

- **Read the dialogues** below to see how English is used in everyday situations.
- **Look at the tips** for the dos and don'ts of social English.
- **Study the vocabulary lists** and learn useful words and phrases.
- **Complete the exercises** and test your language knowledge.
- **Pull out this page** and use it as a reference tool and learning aid.

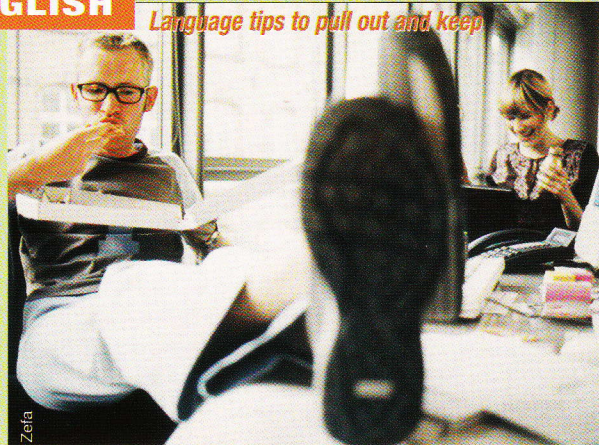


Listen to exercises
about describing work
on our CD/cassette

EVERYDAY ENGLISH

LANGUAGE

Language tips to pull out and keep



Talking about work

Work is an important part of our lives and a popular topic of conversation. Is your job interesting? Is it challenging? Do you get paid appropriately? Here, you can learn some expressions you need to know when talking about work.

1. I could do with a challenge

Peter is talking to David about changing his job.

Peter: Did I tell you that I've applied for a new job?

David: No. Where?

Peter: With an investment bank in London, **looking after their computer system**.

David: So you want to **commute** to London every day?

Peter: Well, **I could do with** a challenge.

David: Have you **handed in your notice**?

Peter: No, no. I only sent in my **CV** last week, so I'm still waiting to hear from them.

David: Well, good luck!

Tip! Rather than boast (*prahlen*) about their job titles, people often describe their responsibilities. Here, Peter avoids using the job title "software developer".

Tip! You use "I could do with" to say that you want or need something: "I could do with some coffee."

Tip! If you "hand in your notice" (also "give notice" or "hand in your resignation"), you tell your employer in a letter that you are leaving.

Tip! "CV" stands for "curriculum vitae" [kəˈrɪkjʊləm ˈvɪtəɪ] (*Lebenslauf*). The US term is "résumé".

challenge ['tʃælɪndʒ]

Herausforderung

commute [kə'mju:t]

pendeln

2. Where's the snag?

Carol has been offered a job as **a sales manager** with a cosmetics company. She's talking to Simon about the pay and benefits.

Carol: There's a basic salary and 10 per cent commission.

Simon: And the **use** of a car, I suppose.

Carol: Yes, there's a company car, too. And **it says** here there's a £400 bonus if you **meet your monthly sales target**.

Simon: Mmm. **Doesn't sound too bad**. Where's the **snag**?

Carol: You have to work hard!

Simon: How much holiday do they give you?

Carol: Only a **fortnight**, unfortunately. Remember, it's an American company.

Tip! The cosmetics company has offered Carol a job as "a sales manager", not as "sales manager", so she is one of several sales managers.

Tip! Here, the word "use" is a noun, so the pronunciation is [ju:s].

Tip! Carol uses the words "it says" because she's reading the information.

Tip! By saying "Doesn't sound too bad", Simon is trying not to sound too enthusiastic about Carol's job.

Tip! In American companies, it is common for employees to be allowed only a fortnight's holiday (US: two weeks' vacation) per year.

meet one's target [mi:t wʌnz 'tɑ:ɡɪt]

sein Ziel erreichen

snag [snæg] UK

Haken

3. Do you have to clock on?

Wayne, 17, has just started a part-time job in a local supermarket. His sister, Fiona, is asking him about the work.

Fiona: So what sort of things do you have to do?

Wayne: Well, **stack shelves**, tidy up — **things like that**.

Fiona: And do you have to **clock on**?

Wayne: Yeah. But we **do** have **flexitime**.

Fiona: I suppose you have to wear one of those silly hats, do you?

Wayne: Yeah, the uniform's the worst thing. And I've got a little **name tag**, too.

