

Business Skills Course

Associate 1: Unit 4 – Scheduling

Objective: Schedule an appointment with basic information such as time and place

Grammar: Future, suggestions



Each unit focuses on a SKILL rather than sets of vocabulary.

After the lesson, you will be confident and ready to perform that real-life skill.

Grammar, vocabulary and new phrases arise naturally during the lesson.

Pre-task (for homework):

- Please print out or bring in one page from your calendar for this week to discuss with your coach.

Warm up

- o Do you have to make many appointments with people at work?
- o How much time do you spend in meetings?
- o Is it easy to schedule a meeting at your company?
- o Do you find it difficult to cancel or reschedule appointments?

Dialogue

Kristy wants to schedule a meeting with a prospective customer.

- Tarik: Megaburger, Tarik speaking. How may I help you?
- Kristy: Hi, Tarik. This is Kristy. I'm a director at Meat Maker, an organic beef supplier, and **I was hoping that we could schedule a time** to discuss some of our new pricing options that you may be interested in.
- Tarik: Ok, sure. We're always looking for new suppliers. I'd like to schedule a meeting with you. **Could we schedule a meeting next Tuesday at 5:00? How does that sound?**
- Kristy: Unfortunately, the evening **will be a difficult time for me** to make it to your office. But **I could possibly come during** the lunch hour if that would work for you.
- Tarik: Hmm...lunch **is gonna be difficult** for the next few weeks. **What else do you suggest?**
- Kristy: **I can always stop by in the** morning, at the beginning of the day. Or if there is only evening times available, I can also **work that into my schedule.**
- Tarik: I know this sounds a little bit strange, but **would it be possible to** schedule something around 9 or 10 pm? Just because I've got really busy days.
- Kristy: Um, actually, **I could make that happen.** Could we possibly meet at a neutral location? Somewhere between my office and your office?
- Tarik: Um, sure that sounds fair. **What day works best for you?**
- Kristy: I think Wednesday would work best for me. I don't know if that suits your schedule.
- Tarik: **Ok, let's do Wednesday at 9** at the Starbucks on 58th Street. How does that sound...
- Kristy: Alright, I have that marked in my calendar.
- Tarik: Ok, great. So I'll see you next Wednesday.
- Kristy: Yes, see you then.

Questions:

1. What phrases do Tarik and Kristy use to make their proposals sounds more polite?
2. What are some other ways that they make their requests and answers less direct?

- Normal, unscripted conversation between 2 native speakers • Student:
- 1. Listens to DIALOGUE recording before class.
- 2. Reads DIALOGUE out loud with coach.
- 3. Practices intonation/pronunciation.
- Highlight key phrases student practices later in unit

PRACTICE 

A. There are many ways to schedule a meeting in English. Look at the phrases below and practice with your coach. Please order the phrases from most polite (6) to most direct (1).

Scheduling a meeting


- Let's meet (on)...
- Would ____ work for you?
- Would it be possible to meet (in)...
- Are you available (at)...
- How about...?
- What ____ works best for you?

Example

Tuesday 3:00	You:	Hey, Jake. I wanted to meet with you to discuss the financial report .
Discuss	Coach:	Ok, sure. When do you wanna meet?
Financial report	You:	How about Tuesday at 3?

- TARGET LANGUAGE taken directly from DIALOGUE.
- Start practicing basic situations in A and then expand to new situations in B.

1.  **September 15**
afternoon
performance review

2.  next week
after 5 pm
plan the Christmas party

2.  tomorrow
10 am
go over figures

4.  next Thursday
anytime
finalize the report

5.  in the next few days
morning
discuss workflow

6.  ?
?
arrange make-up lesson

Expansion

Are there any appointments you need to schedule this week? Practice some with your coach.

B. Sometimes we have to negotiate a time and a place to meet. Look at the following phrases and practice with your coach.

Finding alternatives

- Unfortunately, I'm busy (on)...
- Could we do ____ instead?
- Sorry, I don't have any time (at)...
- Are you free (in the)....?
- Would ____ work for you?
- Why don't we do ____?

Example

Coach: Are you available Friday at 2?
 You: **Sorry, I don't have any time on Friday. Can we do Thursday instead?**
 Coach: Sure, Thursday works for me.

- Expand on TARGET LANGUAGE to introduce new scenarios – FINDING ALTERNATIVES (SCHEDULING).
- Practice FINDING ALTERNATIVES .

1. *Tomorrow morning?*
→ afternoon

2. *Monday?*
→ Tuesday

3. *Next week?*
→ the week after

4. *After the meeting?*
→ before

5. *Tuesday afternoon?*
→ Tuesday after 6

6. *(make up lesson)*
(?)

- EXPANSION simulations at end of every PRACTICE section.
- Coach decides if student needs additional practice with EXPANSION, or student is prepared to move on.

Expansion

How would these expressions change depending on who you're talking to? Review some levels of formality with your coach.

C. In American culture, it's perfectly acceptable to reject meeting offers. But there are of course more and less polite ways to do it! We usually start with a positive statement and then follow it by the rejection.



1. Co-worker: You wanna come play basketball with us after work next week?
 You: **That sounds fun,** _____

2. Co-worker: I think we should have a meeting about hiring a new employee.
 You: _____

3. Supplier: We'd like to meet with you to talk about our new products.
 You: _____

4. Customer: We need some additional training for the new system you guys installed personally? The employees here liked your presentation.
 You: _____

5. Acquaintance: I wanted to go to a self-empowerment seminar next month. Come to join?
 You: _____

6. Boss: We need to meet about this ASAP. How about after the meeting today?
 You: _____

7. Coach: _____?
 You: _____

• Introduce and practice how to REJECT MEETING OFFERS

APPLICATION

This is your schedule for next week. You need to set up a couple of appointments and some co-workers and friends want to set up some appointments with you. Try to find a time slot for each, if possible.



Proposals:

- You need to meet a prospective for a first meeting
- A team member is having some work problems, meet with him
- HR wants to schedule a performance review with you
- A co-worker wants to get lunch this week
- Your buddy wants to meet James D. this week
- A supplier wants to schedule an emergency meeting
- You need to schedule a new test

- APPLICATION – A test to see whether student can apply vocabulary learned in PRACTICE.
- Coach evaluates - student must use natural language to perform task.
- Coach decides whether student needs more practice or moves onto the next skill.

Expansion

Take out your schedule for this week or next week. Your coach is going to play the role of some of the people you're meeting and propose rescheduling some of the appointments.