



LESSON 1 FOUNDATION - BUILDING CONFIDENCE IN BASIC COMMUNICATION

EAKOLARN CHOTIANUSORN, PHD.

OBJECTIVES



By the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

1. Introduce yourself confidently in English
2. Use active listening techniques effectively
3. Start and maintain basic conversations
4. Demonstrate awareness of body language and tone
5. Practice networking skills through simulation

WHY COMMUNICATION SKILLS MATTER



The Power of Effective Communication

- 85% of career success depends on communication and people skills
- English is the global business language - spoken by 1.5 billion people
- Good communicators earn 20% more on average
- Builds professional relationships and opportunities
- Essential for teamwork, leadership, and career growth

COMMUNICATION CONFIDENCE CHALLENGE



Common Fears When Speaking English

- Fear of making mistakes or sounding awkward
- Worry about pronunciation and accent
- Running out of things to say
- Being judged by others

The Truth:

- Everyone makes mistakes - it's part of learning!
- Communication is about connection, not perfection
- Practice builds confidence - the more you speak, the easier it gets

THE 4 PILLARS OF CONFIDENT COMMUNICATION



1. CLARITY (ความชัดเจน)

Speak clearly and organize your thoughts

2. CONFIDENCE (ความมั่นใจ)

Believe in your message and deliver it with conviction

3. CONNECTION (การเชื่อมต่อ)

Listen actively and show genuine interest in others

4. COURTESY (ความสุภาพ)

Respect others and communicate with politeness

SELF-INTRODUCTION STRUCTURE



The Perfect Introduction Formula

Part	What to Say
1. Greeting	Good morning / Hello / Hi there
2. Name	My name is... / I'm... / You can call me...
3. Background	I'm a student at... / I work as... / I'm from...
4. Interest/Hook	I'm passionate about... / I love... / In my free time, I...
5. Purpose/Closing	I'm excited to... / I'm looking forward to... / Nice to meet you!

INTRODUCTION EXAMPLES



Formal Introduction (Professional/Academic)

"Good morning, everyone. My name is Nattapong Suksom, but please call me Nat. I'm a final-year engineering student at Kasetsart University, specializing in industrial engineering. I'm particularly interested in supply chain optimization and sustainability. I'm excited to be here today and look forward to learning from all of you."

Casual Introduction (Social/Networking)

"Hi there! I'm Ploy. I work as a graphic designer at a startup in Bangkok. Outside of work, I'm a total coffee addict and love exploring new cafes around the city. I'm also into hiking on weekends. It's great to meet you all!"

Key Differences:

- Formal: Full name, professional title, structured
- Casual: Nickname, personal interests, conversational tone



ACTIVE LISTENING

WHAT IS IT?

The Difference Between Hearing and Listening

HEARING (การได้ยิน)

= Passive / Automatic / Just receiving sounds

ACTIVE LISTENING (การฟังอย่างตั้งใจ)

= Active / Intentional / Understanding + Responding

What is Active Listening?

- Fully concentrating on the speaker
- Understanding their message
- Responding thoughtfully
- Remembering what was said

ACTIVE LISTENING TECHNIQUES



Key Techniques for Better Listening

Technique	How to Do It
1. Eye Contact	Look at the speaker 60-70% of the time. Don't stare, but show you're engaged.
2. Body Language	Face the speaker, nod occasionally, lean forward slightly, don't cross arms.
3. Don't Interrupt	Let them finish their sentence before you speak. Wait for natural pauses.
4. Ask Questions	Ask for clarification: 'What do you mean?' or 'Could you explain that?'
5. Paraphrase	Summarize what they said: 'So what you're saying is...' or 'If I understand correctly...'

LISTENING BARRIERS TO AVOID



Bad Listening Habits (Things NOT to Do)

- Multitasking - checking phone, looking around
- Thinking about your response - while the other person is still talking
- Judging or criticizing - forming negative opinions too quickly
- Fake listening - pretending to listen but actually daydreaming
- Interrupting constantly - finishing other people's sentences
- Selective listening - only hearing what you want to hear

Remember:

Good communication is 50% speaking and 50% listening!

CONVERSATION STARTERS



How to Start a Conversation in English

Safe Topics for Starting Conversations:

Topic	Example Phrases
Weather	"Nice weather today, isn't it?" / "It's quite hot/cold today."
Weekend Plans	"Do you have any plans for the weekend?" / "How was your weekend?"
Hobbies	"What do you like to do in your free time?" / "Have you seen any good movies lately?"
Current Events	"Did you hear about...?" / "Are you going to the festival this weekend?"
Compliments	"I like your bag. Where did you get it?" / "That's an interesting book!"
Food	"Have you tried the new restaurant?" / "Do you know any good places to eat around here?"

