

## INTRODUCING YOURSELF AT WORK DIALOGUE TRANSCRIPTS AND VOCABULARY GLOSSARY

### Dialogue (part 1)

Peter: Hello. Is this seat taken?

Sarah: No, **go ahead** and sit down.

Peter: Thanks. It's so busy in here at the moment. I **meant** to come before 12. It's always easier to get a seat then, isn't it?

Sarah: Is it? I don't know. I always come in at this time.

Peter: I'm sure I've seen you **around the place** before. Let me think. Ummm. Yes, you work in the Sales Department, don't you?

Sarah: Yes, I work under Billy Townsend. **How about** you?

Peter: I work in the **Marketing Department**. I'm Peter Harvey **by the way**.

Sarah: I'm Sarah Rogers. Pleased to meet you, Peter. *(they shake hands)*

Peter: Pleased to meet you too, Sarah. Yes, I often see you around, but there are so many people working here. It's **hard** to get to know everyone, isn't it?

Sarah: **I know what you mean**. I don't even know the names of some of the people in my own department. **I mean** there must be over 200 people in my department **alone**.

### Dialogue (part 2)

Peter: So, are you **in sales**, then?

Sarah: No, I couldn't sell anything. I'm Billy's **Personal Assistant**. I've been working for him for over three years now.

Peter: I hear he's a really nice guy to work for.

Sarah: Yes, he is most of the time, **except** when he's **under pressure**. Then, he can get a bit **irritable**. I usually try to **avoid** him when I see him like that, but it's difficult when you're someone's assistant.

Peter: What does your work **involve**?

Sarah: I organise my boss's time as **efficiently** as possible. I arrange meetings for him, and **handle** his appointments. I also do **routine administration work**. You know the kind of thing.

Peter: Yes. Do you go to meetings with your boss?

Sarah: I don't go to all of them. I only go to the important ones. I take **the minutes** for those ones. And I hate taking minutes – they take me so long to write up!

Peter: Yes, I can **imagine** it must be difficult.

Sarah: So **how about** you? What do you do in the company?

Peter: Me? I work under Bill Townsend – he's our Department Head. I **come up with** new marketing **concepts**. Once a concept has been decided on, my team is **responsible for** developing the concept fully. It could **end up** as a television or radio commercial, or a **series of ads** in **mags** and newspapers.

Sarah: It sounds very interesting compared to the work I do.

Peter: It is interesting, but it can be very tiring at times. We work to **strict deadlines** and that can often mean lots of **overtime** and late nights in the office. In fact, I've been working late for the past week trying to get this latest **project** finished.

Sarah: But it must be very **satisfying** for you when you develop a successful marketing campaign.

Peter: It is. But it's the sales team that get all **the glory!**

Sarah: I'm sure you're right. Well, it's been really nice talking to you, Peter. I have to get back to the office now. Billy's waiting for me!

Peter: Yes, nice talking to you too, Sarah. (they shake hands) I'll see you around sometime.

Sarah: Yes, I hope so. See you.

Peter: Bye.

### **Vocabulary Glossary**

**go ahead** (phrasal verb)

to start to do something, e.g.

We've received permission to go ahead with the music festival in spite of opposition from local residents.

I got so fed up with waiting for him to do it that I just went ahead and did it myself.

**meant** (verb)

intended, e.g.

I didn't mean to hurt her.

**around the place** (phrase)

somewhere on the office premises (or which place the speaker is referring to)

**How about** (phrase)

used to refer to the question you've just been asked, e.g.

A: How are you?"

B: I'm fine. How about you?"

A: Very well, thanks.

**Marketing Department** (noun)

the department responsible for the promotion, distribution and selling of a product or service

**by the way** (phrase)

used when you say something that does not relate to what is being discussed, e.g.

Oh, by the way, how did your exam go?

**hard** (adjective)

difficult

**I know what you mean** (phrase)

I understand and (usually) agree with what you're saying

**I mean** (phrase)

something that people often say before they continue their sentence, e.g.

She's not my favourite person in the department. I mean, I don't dislike her.

**alone** (adjective)

used to emphasize that only one person or thing is involved, e.g.

Last year alone the company made a million dollars.

You alone know how you feel.

**are you in sales** (phrase)

do you do a sales-related job, e.g.

I used to be in sales but now I'm in marketing.

My brother's in retail; he's been working in shops since left school.

**Personal Assistant** (noun)

a person who attends to the personal business administration needs of a superior (boss)

**except** (conjunction)

not including a particular fact, thing, or person, e.g.

The boat sails from Oban every day except Sunday.

Everyone passed the exam except for Rory.

