

# Business skills & communication

## B2B & B2C



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# Introduction

The objective of this pack is to give you opportunities to improve your practical business English skills through speaking and writing activities. There are exercises, videos, listening activities and lots of speaking exercises to help improve your business skills in the following areas: meetings, presentations, e-mail, negotiating, sales, socialising and phone.

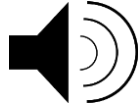
There are also **vocabulary activities** in areas such as marketing, legal English, finance, technology, retail, business and lots, lots more. All of this will help you speak and write confidently and fluently in B2B (Business to Business) and B2C (Business to Consumer) situations.

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Find out what's inside this pack.

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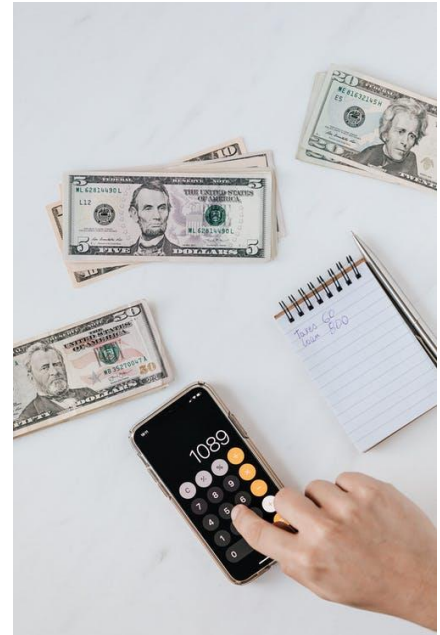
# Demanding a payment!

This lesson will teach you lots of useful language for talking about talking about debt in English.

## Discussion: Debts & loans!

Ask and answer any of the questions.

- What loans or debts does your company have?
- What top tips do you have for collecting bad debts?
- Have you ever had to call about a debt? What happened?
- Has your company ever used a debt collecting agency? Why? What for?
- Why do some companies get into debt?
- Why do some companies have problems paying their bills?
- What can be done to help a client pay their bill?
- Why do some companies need loans?
- What is a loan shark?
- What do you think about the public debt? How can it be reduced?
- What's the difference between the public debt and public deficit?
- What monthly expenses does your company or business have? (phone, electricity, mortgage, utilities, car, internet...)
- How could your company cut back on expenses?
- What are your top tips for avoiding payment issues with clients?
- How important is it to send clients any terms and conditions documents regarding paying bills? What should this document include information on?
- How important is it to ask for an upfront payment before supplying a client with goods or services?
- What do you think about discounts for the early payment of bills?



**Public debt** is the total amount, including total liabilities, borrowed by the **government** to meet its development budget.

## Listening: The cheque's in the post!

In this dialogue, Gloria, the credit controller for *Masters Meat Products* is phoning up to demand a payment for some goods that were delivered recently. Listen to the phone conversation and answer the questions.

1. What's the June payment for that Gloria's phoning about?
2. When does Reginald say that he sent the cheque?
3. How does Gloria know that he's lying about this?
4. What's the next excuse he gives for not paying?
5. What doesn't Gloria want to hear any more of?
6. When does Reginald say that he can guarantee payment by?
7. How does Gloria end the call?



## Audio script

Accountant: Reginald Smooth here.

Gloria: Oh, hello. This is Gloria Banks from Masters Meat Products, I was just phoning in **relation** to the June payment for a batch of **sausages** we **delivered** to you.

Accountant: Ah, yes, do you have the reference number to hand?

Gloria: No, I don't. Look, this is the third time we've spoken to you about this payment and...

Accountant: ...the cheque's in the post.

Gloria: Is it?

Accountant: Yes, I sent it yesterday.

Gloria: Did you?

Accountant: Yes, I sent it **registered** post.

Gloria: Are you sure?

Accountant: Yes, quite sure.

Gloria: Really, because yesterday was a public holiday...

Accountant: OK. I'll be honest with you. We've got a few cash-flow problems.

Gloria: Look, all I want is for you to give me a date when you will pay the money back. Frankly, I'm tired of calling up.

Accountant: OK, I'll need to check those **figures** again...

