



In englischer
Sprache

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Meetings in English

HAUFE.

- Absolutely! I've never been to a cricket match before, thank you!
- I'm afraid I'm tied up all Saturday with a family event.
- I'd rather stay in tonight. I am really tired from the long journey. I hope you understand.
- I'm afraid I'm not really into cricket.

Useful vocabulary

junction: Autobahnausfahrt

roundabout: Kreisverkehr

industrial estate: Industriegebiet

venue: Veranstaltungsort

on the hour: zur vollen Stunde

in good time: rechtzeitig

device: Gerät

overhead projector (= OHP), projector: Beamer [this is a German word, not an English one! In informal British English „beamer“ means a BMW]

transparency (for the OHP), slide (PowerPoint): Folie

power point/power socket (for laptops, etc): Steckdose

adapter (for power cables, etc): Adapter

extension lead: Verlängerungskabel

to attend a meeting: besuchen, teilnehmen an

remote: nicht vor Ort, standortfern

Arriving at the meeting

The time before the meeting actually starts is valuable time for socialising and getting to know the other participants better. There is no second chance to make a first impression, as the saying goes, so this is why introducing yourself to others and making introductions for the attendees you know are very important. Last but not least, the physical surroundings and the technical equipment for the meeting also have to be in place and running.

In this chapter, you will find out more about

- welcoming the attendees (page 34),
- introductions (page 38) and small talk (page 40),
- setting up the room (page 45).

Arriving in reception

When arriving at reception, start by giving your name and the name of the person you are here to see.

Useful phrases

- Good morning, I'm here to see Ms Smith. My name is Sylvia Ackermann. I'm a little early, actually.
- Hello, my name is Sylvia Ackermann. I'm here for a meeting with/to meet Hilary Smith.

Being on time

While punctuality is not always strictly observed internally at companies in English-speaking countries, punctuality for external meetings is considered very important. Lateness is seen as impolite, unless there are very good reasons for it. If you are going to be unavoidably late, phone ahead and let the person you are meeting know what is happening – people rarely mind if you have

a good reason and keep them informed.

Receiving visitors on arrival

If you are responsible for welcoming visitors, the reception you give them will form their first impression of the company. So it helps to have some friendly phrases at the ready. If your visitors are visiting the company for the first time, they may well have planned in extra time for their journey and arrived a little early. If there will be a short wait while the person they have come to see finishes what they are doing, put them at ease with a little small talk.

Useful phrases

- Hello, Ms Ackermann. I'll let Hilary know you're here. Please take a seat for a moment.
- Good morning, Ms Ackermann. Welcome to ABC Ltd. Please take a seat. Ms Smith will be with you shortly.
- Ms Ackermann – Hilary knows you are here and her meeting is just coming to an end. She will be with you very shortly. Can I offer you something to drink while you wait?
- Ms Smith will be with you in just a moment. Can I bring you a tea or coffee in the meantime? Or some water?

Lift talk

Perhaps you've been asked to show the visitor in reception the way to the meeting room. On the way down the corridor or in the lift, it is customary for both parties to make some small talk to break the ice. In this situation, small talk is generally restricted to topics such as travel, or the weather.

Example: arriving at a meeting and making lift talk

A: Ms Burmeister? Good morning. I'm Rosi Forster, Dr Huber's assistant. Welcome to Hamburg!

B: Thank you, Ms Forster. Nice to meet you!

A: Nice to meet you, too. Did you have a good trip?

B: Yes, thank you.

A: The meeting is on the second floor. Shall we take the lift or would you like to walk?

B: Actually, stretching my legs wouldn't be a bad idea, after so many hours on a plane! But before we go, is there a restroom I could use?

A: Of course, over there behind the column, to your left.

[Five minutes later]

B: So, that's better. Ready to roll.

A: Fine. Let's take the stairs. Is this your first time in Hamburg?

B: Yes, it is. I hope I'll have a chance to do a little sightseeing. I expect the harbour must be especially worth a visit?

A: That's right. It's really interesting. What was the weather like in New York when you left?

B: It was awful, really, slush and snow, and grey skies.

A: It's unusually cold for the time of year here, too. Here we are, room Sao Paolo. Can I take your coat?

B: Thanks.

A: Would you like something to drink? Water? Coffee?

B: Just a sip of water would be nice, thanks.

A: Still or sparkling?

B: Sparkling, please. And would you have a few ice cubes?

A: Sure. I'll be back in a minute.

Useful phrases

- How was your journey here today?
- Did you travel by car? Was the traffic good today?
- Is this your first visit to the area/the company?
- Did you find us easily enough?
- How long will you be staying in Germany?
- I'm afraid you're a little unlucky with the weather. How is the weather in Florida at the moment?

- Well, it looks like we'll have some nice weather during your stay.

If you're the visitor, naturally your responses should be upbeat and cheerful and you should have some questions and phrases of your own up your sleeve.

- The journey was very good, thanks. Ms Smith's directions were very clear.
- Yes, it's my first time here. I'm hoping to see a little of the local area during my stay.
- Has the company been situated here long?
- The company seems to be very conveniently located. Does it take long to travel into the city from here?
- It's much warmer here than where I've travelled from. Is this weather usual for the time of year?
- At home, it's lovely and warm. It's spring-like!
- It's pouring/coming down in torrents/buckets.
- It's absolutely freezing/boiling.

Useful vocabulary

to arrive in reception: an der Rezeption ankommen

restroom (US): Toilette

to stretch my legs: sich die Beine vertreten

to boil: kochen; sehr heiß sein

slush: Schneeregen

a sip: ein Schluck

to cheer up: aufklaren

to be worthwhile: sich lohnen

Introducing oneself and others

When you reach your destination, be sure to thank the person who has shown you the way before they go. The next step will be to introduce yourself to your host and the other meeting attendees. It is usual to shake hands as you do so.