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**BUILD YOUR BUSINESS ENGLISH
SKILLS**

— *CURS PRACTIC* —



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Foreword

The book, as the title suggests, is a business English course and is designed for business school students with previous pre-intermediate or intermediate knowledge of English. It provides a substantial theoretical and practical framework to support language teaching, learning and assessment.

Build Your Business English Skills is divided into 12 units drawing on topics of great interest to everyone involved in business. The first two units represent an introduction to the business environment, with the aim of familiarising learners with various ways of approaching and dealing with potential business clients, colleagues or partners in formal or informal contexts, whereas the following units focus on major subject areas in Economics. There are also three revision units, each based on the material covered in the previous three units, and designed so that it can be completed in either one session, or on a unit-by-unit basis.

The coursebook has a homogeneous structure; each unit starts with the introduction of the key words and concepts of the topic, followed by a reading section with accompanying text related activities. The “Language Focus” section provides theoretical review of certain grammar items, as well as relevant practice, and the “Writing” section deals with written communication, including some guiding principles and writing tasks.

The main aim of this coursebook is to develop essential business communication skills that will enable students to function as future economists in an English speaking environment. Therefore, each unit comprises a wide variety of realistic business tasks – role-plays, situational dialogues,

debates – designed to improve students’ ability to take part in meetings, make phone calls, negotiate, make presentations and use English in social situations.

The focus on communicative competence does not disregard other major aspects of learning a foreign language. Thus, students will become more accurate in their use of language by studying business vocabulary and key grammar items. They will learn words and phrases mainly from reading genuine business texts, and will be encouraged to practise the newly acquired vocabulary in different types of exercises: word building, definition matching, fill-in-the-blank, word maps, etc. The grammar section in each unit contains a theoretical revision of the language item under focus, which works as a handy reference tool, and a set of exercises meant to enhance students’ understanding and learning of the grammar structures under consideration. This section ends with a translation task which addresses the vocabulary and grammar items of that unit.

The texts included in this coursebook are authentic articles from newspapers and books on business, on a variety of business topics which include: socialising in business, appointments and arrangements, digital media, the economic sectors, starting and managing a business, career opportunities, labour relations, marketing, advertising, banking and finance, the business cycle. By reading and solving the text related tasks, students will enlarge their knowledge of the business world, will become acquainted to specialised vocabulary, and will acquire the tools needed to critically read information in English and formulate opinions, make statements, ask questions and take a stand in various problem-solving situations.

The final writing sections focus on particular types of written communication which will be helpful for the learners’ business career: the email, the fax, the CV and the covering letter, the letter of enquiry, the letter of complaint, or written presentations.

Having studied this course, students will become more fluent and confident in using English for business purposes, and this should greatly increase their linguistic autonomy, as well as their future career prospects.

The Author

UNIT 1

CONTACTS

Learning objectives

- Greeting
- Introducing yourself and others
- Initiating a conversation
- Making, accepting and declining invitations
- Formal and informal language
- Writing a formal/informal email

The success of your business depends to a great extent on your ability to communicate effectively. Since any kind of business contact involves a special relationship, which is established between you and your partner, it is essential for you to be able to socialise in various contexts, such as: travelling on business, making and accepting invitations, or entertaining a client.

Section A

Meeting for the First Time

A.1. Introductions

I. Read the following situations and introduce yourself accordingly.

1. You are attending a one-week course on Personal Management. It is the first day. You are going to initiate a conversation with a new colleague during the lunch break. Greet the person, introduce yourself and say a few words about yourself.

2. As a Public Relations Officer you are going to welcome a World Bank expert. Introduce yourself and state your position in the company.

Are there any differences between the ways you introduce yourselves in the above situations? Which are the factors that we should take into consideration when addressing somebody? Read the following table which lists the main differences between formal and informal style:

Formal Style	Informal Style
Used in a professional setting	Usually used with colleagues, friends and family
No slang	Contains slang words
Pronounce words correctly	Contains shortened versions of words

II. Look at the dialogues below and identify their style: formal or informal.

- a. Hello, I'm May Garner. What's your name?
Hello, May. I'm Charles Fox.
- b. Good morning. Allow me to introduce myself. My name is Angela West.
Good morning. It is a privilege to meet you. I am Linda Johnson.
- c. Hello. Let me introduce myself. I am Max Reynolds.
Pleased to meet you. My name is Jacob Hills.
- d. Hi, I'm Jill Watson.
I don't believe we've met. I'm Greg.
- e. Hello. What's your name?
Hello, Madam. My name is Mike.

What do you notice about this last dialogue? What could the relationship between Mike and the lady be?

III. Practise the use of formal and informal style by initiating a dialogue in the following situations:

a. You are at the airport, waiting for a trade delegation from the Middle East. Identify yourself and your company.

b. As Personnel Manager, you are going to receive a new employee. Greet him and welcome him to the company.

c. Sue starts a two-week training course in your department today. Introduce yourself and your colleagues.

d. You take part in a conference where you meet your counterpart in another subsidiary of the bank you work for. You have met several times in the past.

e. You arrive in the USA to visit your agent, Mike Singh.

f. **Student A:** It's the first morning of a conference. You are one of the organisers. Room 34 is on the first floor. You see a participant who seems to have a problem. Speak to him / her.

Student B: You are attending a conference. It's the first morning. The first session is in Room 34, but you do not know where that is. Student A speaks to you.

A.2. Initiating a Conversation

After the first introductions, you should start a conversation with your business partner on a general topic. This is called 'the first five minutes' of any business meeting. In other words,

in about five minutes you are supposed to establish a personal contact with the other person. Remember to approach a 'safe' topic to which everyone can answer easily. Do not ask: a person's age, birth date, salary, weight, marital status, etc.

I. Here is a list of safe topics. Write two questions for each topic.

1. the weather: e. g. It is a lovely day, isn't it?
2. the journey
3. the hotel
4. the city
5. the country

II. Working in pairs, act out a conversation on each of the above topics.

III. Put the following conversation between Ben, Carol, and Jim in the right order.

B: Nice to meet you Carol

C: Hartford, the capital. How about you, Ben?

J: Have you two met each other?

C: I'm from Connecticut.

C: How do you know Jim?

B: No, we haven't.

B: Nebraska, a place called Bellevue. It's near Omaha.

B: Where are you from, Carol?

J: Ben, this is Carol. Carol, this is Ben

B: Connecticut? Which part?

C: Nice to meet you too, Ben.

B: He is my friend from college.