Chapter 3
Interacting With Others
Social Interaction
LINC 7
The activities in this section represent a sample of possible activities that can build language proficiency in social interaction. You can supplement these activities with a range of materials from other sources. Below are the CLB competencies, Essential Skills and specific language skills that are addressed in these activities.

The activities in this section focus on the following language skills:

- Managing a conversation; checking comprehension; using a variety of strategies to keep conversation going; encouraging others to participate.
- Avoiding miscommunication by requesting repetition, clarification or confirmation.
- Being diplomatic.
- Making polite requests.
- Handling inappropriate questions and comments.
- Participating in discussions, giving opinions and responding to others’ opinions.

These activities can help to develop the following Essential Skills:

- Oral Communication
- Work with Others

CLB

- CLB 8–I: Manage conversation. Check comprehension. Use a variety of strategies to keep conversation going. Encourage others to participate.
- CLB 8–I: Respond to a minor conflict or complaint.
- CLB 8–IV: Participate in a debate/discussion/meeting on an abstract familiar topic or issue.
- CLB 8–IV: Express and analyze opinions and feelings.
- CLB 8–IV: Express doubts and concerns; oppose or support a stand or a proposed solution.
- CLB 8–IV: Identify facts, opinions and attitudes in conversations about abstract and complex ideas on a familiar topic.
- CLB 8–I: Convey a personal message in a formal short letter or note, or through email expressing or responding to sympathy; clarifying a minor conflict; or giving reassurance.
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1 Discuss these questions in a small group. Ask one group member to provide a summary of your discussion to the class.

1. In which social situations do you find interacting with others difficult? Why?
2. How comfortable do you feel expressing a viewpoint that is not shared by others in social situations? Why?
3. Have you ever had to give someone criticism about their work or behaviour? How did you broach the subject?
4. How do you usually react when your work or your behavior is criticized?

"E-mails, memos - it's ridiculous! You should start talking to people again."

source: www.businesscartoons.co.uk/shop

Culture Note

Canadian workplaces are diverse, not only because employees are from many different cultural backgrounds, but also because, regardless of their culture, they can have vastly different communication styles and life experiences. These differences can sometimes lead to misunderstandings.

It is important to be aware that your way of communicating and your perceptions can differ from those of others. Keeping an open mind, being flexible and tolerant of differences, and not generalizing about others will help you get along well in a diverse workplace. In addition, learning about your co-workers' cultural backgrounds will help you avoid miscommunication and contribute to your success at work.
We all have different styles of interacting with others in our personal and professional lives. Some of these differences are due to cultural factors; others simply reflect individual differences in personality and life experiences.

1. Read the examples of interactional styles below and discuss them in a small group. Consider:
   - the possible impact of each person’s interactional style on his/her career and job satisfaction
   - how each person could adjust his/her interactional style to advance their career

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**Octavio**

Octavio is an energetic marketing assistant. He enjoys his job and puts his heart into it. Whenever he hears negative feedback from his manager during performance evaluations, he becomes upset and angry. He defends himself vigorously against any suggestion that his work is not consistently excellent.

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**Sheila**

Sheila is an administrative assistant in a large financial services company where she has worked for 11 years. She is quite shy and never attends any of the company's functions. She does not eat in the company cafeteria but instead runs errands everyday during her lunch hour. Sheila is very good at her job but wants a change. She has applied for several higher-level positions in the company, but has never been considered for any of them.

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**Alvin**

Alvin is a hardworking manager in a pharmaceutical company. He is constantly worried that his staff are not carrying out their duties to his high standards. He frequently points out their mistakes to help them improve.

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**Fariba**

Fariba is a sociable, outgoing woman who works as an accounts payable clerk in a government ministry office. Her big laugh can often be heard throughout the office. She enjoys chatting with her co-workers throughout the day.

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**Pascal**

Pascal works as a counsellor for a non-profit organization providing community programming for children and parents. Pascal often has ideas for how things could be improved in his workplace. He talks about his ideas to some of the other counsellors but never speaks up at meetings.
Diplomacy refers to interacting with others in a way that fosters good relationships. It involves tact and skill in handling interpersonal communication so that good relationships are maintained and there are no (or few) bad feelings. Being diplomatic involves using phrases to soften our statements when we deliver bad news or negative judgments. The use of these softening phrases conveys an awareness that our judgments are not necessarily right. Here are four tips to soften your language:

1. Avoid using negative adjectives. Instead, use not + very + a positive adjective:
   - The sales associate was unhelpful. The sales associate was not very helpful.
   - The building is ugly. The building is not very attractive.
   - His English is poor. His English is not very good.

2. Use qualifiers which are words or phrases that minimize the certainty of a statement:
   - I’m going to be late. I’m going to be a little late.
   - She’s bossy. She’s kind of bossy.
   - We had a disagreement. We had a bit of a disagreement.

3. Use hedges which are words or phrases that lessen the impact of a statement, or express uncertainty:
   - There’s a problem with our bill. There seems to be a problem with our bill.
   - We’re out of stock. I’m afraid we’re out of stock.
   - We shouldn’t do that. I’m not sure we should do that.
   - That won’t work. That might not work.
   - We should delay the project. I wonder if maybe we should delay the project.

4. Invite agreement by asking a question that is negatively-phrased:
   - That restaurant is too expensive. Isn’t that restaurant kind of expensive?
   - We should wait for John. Shouldn’t we wait for John?

In the email message below, underline examples of each of the four ways to soften language.

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**Message**

Hi Patricia,

Thanks for your suggestions for the agenda. I think we should include Anwar in the meeting if he’s available. I’m not sure about including the new brochure on the agenda, though, as we’ve only got an hour and a half. Perhaps it would be better to leave that until next time.

Re: the catering, maybe we should consider going with a different caterer. We haven’t been very happy with Roland’s Catering the last few times we’ve used them.

Also, wouldn’t it be better to schedule the meeting later in the day? 8:30 a.m. seems a little bit early to me.
Rewrite the following statements. Use one or more strategies to make the statements more diplomatic.

