

01

Making contacts

Learning objectives

Most business people attend a conference at some point in their careers, and this unit is about making business contacts and socializing at conferences.

Students begin by talking about their attitudes to conferences and discussing conference venues. They learn language for engaging in small talk and keeping the conversation going, and they listen to people chatting at a conference. They will also practise networking at a conference.

The grammatical focus is on the Present Simple and Present Continuous tenses, and the lexical focus is on collocations relating to conferences.

Digital resources: Unit 1

Online Workbook; Placement test; Extension worksheets; Glossary; Phrase bank; Student's Book answer key; Student's Book listening script; Fast-track map

This first section is about attitudes to conferences. It gives students an opportunity to talk about their own experiences and opinions.

Warm-up

Read the quotation by Fred Allen to the class and ask for reactions. Find out how often your students attend or take part in conferences. If they have been to one recently, ask them to say where it was and whether they enjoyed it.

- 1 Find out which, if any, of the cities the students have already visited. Invite them to share their experiences and impressions with the class. Then ask everyone to make their choice of city.
- 2 As students discuss the cities with a partner, go around listening to their conversations and make a note of any interesting points. At the end, ask for any interesting information to be reported back to the whole class. If students are hesitant to talk to the whole class about their discussions, use the notes you have taken to prompt them.

1:1

If you have been to any of the cities listed, you should be able to discuss with your student what you would do on your extra day. If not, make sure you do some research in advance so that you have information and ideas to share.

- 3 Go through the blog with the class. Then ask students to work individually to think up tips for the business traveller.

- 4 Ask students to work with a partner to share and discuss their tips. Then have a class feedback session and ask the students to vote for the best three tips.


- 5 Ask students to work with a partner and decide who will be Speaker A and Speaker B. Ask them to turn to their respective pages and read the replies. The two replies give conflicting advice on a number of issues. Make sure the students compare the two opinions. They should then decide which advice they think sounds the best. Find out what the general consensus is in a class feedback session.

1:1

Take one of the roles yourself and work with your student to compare the advice. Ask the student to decide which advice sounds best.

Conference venues

In this section, students meet some common collocations associated with conference venues. Recorded extracts from a business travel programme are used to show these collocations in action and also to train students to listen for detail, in this case picking out numbers and saying what they refer to.

- 1  1.01 Focus attention on the three photos and ask them to say which of the conference venues they would be most interested in going to.

As you play the recording, students match the extracts to the venues.

ANSWERS

Venue A (Disneyland® Paris) = 2; Venue B (Hilton Hotel in Cancún, Mexico) = 1; Venue C (Burj Al Arab Hotel in Dubai) = 3



1.01

Extract 1


Two thousand years ago, it was the home of the ancient Mayan civilization. Today, Cancún is the most popular resort in Mexico; its unspoilt coastline a water sports paradise. With its 426 rooms overlooking the Caribbean, 24-hour room service, express checkout, outdoor pools, residents-only health club and 200 metres of exclusive private beach, the Hilton Cancún is rated among the three best hotels in Latin America. Whether swimming with the dolphins or playing roulette in its own offshore casino, you can be sure of an experience to remember. Or why not take advantage of the Hilton's car rental service and explore the nearby ruins of Chichen Itza? Whatever your company's needs, send them your requirements and they will plan the logistics for you. What's more, if you book on special value dates, you'll get a generous 10 to 30% discount. This year, why not let your annual conference be part of Cancún's 2,000-year-old tradition?

Extract 2

Half an hour from the world's most romantic city and rated by conference organizers the 'hottest' venue in Europe, Disneyland® Paris's corporate clients include American Express, Unilever and MCI. If you think business and *The Lion King* don't mix, the Disney® magic will soon change your mind. With its unique atmosphere and superb fully equipped convention centre for 2,300 people, its 95 meeting rooms and 3,000 square metres of exhibition space, Disney's theme park is sure to be a huge success with both you and your family. As well as fabulous banqueting facilities for over a thousand people, Disney is able to arrange special private events, such as the amazing 'Journey through Time' and the 'Cape Caribbean' adventure or, if you prefer, golf tournaments and team-building activities. Walt Disney's aim was always 'to make people happy' and that aim now extends to corporate hospitality in the cultural heart of Europe.