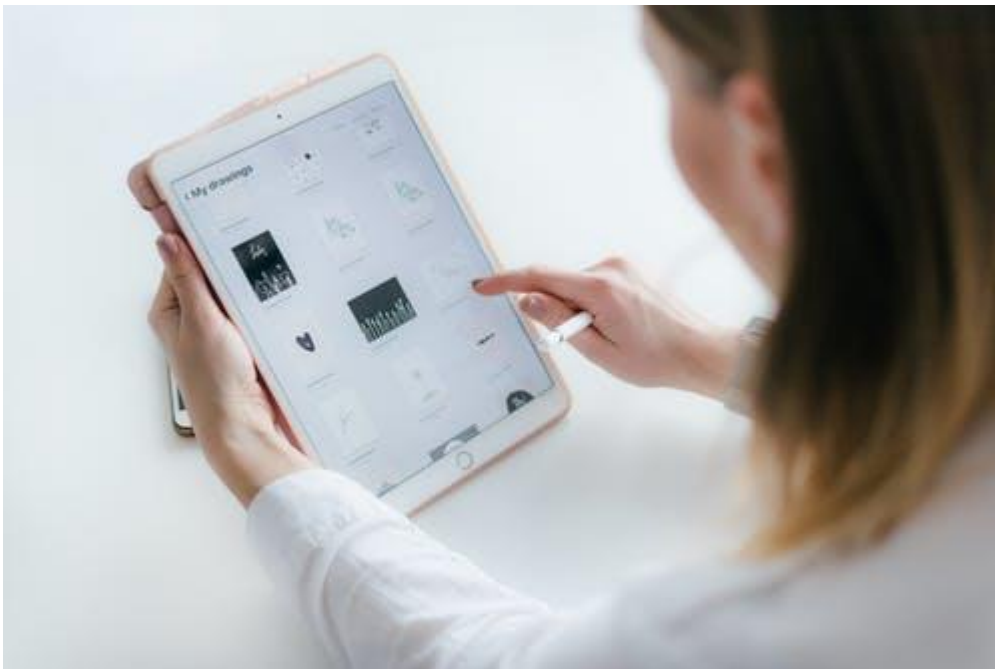
Gloria: Stop right there! I don't want to hear any more of that accountant-speak. Just give me a date.

Accountant: OK, I can guarantee you'll receive payment... erm... by the end of the month.

Gloria: OK... erm, which month?

Accountant: Look, I can't be that specific. Can we offer you something in return for the payments?

Gloria: Right! That's it. You will be hearing from our **solicitors**. Goodbye.



# Exercises

Here are some exercises with words from this lesson. Good luck!

## 1 Gap fill

Complete the sentences with the words from below.

*affect figures cash outstanding owe issues taking times*

1. There's an \_\_\_\_\_ bill to pay.
2. We'll be \_\_\_\_\_ this further.
3. We're going through tough \_\_\_\_\_.
4. This will \_\_\_\_\_ your credit rating.
5. You \_\_\_\_\_ us a total of \$40,000.
6. I'll need to check those \_\_\_\_\_ again.
7. We have a number of \_\_\_\_\_ with the bill.
8. We have been having a few \_\_\_\_\_-flow problems.



## 2 Sentence completion

Read over the sentences. Then, see if you can do the sentence completion exercise on the following page.

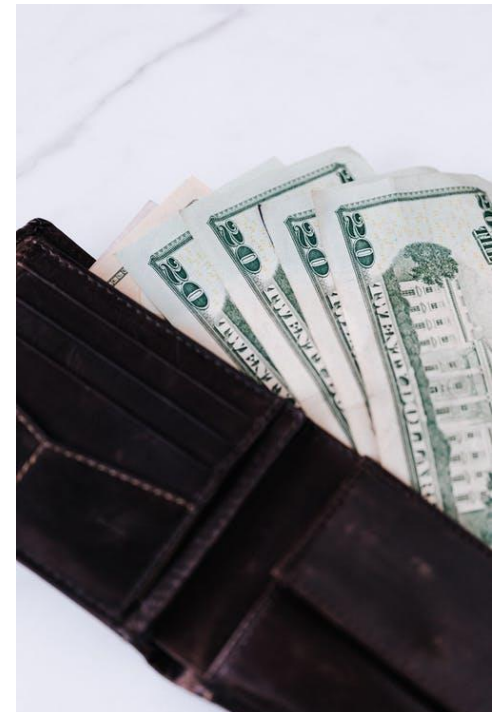
1. Please give me a **date** when you will pay the money back.
2. I'd like to discuss an **unpaid** bill you currently have with us.
3. I'd like to discuss a **pending** payment you have with us.
4. If you pay it all by the end of this month, we'll give you a 10% **discount**.
5. If it would **help**, you could pay us 5% this month, and the other 50% next month.
6. All our bills should be paid 60 days after the **invoice** is sent – as it says on the bill.
7. If you pay all future bills within 15 days, we could **give** you a 5% discount.
8. I was just phoning in **relation** to the June payment.