1. My estimate for installing a new kitchen in your house was low.

2. It will be cheaper to fill this position with a student intern.

3. Your sales projections for the next quarter are too high.

4. He’s a completely ineffective manager.

5. The report was badly written.

6. That’s a bad idea.

7. You made a mistake with my order.

8. Your recent job performance has been terrible.

9. My manager is intolerant of mistakes.

10. I think we should do this first.

11. The filing cabinet you bought is too small.

12. There’s going to be a delay in filling your order.
You have received an email message from a friend suggesting that the two of you organize a dinner out with three others. Your friend suggests a newly opened restaurant she wants to try. The restaurant is expensive and you know that two of the other people you want to invite are currently not working. Write a diplomatic email giving your opinion.

Message

To: From:
Subject: Date:

You are a department manager. You have received a report from one of your subordinates. The report is poorly written and contains several errors. Also, it was submitted late. Write a diplomatic email message to your subordinate asking her/him to rewrite the report; give reasons.

Message

To: From:
Subject: Date:
The words we choose when making requests depend on our relationship with the other person and the nature of our request. A request that is easy to fulfill may require less polite language than a request that is more of an imposition. A “hard” request, such as one made to a close friend to borrow money, may require more polite and careful language.

Using the appropriate language for making requests requires some sensitivity to the other person’s personality and some awareness of the differences in cultural norms. For example, someone may find a request difficult to fulfill, yet feel uncomfortable saying no; a request that is considered “easy” in one culture may be considered “hard” in another culture.

1. Read the following requests. Indicate who the speaker and the listener might be, the nature of their relationship (e.g., co-workers, friends), and whether or not you think the request is easy or hard to fulfill.

   1. I was wondering if I could possibly leave my kids with you for a few hours tomorrow.
   2. Would you mind looking over my essay before I hand it in tomorrow?
   3. Can you get me a coffee?
   4. I’d like you to have this finished by the end of the day tomorrow.
   5. Can you tell me where Sullivan Street is?
   6. I wonder if we could meet sometime next week.
   7. Pass the potatoes, please.
   8. Could I ask you to stop wearing that perfume?
   9. Could you refrain from wearing skirts that reveal your knees?
  10. Can I borrow your car tomorrow if you are not using it?

2. In groups, discuss the following questions.

   1. Why do you think making requests appropriately requires some sensitivity to the personality of the other person?
   2. Describe a time when someone made a request of you that you felt was difficult to fulfill. How did you handle the request?
   3. List some ways to word hard-to-fulfill requests.
   4. List some possible responses to hard-to-fulfill requests.
   5. Have you ever had to make a hard-to-fulfill request? What was it for?
For each of the following relationship/request combinations, write a request that reflects your own experience. Use appropriate language. Then practise making and responding to the requests orally with a partner.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship</th>
<th>Request</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Employee to supervisor, easy request</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Employee to supervisor, hard request</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Co-worker to co-worker, easy request</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Co-worker to co-worker, hard request</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Friend to friend, easy request</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Friend to friend, hard request</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Spouse to spouse, easy request</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Spouse to spouse, hard request</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Neighbour to neighbour, easy request</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Neighbour to neighbour, hard request</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Stranger to stranger, easy request</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Stranger to stranger, hard request</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
With a partner, take turns role-playing dialogues to make a difficult request in the following situations.

**Situation 1: Student A**
You would like to ask your co-worker to change a shift with you. You have an important family function to attend and you need the day off. You have asked your co-worker to change shifts on several occasions in the past and he/she has always accommodated your request.

**Situation 1: Student B**
Your co-worker has asked you to change shifts on various occasions. Each time he/she makes the request, you have said “yes” out of politeness, but you are getting tired of always being asked. You have never asked your co-worker to change his/her shift for you. Respond to your co-worker’s request.

**Situation 2: Student A**
You like to collect used car parts, building materials and other items. You have no room left in your garage, so you store these items in your backyard and on your driveway. Respond to your neighbour’s request.

**Situation 2: Student B**
You feel that your next-door neighbour hoards unsightly objects that you consider to be garbage. His backyard and driveway are full of junk. You are planning to put your house up for sale and are worried your neighbour’s “garbage” will detract potential buyers. You have an amicable relationship with your neighbour and have never complained about the mess in the past. Speak to your neighbour about cleaning up his backyard and driveway.

**Situation 3: Student A**
Your friend borrowed $300 from you about six months ago. She promised to pay it back when she got her next paycheque, but has not done so. Ask your friend for the money back.

**Situation 3: Student B**
You borrowed $300 from your friend six months ago and promised to pay it back when you got your next paycheque. You have still not paid the money back because you needed to pay your rent. Respond to your friend’s request.
Responding to Inappropriate Questions and Comments

1. Discuss the following questions in small groups.

   1. In a social situation with people who are not family members, what kinds of personal questions do you consider rude or inappropriate?

   2. Have you ever been asked an inappropriate question? How did you respond?

   3. Have you ever asked someone a question and regretted it? What did you say? How did the other person react?

2. Audio 3.12: Listen to an excerpt from a CBC radio program in which listeners share stories about inappropriate questions. In your own words, write the meanings of the following expressions.

   - blunt
   - oblivious
   - the big light bulb
   - nosy

   - makes you cringe
   - wince
   - tighten your jaw
   - snap

   - foot-in-your-mouth doozies
   - to mess up
   - a flake

3. Listen to the excerpt again.

   In groups:

   1. Retell the story about the woman who drove her pregnant friend to an industrial baby shower.
      • Why was this woman embarrassed?
      • Why do you think people were asking her if she was pregnant?
      • How did she put an end to the inappropriate questions?

   2. Retell Saddiqua’s story in your own words.
      • Why was Saddiqua offended by the comment made by the man at the restaurant?

   3. Share your own experiences of being offended by an inappropriate comment or question.

   4. Brainstorm possible responses to the questions below.
      • Oh, I love that dress. How much was it?
      • How much do you get paid for doing a job like that?
      • You were quite old when you had your first child, eh?
      • Wow, you’ve put on a lot of weight since the last time I saw you, haven’t you?
Being assertive means expressing your needs, feelings and views in a way that is honest, direct and respectful of the rights and feelings of others. Below are two features of assertive communication:

1. **Using “I” statements instead of generalizations or “you” statements**

   When we use “I” statements, we calmly state the feelings we have and the event that caused these feelings, without blaming others. “You” statements can convey accusations and generalizations; “I” statements focus on our own views and acknowledge that different people have different opinions. Consider the following examples:

   **Generalization or “you” statement:**
   - You can’t expect me to finish the report today!!
   - You make me so mad.

   **“I” statement:**
   - I’ll do as much as I can on this report today.
   - I feel angry when you come home late without telling me.