Extract 3

At 321 metres high, higher than the Eiffel Tower and only 60 metres shorter than the Empire State Building, the magnificent Burj Al Arab is one of the world's tallest and most luxurious hotels. Diamond white by day and a rainbow of colours at night, occupying a central location in Dubai with flight connections to all the major cities of the world, the Burj Al Arab combines the latest technology with the finest traditions of the past. Spacious deluxe suites from 170 to 780 square metres, in-room laptops with Internet access, full conference facilities on the 27th floor, a VIP helipad on the 28th, a golden-domed ballroom and a world-class restaurant with spectacular views across the Arabian Gulf all make this the ultimate business venue. As they say in the Emirates, 'Welcome, honoured guest.'

2  **1.01** Before playing the recording again, read all the figures aloud, or ask students to read them, ensuring that everyone is clear on how each is pronounced.

You may need to play the recording several times and pause it between extracts for students to match the figures to the venue and note down what the figures refer to.

ANSWERS

- a Venue C (height of the building in metres)
- b Venue B (number of rooms)
- c Venue C (floor with conference facilities)
- d Venue A (number of people the convention centre can house)
- e Venue B (discount available on special value dates)
- f Venue A (size of exhibition space in square metres)
- g Venue C (size of deluxe suites in square metres)
- h Venue A (number of meeting rooms)
- i Venue B (length of private beach in metres)

3 See if students can match the collocations from memory. If necessary, play the recording again for them to check.

To make the exercise more interactive, you could divide the class into two teams, numbering the members of the team. In turn, one member of each team calls out the first word

in a collocation and the corresponding member of the other team replies with the second word.

ANSWERS

- Venue A: a 2 b 3 c 1 d 6 e 4 f 5
- Venue B: a 3 b 1 c 2 d 5 e 6 f 4
- Venue C: a 2 b 3 c 1 d 6 e 4 f 5

4 Students can discuss the question with a partner or in groups and report back to the class.

Who's who?

In this section, students are introduced to the kinds of things they will need to say at conferences, beginning by identifying specific people by appearance, manner, location, etc and saying something about them.

1 This exercise equips students to identify people they want to talk about. When students have completed the questions and answers individually, ask them, with a partner, to act out a conversation with one student choosing a question and the other giving an appropriate response. Do not let this go on for too long as they will be doing a similar thing in the next exercise, but with a freer choice of words.


ANSWERS

- a by b with c in d at e to f in g for h at i on

2 Students work with a partner to make new sentences following the structures practised in 1. Make sure students can pronounce some of the trickier items such as *pharmaceuticals*, *buffet* and *moustache* before they start. Invite some pairs to perform short conversations for the class.

Language links

Direct students to the *Language links* section on pages 11–12 for further explanation of the construction and use of the Present Simple and Present Continuous, and exercises to practise these tenses.

3  **1.02–1.05** Focus attention on the photo and ask students to use some of the language they have been practising to identify the people.

For fun, you might like to invite students to see who can put together the longest description of one of the people in the photo. For example, *the woman in the black dress, pink scarf and short dark hair, talking to the man in the dark suit drinking an orange juice.*

Before playing the recordings, establish the meaning of *gossip* and perhaps ask the students to suggest some potential gossip about the people in the photo. Play the recordings and ask students first to decide which of the people in the photo the speakers are discussing.

Play the recordings again for students to complete the information. You may need to play them several times and pause to give students time to write their answers.

ANSWERS

- 1 Siemens; director of R&D; Munich; Hilton; data security; headhunted from Philips at double his previous salary
- 2 Sony®; head of research; UK; Sheraton; New Generation Gaming Systems; may lose his job if Sony move R&D to Frankfurt and appoint a German instead of him
- 3 Warsaw University of Technology; professor; Warsaw; Marriott; innovation strategies; quite influential and things can go badly for you if you get on the wrong side of her
- 4 Cisco; head of technical department; the Netherlands; Hyatt; new server technology; was the boss of one of the speakers, she fired him when they disagreed about the management of a project



1.02

Conversation 1

- A:** Oh, hi, David. How are things? We were just talking about the guy over there.
- B:** Who?
- A:** The big, tall guy in the green tie behind those women. The guy standing at the bar.
- B:** Oh, yeah.
- A:** You know him?
- B:** Yes, that's Karl Schelling.
- A:** Karl who?
- B:** Schelling. He's the new director of R&D at Siemens.
- A:** In Munich?
- B:** Yeah, that's right. Nice guy. I was talking to him last night in the bar.
- A:** Oh, he's at the Hilton?
- B:** Yeah. He was telling me about how he got the job.
- A:** Really?
- B:** Yeah, apparently he was headhunted from Philips. They made him an offer he couldn't refuse. Doubled his salary.
- A:** Headhunted? Don't expect Philips are too happy, then. All that sensitive information.
- B:** Well, no, quite.
- A:** He's presenting, isn't he?
- B:** Yeah, he's on this afternoon. He's talking about data security.
- A:** You're joking.
- B:** No, here he is on the programme: Data Security in the Connected Economy.



