

Small talk phrases

1. Complete these small talk questions by choosing the best form for each verb in brackets.

Asking about current projects:

1. What ____ you ____ on at the moment?
2. How ____ it ____ (go) with your new assistant?
3. ____ you ____ (make) any progress with your big project?

Asking about recent events:

4. How ____ your presentation ____ (go) last week?
5. How ____ (be) your business trip? When ____ you ____ (get) back?

Asking about news:

6. What's new?
7. ____ you ____ (hear) back from that potential big customer yet?
8. What ____ you ____ (be) up to in your department?

Asking about plans and predictions

9. When do you think they ____ finally ____ (sign) the contract?
10. ____ you ____ (go) to the conference this weekend?

2. Now match the questions (1–10) above with the answers (a–j) below.

- a. A little, but it's very slow. We're still tied up with the financing side of things, so it doesn't feel like we're getting anywhere.
- b. Absolutely! I'm giving a presentation! I'm really nervous about it, actually.
- c. Ah, nothing, really. Nothing ever changes! Busy as usual.
- d. It was useful, but really exhausting. I just got back on Tuesday, so I'm still trying to get back on top of my inbox. But I'm glad I went. I made a few potentially useful contacts.
- e. Next week, hopefully, but they're still not happy with our service charges, so it might still all fall through.
- f. Not bad, actually. He's on a steep learning curve, but he's trying hard, and he's got a lot of potential.
- g. Really well. We had a good turn-out, and some people said nice things about it. Whether anyone actually buys the product as a result is another question!
- h. We're about to start working on the new marketing plan. It's not due to be launched for another two months, but it takes a really long time to get ready.
- i. We've been really busy preparing for next week's quality inspection. We're nearly ready, but there are still a few big jobs to finish.
- j. Yes, they emailed us this morning with an order for 500 units, so it looks like it's all going ahead. Very exciting.