Call Center Oracle of Truth!

EAE Learning objectives for this lesson

Learn techniques for explaining complicated things simply. Help your teacher to get to know you and your job and objectives for your English lessons. Learn more about intonation and stress in English and practice using it.

Activity One: Ask and answer.



1. How long have you been working for IKEA CSC?
2. What's your job exactly?
3. How do you use English in your job?
4. What do the customers expect from you?
5. Do your customers expect you to know a lot about the products?
6. Do you have an area of expertise?
7. Do you think your customers have realistic expectations of you?
8. Do you think your customers expectations and behavior is changing?

Activity Two: **Giving information and explanations in English.**

When you have to explain something to a client or colleague in English, it's best to keep in simple and be structured, especially when you are explaining something complex.

The more complicated the idea is that you have to explain, the more simple the language should be. This means using a series of short sentences, with linking words to structure what you are saying. It's also a good idea to stress the important words in each sentence.

Here are some linking words to help you:

First of all
Secondly
Then
Finally

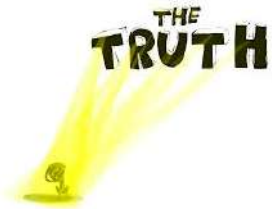
On the one hand
On the other hand
Furthermore
In conclusion



It's essential that
However

Obviously
In addition
Finally

Basically
Added to that…



Here is an example of how these could be used in a conversation: Try reading them and stressing the important words in each sentence.

B) In order to assemble the drawer correctly you need to follow the instructions. **First of all** check that all the pieces listen are in the box. **Secondly** lay everything out where you can see it easily. **Then** position each part of the drawer as it is shown in the instructions. **Finally** follow the instructions step by step.

C) **It's essential that** you provide me with the reference number of your order. **However** if you don't have that information I could try to find it with your name and address. **However** I can't guarantee that I would be able to locate your file.

D) **Obviously** we will do everything we can to help you with this issue. **In addition** we will make sure that someone gets back to you very quickly. **Finally** I will make a note on your dossier so that my colleagues can see what we discussed today.

E) **Basically** your order has been held up because of a shortage in the warehouse. **Added to that** the delivery service has made a mistake.

F) So if I understand correctly, **on the one hand** you are not satisfied with your mattress and want to return it, but **on the other hand** you don't want to go back to the store. **Furthermore** you have been using the mattress for several weeks. **In conclusion**, you need us to propose another solution to make your bed more comfortable. Is that correct?

Activity Three - Using the linking words below explain t
the problems illustrated in these images:











To add information:
Again, moreover, likewise, also.

To contrast:
On the contrary, otherwise, nonetheless, then again.

To present intentions or conditions:
As long as, with this in mind, seing as, unless, given that, provided that.

To introduce examples:
in other words, in this case, to put it another way, in fact, for example, for instance.

To show consequences:
As a result, therefore, consequently.

To conclude:
All things considered, to sum up, all in all.

To sequence:
Next, Finally, Lastly, to begin with, firstly, then, After

Activity Four - Stress it!

In English we say the important words in a sentence *LOUDER* and more *S L O W L Y* than the other words in the sentence. Unimportant words are often spoken very *quickly* and they are difficult to hear. This creates a certain rhythm, which is why English is called a stress timed language.

Listen to your teacher reading the following sentences. Say which words you heard the most clearly.

1. I'm sorry Madam, I'm afraid that won't be possible. The store only opens at 10 so you can't have your click and collect items before 9.

2. I'm afraid that your delivery was cancelled because the item is out of stock. I will just ask you to hold the line while I find out which solution I can offer you. I'm sure we propose an alternative.

3. I'll just check on that for you Sir. Could you give me the order reference number please?

4. Let me check on the availability of that item for you Madam. Which store do you want to visit?

5. I'm going to process your order now Sir. I will just need your credit card number. First let me confirm which items you want to order.

Activity Five - Read the article paying attention to your intonation and stress.Then answer the questions which follow.

Just call the CSC

IKEA products offer us access to a wide variety of design choices for a reasonable budget. In all home furnishing categories the IKEA range is innovative, stylish, varied and good quality. Furthermore, IKEA is a trusted brand, we know that every effort is made to source materials sustainably and that their furniture is manufactured in an ethical manner. When you visit a 'blue box' inspiration is everywhere. From the room settings as you enter the store, to the add on products stacked by the cash tills at the exit. Everything is laid out to maximise the impact of the products on show. There are so many original ideas for saving space, for organizing things, for making life easier. It's impossible to walk around the store without being tempted to buy more than what you came in for. Moreover, as IKEA adds new products to the range on a regular basis, and as their talented designers come up with new ideas again and again, there's always something new to see!

However, the idea at the heart of the IKEA concept, democratic design, is based on the cash and carry, DIY model. So, if you fall in love with the range and want to own some of it, you will have to work for it! Answers, in an IKEA store, despite the best efforts of their communication teams, are hard to find. There are not enough sales people available to answer questions in the store. As many of the products are complicated to assemble, or come in various configurations, customers do have a lot

of questions. It's difficult to transport heavy or large items and it's very challenging to assemble some of the furniture which is flat packed into many boxes. This means that delivery and assembly services are needed. The problem is that the traditional cash and carry concept does not provide for this. Therefore the current services offered to customers who are not very good at DIY, or who don't have the time for it, are inconvenient and insufficient.

Luckily though, the CSC is there. Through social media, by chat or by telephone, you can get in touch with 'an oracle of truth', a 'mine of information', a 'fountain of wisdom', a veritable expert. By calling that magic number you can find answers to all of your questions and solutions to all of your home furnishings problems! Just call the CSC!



J. Franklin

QUESTIONS:

1. Find one phrasal verb from the text (verb + preposition).
2. Which linking words are used in the text?
3. What does the text say that's good about IKEA products?
4. What is inconvenient about the IKEA shopping experience according to the text?
5. Do you agree with the statements made in the text?



Activity Six - Dialogues.

Act out the following dialogues with your teacher, paying attention to your intonation and stress and using short sentences with linking words.

i. A customer calls with questions about your kitchen range, in general. He wants to know some details about how long it would take to assemble an IKEA kitchen and about the level of difficulty involved. He is not that good at DIY but he is attracted by the low price of assembling the kitchen himself.

ii. A woman calls, really upset and frustrated because she ordered a sofa online and when it arrived it came in 27 different boxes and needed to be assembled. She is really confused about how to do this and very disappointed because she thought that the sofa would be ready for her family to visit that evening.

iii. An elderly man calls. He is very worried because the delivery of his new bed was supposed to arrive three hours ago and he has had no news from the delivery services.