Topics to AVOID (especially with new people):

- Politics, Religion, Money/Salary, Personal appearance/weight, Age (especially for women)

KEEPING CONVERSATIONS GOING



How to Keep the Conversation Flowing

The Challenge:

Awkward silences... What do you say next?

Solutions:

- **Ask follow-up questions**
 - "That's interesting! Tell me more about..."
- **Share related experiences**
 - "That reminds me of when I..."
- **Use the FORD method**
 - (We'll learn this next!)
- **Make observations**
 - "I noticed... / I heard that..."
- **Express genuine interest**
 - "I'd love to hear more about..."



THE FORD METHOD

FORD: Your Conversation Toolkit

F = FAMILY

"Do you have any siblings?" / "How's your family doing?"

O = OCCUPATION

"What do you do for work?" / "How long have you been working there?"

R = RECREATION

"What do you do for fun?" / "Any hobbies or interests?"

D = DREAMS

"What are your goals?" / "Where do you see yourself in 5 years?"

Tip: If one topic doesn't work, move to another! FORD gives you 4 options.

OPEN VS CLOSED QUESTIONS



The Secret to Better Conversations

CLOSED Questions	OPEN Questions
Did you enjoy the movie?	What did you think of the movie?
Do you like coffee?	How do you like your coffee?
Are you busy this weekend?	What are you doing this weekend?
Do you like Thai food?	What's your favorite Thai dish?
Is your job stressful?	What do you find most challenging about your job?

The Rule:

Use OPEN questions to encourage conversation

Use CLOSED questions only for specific information

Magic Words for Open Questions:

What / How / Why / Tell me about...

PRACTICE - QUESTION FORMATION



Activity: Transform Closed to Open Questions

Instructions:

1. Work in pairs
2. Look at the CLOSED questions below
3. Transform them into OPEN questions
4. Practice asking your partner the new questions

Transform These:

- "Do you like sports?" → _____
- "Did you have a good weekend?" → _____
- "Are you a student?" → _____
- "Do you travel often?" → _____
- "Can you cook?" → _____

Possible Answers:

- "What sports do you enjoy watching or playing?"
- "What did you do over the weekend?"
- "What are you studying?" / "What do you do?"
- "Where have you traveled recently?" / "What's your favorite place you've visited?"
- "What's your favorite dish to cook?" / "What kind of food do you like to make?"



POSITIVE VS NEGATIVE BODY LANGUAGE

What to Do vs What to Avoid

✓ POSITIVE	✗ NEGATIVE
Smile genuinely	Crossed arms
Make eye contact (60-70%)	Avoiding eye contact
Face the person	Looking down
Nod occasionally	Checking watch/phone constantly
Lean forward slightly	Fidgeting, tapping fingers
Relaxed hands	Turning body away

Remember:

Your body language should match your words. Mixed signals confuse people!

tone of voice



It's Not What You Say, It's HOW You Say It

Same words, different meanings:

"That's great." (enthusiastic) 😄 = Really positive!

"That's great." (sarcastic) 😏 = Not great at all!

"That's great." (flat/monotone) 😐 = I don't care.

Voice Elements to Control:

- **Pitch (high/low)**

Higher pitch = excitement, questions / Lower pitch = seriousness, authority

- **Volume (loud/soft)**

Louder = emphasis, confidence / Softer = intimacy, sensitivity

- **Pace (fast/slow)**

Faster = excitement, urgency / Slower = importance, clarity

- **Pauses**

Strategic pauses = emphasis and give listeners time to process

- **Emphasis (stress on certain words)**

"I didn't say HE stole the money" vs "I didn't SAY he stole the money"

CULTURAL AWARENESS



Body Language & Communication Vary by Culture

Important: What's appropriate in one culture may be offensive in another!

Cultural Differences to Be Aware Of:

Element	Cultural Differences
Eye Contact	Western: Shows confidence Asian: May be seen as confrontational
Touch	Mediterranean: Hugs, kisses common Asian: Minimal physical contact preferred
Personal Space	American: 1-2 feet Middle Eastern/Latin: Closer proximity comfortable
Gestures	Thumbs up: OK in US, offensive in some Middle Eastern countries
Directness	Western: Direct communication valued Asian: Indirect to preserve harmony

Best Practice:

When in doubt, observe and adapt! Watch how others behave and follow their lead.

THANK YOU

College of Innovation and
Management

Eakolarn.ch@ssru.ac.th