## 3 Gap fill

Complete the sentences with the prepositions from below.

*from as to up on in to by*

1. This is Gloria Banks \_\_\_\_\_ Masters Meat Products.
2. Do you have the reference number \_\_\_\_\_ hand?
3. This is the third time we've spoken \_\_\_\_\_ you about the payment.
4. I'm sorry about the delay, but the cheque's \_\_\_\_\_ the post.
5. I can guarantee you'll receive payment \_\_\_\_\_ the end of the month.
6. We could set \_\_\_\_\_ a payment schedule if you want.
7. I'll deal with it as soon \_\_\_\_\_ possible.
8. We're keen to carry \_\_\_\_\_ working with you in future.



#### 4 Sentence completion

Read over the sentences. Then, see if you can do the sentence completion exercise on the following page.

1. You'll be hearing **from** our solicitors very soon.
2. There's a late payment charge if the invoice isn't paid **on** time
3. Could you confirm that **in** writing, please?
4. We normally ask **for** a part of the payment upfront.
5. We could offer you an early payment discount **in** future.
6. We could offer you a 3% discount in future **for** any early payments.
7. You could pay it **in** instalments if you want.
8. You'll be hearing **from** our debt collection service.
9. I think it's **in** our interests to resolve this as amicably as possible.
10. I'll need to check those figures. Can I get back **to** you tomorrow?



## Speaking: role play: Debt collection!

Where possible, use the words and expressions from this lesson. Feel free to add in any new or different information – improvise whenever you want.

### Student A – The supplier (demanding payment)

You work in a **sausage** factory. You're calling up a customer to ask about an unpaid bill. Try to get a firm payment date. Good luck!

**Start the conversation:** *Hi, I was just calling to ask about an unpaid bill. Do you have a moment to talk about it?*

#### Here are some things you could say:

- We're tired of constantly calling you to...
- We need the payment by...
- You signed a contract with us to...
- You agreed to... / You promised to...
- This is the third time I've called you about...
- If you don't make the payment, we'll have to...
- If you want, you could pay the amount in instalments.
- If you do this, we'll have to charge you an interest rate of...
- I'd just like to remind you that...
- Please give me a date when you can pay...

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### Student B – The customer (with an outstanding bill)

You recently received shipment of some sausages that you sell on to retailers. The bill was due a while ago, but you still haven't paid it. The supplier has just called to ask about a payment date. Try to distract, confuse and manipulate them as much as possible, or make some vague promises about when it will be made.

#### Here are some things you could say:

- I spoke with your boss last week and he/she said...
- I think there was a problem with the bill because...
- We've been having a few cash-flow problems.
- The sausages aren't selling very well.
- It was an inferior batch of sausages.
- The economy isn't very strong at the moment.
- We weren't sure whether the total amount was correct because...
- I think we made the payment yesterday.
- I put the cheque in the post two days ago.
- We'll try to make the payment...
- Etc.

### Test 2 Sentence completion

1. Please give me a **da** \_\_\_\_\_ when you will pay the money back.
2. I'd like to discuss an **unp** \_\_\_\_\_ bill you currently have with us.
3. I'd like to discuss a **pe** \_\_\_\_\_ payment you have with us.
4. If you pay it all by the end of this month, we'll give you a 10% **di** \_\_\_\_\_.
5. If it would **he** \_\_\_\_\_, you could pay us 5% this month, and the other 50% next month.
6. All our bills should be paid 60 days after the **in** \_\_\_\_\_ is sent – as it says on the bill.
7. If you pay all future bills within 15 days, we could **gi** \_\_\_\_\_ you a 5% discount.
8. I was just phoning in **re** \_\_\_\_\_ to the June payment.

### Test 4 Sentence completion

1. You'll be hearing \_\_\_\_\_ our solicitors very soon.
2. There's a late payment charge if the invoice isn't paid \_\_\_\_\_ time
3. Could you confirm that \_\_\_\_\_ writing, please?
4. We normally ask \_\_\_\_\_ a part of the payment upfront.
5. We could offer you an early payment discount \_\_\_\_\_ future.
6. We could offer you a 3% discount in future \_\_\_\_\_ any early payments.
7. You could pay it \_\_\_\_\_ instalments if you want.
8. You'll be hearing \_\_\_\_\_ our debt collection service.
9. I think it's \_\_\_\_\_ our interests to resolve this as amicably as possible.
10. I'll need to check those figures. Can I get back \_\_\_\_\_ you tomorrow?