**under pressure** (phrase)

having many things to sort out at the same time often causing anxiety and worry, e.g.

William is under no pressure at all to finish this project this month.

My girlfriend is putting me under pressure to marry her soon!

**irritable** (adjective)

becoming annoyed very easily, e.g.

Be careful what you say - he's rather irritable today.

"Don't disturb me again, " she said in an irritable (= angry) voice.

**avoid** (verb)

stay away from a person, place, situation, etc, e.g.

He's been avoiding me all week.

Try to avoid the city centre.

**involve** (verb)

If a situation or activity involves something, that thing is a necessary part of it, e.g.

The trips often involve a lot of walking.

There are a lot of risks involved.

My job involves a lot of travelling.

**efficiently** (adverb)

working or operating quickly and effectively in an organized way, e.g.

She runs the business very efficiently.

**handle** (verb)

deal with something, e.g.

He handled the situation very well.

This office handles thousands of enquiries every day.

**routine** (adjective)

of something which done in a fixed and habitual way, e.g.

a routine (= regular) task/inspection/medical checkup

Describe your usual daily work routine to me.

DISAPPROVING My job is so routine and boring - I hate it.

**administration work** (phrase)

the work of organizing and arranging the operation of something, such as a company, e.g.

The job involves a lot of administration work.

**the minutes** (noun)

an official record of what is said and decided during a meeting, e.g.

Michael has kindly agreed to take the minutes (= write them down).

**imagine** (verb)

believe that something is probably true, e.g.

I imagine he must be under a lot of pressure at the moment.

**What do you do** (phrase)

what is your job, e.g.

A: What do you do?

B: I'm a teacher.

**come up with** (phrasal verb)

suggest or think of an idea or plan, e.g.

She's come up with some amazing scheme to double her income.

**concepts** (noun)

ideas, e.g.

Kleenbrite is a whole new concept in toothpaste!

**be responsible for sb/sth/doing sth**

to have control and authority over something or someone and the duty of taking care of it or them, e.g.

Paul is directly responsible for the efficient running of the office.

Her department is responsible for overseeing the councils.

**commercial** (noun)

advertisement

**series** (noun)

several things or events of the same type that come one after the other, e.g.

a series of lectures

a series of bad results

**ads** (abbreviation)

short for ADVERTISEMENTS

**mags** (abbreviation)

short for MAGAZINES

**strict** (adjective)

If a rule, law, etc is strict, it must be obeyed, e.g.

She gave me strict instructions to be there by ten.

**deadlines** (noun)

times by which something must be done, e.g.

to meet/miss a deadline

The deadline for entering the competition is tomorrow.

**overtime** (noun)

extra time that you work after your usual working hours, e.g.

unpaid overtime

**satisfying** (adjective)

making you feel pleased by providing what you need or want, e.g.

a satisfying meal/result

It's a very satisfying job.

It is very satisfying to know that the project was a success.

**the glory** (noun)

the great admiration, honour and praise which you earn by doing something successfully, e.g.

He revelled in the glory of scoring three goals in the final 8 minutes of the match.

**get back** (phrasal verb)

return

## **INTRODUCING YOURSELF AT WORK**

### **PODCAST LESSON**

#### **Introduction**

Introducing yourself to a stranger for the first time can be difficult for some people. For outgoing people, starting a conversation with someone they have never met is usually easy. On the other hand, most people find it hard.

When you introduce yourself to someone at work for the first time, you have an advantage. You both work for the same company. You have something in common: something to talk about! And you've probably already seen each other around the place before.

There are a number of ways of making a self introduction. It usually needs to be on a case by case basis; however, here's some basic advice to get someone's attention and finally make an acquaintance.

- The direct approach works for most people who have the confidence to do so. Simply go up to the person whom you want to introduce yourself to. Say "hello," offer a handshake and tell them your name. If, however, it is a group you are approaching, politely ask if you can join them.
- Giving a compliment is also a good tactic. Remember to give a compliment that you really mean. Sincerity is the key here. You can start the conversation with a statement like, "I like your shirt" or "You have a nice watch". The other party can reply with a, "Thank you". From that point, be prepared to talk about the object you are complimenting on to prove that you really admire it. After a minute or two, or when appropriate, start introducing yourself.
- Make a comment to someone about the situation you're in or the environment. Once they've responded, introduce yourself.
- If the person you want to introduce yourself to is speaking to someone you already know, then take it as a chance to get acquainted. Walk towards them and say hello to your friend or the person you knew. An introduction can then follow naturally.
- If you want to introduce yourself to a person you only know by name, you can start a conversation by confirming their name. "Mr Reynolds?", once you get their attention continue by stating how you know about them and then introduce yourself.

