<table>
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<th>Page</th>
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</tbody>
</table>
I. Introduction

The *Berlitz Global Communication Handbook* has been prepared to help English native speakers improve their communication skills with non-native speakers. Non-native English speakers may also use this document as a reference for common expressions and guidelines for communication with native English speakers.

II. Cross-Cultural Communication

Following are some suggestions for things to do and things to avoid when speaking in a global environment. There are also some pointers on business etiquette which can come in handy and help to avoid impoliteness or awkwardness in a business situation. The last part of this section is entitled “How to Hold a Conversation … Anywhere in the World.” This is a very useful guide for global communication.

**DOs**

- Keep it simple. Use short, easily defined words and phrases (e.g., How are you? How do you do?, etc.).
- Repeat key points.
- Ask for questions throughout the presentation.
- Try to use a little of the local language in the presentation, if at all possible.
- Have someone available to translate, if necessary.
- Consider using handouts for the agenda and key points if visuals (i.e., video equipment) are not available.
- Ask a non-native English speaker to read your presentation before you give it, to provide you with input on points that your audience may not understand.
- Speak slowly and use simple sentences.
- Pay attention to your audience’s non-verbal communication (e.g., gestures, facial expressions, eye contact, posture, etc.).
- Use action words and phrases that say exactly what you mean (e.g., Please email me the report by the end of the day. Thank you.)
- Be a good listener. Confirm your understanding of what was said; use active listening skills:
  - Restate what you believe the speaker said (e.g., I will email you the report by the end of the day.).
  - Ask the speaker to restate what he/she thinks you said (e.g., When do you need the report?).
DON’Ts

• Don’t use words that have more than one meaning:
  - their, there, they’re
  - effect, affect
  - stationary, stationery
  - who’s, whose
  - pole, poll
  - compliment, complement
  - principle, principal
  - desert, dessert
  - lead, led

• Don’t use words that mean or sound like something else in the local language.

• Don’t use sports terminology or historical references. Even if the person with whom you are speaking understands your words, he or she may not understand the idiomatic meaning or reference (e.g., out of left field, hit a home run, strike out, ball park, level the playing field, play hardball, slam dunk, the whole nine yards, Gettysburg Address, Independence Day, etc.).

• Don’t use technological terms or “tech talk,” professional jargon, or buzzwords (e.g., client server, firewall, FTP, GUI, IP, ISDN, DNS, Linux, Java, PPP, TCP/IP, telnet, unix, etc.).

• Don’t use idioms or slang (e.g., drive growth, escalate to the next level, etc.).

• Don’t repeat yourself; you might be emphasizing your mistake.

• Don’t shout to be understood; the problem is in the communication system, not your audience’s hearing.

• Don’t change the grammatical function of words (e.g., making a verb out of a noun, etc.: calendar, incent).
**Business Etiquette**

Speak humbly and avoid hyperbole (e.g., wonderful, terrific, etc.).

Include “small talk” in your conversation. Speak to build relationships (either personal or professional), not solely to take care of tasks (e.g., How is the weather where you live?).

Use “relationship-appropriate” topics for discussion, according to the local culture (e.g., speak respectfully; avoid privacy issues and inappropriate topics of discussion, etc.).

Avoid using negative/positive questions (e.g., “You aren’t coming, are you?” might be answered “Yes (I am not coming).” when you might expect a “No.”).

Avoid using humor until you are sure it will be understood. It may be too topical, local, esoteric; the resulting smile may be a result of embarrassment due to non-comprehension.

**Remember …** In some cultures, silence is as meaningful as the spoken word. In these cultures, expect and become comfortable with silence; wait, do not jump to fill in the gaps quickly.

**How to Hold a Conversation … Anywhere in the World**

Demonstrate genuine interest in the culture of your host country: food, art, sports, music, current events, architecture, etc. If you don’t know, ask humbly; and if you do know something about their culture, show it, but admit it is just a start and that you welcome their help. People love to show off their country’s culture. All you have to do is ask (e.g., What sports do you enjoy?).

