

Below is the front page of our IBET Wiki

The screenshot shows a web browser window titled "sgibet / FrontPage - Windows Internet Explorer". The address bar shows "http://sgibet.pbworks.com/FrontPage". The page content includes:

- SGI SAINT GEORGE INTERNATIONAL** logo at the top center.
- Welcome to the SGI Trinity Cert IBET Wiki** in large blue text.
- An interactive resource for all candidates on the IBET** in orange text below the title.
- A section titled "This site contains the following for your information:" with a bulleted list:
 - Reading lists for each workbook including links to journals.
 - Course guidelines and criteria.
 - Appendices of model answers, samples and relevant documents for each workbook.
- A section titled "There are also the following areas we think you might find useful and would encourage you to actively use and contribute to:" with a bulleted list:
 - Discussion forums for each workbook.
 - Links to useful sites for lesson ideas, materials, further reading and jobs.
 - Useful tips written by former candidates.
 - Answers to FAQs (frequently asked questions)
- A note: "For your convenience each workbook has a folder with the above subsections. To access your workbook click on the appropriate link below or navigate via the folders on your right."
- Links for [Workbook 1](#) and [Workbook 2](#).
- A right-hand sidebar with several sections:
 - Send a link**, **Put this page in a folder**, **Add Tags**, **Page Security**
 - Navigator**: A list of links including Starred Pages, FAQs, Final Assignment, Links, Profiles, and Reading List.
 - SideBar**: A section for adding navigation sections, links, or favorite web sites.
 - Share this workspace**: A form to add a new writer to the workspace.
 - Recent Activity**: A list of recent changes, including "Needs Analysis" edited or added by "sziviamiklos".

On the following pages you will find extracts from two of the units contained in the workbooks. Please note that they are the initial stages of the units they refer to – each whole unit is of considerably greater length.

Unit 2

Course and Syllabus Design

You go to start a new course, paperwork and books in hand, and the first lesson goes swimmingly. But after a while the learners seem to become demotivated and mutterings begin that this is not what they expected or need. You begin to dread going to the class and that anxiety further affects your rapport with the students.

Has this ever happened to you? If so, don't worry; this is a reasonably common occurrence and many teachers have faced similar issues. But why do these situations develop? Well, often it is a result of how the course and syllabus have been designed.

A course outline, or a more detailed syllabus, has various advantages. Firstly, the learners or sponsors will probably expect one in advance, especially if it is an in-company course. Secondly, it gives the teacher a sense of direction and ensures that time isn't spent unwisely on unnecessary language points and topics. It likewise gives learners a sense of direction and progress. Furthermore, as we have seen from the story above, for a course to be successful it needs to be directed and with appropriate variety to maintain interest and motivation. Finally, the more time that is spent on course planning in advance, the more likely it is that there will be clear and pedagogically sound methods for learning, practising and producing the required language.

This section of the workbook, then, focuses on how we can go about developing course structures and syllabuses for Business English courses. We will be thinking about what factors we need to take into account, the different ways we can design a course and how we should express ourselves when writing a syllabus or course outline. Much of what we will be discussing here relates back to the needs analysis section of the previous workbook, so it might be worth you looking back at your notes and your wiki entry on that before starting these tasks.

A. Your Situation

Think about any Business English courses you have taught. If you haven't taught much Business English then you can also think about the General English courses you have been involved in.

When a new course starts who decides what the syllabus should be? On what basis do they make their decisions? How well has this system worked for you so far? Have you had any bad experiences like the one mentioned in the introduction above?

Leave a short message (a minute or so is enough) on Voxopop talking about your experiences. Then listen to three other people talking on the same topic.

On the basis of your own experiences and those of the three people you have listened to, identify three different ways institutions can design the syllabus of a course.

1.
2.
3.

B. What is a Syllabus?

What is a syllabus and how can it be organized? A syllabus essentially tells us what is to be covered in a course. As such, a course book contents page is a simplified form of a syllabus. But it does more than that. Below is an example of one unit of a contents page as you might find in a coursebook.