With the right introduction, a good attitude, and confidence, you can find yourself creating a good impression and friendly relationships.

#### **Situation 1**

Peter Harvey and Sarah Rogers, who both work for the same multinational company in London, meet for the first time in the staff restaurant. Let's hear how Peter first makes contact and then introduces himself to Sarah.

#### **Dialogue (part 1)**

Peter: Hello. Is this seat taken?

Sarah: No, go ahead and sit down.

Peter: Thanks. It's so busy in here at the moment. I meant to come before 12. It's always easier to get a seat then, isn't it?

Sarah: Is it? I don't know. I always come in at this time.

Peter: I'm sure I've seen you around the place before. Let me think. Ummm. Yes, you work in the Sales Department, don't you?

Sarah: Yes, I work under Billy Townsend. How about you?

Peter: I work in the Marketing Department. I'm Peter Harvey by the way.

Sarah: I'm Sarah Rogers. Pleased to meet you, Peter. *(they shake hands)*

Peter: Pleased to meet you too, Sarah. Yes, I often see you around, but there are so many people working here. It's hard to get to know everyone, isn't it?

Sarah: I know what you mean. I don't even know the names of some of the people in my own department. I mean there must be over 200 people in my department alone.

## Notes

Peter enters the busy staff restaurant and finds one empty seat. Notice how he doesn't just go and take the seat. This wouldn't be a polite thing to do. Instead he says:

*Peter: Hello. Is this seat taken?*

He starts with a common greeting, "Hello," and then asks if the seat is taken. He could also have said:

*Hello. Is anyone sitting here?*

*Hello. Do you mind if I sit here?*

*Hello. Is it alright if I sit here?*

So the most difficult step, the initial greeting, is now out of the way. What next?

The next step is to begin a conversation. It's best to simply make a comment about the current situation you are in or about your immediate environment. This is exactly what Peter does. He comments on how busy the staff restaurant is. Let's hear him again:

*Peter: Thanks. It's so busy in here at the moment. I meant to come before 12. It's always easier to get a seat then, isn't it?*

Peter thanks Sarah before sitting down. The seat doesn't belong to Sarah so a simple "thanks" is all that is needed. He then makes a comment about the restaurant. But did you notice his last statement was followed by a question tag. Let's hear that again:

*Peter: It's always easier to get a seat then, isn't it?*

When making small talk with someone you've just met, you're unlikely to start asking them direct questions. Far more usual is to make comments, some of which can be followed by question tags. Question tags encourage the person you're speaking to to respond to you. They indicate that you would like to have a conversation. Let's practice a few simple question tags. Repeat the following sentences after me:

*It's warm in here, isn't it?*

*The food in here is excellent, isn't it?*

*It's a beautiful day, isn't it?*

Sarah responds politely but briefly to Peter's question. Now the conversation has begun, he can move towards introducing himself, but he still has a little more work to do. Introducing himself at this point might be considered a little too early. Instead he says:

*Peter: I'm sure I've seen you around the place before. Let me think. Ummm. Yes, you work in the Sales Department, don't you?*

Meeting work colleagues for the first time is easier than meeting people from outside the work environment. This is because you already have something in common. You work for the same company. It's far more likely that they will want to have a conversation with you, even if it's only a very short one.

Peter has seen Sarah around the company and thinks she might work in the Sales Department. As he's not sure, he again uses a question tag? Notice this time that the question tag has a different ending. Let's hear it again:

*Peter: You work in the Sales Department, don't you?*

Let's practice some more question tags. Repeat these short sentences after me:

*You work in sales, don't you?*

*You're new here, aren't you?*

*You're from Japan, aren't you?*

*You work in our Central branch, don't you?*

Sarah responds to Peter's question. She says:

*Sarah: Yes, I work under Billy Townsend. How about you?*

Sarah says that she works under Billy Townsend. This means that Billy Townsend is her boss. Notice that she didn't say "I work for Billy Townsend." She doesn't work "for" Billy Townsend; she works "for" ABC Company. Let's practice. Repeat these sentences after me:

*I work under John Lewis, Head of Sales.*

*I work for AsiaWide Bank.*

*I work under Nancy Long in the Audit Department.*

*I work for Titan Insurance.*

Sarah finishes by saying “How about you?” When you ask “How about you?” or “What about you?” you are simply passing the same question back to the person you’re speaking to. We’ll now practice a couple of short exchanges. Listen and repeat these after me:

*You work in the Sales Department, don’t you?  
Yes. I do. How about you?*

*You work under John Lau, don’t you?  
Yes, I do? What about you?*

*You’re new here, aren’t you?  
Yes, I’ve just been here for two weeks. How about you?*

After responding to Sarah’s question, Peter introduces himself. He says:

*Peter: I’m Peter Harvey by the way.*

Since this is a casual meeting, Peter doesn’t need to use a formal greeting. He just says “I’m Peter Harvey by the way.” In non-work situations it would be normal just to say “I’m Peter by the way.” But since there are probably many Peters working in the company, it’s good practice to include a family name too so you’re not confused later.