In some cultures, very personal questions may be asked of you which you may find intrusive and embarrassing to answer (e.g., How much do you make?, Are you married?, etc.). Handle this by speaking in general (e.g., Just enough to pay my mortgage!, In [your country] many people do not marry, etc.). Treat personal questions for what they really are -- a request for information about life in your country.

Do not talk business during business social situations unless your host brings it up first (e.g., during dinner, golf, a cultural event, a walk, etc.).

Talking about family is usually acceptable, as long as it is about the family in general and not an inquiry about one’s spouse (who is usually not invited along for business social events). Talking about children is usually safe. (A good idea is to bring photos of your family along.)

Do not admire personal items unless you want them delivered to your doorstep the next day. Admire things in general terms (e.g., “Vases that beautiful can be found in museums in [your country]”, NOT: “I really love that vase you have there.”) Guest/host relationships often obligate your host to give you something you admire.

If personal comments about you and your possessions are made, don’t take them personally. It is usually a sign that the person is comfortable enough to “get personal” with you (e.g., That is a very nice suit.). Take it as a compliment.

In most cultures, people want to know more about who you are. Avoid jumping into statements and questions about one’s work; instead seek to learn more about the personality, background, and interests of your foreign associates, and reveal your own! (Exception: In the United States, people tend to talk more about what they do.)
Count on the Three Traditional Taboos (sex, religion, and politics) to be brought up, probably sooner than later at most social occasions. Depending on the culture, they may be referred to more or less, but sooner or later cross-cultural curiosity will overwhelm one or both of you and a sensitive topic will be brought up.

Do not offer your own opinion about the culture of a country; most people do not appreciate “foreigners” (i.e., you) expressing opinions about their culture.

Seek information; be a student and inquire about what you do not understand or need further information about.

When people in your new country volunteer their ideas, opinions, or questions about your country, be a teacher; speak in general terms (not about yourself, but about your country).

III. Speed and Pacing

The old saying “It is not what you say, but how you say it” illustrates the importance of proper speech delivery. Speed and pacing are very important elements of public speaking because they help a speaker engage his or her listeners. When a listener is more engaged with the subject matter, the ability to understand and retain information becomes easier.

How to Speed and Pace your Speech

If a speaker talks too fast, he or she does not allow their audience to process and interpret the subject matter. Public speakers should take speed and pacing into account when both preparing and delivering a speech.

It is important to stay in tune with the audience. Be aware of their reactions; adjust your delivery to their needs. Don’t let anxiety disconnect you from your audience. If you connect to your audience, they will be able to understand and retain the information you deliver to them.

Speech speeds are defined as follows:

- Slow: 100 words per minute
- Medium: 150 words per minute
- Fast: 200 words per minute

As a general guideline, speakers should keep their delivery speed closer to 100 words per minute when speaking to non-native speakers.

It is also important to vary the pace when speaking to a group. By slowing down and speeding up periodically, a speaker can better capture the listener’s attention.

Pauses and silence are also an important factor of speed and pacing. Pauses help a speaker to add emphasis, build suspense, bridge ideas, and comment on what was said. Pauses also allow the listener to better interpret and internalize new ideas.
Analysis of Famous Speeches

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speech</th>
<th>Delivered By</th>
<th>Delivered On</th>
<th>No. of Words</th>
<th>Length</th>
<th>Words per Minute (WPM)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inaugural Address</td>
<td>John F. Kennedy</td>
<td>January 20, 1961</td>
<td>1364</td>
<td>14 min.</td>
<td>97 WPM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(“Ask Not What Your Country Can Do For You”)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I Have a Dream”</td>
<td>Martin Luther King</td>
<td>August 28, 1963</td>
<td>1666</td>
<td>17 min.</td>
<td>98 WPM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State of the Union</td>
<td>Barack Obama</td>
<td>January 25, 2011</td>
<td>7031</td>
<td>60 min.</td>
<td>117 WPM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please note: there are several software applications that can assist in timing a speech or dictation. These can be found by conducting a web search with the search query: “speech timer software.”

IV. Useful Expressions

The following expressions come in handy in everyday situations. Using these expressions will facilitate communication with your audience and avoid unnecessary misunderstandings.