2. **Using descriptive, specific statements about others instead of judgements or generalizations**

   When we talk about others, we often make value judgements and generalizations, such as He’s so rude, She’s brilliant, or You always come home late. These statements are usually not factually true, but are exaggerations and generalizations. They are also value judgments. They praise or condemn someone, rather than focus on specific behaviour. Assertive communication focuses on accurate statements of fact. Because these statements are specific, they can lead to finding solutions. Consider the following examples:

   **Judgement or generalization:**
   - She’s really irresponsible.
   - He’s racist.
   - You are always late.

   **Descriptive and specific statements:**
   - She left early three times last week.
   - On three occasions, he would not allow me to take the day off work for a religious holiday.
   - You were late five times last month.

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1. **Search the Internet for information and tips about using assertive language. Write three tips and provide examples of each tip in use. Share the tips with the class.**

   Possible search terms: being assertive; assertive language
2 For each scenario below, write an appropriate assertive statement. Use “I” statements and avoid generalizations.

1. Your manager frequently gives you work at 4:45 p.m. and tells you she needs it completed before you leave for the day.
2. A co-worker makes fun of your accent.
3. You ask a bus driver for directions. He mumbles something that you can’t understand and you ask him to repeat. He says, “Are you deaf?”
4. A co-worker tells you jokes that you find offensive.
5. Your manager frequently criticizes you in front of your co-workers.
6. Your child’s babysitter constantly teases your daughter about her weight.
7. At a job interview, the interviewer asks you if you are planning to become pregnant.
8. A co-worker asked you out for a drink after work several months ago and you accepted the invitation. However, you realized you didn’t want to socialize with him/her again outside of work. Your co-worker keeps asking you out.
9. An acquaintance frequently sends mass emails that contains racist information. You want him to stop sending you these types of messages.
10. Your mother-in-law often makes negative comments about the way you are raising your children.

3 Role-play the scenarios with a partner.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation 1: Student A</th>
<th>Situation 1: Student B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You are in a lineup to place an order at a bakery. Another customer jumps in ahead of you. Speak to the customer.</td>
<td>You just stepped in front of someone who had been waiting in line longer than you. You are in a hurry and your order will be quick.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation 2: Student A</th>
<th>Situation 2: Student B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Your landlord frequently knocks on your door at inconvenient times and announces he needs to fix something in your apartment. You know that by law, he must give 24 hours notice to enter your home. Speak to your landlord.</td>
<td>You are the landlord. Your tenant requested a repair to a leaking faucet. You are very busy and want to do this repair now.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Giving and receiving criticism can be difficult, and can result in feelings of anger, resentment and defensiveness. However, constructive criticism can lead to positive change and improved relationships. Giving and receiving criticism in a constructive way involves focusing on facts and specific observations, avoiding value judgments, and maintaining respect for the other person.

**Handling criticism**

Handling criticism assertively involves remaining calm, seeking clarity from the other person, agreeing with any specific truth in the criticism and calmly disagreeing with specific statements that are not true.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criticism</th>
<th>Handling the criticism assertively:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You are a terrible driver!</td>
<td>It’s true that speeding yesterday was a stupid thing to do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You’ve been late all week.</td>
<td>I was late on Wednesday and I’m sorry about that.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>But I started at 9 a.m. on the four other days. Can you double-check the sign-in sheets?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Giving constructive feedback and criticism**

Giving criticism constructively involves expressing your observations about the behaviour of another person and the consequences of that behaviour. It includes observations about behaviour you appreciate and/or behaviour that bothers you, and making a request for change.

For example, *I noticed your report was well written and carefully thought out. I also noticed it was submitted two days late. As a result, we weren’t able to discuss the financial aspects of the project at our last meeting. In the future, could you submit your report at least two days before our planning meeting?* This kind of feedback or criticism focuses on facts and specific behaviour rather than on people as individuals.

Constructive criticism generally follows three key steps:

1. Describing the behavior as you have observed it. Stating the facts.
2. Stating the effect of the behaviour on you or on the workplace.
3. Expressing appreciation or concern and requesting a change.

**Audio 3.13: Listen to three dialogues of people giving and receiving criticism. For each dialogue, identify if and how the speaker follows the three steps of constructive criticism. Record the details in a chart (similar to the one below) for each dialogue.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Step 2</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Step 3</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
Here are some more tips for giving feedback about another person’s behaviour:

- Don’t generalize by using the words “always” and “never” (e.g., You never help me when I ask for help; You always interrupt me when I’m talking).
- Don’t make judgments or accusations (e.g., You are a lazy person; You’re spending too much money).
- Keep the focus on specific observations of behavior and state the consequences of the behaviour:
  
  Last month I noticed that you spent $300 on clothes, and now we have a credit card debt.
  
  I hear you mowing your lawn sometimes very early in the morning. It wakes my children up and they don’t get enough sleep.
  
  I really don’t like it when you raise your voice.

2  
Reword the following statements so that they focus on an observation of behavior and the consequences of that behaviour.

1. You never listen to my ideas.

2. Your work is sloppy.

3. You are so disorganized.

4. You never meet your deadlines.

5. You always criticize me in front of others.

6. You didn’t do your share of work on the project.

3  
For each situation below, prepare an assertive response.

Situation 1
Your manager is angry because he believes, wrongly, that you are responsible for a serious mistake in the department. What do you say when your manager accuses you of making this mistake?

