

Talking

by Adrian Doff

Level: Intermediate and above

Time: 20 minutes

Aim: – To use common expressions to describe ways of communicating.
– To talk about speeches, talks, lectures and presentations.

There are three ways of using this worksheet:

- Give the worksheet to students to work through independently and then in the next lesson go through the exercises and deal with any points that arise.
- Use the worksheet for an active classroom lesson. The notes below give ideas for doing this.
- Do not give the worksheet out in class but use it as the basis for your own lesson, getting ideas and phrases from the students and presenting language on the board (use the notes below to help you). Then give out the worksheet at the end and ask students to do the exercises for homework.

Warm-up

Warm-up: Establishing the concept

Write the word 'talk' on the board. Ask students: *How much do you talk at work? Who do you talk to most? When do you talk? What do you talk about?*

Larger classes: Write these questions on the board or OHP, and give time for students to talk about them in pairs. Then ask a few students what answers they gave.

Give out the worksheet.

Worksheet

Language focus

1. **talk, speak, chat, discuss.** Look at the texts at the top of the worksheet and establish what they are: an invitation (maybe a brochure or publicity material) to an annual event (possibly a conference or a reception) held by a company called Impex (probably a marketing, PR or investment company).

Read through the examples and make sure students understand the meanings of the different verbs. To focus on this, ask:

- What kind of things do you chat about at work? (the weather, friends, holidays, TV programmes).
- What kind of things do you discuss? (projects, problems, business strategy – often in a meeting).

2. **have a (conversation).** Look at the expressions in the boxes and use this to establish that:

- each verb has an equivalent phrase with have a + noun.
- the equivalent to *talk to* is *have a conversation* (not *have a talk*, which would be a very serious discussion, usually about a problem, e.g. *Your work hasn't been very good recently. I think we need to have a talk.*).

To practise these expressions ask students to think about today. Ask: *Did you have any interesting conversations today? Did you have any discussions? Who with? What about?*

3. **give a (talk).** Read the example and make sure students understand the difference in meaning between the different words:

- you might *give a speech* to open a conference, to welcome a speaker, or to entertain guests – it mainly has a social function.
- if you *give a talk*, the content will be important (so it will be about a particular subject).
- you would *give a lecture* about a more academic or abstract subject (e.g. at university or at a scientific conference).
- you might *give a presentation* to colleagues or clients (e.g. about the performance of the company) – a presentation is a talk supported by PowerPoint slides and handouts, for example.

Give examples of your own, and refer back to the texts at the top of the worksheet to help focus on the difference between a *talk* and a *speech*.

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To practise these expressions, ask students:

- whether they ever have to give a talk, a speech, or a presentation as part of their job.
- whether they ever attend talks, lectures, speeches or presentations.

Practice

1. Talk or write:

Students write sentences. Then ask them to read out what they have written.

Alternative: Give students a few moments to think about an occasion they remember, and possibly make a few notes. Then ask them in turn to tell the others what they did and what it was about.

2. Exercises:

Do the exercises together round the class; or let students do them alone or in pairs, then go through them together.

Answers:

- a) talk about (**or** discussion about)
 - b) talk to
 - c) discuss with
 - d) chat with
- a) He gave (**or** made) a very good speech.
 - b) We discussed the budget.
 - c) We had an interesting conversation.
 - d) I need to talk to you.

Other language areas you could explore:

1. other phrases connected with communicating

- *consult, ask (for) someone's opinion / advice, talk (something) over, have a word with (someone)*
- *give feedback (on), comment (on), give a summary (of), give a report (on)*
- *write a summary (of), take minutes (of a meeting), write a report (on)*

2. vocabulary for people who speak and listen

- *speaker, lecturer, presenter; main speaker, guest speaker, keynote speaker*
- *audience, participants, guests*

3. adjectives that go with *discussion, talk, speech and presentation*

- *have a lively / heated / intense discussion*
- *give an interesting / fascinating / absorbing / stimulating talk*
- *give a boring / disappointing / uninspiring talk*
- *give a rousing / inspiring / entertaining speech*
- *give a clear / well-organized / concise presentation*

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BUSINESS & ESP WORKSHEET

Welcome to Impex

We are pleased to invite you our annual event 'Welcome to Impex', which will be held this year at the Astoria Hotel.

This is an opportunity to meet and chat to colleagues and guests, and find out more about the company and what it stands for.



A

The programme

The chairman, Robert Foster, will give a short opening speech, and introduce our guest speaker, Dr. Samira Fayed, who will give a talk entitled 'Does advertising have a future?' Afterwards

you will have a chance to talk to Dr. Fayed and discuss some of the issues she talked about.



B

talk, speak, chat, discuss

talk to someone

I talked to Sue about the meeting. She says she'll take the minutes.

speak to someone

If you think he's not happy with the project, you should speak to him about it.

chat to someone

I was chatting to Jose in the coffee break. He told me he's just been to India.

discuss something with someone

I've discussed the plans with the architects, and they're going change them.

Note:

talk and speak mean roughly the same.

We say talk to and speak to, even if both people are talking, NOT ~~I talked with Sue, you should speak with him.~~

chat = talk informally, not about serious things

You talk about something, but you discuss something:

We talked about the new project.

We discussed the new project. (NOT ~~We discussed about...~~)

have a (conversation, chat, discussion)

Notice these verbs and phrases:

Verb
talk (to)

chat (to)
discuss something (with)

have + noun
have a conversation (with)

have a chat (with)
have a discussion (with)

I've already talked to him – we had a conversation about it over lunch.
We had a cup of coffee and a nice chat.
We had a long discussion about it, but we didn't agree.

give a (talk, lecture, presentation speech)

give	a talk	on about
	a lecture	
	a presentation a speech	

The guest speaker gave an interesting talk about how to increase job satisfaction.
Dr. Cheng will give a lecture on the topic 'Chinese art in the Ming period'
Can I borrow your laptop? I need to give a presentation tomorrow.
The CEO gave a short speech to open the conference.

Note: We can also say make a speech.

Exercise

Complete each gap with a two-word phrase. Use one word from Box A and one word from Box B.

A	B
chat	to
talk	with
discuss	about

- I went to a _____ the future of the aircraft industry.
- He wants to _____ you about his working hours.
- There's a problem I need to _____ you. Please come into my office.
- The new sales manager seems very friendly. I had a nice _____ him about restaurants we know.

There is one mistake in each sentence. Correct it.

- He had a very good speech about the importance of loyalty.
- It was a long meeting. We discussed about the budget for the next financial year.
- We made an interesting conversation about the layout of the new office.
- I need to talk with you about next week's trip to Toronto.

Talk or write



Think about a time recently when you:

- had an interesting conversation or a chat with someone
- discussed something connected to your work
- gave a speech, a talk or a presentation, or listened to one.

Write one or two sentences about each topic.