1. Introducing yourself
   - Good morning, everyone. My name is … and I am the … at …
   - Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. I am …, and I work for … as …
   - Hello everyone. I think most of you know me, but let me introduce myself anyway.

2. Stating the purpose
   - I am here today to …
   - In the next few minutes, I would like to …
   - I am going to give you a summary of …

3. Summarizing the agenda
   - I have divided my talk into three parts: first, … second, … and finally, …
   - I am going to start with …, and then I'll move on to … and I'll wrap things up with …
   - Today we will look at three areas: 1 …, 2 …, 3 …

4. Starting the presentation
   - First, let's take a look at …
   - As you can see, …
   - As I mentioned in my introduction, …
5. Moving on to the next point
   • Let me now move on to …
   • Turning to …
   • OK. Moving on to …

6. Giving examples
   • For instance, …
   • Let me illustrate.
   • As a result, …

7. Summarizing
   • So we have seen that …
   • In summary; In conclusion. …
   • To conclude; To summarize, …

8. Closing
   • Thank you for this opportunity to talk about …
   • Thank you for your time and interest.
   • Thank you very much for your attention.

9. Inviting questions
   • I would like to spend the next few minutes answering questions.
   • I would be glad to answer any questions you may have.
   • Yes, the gentleman in the white shirt.
   • Yes, in the back.

10. Answering questions
    • I’m sorry, could you repeat that?
    • I beg your pardon?
    • I’m sorry, I did not quite catch that.
V. Commonly Misused Business Terms

There are many business terms that are commonly misused. Please make a note of these to avoid possible misunderstandings from your audience.

- **Abbreviations vs. acronyms**
  - **Abbreviation**: a shortened form of a word or phrase (e.g., Ave., misc., etc.)
  - **Acronym**: a word formed from the initial letters of words in a set phrase (e.g., NATO, BBC)

- **Types of companies**
  - **International companies** are importers and exporters; they have no investment outside of their home country.
  - **Multinational companies** have investment in other countries, but do not have coordinated product offerings in each country. They are more focused on adapting their products and services to each individual local market.
  - **Global companies** have invested and are present in many countries. They market their products through the use of the same coordinated image/brand in all markets. One corporate office is responsible for global strategy. Emphasis is on volume, cost management, and efficiency.
  - **Transnational companies** are much more complex organizations. They have invested in foreign operations, have a central corporate facility, but give decision-making, R&D, and marketing powers to each individual foreign market.

- **Education vs. training**
  - **Education**: knowledge acquired as a result of school instruction
  - **Training**: acquiring skills through practice

- **Learning vs. studying**
  - **Learning**: the cognitive process of acquiring skill or knowledge
  - **Studying**: reading carefully with intent to remember

- **Learner vs. student**
  - **Learner**: someone (especially a child) who learns (as from a teacher)
  - **Student**: a learner who is enrolled in an educational institution

- **Expertise vs. professional skill**
  - **Expertise**: proficiency; skillfulness by virtue of possessing special knowledge
  - **Professional skill**: ability to carry out complex activities or job functions involving ideas (cognitive skills), things (technical skills), and/or people (interpersonal skills).

- **Acumen vs. insight vs. intelligence**
  - **Acumen**: quickness, accuracy, and keenness of judgment
  - **Insight**: clear or deep perception of a situation
  - **Intelligence**: the ability to reasonably deal with situations

- **Specialist vs. subject matter expert**
  - **Specialist**: an expert who is devoted to one occupation or branch of learning
  - **Subject matter expert**: a person who is an expert in a particular area or topic
• Customer vs. client
  o **Customer**: someone who buys goods or services
  o **Client**: person, company, or organization that uses the professional services of another

• Meeting vs. conference
  o **Meeting**: an arranged gathering of people to discuss a specific topic
  o **Conference**: a formal meeting for discussion and exchange of information (especially one with an agenda)

• Product vs. program
  o **Product**: merchandise offered for sale
  o **Program**: plan; a series of steps to be carried out or goals to be accomplished

• Deliverable vs. offering
  o **Deliverable**: something that can be provided as a product
  o **Offering**: something offered as a proposal or bid

• Revenue vs. sales
  o **Revenue**: gross income; the entire amount of income before any deductions are made
  o **Sales**: income received for goods and services over a given period of time

• Earning vs. profit
  o **Earning**: net income: the excess of revenues over expenses in a given period of time (including depreciation and other non-cash expenses)
  o **Profit**: the return received on a business undertaking after all operating expenses have been met.

