

Zakelijk Engels voor Dummies



BBNC
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Inhoud



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Hoofdstuk 1

Vergaderingen en onderhandelingen

In dit hoofdstuk:

- ▶ Het ijs breken tijdens een onderhandeling
- ▶ De situatie beheersen
- ▶ Zonder angst onderhandelen
- ▶ De verkoop sluiten

In de zakenwereld wordt alles van contracten tot verkopen en opdrachten tijdens vergaderingen geregeld. Een kleine misstap (een verkeerde omgangsvorm, een foute interpretatie, een aarzeling) en alles kan zomaar in de soep lopen. Daarom is het erg belangrijk om te weten hoe je je moet gedragen in dit soort lastige en vreemde omstandigheden.

Om je goed te kunnen redden in deze complexe wereld en mee te kunnen doen met de besten, is het niet genoeg welsprekend en sociaal vaardig te zijn. Je moet gefocust zijn, een goede kennis hebben van nonverbale communicatie (gebaren en gezichtsuitdrukkingen) en vooral beschikken over een grote scherpzinnigheid.

Verdiep je dus in de wereld van de vergaderingen en onderhandelingen en wordt een van de beste in het vak!

The talk before the talk

While there are customers who come to the point immediately, there are others who can't do so without small talk. **Seize** this opportunity to create a positive atmosphere for the conversation.



Ideally, you could **gather** useful information about your potential customer during this short **introductory** phase. Suitable subjects for small talk are, for example:

- ✓ The customer's immediate **vicinity**, for example, the company building (location, interesting architecture, art work in the foyer, exhibits, etc.), the customer's office (beautiful view, **furniture and fixtures** that point to the customer's special interests or hobbies).
- ✓ Positive general remarks about the customer's company, for example, **acknowledging** the special quality image of the products.
- ✓ The weather, but only if it's really worth mentioning, for example if there are extreme weather and traffic situations such as a storm and high water (the customer may be **affected by it**), etc.

Awkward subjects, such as politics, should **be avoided at all costs**.



See to it that the conversation does **not slip into** the banal. Presume that the customer is rushed for time. To make the **transition** to the actual topic, you could **drop some appropriate cues**. If the customer **responds to them**, get to the point immediately. If he doesn't, it helps to ask specific questions: for example, if your small talk is about the company, you could say, "**Incidentally**, how do you ..." or "By the way, what system are you working with?", etc.



If the small talk drifts off **unintentionally**, there is only one way to end it: Forget the

small talk and make a fresh start – but this time with the “right” topic.

Belangrijke woorden

to seize: to take hold of, to grab hold of, to get hold of

to gather: to collect, to garner, to gain

introductory: preliminary, opening, starting, initial

vicinity: surrounding area, neighbourhood, environs

furniture and fixtures: furnishings and fittings

to acknowledge: to recognise, to show appreciation for, to attach importance to

to be affected by something: to be hit or afflicted by something

awkward: problematic, tricky, difficult, complex

to be avoided at all costs: to be abstained from totally or completely

to not slip into: to not change to, to not go downhill to, to not deteriorate into

transition: change, changeover, move, switch, shift

to drop some appropriate cues: to intersperse some key words

to respond to something: to react in response to or acknowledge something

incidentally: by the way, while we're on the subject, before I forget

unintentionally: by accident, accidentally, by chance, involuntarily

Small talk (about something other than the weather)

The weather is a classic small talk subject and is therefore **flogged to death**. But there are still plenty of other **topics** and events to discuss.

“That’s some crazy weather today, isn’t it?”

Sentences like these often **serve as a stopgap** to get a conversation going. However, not every sales representative is always prepared for a suitable small talk topic once he arrives at the customer’s office. Carolin Lüdemann from the CoachAcademy in Stuttgart provides some suggestions and **quotes** the most important rules for effective small talk.

- ✓ Small talk is a door opener and creates a **pleasant** atmosphere for the **ensuing** sales talk. That’s why small talk topics are always positive.
- ✓ Everyone has to be able **to join in** the small talk. If several persons are present during the sales talk, it is important not **to exclude** anyone from the conversation.
- ✓ Even seemingly harmless topics, such as sports and cars **may be doomed** if one of the persons you are talking to **feels very strongly about** them. Carolin Lüdemann, therefore, suggests to not start the conversation by talking about private **matters** or hobbies but to choose a subject from the professional environment, especially if you don’t know the persons you’re talking with very well.
- ✓ Getting into the conversation spontaneously is usually the best **choice** for an **easy-going** start but also **demand**s quick reaction. This works by paying close attention to your **surroundings** and by watching if anything has changed at the customer’s office building or if there is something striking like an interesting sculpture or an **extension to the building**.

- ✓ Small talk ***always moves on the surface***. If the ***actual*** sales talk develops from it, the small talk has ended, but ***there is no clear-cut dividing line***. If it is difficult to make the ***transition***, simply ***make a “cut”*** and ***get into*** the actual topic.

Belangrijke woorden

is flogged to death: is used way too much or too often

topics: subjects, themes, things to talk about

to serve as: to act as, to function as, to do duty as, to do the work of

stopgap: temporary solution or substitute, makeshift, fill-in, last resort

to quote: to cite, to refer to, to mention, to make reference to

pleasant: friendly, nice, enjoyable, pleasurable, pleasing

ensuing: following, subsequent, resulting, succeeding, later

to join in: to participate in, to take part in, to contribute to, to partake in

to exclude: to leave out, to keep out, to bar, to shut out

may be doomed: could be disaster-prone, ill-fated, or ruined

to feel very strongly about something: to get quite emotional, passionate, or fanatical over something

matters: affairs, issues, situations, circumstances, occurrences

choice: option, alternative, possibility, solution, answer, way out, pick

easy-going: relaxed, laidback, informal, casual

to demand: to require, to call for, to necessitate, to involve, to need

(wordt vervolgd)

Vervolg

surroundings: environs, background, setting, backdrop

extension to the building: addition, add-on, supplement, or augmentation to the structure

to always move on the surface: to never go deep, to not be full of meaning

actual: real, concrete, factual, authentic, genuine

there is no clear-cut dividing line: the boundaries are undefined, vague, or non-specific

transition: change, changeover, switch, shift, conversion

to make a cut: to bring to an end, halt, stop, or discontinue (the small talk)

to get into: to start with, to get going with, to commence with, to instigate, to bring about

Identify and skilfully avoid embarrassments

With an off-putting conversation opener, sales people can **spoil** potential business even **in the preliminary stage**. That is why it is important to identify the biggest **pitfalls** and avoid them in a confident manner.



A sales representative is a good 15 minutes late for his customer call. But he is certainly not lost for words or an excuse: “*Your visitor parking lot is way too small,*” he explains to the customer upon arrival, “*I had to go three blocks down to find a space.*” “*Then next time we can arrange for your very own assigned parking space,*” the customer **replies** sarcastically.