

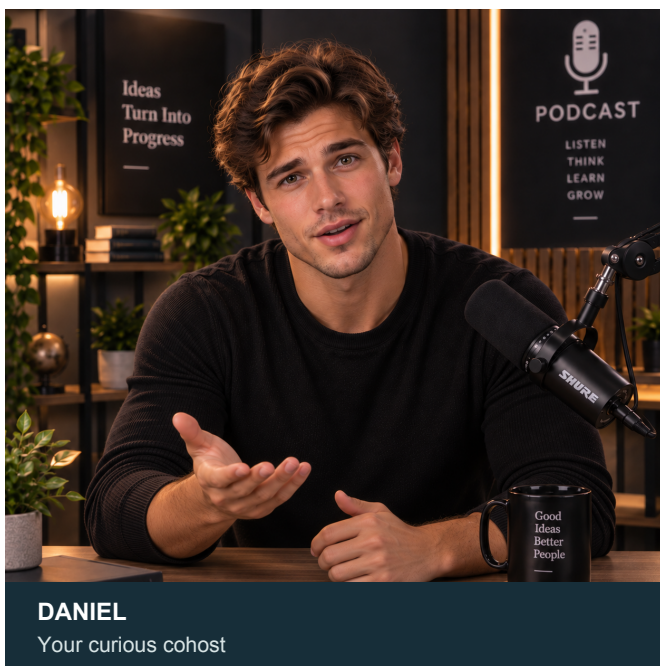


Office Hours

Meetings, mistakes and missing coffee

Natural English for a week at work. Read the conversation, collect useful phrases, then try them in your own situation.

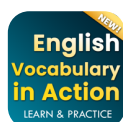
B1-B2 / 5:36 AUDIO / FULL TRANSCRIPT



LISTEN. READ. SAY IT.

- 1 Listen once for the story.
- 2 Read along, then collect the phrases on page 5.
- 3 Use the practice page to make the language your own.

[Watch this episode on YouTube >](#)



Review edition 01



FULL TRANSCRIPT / 01 OF 03

The conversation

Read along with Daniel and Maya. Times mark the start of each chapter.

00:00

Getting clear

Clarifying a task

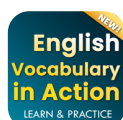
- Daniel** Welcome back! Today we're talking about office English. Meetings, emails, deadlines... and the person who takes your lunch from the fridge.
- Maya** That's a difficult conversation in any language.
- Daniel** Exactly. I'm Daniel, and joining me is Maya, our English teacher. She's here to help me sound professional when my brain is saying, "Help!"
- Maya** A very useful workplace skill. What happened this week?
- Daniel** Monday morning. My manager explained a task. I understood every word, but somehow... not the task. So I smiled.
- Maya** Ah, the dangerous smile.
- Daniel** Then I said, "Absolutely." Very confident. Absolutely no idea.
- Maya** Next time, try: "Could you walk me through that?" To "walk someone through" something means to explain it step by step.
- Daniel** "Could you walk me through the process?"
- Maya** Exactly. Or, if you understood most of it, check one detail: "Just to clarify, do you need the full report or just a summary?"
- Daniel** That sounds much better than, "Sorry, what is happening?"
- Maya** And it shows you're paying attention. Asking a clear question is professional.

01:15

Speaking up

Meetings & polite disagreement

- Daniel** Okay. Tuesday: a meeting. Someone suggested another weekly meeting. I disagreed deeply, in my heart.
- Maya** But what did you say?
- Daniel** "Interesting." Which, in this case, meant "Please, no." How do I actually disagree politely?
- Maya** Acknowledge the idea, then explain your concern. "I see your point, but I'm concerned about the time involved. Could we send a short update instead?"
- Daniel** So I offer an alternative. Can I say, "I want to bring up a problem"?
- Maya** Yes. "Bring up" means to introduce a topic. A softer option is: "Could I bring up one concern?"
- Daniel** "Could I bring up one concern? We now have a meeting to prepare for another meeting."
- Maya** That is a concern worth bringing up.



Review edition 01

02 / 06



FULL TRANSCRIPT / 02 OF 03

The conversation

Read along with Daniel and Maya. Times mark the start of each chapter.

