

# Small Talk Training

Upper-Intermediate

**cts** COMMUNICATION  
TRAINING  
SUPPORT

# What Is Small Talk?

**Small talk** is a friendly conversation between people who have just met or don't know each other very well.

Love it or hate it, it's an important and useful social skill.

So don't be afraid of making **Small Talk**.



# Discussion



In your opinion,  
what is a good  
conversation  
starter?



What would you do  
if you were asked  
an uncomfortable  
question?



Do you think small  
talk is necessary?  
Why or why not?

# Making Small Talk

**You:** What's the weather like in Chicago at this time of a year?

**Customer:** Oh, It's much colder than here. Everything freezes.

**You:** Is that right? How do you survive the cold?

**Customer:** With lots of warm clothes. I hear Japan is quite humid in the summer.

**You:** Yes, especially after the typhoon season in June.

## Dialog 1



Asking questions related to the person.

## Situation

You're meeting a customer from Chicago at your office in Japan.

# Practice 1

Practice each sentence. Make your own sentences using the bold-faced phrases.

1. A: **How's business** in Seoul?

B: It's pretty good, actually.

2. A: **Do you like** watching baseball?

B: Not really, but my son is a big fan of Shohei Otani.

# Making Small Talk

**You:** I like your shoes. They look quite comfortable.

**Visitor:** Thank you. They're Italian. I like the color.

**You:** Yes. Italy makes a variety of good shoes.

**Visitor:** Yes. The selection is great and they also last a long time.

**You:** I agree. Actually, I have some Italian shoes myself. They are more than 10 years old and are still in good shape.

## Dialog 2



Giving compliments.

### Situation

You're showing a foreign visitor around the office. You're in the elevator with him.

# Practice 2

Practice each sentence. Make your own sentences using the bold-faced phrases.

1. A: **I hear you're a great** singer.

B: I don't know about a great singer,  
but I do like singing.

2. A: **You have a nice** office with a great view.  
You can see the whole east side of the city.

B: Yes. Unfortunately, I'm out of my office a lot.

# Making Small Talk

**You:** I heard on TV or from somewhere that people in New York liked sushi, but I didn't expect so many sushi restaurants in Brooklyn.

**Associate:** Oh, yes. We have more sushi restaurants than McDonald's now. I have sushi for lunch at least twice a week.

**You:** Do you? Back in Japan, I go for sushi maybe once or twice a month.

**Associate:** Sushi's becoming more popular in New York than in Japan now, huh?

**You:** Sure looks like it. Do you have rotating sushi bars in New York?

## Dialog 3



City, country and travel talk.

### Situation

You're visiting a company in New York and meeting one of your business associates.



# Practice 3

Practice each sentence. Make your own sentences using the bold-faced phrases.

1. **A: How do you like** Singapore?

**B:** I like it very much. **It's a beautiful city.** There're trees and flowers everywhere.

2. **A: How was** your flight?

**B:** It was great, actually. **It was amazing to** see the country from the air. It's so huge that you can see land throughout the whole three-hour flight.

# Making Small Talk

Class or Pair Work

**01**

Think of your own small talk topics. Practice with your partner, the class or the instructor.

**02**

Keep the conversation going with your partner or the class without stopping more than 5 seconds.