Situation 2
You frequently take your elderly mother to a walk-in clinic for appointments. You have noticed that the nurse speaks rudely to your mother and is rough with her when she gives her injections and takes her blood pressure. As a result, your mother gets very anxious before each visit. Speak to the nurse.
With a partner, role-play the following scenarios. When you give feedback, be sure to:

- Describe your observations of the behavior with "I" statements
- Describe how the behaviour affects you or the workplace
- Express appreciation or concern and request a specific change in behaviour

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Co-worker A</th>
<th>Co-worker B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Your co-worker recently had a negative performance evaluation. He is feeling resentful toward the manager and is constantly making negative comments to you about the manager and the company. You like the manager and are happy with your job at the company. Give your co-worker some constructive criticism.</td>
<td>You recently had a negative performance evaluation. You feel your manager was unfair and you are feeling angry and resentful. You have been voicing your negative feelings about the manager and the company to your co-worker. Respond to criticism from your co-worker.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Co-worker A</th>
<th>Co-worker B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You are getting married in two months and you have a lot to do to plan a big wedding. You are not too busy at work these days, so you have been spending time on the phone calling various vendors to make your wedding plans. Respond to criticism from your co-worker.</td>
<td>You work in a cubicle beside a co-worker who is getting married. She spends a lot of time everyday on the telephone planning her wedding and discussing her plans with friends. You are tired of listening to these conversations and they are affecting your ability to concentrate on your work. Give your co-worker constructive criticism.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Co-worker A</th>
<th>Co-worker B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You are part of a team that is planning a project. During team meetings, one member of your team is consistently negative toward your ideas. In one meeting, she responded to a suggestion from you by saying, Well, that’s a stupid idea. Give your team member some constructive criticism.</td>
<td>You are part of a team that is planning a project. You are enjoying the project and feel you work well with the team members. You have a lot of ideas and you feel your team members are receptive toward them. You have more experience than your team members. Respond to criticism from a team member.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employee</th>
<th>Manager</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You prepared the monthly report for your manager as usual. You were a little late this month because your manager had given you several other responsibilities. Respond to criticism from your manager.</td>
<td>Your employee submitted a monthly report that contained some factual and typographical errors. You had to spend time redoing the report. Give your employee some constructive criticism.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Active Listening Strategies

When you are actively listening, you are doing two key things: you are encouraging the person to communicate with you, and you are focusing on understanding what the person is saying.

**Encouraging communication**

You can encourage communication by indicating verbally and non-verbally that you are interested in what the other person is saying and want them to continue. Supportive words and phrases, such as *Yeah?*, *Really!*, *Oh?* encourage someone to continue talking and are especially important in telephone communication. You can also use follow-up questions for the same purpose. Here are some examples:

Statement: *I got a job!*
Response: *Did you?* (falling intonation; expresses interest)
Response: *You did?* (rising intonation; expresses surprise)

Statement: *I just won a new car!*
Response: *You didn’t!* (falling intonation; negative form; expresses shocked disbelief)

**Focusing on understanding what the person is saying**

You can do this by asking questions to clarify information and paraphrasing what the other person says to make sure you understand. Try to remain focused on the other person’s words and be aware of what gets in the way of active listening. For example, judgments about the speaker (*This person doesn’t know as much as I do!* or about what the speaker is saying (*That’s ridiculous!*)) will prevent you from listening actively. Being impatient about wanting to express your own views will also impact your ability to listen actively.

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1. Work with a small group to brainstorm possible words that can encourage a person to keep talking, and add them to the list below. Practise using them with different intonation to express interest, shock, surprise, disbelief, etc.
   - Really?
   - Really!
   - Wow!

2. Respond to each of the following statements. Use falling or rising intonation and discuss the differences in meaning.

   1. My daughter just got her PhD.
   2. I’m getting married in May.
   3. I love pickled pigs’ feet.
   4. My son just broke up with his girlfriend.
   5. I got this dress on sale for $10.
   6. I’m having surgery next month.
   7. I’m going back to China for good.
   8. I’m going to be a grandmother soon.
3. In groups of three, practise active listening using supportive words or phrases and follow-up questions. Take turns playing each of the roles below.

**Student A (Speaker):** Speak about any personal topic for at least three minutes. Topics can include hobbies, pets, a vacation, an adventure, a current challenge, plans for the future, etc.

**Student B (Listener):** Show interest and encourage the speaker to talk by using supportive comments and follow-up questions.

**Student C (Observer):** Keep track of the time (allow the speaker 3 minutes) and use the table below to write down the words/phrases the listener uses to encourage the speaker to continue, including any follow-up questions the listener uses.

| I heard the listener use these words and phrases to encourage the speaker to continue: |
| I heard the listener ask these follow-up questions: |

4. An active listener focuses on what the speaker is saying, not on what their own response will be. In a group of three, choose one statement from the list below. One learner will argue in favour of the statement and one learner will argue against the statement. The third learner will observe. After each learner speaks, the other must paraphrase what the speaker has said before presenting his/her opposing view, e.g., *So you think ...* The observer checks that the ideas are paraphrased accurately.

1. People who do not speak English perfectly should not be permitted to immigrate to Canada.
2. Teachers should not be allowed to assign homework to children in elementary school.
3. Sixteen is too young to get a driver’s licence. The legal age in Ontario should be raised to 19.
4. Stay-at-home mothers should be paid a salary by the government for their work at home.
5. The world would be a better place if more women were politicians.
6. Stores should remain closed on Sundays so that everyone can have a day of rest.
Confirming and Clarifying Instructions

It’s always a good idea to clarify instructions by repeating back what you heard. This gives the speaker an opportunity to either correct your understanding (e.g., No, I mean . . .; No, the second street), or confirm that your understanding is correct (e.g., Yes, that’s right). By clarifying instructions, you can avoid misunderstandings. Here are some tips for clarifying instructions:

• Alert the speaker to your problem by using any of the following: Wait ...; Sorry . .; So. . .; Hold on . . .; Just a sec . . .; I just want to make sure I understand correctly ... 

• Ask the speaker a direct question or state your own understanding by paraphrasing the instruction (e.g., Do you mean . . .? Was that the first street on the right? So you will be waiting for him at the Air Italia ticket counter?).

1 Audio 3.14: Listen to three conversations between a manager and an assistant. In the chart below, record what the assistant says to seek clarification.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dialogue 1:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dialogue 2:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogue 3:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2 With a partner, role-play giving and receiving instructions for the following scenarios. Take turns playing the role of the assistant. As the assistant you must use strategies to clarify and confirm the instructions.

Scenario 1
You are a real estate agent. Your partner is your assistant. Explain the following task to your partner:

You need a database of everyone who has attended your open houses. You need names, email addresses, the date they attended the open house, as well as the address of the open house.

You want to notify them of houses for sale. Answer all your assistant’s questions. Make up details as required.