1.03

Conversation 2

- C:** Chris, who's that man over there in the light suit?
- D:** You mean the grey suit?
- C:** No, not him! Over there, standing by the entrance. Talking to that woman in black.
- D:** Oh, yes, that's, er, what's-his-name? William Hill. William Hall, that's it. He's at the Sheraton where I'm staying, actually. He's head of research at Sony® UK. Yes, he's giving a talk on ... where's my

programme? ... Ah, yes, here it is. Erm, ... yes, on New Generation Gaming Systems. Ten o'clock on Saturday. I think I'm going to that.

- C:** Mm, sounds interesting. He doesn't look very happy, though, does he?
- D:** Well, no. Neither would you in his position.
- C:** How do you mean?
- D:** Well, this is just a rumour, mind you, but, erm, I've heard they may be moving R&D to Frankfurt.
- C:** Really? Are you sure?
- D:** Well, no, but that's what I heard.
- C:** And he doesn't want to make that move?
- D:** Well, the thing is: I'm not sure they're keeping him on. I think they want a German to lead the team.
- C:** Oh, I see. Well, no wonder he's unhappy ...



1.04

Conversation 3

- E:** Anne, you know nearly everybody here. Who's that woman in the brown jacket with the long red hair? She's talking to that other woman, the one with the blonde hair.
- F:** Oh, you mean, Irena, Irena Stefanowitz?
- E:** Yes, who is she? I saw her coming out of the Marriott last night with a whole group of people. Going to some dinner party, by the look of it. Sounded like they were speaking Polish.
- F:** Yes, she's a professor at the Warsaw University of Technology. And I think she does quite a lot of consultancy work as well. Amazing speaker. You should go to her talk.
- E:** Really? What's she talking about?
- F:** I think she's doing a session this year on innovation strategies.
- E:** Interesting. You know, I'm going to be working on a project in Krakow next year.
- F:** Krakow? Oh, you'll love it there. Very nice city.
- E:** Yes, if all goes well, there might be a lot more work in Poland.
- F:** Oh, well, in that case, perhaps you should meet Irena. I'm sure she'd be interested in talking to you.
- E:** Yes, perhaps you're right.
- F:** I should warn you, though ...
- E:** What?
- F:** Well, she's quite influential in Warsaw.
- E:** Oh, yes?
- F:** Yes. Let's just say it doesn't pay to get on the wrong side of her. A friend of mine knew her well. They had a bit of a disagreement and his latest project proposal was rejected by the authorities.
- E:** Hmm. Okay, I'll remember that.
- F:** But you must meet her. In fact, why don't I introduce you now?
- E:** Erm, well, okay then ...

 1.05

Conversation 4

- G:** ... So, anyway, that's how it ended up costing me 75 euros just to get from the airport to the hotel!
- H:** Oh, dear. Well, I did warn you about some of those mini-cab drivers.
- G:** Yes, yes, I know. I'll wait in the queue with the rest of you next time ... Anyway, let's change the subject ... Who's that blonde woman over there?
- H:** Hmm?
- G:** The one in the black dress. Over there, talking to those two guys.
- H:** Which two guys?
- G:** Those two. The woman with her back to us!
- H:** Oh, her! That's Margo Timmerman.
- G:** Ah, so that's Margo Timmerman. I thought so. She still works for Cisco, right?
- H:** Yeah. Heads up their technical department in the Netherlands.
- G:** Isn't she giving the keynote presentation tomorrow morning?
- H:** Yes, she's talking about new server technology or something. Why?
- G:** Hmm, I'd quite like to talk to her if I get the chance. Is she staying at the Marriott, do you know? I might leave her a message.
- H:** Erm, no, she's probably over at the Hyatt. That's where most of the Cisco people are staying.
- G:** Ah, right ... Listen, you seem to know her. You couldn't introduce us, could you?
- H:** Er, well, to tell you the truth, I'm really not the best person to ask.
- G:** Oh?
- H:** No. She, er, used to be my boss. You know, years ago. We, er ... Well, let's just say we had very different ideas about how to manage a project. And she, er, let me go.
- G:** You mean she fired you!
- H:** Yes, well, all right. Keep your voice down! I wasn't exactly fired ...

Language links

Direct students to the *Language links* section on page 11 for more practice of language for 'talking shop'.