Sarah responds:

*Sarah: I’m Sarah Rogers. Pleased to meet you, Peter.*

Note that both Peter and Sarah use the informal “I’m,” not “I am,” and not “My name is.” Sarah also uses a common greeting “Pleased to meet you.” She could also have said “Nice to meet you.” We never say “Happy to meet you.”

At this point in the conversation it would be normal to shake hands. At the same time Peter says:

*Peter: Pleased to meet you too, Sarah.*

Peter could also have said “Nice to meet you too, Sarah.” It’s best to just repeat what the other person says.

Now let’s practice some short exchanges. Listen and repeat these after me:

*I’m John Jenkins by the way.  
I’m Jane Wong. Pleased to meet you, John.  
Pleased to meet you too, Jane.*

*I’m Grace Chu by the way.  
I’m Ben Williams. Nice to meet you, Grace.  
Nice to meet you too, Ben.*

## **Situation 2**

In the next dialogue you will hear the rest of Peter and Sarah's conversation.

### **Dialogue (part 2)**

Peter: So, are you in sales, then?

Sarah: No, I couldn't sell anything. I'm Billy's Personal Assistant. I've been working for him for over three years now.

Peter: I hear he's a really nice guy to work for.

Sarah: Yes, he is most of the time, except when he's under pressure. Then, he can get a bit irritable. I usually try to avoid him when I see him like that, but it's difficult when you're someone's assistant.

Peter: What does your work involve?

Sarah: I organise my boss's time as efficiently as possible. I arrange meetings for him, and handle his appointments. I also do routine administration work. You know the kind of thing.

Peter: Yes. Do you go to meetings with your boss?

Sarah: I don't go to all of them. I only go to the important ones. I take the minutes for those ones. And I hate taking minutes – they take me so long to write up!

Peter: Yes, I can imagine it must be difficult.

Sarah: So how about you? What do you do in the company?

Peter: Me? I work under Bill Townsend – he's our Department Head. I come up with new marketing concepts. Once a concept has been decided on, my team is responsible for developing the concept fully. It could end up as a television or radio commercial, or a series of ads in mags and newspapers.

Sarah: It sounds very interesting compared to the work I do.

Peter: It is interesting, but it can be very tiring at times. We work to strict deadlines and that can often mean lots of overtime and late nights in the office. In fact, I've been working late for the past week trying to get this latest project finished.

Sarah: But it must be very satisfying for you when you develop a successful marketing campaign.

Peter: It is. But it's the sales team that get all the glory!

Sarah: I'm sure you're right. Well, it's been really nice talking to you, Peter. I have to get back to the office now. Billy's waiting for me!

Peter: Yes, nice talking to you too, Sarah. (they shake hands) I'll see you around sometime.

Sarah: Yes, I hope so. See you.

Peter: Bye.

### Notes

Since Sarah has already told Peter that she works in the Sales Department, he assumes that she works in sales. Peter thinks she's a sales person. Let's hear him again:

*Peter: So, are you in sales, then?*

If you are "in sales" or "in marketing," this is the job you do. If you are a clerk in the Sales Department, you are not "in sales"; you are "in administration."

Let's practice asking about someone's work. Practice saying these short exchanges after me:

*Are you in marketing?  
No, I'm in sales.*

*What do you do?  
I'm in advertising.*

*What kind of work do you do?  
I'm in computing.*

We're now going to skip forward to a later part of their conversation. We're going to focus on how both Peter and Sarah describe routine aspects of their work.

When asking about and describing routine actions, that is, things that you do regularly or even daily, we use the present simple verb tense. Let's hear Peter's first question concerning Sarah's work again:

*Peter: What does your work involve?*

If you ask someone what their work involves, you want to know about the kind of routine things they do. Note that the question was formed in the present simple tense.

