The Meeting Mindset
World of Work

Kickoff: **Ask and answer the questions.**

1. How often do you attend meetings in your professional life?
2. What challenges do you face when attending or participating in meetings in English?
3. What do you think are the most important elements of a successful meeting?
4. How do you prepare for a meeting?
5. How do you feel when you have to express your opinion or make a decision during a meeting?
6. Can you think of a time when you participated in a particularly effective or ineffective meeting? What made it so?

Reading: **Read the article and fill in the following words.**

takeaways	agenda	recap	engagement	icebreaker	approach

An effective meeting begins with a well-organised _____, shared in advance to allow participants to prepare. Starting the meeting with a brief _____ can help create a relaxed atmosphere and encourage open communication.

Throughout the meeting, try to take a structured _____ while promoting active _____ among participants. The chairperson plays a vital role in directing the conversation, ensuring everyone has the opportunity to contribute, and keeping the meeting on track with time management.

As the meeting draws to a close, it is important to review key _____, assign action items, and establish follow-up plans. Concluding with a concise _____, circulated to all attendees, ensures clarity and accountability, ultimately contributing to the success of future meetings.

Vocabulary: **Read the sentences and choose the correct definitions.**

1. "Now that we've exchanged pleasantries, let's get down to business."
a. Start talking about something unimportant.
b. Start discussing the main topic of the meeting.

2. "We're running out of time, so let's wrap up this discussion."
a. Continue talking about the topic.
b. Finish the discussion or meeting.

3. "Please don't put me on the spot like that. I need more time to think."
a. Ask someone a difficult question or situation.
b. Make someone feel comfortable.

4. "I think we're on the same page about this project, so let's move forward."
a. Have different opinions about something.
b. Have the same understanding or agreement about something.

5. "I don't have much time for small talk today, so let's cut to the chase."
a. Talk about something not relevant to the meeting.
b. Get to the main point or important information quickly.

6. "We've gone off-topic. Can we try to get back on track?"
a. Start talking about something not relevant to the meeting.
b. Keep talking about the main point.

7. "I'm glad we see eye-to-eye on this issue, it makes things easier."
a. Disagree on something.
b. Agree on something.

8. "The new project is still in the pipeline, but we hope to finalise the details soon."
a. Something is already finalised.
b. Something is planned or in progress but not yet finalised.

9. "Let's put it on hold for now and revisit the idea in a few months."
a. Continue with the idea.
b. Postpone or delay the idea.

10. "It's a no-brainer. We should definitely invest in this opportunity."
a. A decision that is obvious or easy.
b. A decision that is difficult or complicated.

Speaking I: Read through the points and tick the box that best describes you.

	always	sometimes	never
Prepare for the meeting by reviewing the agenda and any relevant materials beforehand.			
Take notes during the meeting to help you remember important points and stay engaged.			
Speak clearly and concisely, making sure to express your thoughts and opinions respectfully.			
Practice active listening by giving your full attention to the speaker and avoiding interruptions.			
Ask questions and seek clarification when needed to ensure you fully understand the topic being discussed.			
Contribute to brainstorming sessions and group discussions, offering ideas and suggestions.			
Be respectful of others' opinions and ideas, even if you disagree with them.			

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Useful Language: **Match the sentences (grouped) with the titles.**

Getting Started	Moving onto the Next Point	Politely Interrupting	Avoiding Interruptions	Reaching a Decision	Wrapping Things Up

_____

- Can we come to a consensus on this?
- Do we have an agreement?
- All in favour, please raise your hands.
- Are there any objections?
- Let's take a vote on this matter.

_____

- As I was saying...
- To get back on track...
- Let's return to the main topic.
- I'd like to refocus our attention on...
- Before we were interrupted, we were discussing...

_____

- Now that we've covered this point, let's move on to...
- Having discussed that, let's turn our attention to...
- With that out of the way, let's discuss...
- Our next topic is...
- Let's now proceed to...

_____

- Excuse me, may I interject for a moment?
- I'm sorry to interrupt, but...
- If I may add something...
- Can I just quickly say...?
- Pardon me for cutting in, but...

_____

- Let's get started, everyone.
- Good morning/afternoon, everyone.
- Thank you all for joining today's meeting.
- I'd like to call this meeting to order.
- Before we dive in, let's quickly introduce ourselves.

_____

- To sum up...
- In conclusion...
- That wraps up our meeting, thank you all for your contributions.
- Let's quickly review the action items before we adjourn.
- I think we've covered everything for today.

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Speaking II: Past vs. Present Meeting Attitudes

Below are a list of statements related to meetings. In pairs or small groups, discuss each statement and decide if it reflects a past or modern way of thinking. Explain your reasoning.

a. In-person meetings are always more effective than remote meetings.
b. Time management during meetings is crucial, and sticking to the agenda is a must.
c. Encouraging a more relaxed atmosphere during meetings can foster creativity.
d. It's important to have regular, weekly meetings to stay on top of tasks and progress.
e. Many meetings can be replaced by emails or messaging apps.
f. Meetings should always start with pleasantries before getting down to business.
g. Meetings should be conducted using a strict, hierarchical structure.
h. Remote meetings can be just as effective as in-person meetings.
i. Flexible and agile meeting structures lead to more productive meetings.
j. Silent/asynchronous meetings, with written idea sharing, can foster inclusive discussions.

Questions: 1. Which approach do you believe is more effective
2. How can elements of both be combined to create an effective meeting approach?

Preparation I: Split into small groups and choose one of the following scenarios:

Discussing a new project or initiative
Addressing a problem or issue in the workplace
Brainstorming ideas for a company event
Reviewing progress on a current project
Sharing updates from different departments

Preparation II: For your chosen scenario, follow these steps:

Assign roles to each group member (e.g., chairperson, note-taker, participants).
Develop an agenda with key topics and goals for the meeting.
Prepare any necessary materials or points you want to discuss.

Role-Play: Conduct your meeting in the small group.

Using the language and skills you've learned, hold a meeting based on your chosen scenario. Ensure everyone has a chance to contribute and that the agenda is followed.

Feedback: Use the following questions for group discussion:

a. How did the meeting go? Was the agenda followed, and were the goals achieved?
b. Did everyone have a chance to contribute, and were different perspectives heard?
c. How effective was the chairperson in managing the meeting and keeping it on track?
d. Were there any particularly successful moments or strategies used during the meeting?
e. Were there any challenges or areas where the meeting could have been improved?
f. What suggestions do you have for improving future meetings based on today?