SIMPLIFY

EAE Learning objectives for this lesson

Learn techniques for communicating in a simple way. Learn some idiomatic expressions about simplicity. Discuss simplicity issues.

Activity One - Answer the questions:

1. Do you like to keep things simple in general?
2. Do you sometimes realise that you are making things too complicated?
3. Are you a person who likes to get straight to the point?
4. Do you find that other people around you make things unnecessarily complicated?
5. How do you separate the wood from the trees?
6. Do you try to find simple solutions to work problems?
7. Do you think that simplicity is more important than ever in your work?

Activity Two - Read the expressions and the article below. Make sure you understand them and then observe how they are used in the article.

Word Cloud:

- Simply put
- Make it simple
- Find simple solutions
- Keep it simple
- Don't go round the houses
- Get straight to the point
- Separate the wood from the trees
- Explain things simply.
- Do things simply



At IKEA people sometimes forget that one of their values is simplicity and they want to do things in a complicated way. They forget that they should *aim to* **find simple solutions. Simply put**; 'why make it complicated when you can **make it simple**'? As the company gets *bigger and bigger it's more and more* important to do things simply. *Goals* have to be simple so that people can understand them. Tactics and working methods have to be explained *in simple terms* so that they are easy *to act on*. Co-workers have to understand where they are today and where they need to go next. This has to be **simply explained**. Now that the company has matured in IKEA France and systems are *up and running*, it's time to simplify instructions and working methods. So people need to know who they report to, what their main goal is and how they are contributing to the *overall* strategy of their unit. They also need to know where to go to get help and what the next step is. With so many priorities at *any one time*, people sometimes find it hard to **separate the wood from the trees**. They feel *overwhelmed* by all the different focus points and don't know where to start. So managers should **get straight to the point** in every communication and give clear instructions on priorities and a clear message, **without going round the houses**, about *exactly* how to *achieve* strategy.

Activity Three Questions - Do you *relate to* the issues discussed in the text? Do you think agree that it's *actually not that simple* to keep things simple? What techniques do you use to keep things simple in your work and your communication? What are the challenges you face in this area? Are you familiar with all the words in *italics* in the above article and questions?

Use these structures (or similar ones) to answer the questions so that your answers are simple with a series of **short clear sentences**:

There is a technique to being as clear as possible when you speak. You need to use short sentences. Between the sentences you have to use linking words. You need to structure what you are saying. If you are structure and keep it simple, people understand your message more easily. Make it clear when one sentence is finished by pausing and using falling pitch. This gives people time to think about what you have said. Then use rising pitch to show the start of your next idea. Use intonation to highlight important words.

- *First of all*
- *Secondly*
- *Finally*

- *I agree that*
- *However*
- *In fact*
- *Therefore*
- *So finally*

- *It does seem clear that*
- *This means that*
- *Therefore*
- *So we need to*

- *As a matter of fact*
- *Furthermore*
- *Then there is the question of*
- *So, all in all*

- *I do feel that…*
- *This is an issue that…*
- *So, we try to…*
- *Therefore…*

- *Yes, it's true that..*
- *Therefore…*
- *Which means that..*
- *So in the end…*

Activity Four - Quotations Answer these questions using short simple sentences:

1. *Do you agree with the quotations below?*
2. *Which do you like the best and why?*
3. *Do you make a conscious effort to use simple explanations?*
4. *Is simple always best? (Give examples).*
5. *Do you admire simple things or complex things? (Give examples).*

"If you can't explain it simply, you don't understand it well enough."
Albert Einstein
"Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication."
Leonardo di Vinci
"Do not accustom yourself to use big words for little matters."
Samuel Johnson
"The shorter and the plainer the better."
Beatrix Potter
"The finest language is mostly made up of simple unimposing words."
George Eliot
"Never use a long word when a short one will do."
George Orwell

Activity Five - the ***Power*** of a **Simple** message.

