

Collins

English for Business



LISTENING

Ian Badger



NHÀ XUẤT BẢN TỔNG HỢP
THÀNH PHỐ HỒ CHÍ MINH

NTV

Công ty TNHH
Nhân Trí Việt



POWERED BY COBUILD

Common European Framework (CEF) level mapping chart

A1 - A2								
A2 - B1								
B1 - B2								
B2 - C1								
C1 - C2								

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For Mum and Dad

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ian Badger is a highly regarded author who has written a wide range of published materials to aid spoken and written communication in English. He runs a training consultancy (BMES) which specialises in helping the employees of international companies to communicate with their counterparts, contacts, and customers worldwide. This work, which involves helping speakers from all over the world to communicate clearly and effectively with each other, has made him acutely aware of the need to understand English however it is spoken.

Ian is originally from London but now lives in Bristol in the west of England. He spends a lot of his time running face-to-face training in Finland, Germany, France, and Russia and working remotely in many other parts of the world. He has worked as a director of studies, teacher trainer, teacher of English, and communications consultant and is a regular speaker at international conferences.

Ian is also the author of *English for Life: Listening B1* (Collins 2012).

Collins

English for Business Listening


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Contents

Introduction	4
Section 1 – Everyday business communication	
Unit 1 Communicating clearly (<i>Northern Irish, English</i>)	6
Unit 2 Understanding different accents (<i>East Coast US, Indian</i>)	10
Unit 3 Conference calls (<i>English, Scottish, Irish, Indian</i>)	14
Unit 4 Voicemails (<i>Canadian, English, Chinese, Thai</i>)	18
Section 2 – Working internationally: some impressions	
Unit 5 USA and Canada (<i>Midwest US, Southern US, Canadian</i>)	22
Unit 6 Ireland and Germany (<i>Irish, Peruvian</i>)	26
Unit 7 India (<i>Indian, Scottish</i>)	30
Unit 8 China (<i>Chinese</i>)	34
Section 3 – Outside the office	
Unit 9 Making arrangements (<i>Canadian, Scottish, English, Brazilian</i>)	38
Unit 10 Business hospitality (<i>Japanese, Southern US</i>)	42
Unit 11 Talking about food (<i>Chinese, Japanese, East Coast US, Scottish, Palestinian</i>)	46
Unit 12 Work-life balance (<i>English, Southern US</i>)	50
Section 4 – Everyday business matters	
Unit 13 Talking about your work (<i>Polish, Australian</i>)	54
Unit 14 Finance and accounting (<i>New Zealand, Southern US</i>)	58
Unit 15 Parental leave and redundancy (<i>English, Scottish</i>)	62
Unit 16 Planning a business trip (<i>Scottish, English</i>)	66
Section 5 – Cultural considerations	
Unit 17 Cross-cultural negotiation (<i>Japanese, French, Chinese</i>)	70
Unit 18 Written and spoken communication (<i>West Coast US, Chinese, Scottish</i>)	74
Unit 19 Meeting and greeting (<i>Spanish, Italian, Canadian</i>)	78
Unit 20 Working hours and the office environment (<i>Spanish, Italian, South African</i>)	82
Mini-dictionary  (extracts from Collins COBUILD Advanced Dictionary)	86
Answer key	93
Transcripts	105

Introduction

Collins English for Business: Listening will improve your understanding of what your colleagues, customers, suppliers and other business contacts are saying in English.

You can use *Listening*:

- as a self-study course
- as supplementary material on a business communication or business English course.

Listening aims to develop your awareness and sensitivity to different accents. As you listen to the recordings, you will note which speakers are easier to follow and notice why this is the case: speed, clear accent, lack of complex vocabulary and idiom, straightforward use of grammar. By studying these features of other people's language, you will gain more awareness of your own English and take steps to ensure that you become a clearer speaker.

Specifically, *Listening* will help you to develop:

- listening for the gist/the main points made by speakers
- listening for the exact meaning of words and phrases
- awareness of clear usage and structures
- your range of business-related vocabulary
- cultural awareness

Listening comprises a **book** and **CD**. The **book** consists of 20 units divided into the following five sections:

- 1 Everyday business communication
- 2 Working internationally: some impressions
- 3 Outside the office
- 4 Everyday business matters
- 5 Cultural considerations

You can either work through the units from Unit 1 to Unit 20 or pick and choose the units that are most useful to you.

The **CD** contains 55 recordings of American, Chinese, Japanese, Indian, Italian, Spanish, British, Irish, French and Australian speakers among others. The ability to understand varieties of English is a key to better business performance and success.

At the back of the book there is:

- a mini-dictionary
- the answer key
- the transcripts for the audio recordings.

Using *Listening*

For ease of use, each unit follows a similar structure. It is recommended that you follow the order of exercises when working through a unit. Each unit includes:

- Some simple questions to check your understanding of what is said.
- Exercises which focus on extracts from the recording where you can check your understanding of specific features: pronunciation, vocabulary, structure.
- Gap-filling exercises intended to direct your attention to specific words and phrases which may cause comprehension problems.
- Vocabulary-matching exercises to widen your vocabulary. A poor vocabulary is often the reason that misunderstandings occur.

In some cases the language level of the exercises may appear low, but understanding the gist and details of the recordings will present a challenge.

Other features

'Powered by COBUILD'

In order to help you to extend your vocabulary, further uses of key language are explored through references to examples taken from the Collins COBUILD corpus. In addition, you can look up any unfamiliar words and phrases in the mini-dictionary at the back of the book. This contains definitions and further examples from the *Collins COBUILD Advanced Dictionary*.

Did you know?

Small sections set in speech bubbles provide useful background information which will help you to understand the context of a recording.