Scenario 2
You are an HR Manager. Your partner is your assistant. Explain the following task to your partner:

You need some information to evaluate your company’s orientation sessions for new employees. Ask your assistant to design a questionnaire that will be given to all recently hired employees. Answer all of your assistant’s questions. Make up details as required.
Expressing Opinions: Putting It in Practice

At work and in social situations, we often give opinions and suggestions, and respond to others’ opinions and suggestions. In these discussions, we can use diplomatic language, active listening techniques, and assertive language to share our views while respecting the views of others. Here are some expressions you can use to:

**Give an opinion or seek the opinions of others:**
- I think ...; If you ask me ...; As far as I’m concerned ...; The way I see it ...; What do you think?

**Agree:**
- I agree; Exactly! Good idea; I think so, too; Good point! Sounds good! That’s right!

**Disagree:**
- You have a point but ...; I disagree because ...; I see what you mean, but ...; Yes, but don’t you think ...; Yes, but what about ...; Yes, but don’t forget ...; I know what you mean, but ...; I’m not so sure that’s such a great idea ...

**Interrupt and resist an interruption:**
- Can I say something here?; Sorry to interrupt, but ...; Could I just add something here?
- Let me finish, please; Hang on, I’m not finished; Hold on ...

---

1. In groups of four, discuss one of the controversial statements below. Offer your opinions and respond to those of your group members. Keep the discussion going, confirm your understanding of the views of others, and agree or disagree. Use diplomatic language and active listening techniques.

1. Landlords should have the right to prohibit smoking in apartments.
2. Drivers should not be permitted to make right-hand turns on red lights.
3. Convicted murderers should get the death penalty.
4. Assisting a terminally ill person to commit suicide should be legal.
5. The government should provide free daycare to all children until they enter kindergarten.
6. Boys and girls should be educated separately.
7. Driving on Sundays should be banned to protect the environment.
8. Nuclear energy is clean and efficient. The government should invest money in building new nuclear power plants.
Messages for Special Occasions

You can buy a special occasion card for almost any occasion you can think of. Some cards are blank inside; others contain a message. In either case, you should always write a short personal message of your own and sign your name.

1. **Read the messages below. For each situation, write the letter for the type of card you would use.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>a. Sympathy</th>
<th>c. Thank you</th>
<th>e. New baby</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b. Going away</td>
<td>d. Birthday</td>
<td>f. Wedding</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. ____ Just wanted to let you know how much I appreciate your efforts on my behalf.
2. ____ Life will not be the same without you. Goodbye and good luck!
3. ____ We were so saddened to hear of your loss and send our deepest sympathies.
4. ____ Thank you so much for referring me to Jan Hunt. I’m starting work on Monday. Please accept this small token of my appreciation.
5. ____ Hope this special day is just the beginning of a year filled with happiness.
6. ____ I wish you every success in your future endeavours.
7. ____ Congratulations to you and your growing family.
8. ____ Best wishes for a long and happy life together.
9. ____ Hoping all your wishes come true this year.
10. ____ Wishing you both many years of joy and happiness.
11. ____ Please accept my condolences for your sad loss. My thoughts and prayers are with you and your family.
12. ____ Hope today is filled with all the things you love. Best wishes for a happy and fulfilling year ahead.
13. ____ Thank you so much for the beautiful plate. Every time I use it, I will think of you.
14. ____ Best wishes for a lifetime of love and happiness together.

2. **Search the Internet for additional messages that you can write in special occasion cards.**
   Possible search terms: *birthday card message; thank you card message*

3. **Write a two-paragraph personal message for one of the following situations:**
   1. Express thanks to a child’s teacher at the end of the school year
   2. Express condolences to a friend who has lost a close family member
   3. Express appreciation to a mentor for his/her assistance
This chapter includes activities that can help learners develop the skills and background knowledge needed to interact socially in personal and workplace situations. These skills include:

- using active listening skills
- giving opinions and responding to others’ opinions
- giving and responding to feedback
- making requests
- using diplomatic language
- being assertive

The activities have been guided by the CLB performance conditions relating to LINC 7. If you want to develop your own activities for social interaction, consider the CLB performance conditions below.

**Performance Conditions**

- Interaction is with one or more people, face-to-face or on the phone
- Rate of speech is normal
- Speech is partly predictable and does not always support the utterance
- Setting and context are familiar, clear and predictable but moderately demanding (e.g., real world environment; limited support)
- Topics are familiar, concrete and abstract
- Interactions are formal or semi-formal

You can use all or some of the activities in the order they are presented or choose the activities that are of interest to the learners you teach. For more ideas on possible skills and language functions relating to social interaction, see *Unit 5: Social Interaction*, pp. 115–124 in the *LINC 5–7 Curriculum Guidelines*.

Some of the activities in this chapter are followed by *Putting It in Practice* tasks. These tasks allow learners to demonstrate their knowledge and skills in a communication task. They can be used for formative assessment of learner progress.

**p. 361 | Introduction to Interacting With Others**

Introduces the topic of social interaction

1. The discussion questions will provide some insight into the kinds of situations learners have difficulties with. These situations can be used as practice scenarios in your lessons.

   Have learners discuss the Culture Note and perhaps provide examples from personal experiences where they encountered misunderstandings because of cultural differences.

**p. 362 | Interactional Styles at Work**

Builds awareness of how different interactional styles at work can impact performance on a job and job satisfaction

1. Ask learners to read the profiles and discuss the questions in small groups. You can elicit other examples of interactional styles that can impact positively or negatively on someone’s success (e.g., someone who always sees the negative side of things, someone who is flirtatious in the workplace, someone who constantly tries to ingratiate him/herself with the boss, etc.).
Using Diplomatic Language

Provides practice using diplomatic language

1. Discuss the diplomatic language strategies with learners. Elicit other examples for each strategy.

   **Answers**
   
   Strategy 1: We haven’t been very happy with Roland’s Catering.
   Strategy 2: 8:30 a.m. seems a little bit early to me.
   Strategy 3: I’m not sure about including the new brochure on the agenda.
   Strategy 4: Wouldn’t it be better to schedule the meeting later in the day?

2. **Possible Answers**
   
   1. I think I may have underestimated the cost for installing a new kitchen in your house.
   2. Wouldn’t it be cheaper to fill this position with a student intern?
   3. I think your sales projections for the next quarter might be too high.
   4. He is not a very effective manager.
   5. The report was not very well written.
   6. I’m not sure that’s a good idea.
   7. It seems you’ve made a mistake with my order.
   8. I am not very happy with your recent job performance.
   9. My manager is not very tolerant of mistakes.
   10. Maybe we should do this first.
   11. Maybe we should get a bigger filing cabinet.
   12. I’m afraid there’s going to be a slight delay in filling your order.