Taboo or not taboo?

In this section, students discuss the issue of what is and is not a suitable topic for conversation with people you meet at a conference for the first time.

- 1** Establish the meaning of *taboo*. Ask students whether taboo topics in their culture differ according to how well you know the people you are talking to and the circumstances of the conversation. Invite them to suggest topics which they think would be taboo when meeting someone at a conference for the first time and other topics which would be safe.

Point out other categories given in this exercise: *conversation killers* and *a bit risky*. Ask for examples, e.g. subjects that are not exactly taboo but wouldn't encourage people to continue a conversation, and subjects that are risky because they may cause offence.

Ask students to share with the class any amusing or embarrassing moments they've actually experienced in conversation. If your students are from different cultures, ask them to work individually at first to group the items in the box under the headings. They can then compare their answers with a partner or in small groups. If students share a culture, encourage them to discuss and do the grouping with a partner. As a follow-up activity, you could ask the class to make a list of topics which they think would be completely safe in most cultures.

- 2**  **1.06–1.10** Students may be able to decide whether the speakers get on or not before they identify the specific details of the topics of conversation. Ask only for this the first time you play the recordings to encourage students to realize that it isn't always necessary to understand every word of a recording in order to pick up the gist of what is said or the attitude of the speakers.

Play the recordings again for them to note down the topics of conversation that they hear and allow them to compare answers with a partner before checking with the class.

ANSWERS

	Topics of conversation	Do the speakers get on?
a	Russia, work, drink	yes
b	food, astrology	no
c	speaker's talk, conference, weather	yes
d	work (the merger), rail strikes	no
e	watch, hotel, Mexico, food	yes

 1.06

Conversation a

- A:** Is this your first visit to Russia?
- B:** Er, yes it is, actually. Fascinating place.
- A:** Yes, isn't it? I come here quite a lot. What do you do, by the way? I see you work for Glaxo.
- B:** How did you know? ... Oh, yeah, my badge. Yeah, I'm in R&D. Molecular modelling, to be precise.
- A:** Really? We should talk. Can I get you a drink?
- B:** Er, no thanks. I'm fine.
- A:** Sure?
- B:** Well, just a coffee, then. Thanks. So, what line of business are you in?

 1.07

Conversation b

- C:** Hi, Fiona Hunt. Sun Microsystems. Mind if I join you?
- D:** Erm, no. Er, Michael Steele.
- C:** Pleased to meet you, Mike. Try one of these – they're delicious.

- D: Er, thanks, but I'm allergic to seafood.
 C: Oh, then try the cheese dips instead. They're really good! Have we met somewhere before? Oslo, perhaps?
 D: I don't think so.
 C: Mm. I was sure I recognized you ... You're an Aquarius, aren't you? I can tell.
 D: Well, I don't know. I'm not really into horoscopes, I'm afraid.
 C: When's your birthday?
 D: Oh, er, February the 2nd.
 C: I knew it! A typical Aquarius.
 D: Er, yes. Geez, is that the time? If you'll excuse me, I have to make a phone call. It's been nice talking to you.

1.08

Conversation c

- E: I really enjoyed your talk this morning.
 F: Oh, thanks. Yeah, it went quite well, I think.
 E: You had some very interesting things to say. I'm Amy Cooper, by the way. Yes, I'd like to talk to you about some of your ideas. My company may be interested in your product. Where are you staying?
 F: At the Regency.
 E: I'm at the Hyatt. Why don't we fix up a time to chat over a drink? Here's my card.
 F: Oh, thanks. I've got mine here ... somewhere.
 E: Don't worry. I know who you are. So, how are you enjoying the conference?
 F: Well, it's been good so far. More people than ever this year. But, er, isn't this weather awful? Half a metre of snow this morning, I heard.
 E: Yeah, it gets pretty cold here in Moscow, that's for sure.
 F: Erm, would you excuse me a moment? I'll be right back.

1.09

Conversation d

- G: So, how's business?
 H: Fine. This merger's meant quite a lot of work for us, but, fine.
 G: Hmm. Well, mergers are often difficult. So, er, what do you think about the strikes in Europe?
 H: I'm sorry?
 G: The rail strikes in France. It was in the news again this morning.
 H: Er, well, I, er ...
 G: I mean, it must affect a company like yours – you being in logistics.
 H: Er, no, I think you've made a mistake. I'm not in logistics. I work for Audi.
 G: Audi? Oh, sorry. Thought you were someone else.
 H: That's okay. Er, if you'll excuse me, I must just go and say hello to someone.