Fiona: That's so people know who to complain about. So, have you **got paid** yet?

Wayne: Why? Do you want me to lend you some money?

Tip! The expression "things like that" is very common in spoken English. Wayne uses it to refer to other tasks he does without saying exactly what they are.

Tip! In Britain, you clock on and off. In the US, you clock in and out (*Arbeitsbeginn und -ende per Stechuhr registrieren*).

Tip! Wayne uses "do" in "we do have flexitime" to give his sentence more emphasis.

Tip! Note that passive forms are sometimes formed with "get" instead of "be": "Have you got paid?"

flexitime ['fleksitaɪm] UK

Gleitzeit

name tag ['neɪm tæg]

Namensschildchen

stack shelves [ˌstæk 'ʃelvz]

Regale auffüllen

4. It's head office

Oliver has come home with some bad **news**.

Oliver: There was a big meeting today about **cutbacks**.

Debbie: Cutbacks?

Oliver: Yeah. Some people **will be losing** their jobs.

Debbie: And whose decision is that, then?

Oliver: It's **head office**. Two **layers** of management are being cut.

Debbie: Two whole layers? And your job?

Oliver: It's a bit early to say. Some people **will be taking** early retirement. But **some of us will be offered** posts at a lower level.

Tip! Although the word "news" has an "s" at the end, it is uncountable. To make it countable, you say "a piece/an item/a bit of news".

Tip! The future progressive form ("will be losing", "will be taking") is used when talking about a planned or expected future event: "Jane will be spending Easter with us this year."

Tip! By saying "...some of us will be offered...", Oliver shows that he is not expecting to lose his job.

cutbacks ['kʌtbæks]	Stellenkürzungen
head office [ˌhed 'ɒfɪs]	Zentrale
layer ['leɪə]	Ebene

5. I wouldn't put it past her!

Rachel is talking to her boyfriend about her boss.

Rachel: **That woman's driving me round the bend**.

Steve: You've been saying that for a year now.

Rachel: She **swans in** late, orders everybody about and then disappears for two hours over lunch. It's so unfair.

Steve: She could be in an important meeting.

Rachel: Hardly! And then she says we can always discuss any problems with her "in confidence". She's got **the biggest mouth** in the whole company.

Steve: Maybe she's got her office **bugged**.

Rachel: **I wouldn't put it past her!**

Tip! By using the word "that" in "that woman", Rachel shows she dislikes her boss. "This", on the other hand, can signal interest: "Tell me about this project of yours!"

Tip! If you "swan in" (or "saunter in") somewhere, you enter a room appearing very relaxed and carefree.

Tip! The informal expression "big mouth" is used to criticize people who say things they shouldn't: "You should have kept your big mouth shut!"

bug sth. [bʌg]	etw. verwanzeln
drive sb. round the bend	jmdn. wahnsinnig
[ˌdraɪv raʊnd ðə 'bend] UK ifml.	machen
I wouldn't put it past her	ich würde es ihr durch-
[aɪ wʊd'nt put ɪt 'pɑːst hə]	aus zutrauen

Spotlight 2/04

EXERCISES

1. Complete the sentences below using four different prepositions.

- a) I've applied _____ a new job. c) I don't mind commuting _____ London.
b) The work involves looking _____ the computer system. d) I haven't handed _____ my notice yet.

2. Join the two parts.

- a) a 5 per cent 1. manager
b) a basic 2. salary
c) a company 3. commission
d) a sales 4. car

3. Translate into English.

- a) Sie arbeitet Teilzeit. _____
b) Wir müssen eine Uniform tragen. _____
c) Die Angestellten haben Gleitzeit. _____
d) Er hat sich über dich beschwert. _____

4. Mark the correct verb.

- a) When she was 56, she **took / went into** early retirement.
b) We have to clock **on / up** before 9 a.m.
c) Do you have to wear a name **plate / tag**?
d) The company plans to **cancel / cut** 400 jobs.
e) I'm afraid we didn't **hit / meet** this year's target.

5. Put in the correct words.

bend • confidence • fortnight • mouth • office

- a) She's got such a big _____, hasn't she?
b) Be careful! The _____ may be bugged.
c) My boss is driving me round the _____.
d) I'm telling you this in _____, so please don't tell anyone else.
e) You're back! Were you away for a week or a _____?