

LESSON
01

BREAKING THE ICE

OBJECTIVES

After this chapter, you will be able to...

- start a conversation with unfamiliar people
- use basic conjunctions to convey deeper opinions
- brainstorm and discuss the pros and cons of different career choices



1 GETTING STARTED

A Let's look at the image.
Describe what's happening in the picture.

Why are moments like these so important in office environments?



B Discuss the questions below:

- What's a good way to get people smiling or laughing in your culture? Why doesn't it happen more often?
- What is a helpful way to break the ice with someone? When does it not work very well?
- Is it easier or harder to break the ice with someone from another culture? Why?

GOOD TO KNOW



Common Mistakes

One or both? Circle the best answer. Check your answers in the back of the book.

- I bought him a present. I did it **to/ for** him.
- Apples are good **to/ for** you.
- My co-worker is good **to/ for** me.

2 LANGUAGE PREVIEW

A Business Expressions

Read the following expressions and write your own sentence for each.

need a boost: need energy or motivation.

E.g.) A shot of espresso is always helpful when you need a boost of energy.

Make your own:

take a power nap: get short, restful sleep.

E.g.) When I'm too tired to focus, I take a 15-minute power nap and I'm ready to go.

Make your own:

can't even imagine: it's difficult to consider (often indicating sympathy).

E.g.) I can't even imagine how you're able to function so well on 3 hours of sleep!

Make your own:

B Key Patterns

Here are some key patterns that you can use when starting and developing a conversation.

I don't believe...

- ... we've met
- ... we've been introduced
- ... I've seen you before

Looks like I'm not the only one who...

- ... forgot an umbrella
- ... needs energy
- ... loves sugar

Not only... but...

- ... did we do it... we did it well
- ... is he intelligent... also friendly
- ... are we prepared... we are determined

3 THE FORMAL SORT

A Formal or Informal?

With a partner, sort the expressions and explain why you believe it is formal or informal.

It's beneficial for...
I'm for...

It's good for...
...yet it may lead to...

I support...
...but it is bad for...

Formal


Informal

.....

.....

.....

4 INTERACTIONS

 **A Listen and fill in the blanks.**

Breaking the Ice in the Breakroom

Zoe: (1) I'm not the only one who needs a 3:00 boost.

Theo: Just brewed a fresh pot. I either drink coffee or take a power nap.

Zoe: Both sound good to me.

Theo: I don't believe we've met.

Zoe: I'm Zoe. I started in (2) on Monday.

Theo: Nice to meet you. My name's Theo, and I started in Accounting before coffee breaks were (3)

Zoe: I can't even imagine.

Theo: Not only did we not have coffee, but we had to use these gadgets called (4)

Zoe: Well, it was nice meeting you. Thanks for making the coffee.

Theo: (5)

B Practice the dialogue with the options below.

Option 1

1. I see
2. Sales
3. around
4. Palm Pilots
5. My pleasure

Option 2

1. Clearly
2. Logistics
3. created
4. beepers
5. You're welcome


C Pragmatic Comprehension

- 01 How does Zoe break the ice with Theo? Why was it effective?
- 02 What expressions helped the two workers relate to each other?
- 03 Is this a good start to a friendship/positive working relationship? Why do you think so?



Grammar Brief **p. 76**

5 ATTENTIVE LISTENING

 **Extended Dialogue** · Three co-workers talk near an exit at work as they wait for the weather to improve.

A Active Listening. Think about the following questions as you listen. Write the answers in the spaces below.

- > How does Zoe break the ice?
- > What do the co-workers talk about?
- > What information do we discover about the co-workers?

B True or False. Circle *T* for true and *F* for false. Explain your answer.

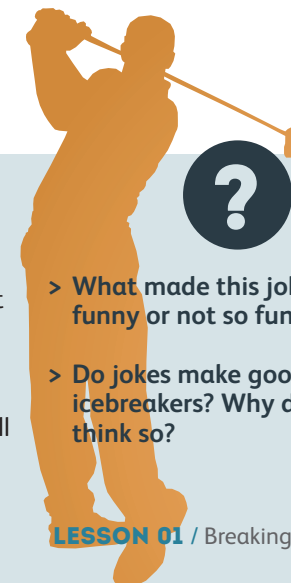
- 01 No one brought an umbrella to work. T (F) *"False! Dan brought an umbrella but left it in the car."*
- 02 Zoe thinks waiting is not any fun. T / F
- 03 One of the workers believes he is not very intelligent. T / F
- 04 Zoe thinks Miami is the worst place to live. T / F
- 05 Zoe and Steve have seen each other before. T / F

Audio Script **p. 86**

QUOTE OF THE DAY

A man and a friend are playing golf one day at their local golf course. One of the guys is about to chip his ball onto the green when he sees funeral cars next to the course. He stops in mid-swing, takes off his golf cap,

closes his eyes, and bows down in prayer. His friend says: "Wow, that is the most thoughtful and touching thing I have ever seen. You truly are a kind man." The man then replies: "Yeah, well we were married 35 years."



- > What made this joke funny or not so funny?
- > Do jokes make good icebreakers? Why do you think so?

6 BUSINESS BASICS

A Pros & Cons

In groups of 3-4, choose one topic from below and think of its pros and cons. Do you support or oppose the topic?

		PROS	CONS
› retiring early	
› owning your own company	
› being an executive	
› working for an NGO	
› transferring overseas for work	

B Contrast a pro and a con for each topic, then say which you support.

Get into new groups and repeat Part A. Create your own if necessary.

- › Retiring early is undesirable because you make less money, but you have less stress. Therefore I support retiring early
- ›
- ›
- ›
- ›
- ›

7 TALKING SHOP

A Group Discussion

In groups, choose questions that interest you the most and discuss.

- 01 What are safe topics to talk about when breaking the ice with someone? What makes them safe?
- 02 Do you ever practice meeting new people (in front of the mirror, role play, etc.)? If yes, what do you do? If no, why not?
- 03 Is it easier to start networking with people in a business setting? Why?
- 04 Have you ever failed in trying to break the ice with someone? What happened?
- 05 What can you say to people at a convention who try to talk to you, but you don't want to talk to them?
- 06 What are different strategies for ice breakers that you use?
- 07 Use an ice breaker to start a conversation with your group members.
- 08 Your own:

8 CASE STUDY

Staffers Co. has nearly 50 employees. Senior account managers provide staff for clients and suggest available candidates. Junior employees are in charge of finding available temporary workers ("temps"). Junior employees are typically younger and communicate almost entirely by e-mail or by instant messaging. Senior managers often forget to open the instant messaging program, so they miss messages about which temps are available. The delays and missed messages are causing clients to go to competitors.

The Generation X office manager has proposed the following solutions:

- 01 The IT department can update the system settings so that the instant messaging program opens automatically when employees log in each morning.
- 02 The company can adopt "Face-to-Face Fridays" once a month. On these days, if employees are both in the office, they will have to speak with each other in person.
- 03 The company can create a "reverse" mentoring program that matches a younger employee with a senior employee to teach him or her how to use new technology to communicate in the workplace and to connect with clients.



TASK

You are the CEO of Staffers Co. You want the employees to learn to be flexible in how they communicate and to choose the most efficient method based on the circumstances. Which of the three options do you instruct the office manager to put in place?

After reading this chapter, **I can...**

- ... start a conversation with unfamiliar people
- ... use basic conjunctions to convey deeper opinions
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SNEAK PEAR:

> How well do you keep track of time?