? [7]
- If we move the photocopiers into the hallway, we could turn that room into an office. [7]
- Off the top of my head, I can think of one thing we could do. [8]
- What if we moved further out of the city? [8]
- I say we should increase the budget for the rent. [8]
- Let's withhold judgement for now. [8]

Encouraging ideas

- What other options are there? [6]
- How could we reduce costs elsewhere? [8]
- Let's consider that as well. [8]
- I'd like to explore a couple of ideas further. [9]
- What would be the biggest downside for us? [9]
- What else? [9]
- What are you thinking? [11]

Keeping positive

- Maybe we can find a temporary workaround. [6]
- Let's not make this personal. [8]
- Let's keep the facts in mind. [9]
- We'll cross that bridge when we come to it. [9]
- Let's avoid making any assumptions right now. [10]
- We need to step back and look at this from another perspective. [11]

Empathizing with others

- To be honest, I have the same issue. [4]
- We should look at their needs. [10]
- We need to put ourselves in their shoes. [10]
- Let's talk to them. [10]

Talking about testing

- Why don't you try it for a month? [3]
- What have you got to lose? [3]
- I suggest we run a small-scale pilot test. [12]

Expressing concerns

- If we make too many compromises, it won't work. [7]
- We're going to have to look at the options that are realistic. [9]
- That might be counterproductive. [10]
- It's simply not viable, for so many practical reasons. [10]

Talking about solutions

- I'd have to sift through the data. [10]
- In my opinion, this is the perfect way out. [11]
- I'm also convinced that this is the best way forward because... [11]
- It meets all the success criteria. [11]
- It's a win-win situation. [12]
- You've made a compelling case. [12]

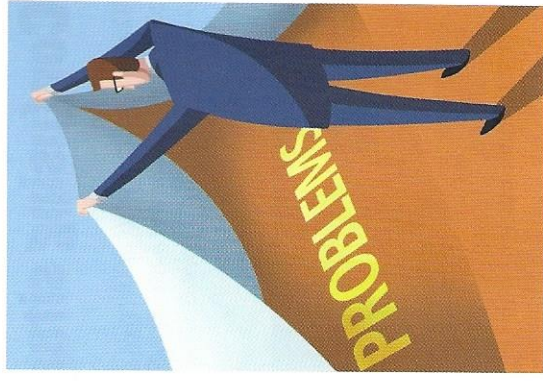


Illustration: Bernhard Forth

Building trust

Here, we present the phrases you will need to discuss your own strengths and responsibilities, as well as the role of the team as a whole.



THE SITUATION:

The first face-to-face meeting is an opportunity to discuss individual roles and the role of the team.

5. My specific role

Ria: So, that's it. Basically, I handle the requests on a day-to-day basis and I'm responsible for ensuring the daily updates are correct.

Nisha: Thanks, that was great. Let's hear from the other team members. Who's next? Brian?

Brian: Can we go through the specific tasks that I will be responsible for?

Nisha: Absolutely. The more specific the better!

day-to-day basis: on a ~ • täglich

4. Individual strengths

Nisha: OK, we all know the main reason why we're here. Teamwork! Let's go round the table and introduce ourselves.

Ria: These croissants are delicious. Thank you, Nisha. No introductions necessary, really. We all know each other.

Nisha: That's true, but I think it would be useful to remind ourselves of our individual roles and strengths. What do you bring to the team, Ria? Tell us a bit more about your specific expertise and responsibilities.

"BASICALLY"

When we want to summarize something, we can use the adverb "basically" to show that we are about to talk about something using a very short description.

Illustration: Bernhard Forth

6. Together, it works

Nisha: Together, we are a pool of valuable expertise, experience and personalities. Before this meeting, I sent you all the "Teamwork Checklist" and asked: "How do we all feel about the team?". I've summarized the results on this slide. As you can see, "Communication" doesn't score highly.

Ria: Ouch, that's low. So, what's not working?