### VI. Commonly Misused Words

The following words are often misused or confused with one another. Please make a note of them to avoid possible misunderstanding from your audience.

- accept, except
- affect, effect
- allusion, illusion
- capital, capitol
- climactic, climatic
- elicit, illicit
- emigrate from, immigrate to
- principle, principal
- than, then
- there, their, they're
- to, too, two
- your, you're
- lie, lay
- set, sit
- who, which, that
- chest of drawers
- supposed to
- used to
- toward
- anyway
- couldn't care less
- all walks of life
- for all intents and purposes

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VII. Business Abbreviations and Acronyms

The following are common business abbreviations and acronyms. It is a good idea to avoid using abbreviations and acronyms when speaking as they may cause confusion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AGM</td>
<td>annual general meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASAP</td>
<td>as soon as possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATM</td>
<td>automated teller machine (cash dispenser)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cc</td>
<td>copy to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEO</td>
<td>chief executive officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CFO</td>
<td>chief financial officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIO</td>
<td>chief information officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLO</td>
<td>chief learning officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CTO</td>
<td>chief technology officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COD</td>
<td>cash on delivery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.g.</td>
<td>exempli gratia (= for example)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ETA</td>
<td>estimated time of arrival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>gross domestic product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GNP</td>
<td>gross national product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GMT</td>
<td>Greenwich mean time (time in London)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR</td>
<td>human resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HQ</td>
<td>headquarters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inc.</td>
<td>incorporated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IOU</td>
<td>I owe you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPO</td>
<td>initial public offering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jr.</td>
<td>junior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>thousand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ltd</td>
<td>limited company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>not applicable; not available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NB</td>
<td>Nota Bene (it is important to note)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA</td>
<td>personal assistant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p.a.</td>
<td>per annum (per year)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plc</td>
<td>public limited company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PR</td>
<td>public relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p.s.</td>
<td>post scriptum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R &amp; D</td>
<td>research and development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROI</td>
<td>return on investment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SVP</td>
<td>senior vice president</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.I.</td>
<td>user interface</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VAT</td>
<td>value added tax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VP</td>
<td>vice president</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIP</td>
<td>very important person</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**VIII. Power Words**