02:04

Following up

Emails & getting a reply

- Daniel** Wednesday. I emailed a colleague, but they didn't reply. Can I write, "Hello? Are you alive?"
- Maya** Let's save that for a close friend.
- Daniel** Fine. Professional Daniel is listening.
- Maya** Try: "Hi Alex, I'm following up on my email about the budget. Could you send me your figures by Thursday?"
- Daniel** What's the difference between "follow up" and "chase"?
- Maya** Here, "follow up" means to contact someone again about something. "Chase" can mean to keep trying to get a reply or result. You might hear, "I'll chase that up," especially in British English. "I'm following up on..." is a useful, neutral choice for your email.
- Daniel** And I should give an actual deadline?
- Maya** Yes, if there is one. "By Thursday" is clearer than "soon." You can add why: "I need them to finish the report."
- Daniel** Right. My "soon" means this afternoon. My colleague's "soon" apparently means next winter.
- Maya** Different calendars. Very common.

03:12

Making time

Workload & deadlines

- Daniel** Thursday brings a small problem. I've got too much work, and I can't finish everything on time. Do I say, "I'm very busy," and hide behind my screen?
- Maya** Tempting, but try being specific: "I'm working on the sales report today. If this new task is urgent, which one should I prioritize?"
- Daniel** Ooh. Let the manager help choose.
- Maya** Exactly. And if you're late with something, say: "I'm running behind on the report. Could we move the deadline to Friday?"
- Daniel** "Running behind" means I'm taking longer than planned?
- Maya** Yes. Explain the reason briefly and suggest a realistic next step.
- Daniel** Could I say, "Let's put off the report?"
- Maya** "Put off" means postpone. But that sentence is vague. Say what you want to delay and until when: "Could we put off the review until Friday?"
- Daniel** Sadly, we can't put off Friday until Monday. I need the weekend.
- Maya** Finally, a scheduling decision we agree on.



Review edition 01

03 / 06



FULL TRANSCRIPT / 03 OF 03

The conversation

Read along with Daniel and Maya. Times mark the start of each chapter.

04:16

Fixing mistakes

Attachments & solutions

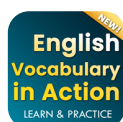
- Daniel** Last situation. I've sent a client the wrong attachment. Should I close my laptop and start a new life?
- Maya** Start with a new email. "Sorry, I attached the wrong file. Please use this version instead."
- Daniel** Short. Honest. Slightly painful.
- Maya** And useful. If you need time to fix a problem, say: "I'll look into it and get back to you this afternoon."
- Daniel** Two expressions! "Look into" means investigate?
- Maya** Exactly. And "get back to someone" means contact them again with an answer or update. Just make sure you actually do it.
- Daniel** Let's check what I've learned. Confusing task: "Could you walk me through it?" No email reply: "I'm following up on my email." A problem: "I'll look into it and get back to you."
- Maya** Perfect. Listeners, choose one of those phrases and say it out loud. Then imagine using it at work.

05:15

Coffee, please

One last office mystery

- Daniel** My phrase is, "Could I bring up one concern?"
- Maya** What's your concern?
- Daniel** Someone's taken my coffee.
- Maya** I'll look into it.
- Daniel** Maya... you're drinking it.
- Maya** Investigation complete. I'll get you another one.
- Daniel** Now that's a professional response. Thanks for listening, everyone!



Review edition 01

04 / 06



PHRASE BANK

English you can use

Eight useful expressions from the episode. Say each example out loud.

01 walk someone through

Explain something step by step.

"Could you walk me through the process?"

02 bring up

Introduce a topic in a conversation.

"Could I bring up one concern?"

03 follow up on

Contact someone again about something.

"I'm following up on my email about the budget."

04 prioritize

Decide what is most important to do first.

"Which one should I prioritize?"

05 run behind

Take longer than planned.

"I'm running behind on the report."

06 put off

Postpone something until a later time.

"Could we put off the review until Friday?"

07 look into

Investigate a problem or situation.

"I'll look into it this afternoon."

08 get back to someone

Contact someone again with an answer or update.

"I'll get back to you this afternoon."

You may hear 'I'll chase that up', especially in British English. 'I'm following up on...' is a useful, neutral choice for an email.





YOUR TURN

Make it your English

Try the tasks without looking at the phrase bank. Then check your answers.

01 COMPLETE THE EXPRESSIONS

1. Could you _____ me _____ the process?
2. Could I _____ one concern?
3. I'm _____ on my email about the budget.
4. I'll _____ it and _____ to you this afternoon.

02 WRITE A PROFESSIONAL RESPONSE

1. You have two urgent tasks. Ask your manager which one to do first.

2. Your report is taking longer than planned. Ask for a Friday deadline.

03 SAY IT OUT LOUD

Choose one situation above. Say your response out loud, then add a reason or a clear next step. Try it once without looking at the page.

CHECK YOUR ANSWERS

1. walk / through | 2. bring up | 3. following up | 4. look into / get back

Possible responses (other natural answers are welcome):

1. If this new task is urgent, which one should I prioritize?
2. I'm running behind on the report. Could we move the deadline to Friday?

