

## CHAIRING A MEETING



**“When the result of a meeting is to schedule more meetings, it usually signals trouble”** *Mike Murphy, business writer*

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**I. Watch the Video : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oPhKhTIOLss>**

**1. Note down the English for the following words/phrases from the video:**

- Mener/diriger une réunion
- Être à l’heure
- On a beaucoup à faire alors commençons
- L’ordre du jour
- Un point (à l’ordre du jour)
- Puis-je attirer votre attention sur...
- Un sous-traitant
- Faire une pause
- Comme vous le savez
- Ce qui ressort de la présentation
- Pouvez-vous nous faire un retour sur...
- Maintenant passons au point 2
- Je suis conscient que...
- Que pensez-vous de cela ?
- Selon moi...
- Cela me paraît bien
- Nous devons relire la proposition avant d’en discuter davantage
- Et maintenant le point 3
- Merci de nous avoir envoyé les chiffres par mail
- Autant que je sache
- Avez-vous des questions suite au rapport de Mia ?
- Matt tu as une question semble-t-il ?

**2. Explain in your own words what the main problem is at the end. Why is Matt concerned? What does he disagree with?**

## II. Language skills

1. **The language of meetings:** The following expressions are useful in meetings. Complete the final words. Once completed, the letters in the box spell out a good piece of advice for the chairperson!

- a- OK, let's get down to...
- b- Can I just stop you there for a...
- c- I totally...
- d- Perhaps I didn't make myself...
- e- What do you...?
- f- With respect, you don't quite seem to...
- g- I agree with you up to a...
- h- If I could just finish what I was...
- i- OK let's move...
- j- I'm afraid that's completely out of the...
- k- Perhaps we can come back to this...
- l- Maybe we should take a short...
- m- Does anyone have any...
- n- Can I just come in...
- o- Sorry I don't quite see what you...
- p- I think that's as far as we can go...
- q- We'll have to break off here I'm...

B	_	_	_	N	_	S
M	_	M	_	_	_	?
				D	_	S
					_	_
					_	EE
					_	L
					_	R
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					TH	_
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☞ **ADVICE:** \_\_\_\_\_

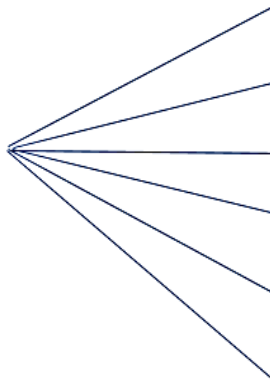
Which expressions are used to: ( write the corresponding letter like in the example)

- 1. open a meeting → **a**
- 2. ask for an opinion
- 3. interrupt
- 4. prevent interruption
- 5. get some fresh air
- 6. speed things up
- 7. ask for clarification
- 8. disagree
- 9. half-agree
- 10. explain
- 11. delay
- 12. ask for ideas
- 13. reject a proposal
- 14. close a meeting

2. Here are six simple ways of checking what someone has just said. Fill in the blanks with the following pairs of words.

see + be	catch + slow 'm + go	missed + say understand + explain	follow + run
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Sorry I



- a) \_\_\_\_\_ that. Could you \_\_\_\_\_ it again ?
- b) didn't \_\_\_\_\_ that. Could you \_\_\_\_\_ down a bit?
- c) don't \_\_\_\_\_. Could you \_\_\_\_\_ what you mean?
- d) \_\_\_\_\_ not with you. Could you \_\_\_\_\_ over that again?
- e) don't \_\_\_\_\_ you. Could you \_\_\_\_\_ through that again please?
- f) Don't quite \_\_\_\_\_ what you mean. Could you \_\_\_\_\_ a bit more specific?

3. In meetings where you are discussing facts and figures, saying "Sorry"? or "I don't understand" is not always enough. Sometimes you need to be more precise. Look at the following short extracts from meetings. Complete the second speaker's responses with the correct question words.

who	where	when	what	how long	how much
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- 1. A. The problem is money.  
B Sorry, \_\_\_\_\_ did you say?  
A The problem is money.  
B Oh, as usual.
- 2. A We have to reach a decision by next week.  
B Sorry, \_\_\_\_\_ did you say?  
A Next week.  
B Oh, I see
- 3. A An upgrade will cost \$3,000.  
B Sorry, \_\_\_\_\_ did you say?  
A \$3,000 at least  
B Oh, as much as that?
- 4. A Ildiko Dudas spoke to me about it yesterday.  
B Sorry, \_\_\_\_\_ did you say?  
A Ildiko Dudas – from the Budapest office.  
B Oh, yes, of course.
- 5. A The company is based in Taipei.  
B Sorry, \_\_\_\_\_ did you say?  
A In Taipei  
B Oh, really?
- 6. A The whole project might take eighteen months.  
B Sorry, \_\_\_\_\_ did you say?  
A Eighteen months  
B Oh, as long as that?

**4. People sometimes disagree about facts in meetings.** There are different ways of politely querying something. Look at the examples below:

- |                                 |                                  |                                     |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| A So that's \$13m?              | A This represents 8.6% of        | A These are the figures for 2018.   |
| B \$13m? <b>Isn't it</b> \$30m? | totals sales                     | B 2018? <b>Don't you mean</b> 2017? |
| A Oh, yes, sorry, \$30m.        | B 8.6%? <b>Shouldn't that be</b> | A No, I mean 2018.                  |
|                                 | 6.8%                             |                                     |
|                                 | A Yes, 6.8%. Didn't I say        |                                     |
|                                 | that?                            |                                     |
- A Eight out of ten members of staff liked the proposal. So, 90% is a good result.  
 B **Wait a minute.** 90%? **I thought you said** eight out of ten...  
 A Oh, yeah. Sorry, 80%, of course.

