

ENGLISH IN BUSINESS

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Students of business English may be classed into two categories: in-company employees and would-be workers. The distinction between these two categories is crucial for course design, course content, and material choice.

The ideal business English course should be relevant to the students' future job and focused not on the language but job employment and promotion. That's why the course design must meet the linguistic, occupational needs, and cultural expectations of the learners as close as possible.

In the case of in-company employees it is rather easy to identify the needs of the business English students because they are quite aware of the particular skills both language and professional they need for their career. The course design starts with a second language diagnostic test and then a brief questionnaire including such information as age, native language, previous English language training, job responsibilities, communication skills required for fulfillment of their duties. Self-assessment in listening, speaking, reading and writing is also very useful. Client-specific and industry-specific language content in English can always be addressed in all business English courses. For this purpose the use of realia is especially effective.

According to the language needs realia from the workplace (specialist literature, company brochures, product descriptions and correspondence etc) can be incorporated into the lessons. While training in-company staff coaches widely use company's materials: correspondence and company documents, records of real telephone talks, negotiations, surveys etc.

The content of business English course for students of universities (would-be workers) should be focused mostly on General Business English concerning a wide range of business functions such as speaking, listening comprehension, reading and writing and offer general business English skills at all levels. That is because these students lack an understanding of the main business English

concepts and practices yet and they maybe introduced, at least some of them, during their business English course. Special attention must be paid to improvement in basic communication skills, particularly interpersonal communication skills, assertiveness, non-verbal communication, grammar, pronunciation, writing and reading skills.

Focusing on business English functions are of great use. Coachers will find it useful to teach special skills such as asking for clarification, confirming, repetition, giving feedbacks, understanding reduced speech. Writing effective business correspondence is required for many occupations and must be included into the business English course.

According to the language level a well-structured course book can be used to teach this language content. Teachers should be constantly up to date with the numerous publications available for teaching business English and can therefore guarantee that the most suitable course materials are always employed in the business English courses.

The teachers of business English courses should keep in mind that the success of non-native speakers of English in the world of business depends not only on improvement of their language competence but also on understanding and adapting to corporate culture of the English speaking business world.

Reference

1. Master P. The development of ESP // Responses to English for Special Purposes. – San Jose State University. – 244 p.