Nisha: And what's working?

Brian: What are our strengths and weaknesses?

Nisha: I think we all have something to contribute. Who wants to start? John? Tell us about a quality that your colleagues have that you can rely on.

contribute sth.

• etw. beitragen

score highly

• eine hohe Punktzahl erreichen, gut abschneiden

work • hier: funktionieren

Phrase Bank

For a list of all the key phrases used in the dialogues, see pages 12–13

7. Asking for input

Teamwork checklist

Team goals					
Clear	1	2	3	4	5
	0	0	0	0	0
Responsibilities					
Clear	1	2	3	4	5
	0	0	0	0	0
Workload					
Fair	1	2	3	4	5
	0	0	0	0	0
Communication					
Clear	1	2	3	4	5
	0	0	0	0	0
Trust					
High	1	2	3	4	5
	0	0	0	0	0
Low					

Food for thought for the meeting:

- How do you like to communicate and collaborate?
- How would you like us all to work together in the future?
- What support would be useful for you to fulfil your role?
- Could you tell us a positive experience about working together?
- Who and what made it so good?

Deadlines and schedules

Knowledge of the basics of English grammar will help you to communicate clearly and confidently. Here, we review some of the structures typically involved in talking about timetables.

1. Setting specific deadlines

We use **by** to say that something will happen or will be completed

either before a specific time or at that time at the latest. Use "by" to give a time limit for something to happen:

- We need the design **by** Monday.

We often use **by then** to talk about a deadline we have already mentioned:

- Friday is the launch. Everything has to be perfect **by then**.

We use **until** to say that something will continue up to a certain time, event or deadline. Use "until" to focus on the duration of the action before a specific deadline:

- We only have **until** Monday afternoon to finish the design.

We can also use both **by** and **until** to talk about past deadlines and duration of time in the past:

- I finished the design **by** Monday afternoon as planned.

- I worked on the design **until** midnight last night.

If you use **until** in a negative sentence, it means "not before":

- You shouldn't start work on the project **until** the budget has been approved.

Informally, people will sometimes use **till**:

- We can't start **till** we get the green light.

NOTE: You cannot use "until" with numbers or quantities. If you want to talk about a period of time with a limit, for example a three-week deadline, use **up to**:

- We can spend **up to** three weeks on this section. But it has to be finished by the end of this month.

2. Talking about specific dates

We use **on** to talk about a specific day, date or part of a particular day:

- We're meeting **on** Friday.
- The product launch is **on** 16 October.

3. Talking about periods of time

We use **during** to talk about something that happens within a particular timeframe. Use this preposition to emphasize the duration of time, or of a phase in the project, but not the end date. "During" is followed by a noun phrase:

- You can contact me **during** the launch party if necessary.
- We should plan three meetings **during** the evaluation phase.

The conjunction **while** has the same meaning but is followed by a clause:

- We should plan three meetings **while** we are in the evaluation phase.

We can use **over** in the same context. However, we generally use "over" if we want to focus on an activity that lasts for a length of time, not on an event or a point in time. In these examples, "during" is also possible:

- Matt will work in London **over** the next five weeks.
- We have made fantastic progress **over** the past few days.

The preposition **for** is used to say how long something happens. "For" focuses on the length of time. In the examples below, you cannot use "during" or "over":

- Julie will work closely with the client at their office **for** five weeks.
- We can talk about the goals **for** a few minutes.



"IN TIME" vs "ON TIME"

The difference between "in time" and "on time" is very subtle. They may be used in the same context to express that something wasn't late:

- We sent it **on time/in time**.

But we use **on time** to talk about something that happens at the exact time that it was planned to happen:

- The meeting is at 4 p.m. Please be **on time**. (= Do not come after 4 p.m.)

We use **in time** to say that something happens early enough, often so that there is time to do something else as well:

- We arrived at the offices **in time** to have a coffee before the meeting.