Writing Diplomatic Email Messages: Putting It in Practice

Provides an opportunity for learners to demonstrate their skills in writing a diplomatic message

Have learners write one- or two-paragraph email messages for each of the situations provided. Encourage them to proofread their emails when they are done. You could have learners peer edit each other’s work and provide feedback.

This task can be used for formative assessment. The results of the assessment can help you and learners determine what still needs to be worked on. The task relates to the CLB competency below. You can use the sample criteria or develop your own based on what you have taught. Learners can use the same criteria for self-assessment. For more information on how to assess learner progress, see the *LINC 5–7 Curriculum Guidelines*, pp. 37–45.
**Making Requests**

Builds awareness of the cultural and individual differences in what is considered a difficult request

1. Ask learners to work with a partner to complete the activity and take up the answers with the class. Answers will vary.

2. Have learners work with a partner to write the requests, then discuss the difficult requests and what makes them difficult.

**Making Requests: Role-Play**

Provides an opportunity to practise making difficult verbal requests

1. Have learners role-play one or more of the dialogues in front of the class and provide feedback on whether or not the appropriate register was used when making the request.

**Responding to Inappropriate Questions and Comments**

Provides practice responding to inappropriate questions and comments

1. Ask learners to discuss the questions in groups and have one member of each group offer a summary of the group’s discussion to the class.

2. Have learners listen to the recording and infer the meanings of the terms underlined in the transcript below from context. They are all from the first portion of the recording, so you could pause the recording to give learners a chance to write down the meanings. They can compare their answers with a partner or use a dictionary if needed. Take up the answers in a class discussion. You may also want to talk about the meanings of the following idioms from the text:
   - the Garden of Eden – a biblical reference to the origin of the human species
   - the light bulb goes on – to have a sudden realization
   - to be blown away – to be completely surprised
   - to get all red – to blush
   - to put your foot in your mouth – to say something inappropriate
   - when a woman is due – when a pregnant woman expects her baby to be born
   - a pick-up line – a phrase used by someone to show the other person that they are interested in dating them
Instructor Notes | Chapter 3 | Interacting With Others | Social Interaction

Excerpt from CBC Ontario Today, May 9, 2009, reproduced courtesy of © Canadian Broadcasting Corporation

Rita: Good afternoon, I’m Rita Celli, this is Ontario Today.

Sometimes we can really mess up, being too nosy, too blunt, or just plain thoughtless and oblivious. Like the time you were at a dinner party and said, “She’s a flake” and the person sitting next to you got all red and said, “She’s my best friend.”

Can you match that? Some of my personal all-time favourites go back to my own TV days – the people who say “Hey, you’re skinnier in person” or better looking. Or the lady who stopped me in the grocery store and was absolutely fixated on my hair when she finally said, “I’m going to have to tell my husband that your hair really does look nice in person.” She seemed decent! I have this image of her sitting down for dinner that night and then the big light bulb goes on and she thinks, “Oh, did I really say that?”

All true stories coming up, more real foot-in-your-mouth doozies and some advice on how to remain poised and polite in those very, very awkward moments.

Rita: We all know the feeling: someone asks you an outrageously personal question or says something that just makes you cringe. Now you might blush, wince, tighten your jaw, simply snap... listen to some of the stories that we collected in, oh, let’s say a 10-metre radius of the Ontario Today office, because you really don’t have to go far to find stories about inappropriate questions and comments.

It happened that I was taking a friend of mine to one of these industrial baby showers. That’s where all of the diaper services and everything get together and they show their wares to pregnant moms. Anyway, needless to say this woman’s husband wouldn’t take her, she couldn’t drive, and so I kindly volunteered to take her to the event. We go in the door and from the time we entered every woman that came up to me asked me when I was due! It just got to be more and more embarrassing as it went on because no one asked the pregnant woman when she was due. So finally someone came up to me and she said like, ‘Is this your first child or have you had others?’ And I said, ‘I’m not pregnant, I’m just fat, okay?’. And that was that.

Rita: What is the most inappropriate question or comment that you have been subjected to? How did you handle the situation? Maybe you’ve asked a question or made a comment that you now regret because that happens too, although it is easier to think of the ones that stick with us. But we welcome all the calls at 1-888-817-8995. The number again 1-888-817-8995. Our guest is Louise Fox. She runs a service called “The Etiquette Ladies” and she is joining us from our studio in Toronto. Good afternoon.

Louise: Hello Rita, it’s great to be here.

Rita: Let’s go to Saddiqua in Toronto. Hello to you.

Saddiqua: Hi there.

Rita: Hi, so tell us about your story.

Saddiqua: Yes, so this is an example of an inappropriate comment I received. So I was in Geneva, Switzerland two summers ago and I was doing an internship there with the WHO. And one evening I had gone out for dinner with a girlfriend and we were just having a nice dinner, we get up to leave the restaurant and we walk by this table and these guys were sitting at the table and one of them stops me and he gave me some pick-up line. He said something, you know, regarding what I look like and asked me what I was doing there, so I gave him some reply, I can’t remember exactly what I said but he replies, “Wow, your English is really good! Where did you learn it?” So just to give you some background, I’m of Guyanese descent so I look Indian. I have long dark hair, dark skin and yeah he gave me this reply, “Wow, you speak English!” So I replied to him and said, “Well, English is my mother tongue,” and he was just blown away. I have grown up in the Toronto area, and I speak French a little bit, but English is my mother tongue, and he actually couldn’t believe that I spoke English. So I mean I was just blown away that we’re in this international city and never in my life have I received such an ignorant comment like that. So we walked out of the restaurant and he gets up and stops me and he says, “I must take you out for dinner tomorrow night,” and I just said, “You must be kidding me,” and walked right out and that was it.

Rita: And that was it, he really didn’t win your heart?

Saddiqua: No.

Rita: Or were you going to say, “… and then I married him and the story ended.” Louise Fox, we have Saddiqua, it is an interesting reversal from our experience overseas.
Audio 3.12: Transcript (continued)

Saddiqua: Yeah, exactly.
Louise Fox: Right, and rather unexpected, I would’ve guessed. We have to be more aware, particularly in Canada. There is a lot of cultural diversity here and we have to be more aware of that and be a little more sensitive to it. I had somebody tell me a very similar story about that where she was asked, “Where are you from?” And she said, “Well, actually, North York,” and they said, “Well, no, no, I mean before that.” And she said, “I lived downtown.” “No, no, before that.” And you know how far back do you want to go? And she said, “Well, if you want to go back really far, Garden of Eden.” So there you are.