Clear usage

These sections focus on specific issues which can cause problems for the listener, such as complex grammar forms used by native speakers or non-standard usage.

Further study

The final section in the each unit provides you with some suggestions for further study. In most cases it refers you to complimentary listening material on the *Listening* website:

www.collinselt.com/businesslistening.

We all make mistakes!

'Since many years I haven't seen a rifle in your hand!' From Fernando, ABBA

Native and very fluent non-native speakers make 'mistakes' – even ABBA. The recordings that accompany *Listening* were recorded on location (i.e. not in a studio) and are unscripted. As happens in the real world, the speakers make mistakes. They sometimes use unconventional grammar forms, they do not always speak in full sentences, and they hesitate regularly. These real 'errors' have not been removed from the recordings. The speakers' views are also unscripted and reflect their individual opinions and knowledge.

Language level

Listening has been written to help business learners at B1 level and above (Intermediate to Advanced).

Other titles

Also available in the *Collins English for Business* series: *Speaking* and *Writing*

Using the CD



This icon indicates that there is an audio track that you should listen to. Please note that the *Listening* CD is designed for use with a computer. If you want to play the audio on a CD player, you should download the tracks to your computer and then burn all of the tracks onto an audio CD.

1

Communicating clearly

Think like a wise man, but communicate in the language of the people.
– William Butler Yeats (Irish poet and dramatist)

A

Seamus is from Northern Ireland. In this recording, he discusses features of his Northern Irish English and how he has become 'anglicised' in his efforts to make himself clearly understood.



1 Read the general comprehension questions below. Then, play track 1 through once and answer the questions.

- 1 What feature of Seamus's English does he mention as causing some comprehension problems?
- 2 What feature of his pronunciation does he identify as helping people to understand him particularly well?
- 3 How has he modified his language in order to make himself more easily understood?
- 4 How long does it usually take him to revert to his Irish accent when he goes home?



2 Now listen again. As you play the recording, familiarise yourself with the way Seamus pronounces the words and phrases which are underlined.

- OK, well I'll talk to you later.
- This is really something very specific to do with the nature of my local English accent from Northern Ireland.
- You don't need a road map to get around – you need a score.
- People say I speak very clearly.
- ... in the way that I pronounce words.

'The score'

Seamus says: 'There's a joke in my home town that you don't need a road map to get around – you need the score.'

He is referring to the 'sing-song' style of the Derry accent, which is said to be like a musical score.

Derry (also known as Londonderry) is the second-largest city in Northern Ireland.



3 Now listen again, stop the recording as necessary, and complete the gaps in the sentences.

- 1 I would never accept that I'm _____ except Northern Irish.
- 2 I think the accent has _____.
- 3 I speak with quite a _____ intonation.
- 4 We don't drop the _____ as in Received Pronunciation.
- 5 I think the _____ are quite round.
- 6 I've slowed _____ down quite considerably.
- 7 When I go back home, people say I've become extremely _____.
- 8 After about three hours it speeds up again [...] sort of _____ to _____ type.

Clear usage: I have changed ('I've' changed)

Note the way Seamus discusses how **he has changed** the way he speaks in order to get his message across more clearly. Notice also how he contracts *I have* to *I've*.

'When I've said, 'OK, well I'll talk to you later' ...'

'I've actually modified the way I speak.'

'I've slowed the speed of delivery.'

'I've become extremely anglicised.'

4 Match the verbs in the left hand column, which are taken from the recording, with words on the right which have similar meanings.

- | | |
|-------------|-------------|
| 1 mellow | a say |
| 2 drop | b stop |
| 3 pronounce | c soften |
| 4 pause | d adapt |
| 5 modify | e return |
| 6 revert | f leave out |

B

In this next recording, Seamus continues to describe how he modifies his language in order to communicate clearly.



1 Read the comprehension questions below. Then, play the recording through once and answer the questions.

- 1 What did Seamus consider to be most important when communicating in export markets?
- 2 What is his attitude towards the use of incorrect grammar?
- 3 What is more important in his view – having knowledge of the product or having the ability to communicate clearly?
- 4 What was the most important lesson he learnt in his first year of business?



2 Now listen again, pause the recording when necessary, and complete the following phrases.

- 1 After my first _____ working in the export market.
- 2 If that meant _____ the way that I speak to make it easier for people to understand me, then that's what I would do.
- 3 I avoid more _____ in sentences.
- 4 I occasionally will speak incorrect grammar just to _____ across.
- 5 Depending on, of course, the language skills of the person _____ to.
- 6 That's the most _____ of the job.
- 7 You're already up against a _____.
- 8 So _____ is by far the most important thing I learnt.

Clear usage: subjunctives and subordinate clauses

Seamus says:

'I would leave out subjunctive clauses and subordinate clauses.'

The **subjunctive** mood of a verb is used to express wishes, hopes, doubts, etc. It is not often used in English but here are some examples:

I recommend that this be organised later. (present subjunctive)

I recommend that we should organise this later. (avoiding the subjunctive)

Were we to organise this, how much would it cost? (past subjunctive)

If we organised this, how much would it cost? (avoiding the subjunctive)

A **subordinate clause** is the part of a sentence which is less important than the main part of a sentence – a subordinate clause cannot stand on its own. Some examples (the subordinate clause is underlined):

Having made the decision, he ended the meeting.

When I get to the station, I am going to get something to eat.

I spoke to our agent, who is Egyptian, about the new office procedures.'

C

In this recording, Jude, who is from the south of England, talks about the respect that she has for those who have to do business in English when it is not their native language; she goes on to talk about a specific experience of communicating in English in the UAE.



1 Read the comprehension questions below. Then, play the recording through once and answer the questions. Do not worry about understanding every word and phrase.

- 1 What was a challenge for Jude?