So, you've been invited to participate in a meeting at work, at your community center, to organize a family event,… How can you join in, productively and politely?



For speaking in English, the first thing to figure out is the meeting's *register*, or where it falls on the *formal – informal* range, but gradations are subtle, so which to choose?! Now you'll know!



1.) Draw a line* between these phrases and the appropriate dish:

a. Group work meetings for upper management levels tend to be…



b. One-on-one work meetings (manager-employee) tend to be…

c. Group work meetings for clerks & sales reps tend to be…

Think about the levels of formality vs. informality represented by the food, and do this before going ahead!

*The boxes "grab" and "drop" the virtual pencil/lines in their upper left hand corners.

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A WORD TO THE WISE: Even if it's an after-hours drink with peers or an office party during which colleagues relax together, it is NOT a purely social event, and your speech and behavior ***should never relax into totally informal***. Sadly, too, there are always "snakes in the grass" just waiting for others' inappropriate behavior and/or speech to use in office battles; ***forewarned is forearmed***.

2.) Even the informal end of the spectrum has gradations. Draw lines to connect them, correctly:







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OK, I can hear you saying, "Star, that's awfully sexist and old-fashioned, isn't it? I mean, so many young and not-so-young women swear a lot and enjoy bathroom humor, too, these days!"

Sadly – **IMNSHO*** – that's true, but…as a non-native speaker, you won't probably have a sure feel for what is appropriate, so just be safe, and avoid extremely informal language, swearing, and vulgar jokes. *IN FACT, we won't even look at extremely informal language in this task.*

***IMNSHO** = "In my not so humble opinion." You'll also see just "**IMHO**."

3.) So, you've received an invitation to a meeting. You answer (*tick the correct answer*):



WORK: _____ The date and time are fine; I'll be there. | _____ Works for me; see ya'!

F/F*: _____ The date and time are fine; I'll be there. | _____ Works for me; see ya'!

*FAMILY & FRIENDS

(*some options, look AFTER answering!*: _____)

4.) You have a request. (*tick the correct answer*):



WORK: _____ Can I open the window? | _____ May I open the window?

F/F: _____ Can I open the window? | _____ May I open the window?

(*some options, look AFTER answering!*: _____)

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5.) You get this answer. (*tick the correct answer*):



WORK: _____ Yes, of course / No, please don't. | _____ Sure, no problem! / Naaah!

F/F: _____ Yes, of course / No, please don't. | _____ Sure, no problem! / Naaah!

(*some options, look AFTER answering!*: _____)

6.) There is a problem to solve. (*tick the correct answer*):



WORK: _____ The results are unsatisfactory. | _____ It's not much, is it?!

F/F: _____ The results are unsatisfactory. | _____ It's not much, is it?!

(*some options, look AFTER answering!*: _____)

7.) What could be a solution? (*tick the correct answer*):



WORK: _____ Pat, what can we do? | _____ Patricia, what are our options?

F/F: _____ Pat, what can we do? | _____ Patricia, what are our options?

(*some options, look AFTER answering!*: _____)

8.) Did you understand? Get clarification (*tick the correct answer*):



WORK: _____ Would you clarify that, please? | _____ What did ya' mean?

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F/F: _____ Would you clarify that, please? | _____ What did ya' mean?

(*some options, look AFTER answering!*: _____)

9.) Interrupt (**but not in real life; it's impolite!**) (*tick the correct answer*):



WORK: _____ If I may say something, I'd like to say…. | _____ But…

F/F: _____ If I may say something, I'd like to say…. | _____ But…

(*some options, look AFTER answering!*: _____)

10.) Change the topic (*tick the correct answer*):



WORK: _____ What about…? | _____ I'd like us to talk about….

F/F: _____ What about…? | _____ I'd like us to talk about….

(*some options, look AFTER answering!*: _____)

11.) Great idea! You agree (*tick the correct answer*):



WORK: _____ I'm inclined to agree. | _____ You're right!

F/F: _____ I'm inclined to agree. | _____ You're right!

(*some options, look AFTER answering!*: _____)

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12.) Bad idea! You disagree (*tick the correct answer*):



WORK: _____ I'm not inclined to agree. | _____ You're off base!

F/F: _____ I'm not inclined to agree. | _____ You're off base!

(*some options, look AFTER answering!*: _____)

13.) Express your idea (*tick the correct answer*):



WORK: _____ In my opinion, ... | _____ It is my opinion that...

F/F: _____ In my opinion, ... | _____ It is my opinion that...

(*some options, look AFTER answering!*: _____)

14.) Justify your idea (*tick the correct answer*):



WORK: _____ Based on the report's data,... | _____ Because I say so, that's why!

F/F: _____ Based on the report's data,... | _____ Because I say so, that's why!

(*some options, look AFTER answering!*: _____)

Yay! Everyone has accepted your proposal, you've now seen typical phases of a meeting, and now it's over! **(*Do you also need to LEAD a meeting? – See that task.*)**

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N.B., all images are Microsoft Clipart available in the Word program used to create the file.

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