

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.



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:

nicknames
contractions
*informal
phrasal verbs*

naughty
*risqué
sensist
bathroom
sulcy*



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!*: _____)

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!

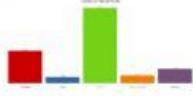


(some options, look AFTER answering!: _____)

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?



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!: _____)

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.)

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