When you present your ideas in a meeting or a presentation of any type, it's best to keep it simple. Research has shown that complicated graphs, text heavy slides and long winded explanations just frustrate and annoy an audience. In businesses today people are bombarded with information through e mails, text messages, reports, and in non stop meetings and telephone conferences. They have to prioritise constantly. If you add to their workload by explaining things in a complicated way, you make a bad impression. To be efficient and achieve your objectives you need to explain things in a simple and human manner with a strong clear message. Powerful communication is simple! Here is a simple plan for presentations. I've called it CHOCO (because I love chocolate!). Jeanette

CONNECT

Connect with your audience. Get eye contact, ask how they are, smile and show that you are relaxed and professional. Show your manners with a positive "Hi, how are you all, thanks for taking the time for this meeting.", "Hello, it's great you all here today" etc..



HOOK your audience

Make the beginning really interesting. (*Big statement, suspense, intrigue etc..*)



OUTLINE (structure)

Explain each part of the presentation to come - *first I will tell you.. then this, then this..*

CLEAR

Short sentences, linking words, structured and clear speech - (*Intonation and enunciation.*)



OUT on a positive note

End on a positive or fun note and try to link back to the beginning by referring to what you said at the start. *("So, as I said….").*



EXAMPLE - Read the example presentation below:



C "Hi everyone. It's a beautiful day here in Paris and it's great to see you all together ready for this new challenge. Thanks for taking the time."

H You may not know it but we spend on average 25 percent of our working hours in meetings! More than a day a week and maybe ten years of your life! So, we have to make those meetings count!

O I'd like to talk to you today about how to optimise and reduce the time we spend on meetings. I will talk about how to improve communication and how to prioritise.

C The main problem with too many meetings is that we don't have enough time in our working day. So we need to make sure that we only participate in useful meetings. This means prioritising. To do this we must…. furthermore… finally…

O So to conclude. We can make our meetings count by using better techniques for communicating our ideas and by prioritising. Let's make the most of our time!

Activity Six - Your time to **shine**!

Use the **CHOCO method** for simple presentations to present an idea of your own. You can talk about an idea you have for work, a strategy your are working on currently or even try out a new presentation you have to give in English soon at work.

Let's review some **linking words** first. If you want to use short sentences you have to avoid saying 'and' between two ideas. Choose words and expressions like: ***Therefore, However, This means that, Nevertheless, Despite this, Furthermore, As a result, For this reason, In contrast, Indeed, It could also be said that, Subsequently, On the other hand, Our research has shown that, It seems that….***

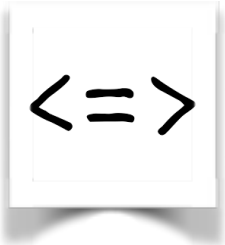
For **more information** on linking words **-** http://www.easyaccessenglish.com/wp-content/uploads/brochures/Livret-Linking-Words_Talk-to-the-Monkey-EAE.pdf
http://www.easyaccessenglish.com/talk-to-the-monkey-tutoriels-anglais/

Activity Seven - *Reading.* 'Less is more.'

*This is a proverbial expression about **simplicity** which comes from poem by **Robert Browning**. **Read the poem.***



"Who strive - you don't know how the others strive
To paint a little thing like that you smeared
Carelessly passing with your robes afloat,-
Yet do much less, so much less, Someone says,
(I know his name, no matter) - so much less!
*Well, **less is more**, Lucrezia."*



*Now **read the lists below** and add your own ideas to each list. Think about what you have experienced when you have participated in meetings and presentations. Think about the challenges facing you in your work today.*

Simplicity = Clarity of Expression.

>Less
Less translation from French.
Less ummmmm and arrrrrrrrr.
Less long sentences.
Less complex ideas.
Less theoretical concepts.
Less general ideas.

<More
More simple sentences.
More structure.
More linking words.
More simple ideas.
More practical action plans.
More how exactly to go about things.