1.10

Conversation e

- I: I like your watch. An Omega, isn't it?
 J: Er, well, to be honest, don't tell anyone, but it's a fake.
 J: No! Well, it looks real to me. Where did you get it?
 J: Turkey. It cost me 25 dollars.
 I: Amazing! So, do you know many people here?
 J: No, not really. It's the first time I've been to one of these conferences.
 I: Me too. So, what's your hotel like?
 J: Hmm, pretty comfortable. Nothing special, but it's okay, I suppose.
 I: Yeah, you're at the Sheraton, aren't you? Last year they held this thing in Mexico. The Hilton Cancún. Fabulous hotel, they say.
 J: Cancún! A bit warmer than here, then!
 I: Oh, yeah. I went there on holiday once. Beautiful place. Can I get you anything from the buffet?
 J: Oh, that's all right. I'll come with you. I'd like some more of that Beluga caviar before it all goes!

Keeping the conversation going

This section gives students some of the tools for keeping a conversation going once it has started.

1 **1.06–1.10** Ask students to work individually to complete the expressions. Then allow them to compare with a partner before playing the recordings for them to check their answers. Write the expressions on the board and ask the students to close their books. Wipe off some of the words and see if the students can remember the expressions. Gradually wipe off more words so that fewer and fewer remain, each time checking if the students can still remember.

ANSWERS

- a Is this your b What do you c Can I get d What line of
 e Try one of f Have we met g If you'll excuse h It's been nice
 i I really enjoyed j How are you k Isn't this weather
 l Would you excuse m I must just n Do you know o Can I get

2 Ask students to discuss the questions with a partner or in small groups. Explain that some expressions can be used more than once. Then have a class discussion on what they would do in their own language(s) to open, continue or end a conversation.

ANSWERS

- a a, c, e, f, i, j, k, n, o
 b b, c, d, e, j, k, n, o
 c g, h, l, m

At a conference party

In this section, students practice what they have learned about starting and maintaining a conversation at a conference by roleplaying a conference party. Students work together as a class to do this, and they are given plenty of support by preparing questions and answers in advance.

1 Students could use their real names and nationalities, but some may find it less embarrassing to assume a fictitious identity. The fantasy role approach may also work better with in-company groups and those who already know each other well; it certainly allows more room for gossip.

2 Ask students to write the questions first and check the answers with the class before getting them to fill in the answers. Students work individually to devise answers for their character, and you will need to go around offering help and advice where needed.

ANSWERS

So, who do you work for?
Is this your first time in Paris?
And what do you do there?
How are you enjoying the conference?
Where are you based?
Are you giving a presentation?
How's business?
Do you know many people here?
Can I get you a drink?
So, where are you staying?
Where are you from originally?
Can I get you anything from the buffet?

Language links

Direct students to the *Phrase bank* in the *Language links* section on page 12 for a further exercise on making questions and answers to use when networking.

3 If you have the time and the facilities to do so, you might like to add to the reality of this roleplay by having some refreshments available and by encouraging students to bring to class business cards (real or imaginary) and name badges.

Focus attention on the fact that they are not limited to the questions and answers they have just prepared. They have already practised other techniques in this unit for talking about other people in the room and keeping the conversation going. They could even engage in a little (fictitious) gossip about the other people they have met at the conference.

Have a class feedback session at the end in which students report back to the class on the people they met, the gossip they heard and the appointments they have made.

1:1

Ask your student to invent one persona to play at the drinks party, but prepare several for yourself. Each time you have a conversation, assume a different persona and steer the conversation in a different direction.

Language links

ANSWERS

Vocabulary

Conferences

a up; plant b in; distributor c off; workers d out; product
e of; job f to; office g under; takeover h with; supplier
i for; contract j down; factory

Grammar

Present Simple

- 1 a **A** *Does he work* for the BBC?
B No, he *doesn't* work for them anymore. He *works* for CNN.
b **A** *Where do you work*?
B I *work* for a design company in Frankfurt.
c At our firm, we *don't* work on Friday afternoons.
d On Mondays our CEO usually *flies* to Oslo.
2 1 b, f 2 c, h 3 e, g 4 a, d

Present Continuous

- 3 1 a, e 2 d 3 b, c

Present Simple or Continuous?

- 4 a do you do b I'm c Do you know
d are you enjoying e I guess f Are you giving
g I only come h are you staying i I usually stay
j you aren't doing

Phrase bank: Networking

- a 9 b 6 c 4 d 2 e 10 f 5
g 11 h 7 i 1 j 8 k 3