Let's hear Sarah's response. Count the number of verbs she uses in the present simple to describe what she does:

*Sarah: I organise my boss's time as efficiently as possible. I arrange meetings for him, and handle his appointments. I also do routine administration work.*

Let's repeat what Sarah says:

*I organise my boss's time.  
I arrange meetings for him.  
I do routine administration work.*

When describing any action you do daily, or regularly, for example, weekly or monthly, you need to use the present simple tense. Here are some more examples. Repeat these sentences after me:

*I file the accounts.  
I answer the phone.  
I supervise a team of six sales staff.  
I train the new employees.  
I handle and maintain client accounts.*

Let's hear their next exchange again. Listen out for the present simple again:

*Peter: Yes. Do you go to meetings with your boss?  
Sarah: I don't go to all of them. I only go to the important ones.*

Note that both question and response are in the present simple "Do you go to," "I don't go to," and "I only go to." Even when describing things that you don't do routinely, you need to use the present tense, for example, "I don't go to meetings." Here are some more negative statements. Repeat these sentences after me:

*I don't file the accounts.  
I don't answer the phone.  
I don't sell.  
I don't travel in my work.  
I don't go to meetings.*

If you want to make a good first impression, don't talk about yourself all the time. If someone asks you about your job, ask them about theirs in return. A good conversation is a balanced one. Speakers should take it in turns to talk. This is exactly what Sarah does. She throws the same question back to Peter. She says:

*Sarah: So how about you? What do you do in the company?*

Remember "how about you?" and "what about you?" have the same meaning and can be used in the same way. "What do you do?" means "What is your job?" Don't confuse the phrase with "How do you do?" which is a formal way of greeting someone.

Peter briefly describes his work. He says:

*Peter: Me? I work under Bill Townsend – he's our Department Head. I come up with new marketing concepts. Once a concept has been decided on, my team is responsible for developing the concept fully. It could end up as a television or radio commercial, or a series of ads in mags and newspapers.*

Peter describes two routine tasks that form the basis of his work. He uses the present simple tense. Repeat the two sentences after me.

*I come up with new marketing concepts.  
My team is responsible for developing marketing concepts.*

Sharing a conversation evenly is one aspect of good communication. Asking and giving full answers to questions is another. But if you want someone to like you, you need to show a real interest in what they are saying. Sarah is very good at this. After Peter describes his work, she comments:

*Sarah: It sounds very interesting compared to the work I do.*

*Sarah: But it must be very satisfying for you when you develop a successful marketing campaign.*

Let's practice making simple yet positive comments about someone's work. Listen and repeat these short exchanges after me:

*I supervise a team of 12 sales staff.  
That must be quite challenging.*

*I spend about half the month on business trips.  
That must be very exciting.*

*I handle all the main client accounts.  
It sounds like you have a lot of responsibility.*

Ending a conversation and saying goodbye can sometimes be as difficult as starting a conversation and introducing yourself. Don't just say, "OK, bye." This would be impolite. First, you need to make an excuse for having to leave. But before that you should tell the person that it's been nice talking to them. Let's hear how Sarah does it and Peter's response:

*Sarah: Well, it's been really nice talking to you, Peter. I have to get back to the office now. Billy's waiting for me!*

*Peter: Yes, nice talking to you too, Sarah. I'll see you around sometime.*

Sarah says "Well, it's been really nice talking to you, Peter." Then she makes her excuse why she has to leave. Note that she starts with "Well." "Well" is a word is used to indicate that someone wants to end the conversation.

Sarah could have said:

*Well, it's been nice meeting you, Peter.  
Well, I've enjoyed talking to you, Peter.  
Well, it's been great talking to you, Peter.*

Now repeat after me these common excuses for ending a conversation in the workplace:

*I need to get back to work now.  
I must get moving. I have a meeting to attend.  
I have to be back at my desk at 2.*

Peter is a good listener. He knows he needs to end the conversation at this point. He simply repeats what Sarah has said to him. He says:

*Peter: Yes, nice talking to you too, Sarah. I'll see you around sometime.*

Let's now practice some short conversation endings. Listen and repeat these after me:

*Well, it was great talking to you, Jim. I need to get back to work now.  
Yes, great talking to you too, Chris. I'll see you around.*

*Well, it's been nice meeting you, Charles. I must get moving. I have a meeting to attend.  
Yes, nice meeting you too, Frank. I'll see you around sometime.*

### **Conclusion**

In this situation, Peter did not think to himself, "When I go to the staff restaurant, I'll find a stranger to talk to." No. Simply, a situation presented itself to him. He met a stranger, introduced himself, had a short conversation and said goodbye. He made a good impression and made another friendly contact in the company.

How did he do this so successfully?

Firstly, he approached the person politely and started the conversation with a simple comment about the environment they were both in. Once Sarah had responded positively to his comments, he introduced himself and they shook hands. He then took an interest in Sarah and what she did in the company. A balanced conversation took place where both sides shared the conversation evenly. At an appropriate time, Sarah concluded the conversation with a pleasant comment and made an excuse for having to leave.