Rita: Saddiqua, thank you for your story as well.

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p. 370  | Being Assertive

Provides practice responding assertively in various situations

2 Ask learners to work alone or with a partner to write an assertive response for each of the given scenarios. For each response, instruct learners to try to use “I” statements. You can also ask them for examples of situations they have encountered where they had to respond assertively. Discuss with learners how they feel when they respond assertively. Responding assertively may be more difficult for some learners than others.

3 You can have learners role-play the situations provided or use ones they have experienced.

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p. 372  | Being Assertive: Giving and Handling Criticism

Provides background information and strategies for giving and handling criticism

1 Review the information about giving and receiving criticism. Elicit from learners how they would respond to negative feedback. Emphasize that it is usually not constructive to defend oneself from criticism or to argue with the person giving the feedback. As much as possible, they should listen to the criticism, ask questions in order to clarify the information, and resist becoming defensive or angry. They can always choose to accept or reject the feedback later.

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Audio 3.13: Transcript

Three dialogues of people giving and receiving criticism

Dialogue 1
Sheila: Kim, can I speak to you for a moment?
Kim: Sure.
Sheila: Kim, I’ve noticed that you’ve sold a lot of merchandise this month. You exceeded your sales target by $8,000. Excellent work. Two different clients called me to report that you were a great help to them. I really appreciate your efforts.
Kim: I’m so glad. Thanks for letting me know.
Sheila: My pleasure. But Kim, I’ve also noticed that there are grammatical and spelling errors in the closing agreements that you have been preparing. One client called our office yesterday to clarify three sentences in the agreement.
Kim: Oh, I didn’t realize that. I’m sorry ... I ... I’m not very good at writing.
Sheila: I understand. Writing is only a small part of the job. Perhaps Jani could edit your agreements before you send them to clients.
Kim: Um ... yes, actually that would be great. I tend to spend a lot of time writing the agreements and I would welcome some guidance. I’ve been wanting to improve my writing skills anyway.
Sheila: That’s great to hear, Kim. I’ll let Jani know. Thanks again for your hard work.
Kim: You’re welcome. Thank you for your support.
Dialogue 2
Emma: Hi Josh, how are you?
Josh: Great, how are you doing? How was your weekend?
Emma: It was great. Listen, do you have a few minutes?
Josh: Sure, what’s going on?
Emma: Well, first of all, I want to thank you for looking after my cat again. This is the third time you’ve taken care of her while I’ve been on vacation. I appreciate it enormously.
Josh: I’m happy to do it, Emma. It’s no trouble at all.
Emma: But the thing is, when I got home, I noticed that someone had cut back the bush in my front yard. Was that you?
Josh: Well...yes, I did cut it back. I thought it needed a trim.
Emma: I know you were trying to help. But the thing is, it only flowers every two years and now that it’s been cut back, it won’t flower this year. So I’m disappointed about that. You’ve never seen it in bloom because you just moved in last year. But two years ago, it was an amazing sight.
Josh: Oh, Emma, I wish I’d known. I really thought I was saving you the trouble.
Emma: I know, but please don’t do anything like that again without asking me first, okay?
Josh: Of course not. I won’t touch anything without asking you.
Emma: Thanks.
Josh: And I’m really really sorry I wrecked your bush.
Emma: Well, that’s okay. It’s only a plant. Not the end of the world.

Dialogue 3
Barbara: Gabriela, have you got a minute? I wanted to talk to you about something.
Gabriela: Sure, what’s up?
Barbara: Well, I wanted to talk to you about something that’s been bothering me.
Gabriela: Okay, go ahead.
Barbara: You know, the other night we had made plans to see a movie. I was really looking forward to going out and I actually turned down another invitation because I wanted to spend time with you, just going to a movie and hanging out with you afterwards. And then you cancelled at the last minute. I know that things come up, but Gabriela, this is the third time in a row that this has happened. I’m starting to feel reluctant to make plans with you because they always seem to fall through.
Gabriela: I’m really sorry, Barbara. But you know things have been a bit hectic lately with my wedding coming up and everything. I’m not doing it on purpose. It’s just that things come up at the last minute.
Barbara: I know. I know. Planning a wedding is so much work.
Gabriela: Maybe I just shouldn’t make any plans anymore until this wedding is over. It’s got me so stressed.
Barbara: Well, maybe ... but then again, maybe a night out would be good for you. So you can relax and get your mind off things. What do you think?
Gabriela: You’re right. And I’m sorry I’m so edgy.
Barbara: That’s okay. I understand.
Gabriela: Listen, are you free this evening? Why don’t we try and see the movie tonight? I don’t have any plans and I promise not to answer my cell for the rest of the day so that no one can get in touch with me about any wedding stuff.
Barbara: Promise?
Gabriela: Cross my heart!
Extend the Activity: Give learners the transcript of the three dialogues. Ask them to identify the components of the assertive feedback: 1) describing the behaviour you have difficulty with; 2) stating the effect of the behaviour on you; 3) asking for a specific change in behaviour.

**Possible Answers**

1. I feel that my ideas aren’t being considered and that frustrates me.
2. I’ve noticed that you hand-write your reports. I wasn’t able to read your last two reports because I couldn’t make out your writing.
3. On two occasions last month, you misplaced signed client agreement forms, and we had to ask the clients to re-sign the forms. You also missed an important meeting with a potential client. That client later called us to cancel our business agreement.
4. Twice last week you missed your deadline.
5. I don’t like being criticized in front of others. It’s humiliating.
6. The project was due today. I didn’t receive section two of the report from you, so I stayed up until 3 a.m. to finish it.