Unit 5: A Good Year				
Business Skills	Practical Functions	Working with words	Language focus	Reading and Listening Texts
Giving Presentations (part 2)	How to describe graphs and statistics	Verbs and adjectives related to <i>increase</i> and <i>decrease</i>	Present Perfect Simple and Present Perfect Progressive	Reading: <i>The English Don't Make Wine!</i> Listening: A wine producer gives a presentation on sales results

Read carefully through the extract above and match up the three columns of the table. The first one has been done for you as an example.

	Factor		How covered in syllabus		Rationale/Conclusion
1.	Common Threads		Descriptions of graphs; prepare and give middle section of a presentation on sales results		A syllabus is not only about what but also in what order. There should be a logic to what is introduced when, for example on the basis of simplicity or priority of needs.
2.	Context		This is the fifth unit. Present tenses and starting presentations covered previously.		It is important to think about not only what needs to be learnt but also how, thinking about learner styles and current competences.
3.	How language is learnt		Perfect tenses and lexis for trends. Useful phrases for presentations.		Language needs to be in a carefully chosen and familiar context so that learners are engaged and meet useful secondary language.
4.	What learners perform		Wine production and sales of wine	1.	A syllabus should be built around commonly recurring components or threads.
5.	What language is covered		A variety of task types, including listening for useful phrases and guided discovery of grammar based on a text.		The language focus of the topic should be appropriate to the learners' level (learnable) and link in to the business skill and practical function being covered.
6.	Progression of syllabus	1.	Business skills, functional language, lexis, grammar, reading and listening skills		Learners should be required to actively perform achievable tasks using the target language, not only talk about the topic area.

So, in summary what have we learnt about the nature of a syllabus and hence syllabus design? A syllabus tells us not only what is to be learnt but also in what order, ensuring that the target language is learnable (at an appropriate level) and achievable (in the time available). It is useful for a syllabus to have a grid framework with regularly recurring threads such as lexis and business skills. It takes into account that the target language should be couched in a topic which is familiar and useful to the learners. A well designed syllabus also considers how the language is to be learnt, bearing in mind different learner styles and learners' current weaknesses. It also demands that learners actively perform relevant business skills using the target language. Naturally, the 'how' also ensures that a communicative approach and best practice is followed in methodological terms.

C. Expressing Aims and Objectives in a Syllabus

If a syllabus should indicate what and how, we also need to consider the ‘why’ and the way the ‘why’ is expressed. As mentioned in workbook 1, Frendo¹ builds up a distinction between ‘aims’ and ‘objectives’, the former being a more general comment on why the course is happening while the latter focuses on why specific elements are covered. Objectives can then be viewed from two different perspectives. Performance (or behavioural) objectives are about what we expect learners to be able to do and to what standard. Teaching (or training) objectives, on the other hand, are more about guidelines for the teacher and includes more jargon.

The style in which aims, objectives and a syllabus as a whole are written is also an important consideration. Firstly, as Donna points out, any paperwork produced by an institution or a teacher acts as an ambassador or marketing tool, indicating a degree of professionalism and dedication. Secondly, it is worth considering who will read the document. Is it for the teacher, the learners, the sponsor or a combination of all of them? In whichever case, abstract and detailed teaching terminology might be best avoided. Even performance objectives can be expressed from the perspective of the learner instead of the teacher.

In addition, it is worth noting that often it is quite difficult to be precise about objectives. This means that expressions like ‘an increased awareness of...’ or ‘learn about some...’ often crop up. It is also worth bearing in mind that to a business performance and teaching objectives are often secondary to their own business objectives. Hence, it is always worth overtly linking any syllabus objectives to active business skills. For example, a course objective might be expressed as ‘learners will improve their fluency when giving presentations at conferences’, while the business objective might be ‘to attract a higher number of new clients as conferences’.