Power words, also known as action words, are used to strengthen or emphasize a statement or idea. It is generally recommended to use power words to help convey your idea.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Absolutely</th>
<th>Destiny</th>
<th>Helpful</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Action Items</td>
<td>Develop</td>
<td>High tech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action Plan</td>
<td>Developed</td>
<td>Highest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acumen</td>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>Huge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advice</td>
<td>Discount</td>
<td>Imagination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affordable</td>
<td>Discovery</td>
<td>Immediately</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyzed</td>
<td>Diversity</td>
<td>Impacted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Announcing</td>
<td>Download</td>
<td>Implemented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>Easily</td>
<td>Important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>Edge</td>
<td>Improved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Astonishing</td>
<td>Emerging</td>
<td>Inclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attractive</td>
<td>Emotional Intelligence</td>
<td>Increased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attribute</td>
<td>Endorsed</td>
<td>Informative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authentic</td>
<td>Energy</td>
<td>Innovative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bargain</td>
<td>Enhanced</td>
<td>Insider</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beautiful</td>
<td>Enormous</td>
<td>Instructive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benchmark</td>
<td>Escalated</td>
<td>Integrated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better</td>
<td>Established</td>
<td>Intercultural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bottom Line</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Interesting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breakthrough</td>
<td>Exciting</td>
<td>Introducing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Built</td>
<td>Exclusive</td>
<td>Just arrived</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Etiquette</td>
<td>Executive Coaching</td>
<td>Largest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Knowledge</td>
<td>Expert</td>
<td>Latest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenge</td>
<td>Exploit</td>
<td>Launching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coach</td>
<td>Facilitated</td>
<td>Leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborated</td>
<td>Famous</td>
<td>Lifetime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colorful</td>
<td>Fascinating</td>
<td>Limited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compare</td>
<td>Focus</td>
<td>Love</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competitive</td>
<td>Framework</td>
<td>Luxury</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>Magic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compromise</td>
<td>Full</td>
<td>Mainstream</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidential</td>
<td>Fundamentals</td>
<td>Maintained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consulted</td>
<td>Generated</td>
<td>Mammoth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core Competency</td>
<td>Genuine</td>
<td>Mentor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Created</td>
<td>Gift</td>
<td>Miracle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customization</td>
<td>Gigantic</td>
<td>Money</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customize</td>
<td>Global Business Acumen</td>
<td>Monumental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daring</td>
<td>Global Leadership</td>
<td>Multi-cultural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delighted</td>
<td>Greatest</td>
<td>Negotiated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrated</td>
<td>Growth</td>
<td>Networking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deployment</td>
<td>Guaranteed</td>
<td>New</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
noted
now
objective
obsession
odd
opportunities
outstanding
personalized
perspective
pioneering
popular
portfolio
powerful
practical
presented
professional
profitable
programmed
promising
prospected
quality
quickly
rare
reduced
refundable
reliable
remarkable
results
revisited
revealing
revitalized
revolutionary
reward
safety
sale
sampler
save
scarce
secrets
security
selected
sensational
shrewd
simple
simplified
simplistic
sizable
skill
soar
special
special offer
spotlight
startling
strange
strong
sturdy
successful
suddenly
superior
supported
sure fire
surging
surprise
survival
technology
terrific
tested
timely
tremendous
troubleshoot
ultimate
unconditional
underpriced
understand
unique
unlimited
unlock
unparalleled
unsurpassed
unusual
urgent
useful
valuable
value
wanted
wealth
weird
white papers
willpower
wonderful
IX. Commonly Used Expressions to Avoid

Try to avoid these expressions when speaking to a non-native English audience.

**Expressions**

- a shot in the dark
- a wild goose chase
- across the board
- aka
- all talk
- at a loss for words
- ball’s in your court
- ballpark figure
- bang for the buck
- basket case
- bells and whistles
- belly of the beast
- bottom line
- brownie points
- cookie-cutter
- cream of the crop
- deception
- don’t sweat the small stuff
- eye candy
- fall through the cracks
- fit as a fiddle
- game changer
- home run
- ice breaker
- instant message (IM)
- jog my memory
- kick off
- let’s play it by ear
- low hanging fruits
- mind over matter
- nature of the beast
- ninth inning
- off the beaten path
- off the shelf
- off the wall
- out of the box
- rookie
- roundabout fashion
- short fuse
- short list
- state of the art
- tables are turned
- take offline
- take-away
- the domino effect
- to abstain
- to bash somebody
- to be geared up
- to beat a dead horse
- to beat about the bush
- to bite the bullet
- to break even
- to bring up to speed
- to call it a day
- to come out of the woodwork
- to dodge the bullet
- to face the music
- to get a grip on yourself
- to give someone a buzz
- to give someone the cold shoulder
- to go the whole nine yards
- to go to bat for someone
- to go with the flow
- to grasp at straws
- to hear through the grapevine
- to hold your horses
- to jump through hoops
- to learn the ropes
- to live vicariously
- to pass the buck
- to peruse
- to plow ahead
- to put lipstick on a pig
- to put your best foot forward
- to put your foot in your mouth
- to rack your brain
- to rub the wrong way
- to run it by you
- to set / cast in stone
- to shoot yourself in the foot
- to split hairs
- to sweep something under the rug
- to take a rain check
- to throw a curve (ball)
- to throw someone under the bus
- to turn the tide
- to work oneself up
- to work out the kinks
- to wrap up
- turn key operation
- uncharted waters
- whole new ball game