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Active Listening Strategies

Provides background information on active listening strategies; provides practice using various strategies for listening actively

**Possible Answers**

1. • Really? • No way!
   • Really! • Get out!
   • Wow! • I see
   • Seriously • Okay
   • Right • Yes
   • That’s nice • Yeah?
   • Uh-huh • No! (disbelief)
   • Is that right • Go on

2. Model statements and possible follow-up questions, emphasizing intonation. Explain that rising intonation expresses surprise and falling intonation expresses interest. Have learners work in pairs with one learner responding to the statement, and the other identifying the meaning conveyed. The purpose of this activity is to identify the meaning of rising and falling intonation. Learners can practise using different intonation patterns and compare the meaning. For example in question 1, possible responses could be Did she? (rising intonation conveying excitement and surprise); Did she? (falling intonation conveying interest); or Really! (falling intonation conveying unpleasant surprise).

3. Have learners work in groups of three to practise active listening using supportive continuers and follow-up questions. Have them take turns being the speaker, the active listener, and the observer. Ask the observer to complete the chart with the supportive continuers and follow-up questions used by the active listener. Discuss the activity with the class.

4. Have learners work with a different group of three. They can choose a controversial statement from the ones provided or invent one of their own. Two learners choose sides. One learner starts by stating his or her opinion. Before the other learner can respond by giving his or her opinion on the opposite site of the issue, he or she must paraphrase what the first learner said. Have learners do the activity and then discuss it with the class.
You can introduce this activity by explaining that confirming and clarifying instructions at work is just as important for native speakers as for non-native speakers. Play the recording of three short dialogues and ask learners to complete the chart with the language used to confirm and clarify instructions.

Answers

Dialogue 1: Sorry, Peter, do you mean the sales report for March?; Thursday at what time?; Thursday at the end of the day; Okay, I’ll leave it on your chair before I leave for the day.

Dialogue 2: What happened?; Anything else?; Okay, so the chip out of your desk … where is the chip located?; Chip…right front of Peter’s desk. Boardroom table missing a leg … and sorry, sorry, what was the third thing?; You mean the microwave is missing?; Okay, kitchen dishes broken and microwave missing. Got it; Do you want me to ask them for a full refund?

Dialogue 3: For when?; Sorry, Peter, was that with Air Canada?; What time would you prefer on Monday evening?; You mean economy?; Okay, Peter, so you want the 7 a.m. next Monday, April 18 if possible. If not, the next best is 8:00 a.m. on Monday.

Audio 3.14: Transcript

Three conversations between a manager and an assistant

Dialogue 1
Peter: I need the report by Thursday, Merilee. And I’d appreciate it if you could …
Merilee: Sorry, Peter … do you mean the sales report for March?
Peter: Yes.
Merilee: Okay, Thursday at what time?
Peter: By the end of the day will be fine.
Merilee: Thursday at the end of the day. No problem, Peter.
Peter: Great, and could you email it to me and also print out a hard copy and leave it on my chair? I have to leave at 4:00 but I’ll be in early on Friday to look at it.
Merilee: Okay, I’ll leave it on your chair before I leave for the day.
Peter: Thanks a lot, Merilee.
Merilee: You’re welcome, Peter.

Dialogue 2
Peter: I’d like you to call the company that handled our move and let them know that we are not happy with their service.
Merilee: Oh, why, what happened?
Peter: Well, there’s a big chip out of my desk, for one thing. The boardroom table is missing a leg so we can’t put it together. And some of the dishes in the kitchen boxes were broken.
Merilee: Anything else?
Peter: I think that’s about it. Well, and also the fact that they were a day late in delivering it.
Merilee: Okay, so the chip out of your desk … where is the chip located?
Peter: It’s on the right front of the desk. And it’s really obvious.
Merilee: Chip … right front of Peter’s desk. And the boardroom table is missing a leg … and sorry, what was the third thing?
Audio 3.14: Transcript (continued)

Peter: Some of the kitchen dishes were broken. Oh, and the microwave? Where is it?
Merilee: You mean the microwave is missing?
Peter: That’s what I mean.
Merilee: Okay, kitchen dishes broken and microwave missing. Got it. I’ll phone them this morning. Do you want me to ask them for a full refund?
Peter: Well, I doubt we’ll get a complete refund, but ask for a 20 per cent refund and see what they say.
Merilee: Sure, I’ll do that.
Peter: Thanks a lot, Merilee.
Merilee: You’re welcome.

Dialogue 3
Peter: Merilee, I need you to book me a flight to Ottawa.
Merilee: Okay. For when?
Peter: Try to get me on the 7:00 a.m. flight next Monday. If you can’t get that one, try 8:00 a.m. If you can’t get 8:00 a.m., I’ll have to go Monday evening or possibly …
Merilee: Sorry, Peter, was that with Air Canada?
Peter: Yes.
Merilee: What time would you prefer on Monday evening?
Peter: Oh, let’s say 8:00 p.m. There should be plenty of seats. But as a last resort, I’d go at 7:00. Get me the cheapest seat.
Merilee: You mean economy?
Peter: Yes, the company’s not paying for business anymore.
Merilee: Okay, Peter, so you want the 7:00 a.m. next Monday April 18 if possible. If not, the next best is 8:00 a.m. on Monday and if that’s not possible you want the 7:00 or as a last choice 8:00 p.m. flight on the Monday evening.
Peter: Right.
Merilee: I’ll book that for you this morning.
Peter: Thanks a lot, Merilee.
Merilee: You’re welcome, Peter.

p. 378  Expressing Opinions: Putting It in Practice

Provides an opportunity for learners to demonstrate their skills in expressing opinions and agreeing/disagreeing with others’ opinions in a group discussion

1 Learners participate in a group discussion about a controversial topic. Learner can apply strategies they have practised throughout the activities in Social Interaction, such as using diplomatic language, active listening techniques and assertiveness techniques. They can also use the expressions for giving opinions, agreeing and disagreeing, interrupting, and maintaining the discussion.

This task can be used for formative assessment. The results of the assessment can help you and learners determine what still needs to be worked on. The task relates to the CLB competency below. You can use the sample assessment criteria or develop your own based on what you have taught. Learners can use the same criteria for self-assessment. For more information on how to assess learner progress, see the LINC 5–7 Curriculum Guidelines, pp. 37–45.
CLB 8-IV: Express doubts and concerns; oppose or support a stand or a proposed solution.

**Sample Assessment Criteria**
- Learner qualifies opinions
- Learner adds information, elaborates
- Learner uses appropriate non-verbal behavior
- Learner summarizes and repeats back information
- Learner asks follow-up questions to keep the discussion going

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p. 379  | **Messages for Special Occasions**

Provides some models for writing messages in cards for special occasions