Task: Look back to the extract from the contents page and attached task above. Imagine the extract is part of a syllabus you have prepared for a Business English course. Please complete the questions below, thinking carefully about the language you use to express yourself.

¹ Frendo ‘how to teach business english’. Pearson 2005, chapters 2 and 3.

1. What could the aim of the course be?

2. What is the teaching objective(s) for this extract?

3. What is the performance objective(s) for this extract from the teacher's perspective?

4. What is the performance objective(s) for this extract from the learner's perspective?

Now compare your thoughts to ours in the Appendix on the Wiki.

Another way of expressing the aims of a course is to look the syllabus elements in terms of outcomes instead of objectives. As opposed to writing about what learners 'will do' in class, we write about what learners 'will be able to do' by the end of that component. These 'can do' statements have two distinct advantages. Firstly, they are simple to express and understand. Secondly, it allows us to link our syllabus to a clear external benchmark, for example the Council of Europe's Common European Framework (CEF), which could prove very useful in designing our syllabus and giving it validity.

The CEF, as you possibly know, categorizes each level according to 'can do' statements, giving each level a code. For example, a pre-intermediate learner is considered to be a 'basic user' and is given the code A2. A summary of the A2 learner might sound something like this: 'The pre-intermediate learner can understand frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance and can communicate in simple and routine situations requiring a simple and direct exchange of information. He/she can convey basic information in writing'.

Looking back to the same syllabus extract above, how could you express the outcome(s) of the unit?

The learners...

Unit 3b Negotiations

When we think about negotiations, it is often high-end, confrontational buying and selling that springs to mind. However, whilst this is indeed a part of negotiating (and tends to be the part that we develop in class), we all employ this skill as regularly with our colleagues and managers (for example distributing work and setting salary), and family (what to have for dinner and whose turn it is to wash up) as well as with suppliers, contractors and customers.

A. Types of negotiation

Task

What is the difference between distributive (or competitive/win-lose) negotiations and integrative (or win-win) negotiations? Write your answers below and give two examples of each. You may want to refer to Frenzo, p.76-77.

These two main types of negotiation will naturally require some different language, as well as having some language in common with each other and with other types of meetings in general (a negotiation is, after all, a specific type of meeting, and will still require much of the same language for organising, interrupting, summarising, etc.). As with all other business skills, it is very important to find out what types of negotiations their learners are involved in and to try to tailor material and language to meet these needs.

In addition, of course, there are specific stages, tactics, cultural issues and language to consider here.

B. Stages of a Negotiation

Below there are some stages that are common to negotiations. Choose a title for each stage from the box, then check your answers in Frendo, p.77

Bargaining	Closing the deal
Gathering information	Implementing the agreement
Preparation	Presenting opening positions
Relationship building	

1. _____. Deciding on your goals. It is important to have a range of acceptable goals and also to think about what the other party will be aiming for. You should aware of your bottom line.
2. _____. Getting to know the other party. Understanding similarities and differences, establishing a positive working atmosphere.
3. _____. Finding out the other party's situation, their needs and wants, about what would happen if no agreement was reached.
4. _____. Negotiators present their best case scenario, maximising their own benefits. Often this will include points that the negotiators know they will probably have to give way on later on, but they would hope to win some concessions for so doing.
5. _____. Proposals and counter proposals are made, each party making concessions as they move towards a compromise.
6. _____. When a compromise that is acceptable to both parties is reached, the negotiation should be closed with a positive commitment to its successful implementation. It is very important to summarise and clarify at this point so misunderstandings are avoided.
7. _____. The negotiation process doesn't necessarily end when the contract is signed. There are often further issues that weren't thought of during the negotiation, situations change and the ongoing relationship needs to be managed.

Before we get stuck into the tactics of negotiations and useful functional phrases, there are a few basic terms that learners need to know. Complete the following brief article on the art of negotiation with a word from the box.

compromise outcome	concessions x 2 rapport	deal win-lose	long-term win-win
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The Art of Negotiation.