You may also use the following phrases (complete them with : **mistake, right, sound, sure**)

- Are you** \_\_\_\_\_ ?
- There must be some** \_\_\_\_\_ ?
- That can't be** \_\_\_\_\_ ?
- That doesn't** \_\_\_\_\_ **right to**

► **Pairwork: now read out the following sentences.** Each one contains a silly mistake. Use the expressions highlighted above to correct the mistake. (the second half is for you to find!)

**Example:** The biggest Benelux country is Belgium (*the Netherlands*).  
 Belgium? **Don't you mean** the Netherlands?

- Hyundai is a well-known Japanese car manufacturer (*Korean*).
- China regained control of Hong Kong in 1998 (*1977*).
- Microsoft is the world's leading computer hardware manufacturer (*software*).
- MTV is the biggest news channel in the world (*music*).
- I love Scotland, especially Dublin (...)
- I'm worried about this trip to Denmark. I can't speak a word of Dutch! (...)
- We always drink German wine. Bordeaux is our favorite (...)
- I've nearly given up smoking. I'm down to about 30 a day now.
- The managing director must be at least 70. But it's his grandfather who really runs the company.

### 7. The decision-making process

a. Put the following stages in the decision-making process into the most likely order.

- consider the options 1.
- collect information 2.
- implement your decision 3.
- define your objectives 4.
- monitor the effects 5.
- choose the best course of action 6.

b. Look at the agenda for a decision-making meeting on the right. Decide which two statements below were made at each stage in the meeting.

- Objectives \_\_\_ \_\_\_
- Priorities \_\_\_ \_\_\_
- Data analysis \_\_\_ \_\_\_
- Alternatives \_\_\_ \_\_\_
- Pros and cons \_\_\_ \_\_\_
- Final decision \_\_\_ \_\_\_

**AGENDA**

- a) **We're here to decide** whether to go ahead with the project.
- b) **One option would be to** do detailed market research.
- c) **The most important thing is:** can we make this profitable?
- d) **The advantage of** doing market research it we reduce risk.
- e) **Have a look at** these figures.
- f) **Above all, we must** be sure there's a market for our service.
- g) **What we've agreed, then, is to** start marketing this service now.
- h) **Another alternative is to** offer the service on a trial basis.
- i) **On the other hand,** market research takes time.
- j) **Our aim is to** find out if there's a good chance of success.
- k) **As you can see,** client feedback is very positive.
- l) **So, that's it – we're going ahead with** the project.

### 8. Using visuals

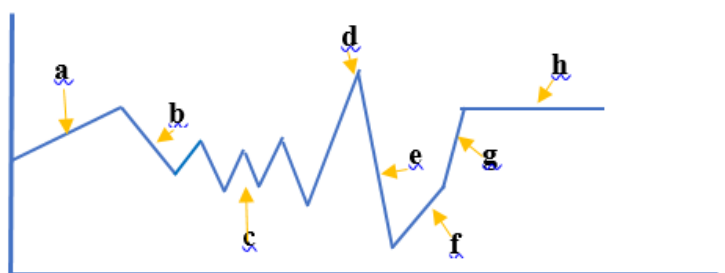
1) You can draw attention to your visual by using the phrases below. Complete them using the words in the box :

**give      see      point      have      show**

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_ a look at this
- 2. As you can \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. I'd like to \_\_\_\_\_ out...
- 4. Let me \_\_\_\_\_ you something.
- 5. To \_\_\_\_\_ you the background of this

2) Which part of the graph do the following verbs refer to?

- rise
- level off
- fluctuate
- peak
- bottom out
- fall
- recover
- plummet



## 9. Interruption strategies

1. What do you think is the most effective way to do the following? Highlight your answers.

### Interrupt in meetings

I raise my hand  
I cough  
I say Ummm  
I say the speaker's name  
I just start speaking

### Prevent interruption

I gesture that I haven't finished yet.  
I raise my VOICE!  
I avoid eye contact with the other person.  
I just keep talking  
I glare at the person interrupting

2. Rearrange the words to make complete expressions like in the example.

1. minute a just ☞ *Just a minute!*

2. me let finish ☞

3. no me out hear ☞

6. could if finish I just  
☞

7. here can just I in come?  
☞

8. just I something say can  
☞

9. what I finish could just saying was I?  
☞

## 9. Directness

In a meeting or a negotiation, participants cannot be too direct, otherwise they might be regarded as rude! So use the words in brackets to rephrase the following remark into a more polite and less direct one! (look at the example)

### a. That's impossible!

(*unfortunately / would not / possible*) ☞ **Unfortunately, that wouldn't be possible**

### b. We can't go higher than 7%

(*would find / quite difficult*) ☞

### c. We won't accept less than \$ 5 a unit

(*afraid / not in a position / this stage*) ☞

### d. You'll have to pay more if you want that.

(*may / slightly*) ☞

### e. We need a commitment (= *un engagement*) from you now

(*would / prepared / some kind*) ☞

### f. We have to agree on a price before we go any further

(*Wouldn't / better*) ☞

### g. We hoped you'd pay a deposit today.

(*were hoping / be able to*) ☞

### h. We must try to find a compromise here.

(*shouldn't*) ☞

### i. That's as far as we can go.

(*afraid / about / the moment*) ☞