There has been a great deal of research into the art of negotiation, and, in particular, into what makes a good negotiator.

One point most researchers agree seem to agree on is that good negotiators try to create a harmonious atmosphere at the start of a negotiation. They make an effort to establish a good _____ with their opposite number, so that there will be a willingness - on both sides – to make _____.

Good negotiators generally wish to reach an agreement which meets the interests of both sides. They therefore tend to take a _____ view, ensuring that the agreement will improve (or at least not harm) their relationship with the other party. On the other hand, a poor negotiator tends to look for immediate gains, forgetting that the real benefits of a _____ may come much later. A _____ situation is usually in the long-term interests of both parties, although there are certain situations (such as buying a house) where there will not be a long-term relationship, so in these instances a slightly different approach (and more of a _____ attitude) may be taken.

Skilful negotiators are flexible. They do not lock themselves into a position so that they would lose face if they have to _____. They have a range of objectives, thus allowing them to make _____, for example, by paying more for the product but receiving more generous credit terms or more flexibility on delivery times.

Successful negotiators do not want a negotiation to break down. If problems arise, they suggest ways to resolve them in order to reach an acceptable _____. The best negotiators are persuasive, articulate people who select a few key arguments and repeat them. This suggests that tenacity is an important quality.

Finally, it is essential to be a good listener and to check frequently that the two parties have understood the same thing.

Based on Cotton & Robbins 'Business Class' (Longman 1993). p.64²

² I sometimes use this text as an introduction to a first lesson in a short course on negotiating. Having discussed the qualities of a good negotiator, I give the students half of the completed text each as a jigsaw reading to explain to their partners, before then giving the full, gapped text to introduce the key vocabulary. This unit of Business Class, which in some ways was the forerunner of the famous Market Leader series, also contains some very good listening texts, vocabulary focus and an excellent roleplay.

C. Cultural Issues

We are going to discuss the cultural side of international business in depth in the fourth workbook, but it should be remembered that negotiations are potentially the most confrontational of all of the business skills, and that it pays to be aware of your counterpart's expectations and likely behaviours. Whilst aggression might win concessions from negotiators from some backgrounds, it will hinder or ruin the negotiation with those from other cultures.

D. Language – A functional approach to language for negotiations?

As with the other business skills, much of the language needed here is functional. Some of the relevant functions are given in the box below.

TASK: Match the function on the left to the example exponent from the right hand column.

Exponent	Function
What sort of price did you have in mind?	Offering a concession.
I was going to say £20 per unit, but what if I were to say £18?	Making a counter-proposal.
I'm afraid that £18 a unit is not quite what we had in mind.	Avoiding breakdown in negotiation by leaving an issue that is causing problems to another area where hopefully agreement might be easier to come by.
We were hoping for something a bit closer to £12.	Probing, attempting to find the other person's position.
Let's set the price issue to one side for now, shall we?	Suggesting a concession from the other side.
What we'd like to see is a bit more flexibility regarding delivery dates.	Rejecting a proposal.

<p>What other functions might be appropriate to introduce in a course on negotiating?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3.
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It should also be reiterated that, in addition to the functions listed here (there are obviously many more exponents used to express each of the functions shown), much of that we have seen with regard to meetings is also relevant.

TASK: Read Frendo p.77-79 and answer the following questions.

1. What does Frendo say are the disadvantages of a function-led approach to negotiating?

2. What are the other factors that impact on the success of the negotiation?

3. What alternative does he suggest?

4a. How do you feel about this model?

4b. How do you think different groups of students that you have encountered would feel about this model? (i.e. would they appreciate the deep-end approach with its theoretical focus on their specific needs or do you think they equate learning to some extent with the presentation and contextualised practice of specific language?) Answer with reference to at least 2 different groups (or individuals) that you have experience of teaching (Business or General English).

However you feel about this issue, we will still look at some of the 'generic' functional language below.