

Welcome! This unit will give you an introduction to some of the styles of English used in business. Since you will be using English in cross-cultural situations, the unit starts off by discussing some advantages and disadvantages of doing business internationally. Then you will look at the differences between a formal letter and a friendly email, both of which are written to thank a customer for a visit. You will meet some people who will reappear throughout the book, such as Tanja Buchner, a sales assistant at Backmeister GmbH in Heidelberg. In this unit, Tanja is writing invitations to a business meeting. Later on, you will identify company departments and practise taking care of a visitor to your company. Whatever the task, the key is communication. If you are open to learning new skills and meeting new people, you can successfully take part in the global business world.

A Warm-up: Doing business internationally



- 1 Read the list below. Then decide if each phrase describes an advantage or a disadvantage of doing business internationally and tick the appropriate column.

Companies that do business internationally might ...

	disadvantage	advantage	both
become more well known		✓	
develop a new advertising strategy			
gain new customers			
increase sales			
obtain special export licences			
spend more money on travel			
translate product descriptions			
wait longer for payment			

- 2 What are some other challenges of doing business with people from other countries? How would you deal with these challenges? Discuss.

B Business correspondence

Emails and letters

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Emails and letters are the most common forms of written business correspondence today. Emails are often, but not always, less formal and shorter than letters.

Peter Neumann of Spiel+Sport GmbH in Augsburg had two visitors yesterday, and he wants to thank each of them in writing. He decides to write an email to Celine Lauer, a regular customer from Luxemburg, and a letter to Boris Sidorov, a new contact from Moscow.

- 3 Read the texts. What impression do they make?

Email

Dear Celine

Thanks a lot for stopping by yesterday. It was great to see you again and talk about what's planned for next year!

I'm attaching our latest catalogue as a PDF file. Go ahead and make as many copies as you want.

If there's anything else you need, just give me a ring. Hope to hear from you again soon!

Kind regards

Peter

<<SUScatalogue.pdf>>

Letter

Dear Mr Sidorov

Many thanks for your visit to our office yesterday. It was a pleasure to meet you and discuss possible business opportunities for our two firms in the coming year.

As requested, I am enclosing ten copies of our latest catalogue for you and your sales staff.

Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact us. We look forward to doing business with you in the near future.

Yours sincerely

Peter Neumann

Encs

- 4 Compare the expressions and styles used in the email and the letter.
What differences can you find? Add them to the lists below.

Email

Letter

Thanks a lot
exclamation marks (!)

Many thanks
no exclamation marks

VOCABULARY TIPS

advertising strategy	Werbestrategie
trade fair	Handelsmesse
reminder	Erinnerung
headquarters	Hauptsitz
recipient	Empfänger
distribution	Vertrieb
sales forecast	Verkaufsprognose
agenda	Tagesordnung

Writing invitations

Invitations are sent to encourage people to attend various types of company events. These can include meetings, trade fairs, conferences, new product presentations or retirement parties. The language used in an invitation should make the event sound appealing and worth attending. It can be more or less formal depending on the situation. Even if someone does not attend the event, the invitation will act as a positive reminder of the company that sends it.

- 5 What information should be included in an invitation?
With a partner, make a list.

date, place, ...

Backmeister GmbH, located in Heidelberg, has been exporting industrial kitchen equipment for over twenty years. Every year they invite their representatives to a three-day sales meeting in the company headquarters.

6 Read the following email invitation. Compare the information it includes with your list. Is anything missing? Then label the parts of the email.

body | complimentary close | recipient | salutation | signature block | signature block | subject line

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Email

From: sales@backmeister.de
To: richard.gomez@cuisineexperts.co.uk (a) _____
Sent: 15 August 201_ 3:15 p.m.
Subject: Invitation to the Backmeister sales meeting (b) _____
Attachment: agenda201_.pdf

Dear Richard (c) _____

We are pleased to invite you to this year's Backmeister sales meeting, which will be held here at our headquarters in Heidelberg from 2 to 4 October 201_.

The main topics of discussion will include advertising, distribution and sales forecasts for the coming year. In addition, we will be demonstrating our new line of heavy-duty Doughboy 3000 mixers. Please see the attached agenda for further details. (d) _____

If you need help with hotel or travel arrangements, please feel free to contact us. We look forward to welcoming you to Backmeister in October.

Best regards (e) _____
Tanja

Tanja Buchner
Sales Assistant
Backmeister GmbH (f) _____

7 Read Richard Gomez's response to Tanja Buchner's email and choose the appropriate expression.

Email

From: richard.gomez@cuisineexperts.co.uk
To: sales@backmeister.de
sharon.mann@cuisineexperts.co.uk
Sent: 16 August 201_ 9:10 am
Subject: RE: Invitation to the Backmeister sales meeting

Dear (a) Ms Buchner/Tanja

(b) thanks/Thanks for the invitation to the meeting. (c) For/To your information, my new colleague, Sharon Mann, will be coming with me to meet all of you at Backmeister (d) headquarters/headquarter.

We are looking forward to (e) come/coming to Heidelberg!

Best regards
Richard

C Business topics: Company departments and job titles



When doing business internationally, it is important to be able to explain the departments within the company you work for and the functions of their employees.

Simon Crewell was recently hired as a sales representative for Peterson Ltd in Maidstone, England. So that he can get to know the products and the company better, Simon is visiting the company's headquarters, Peterson GmbH in Bochum. Jana Gerber, the assistant to the managing director, is giving him a tour and showing him the company's departments.

8 Complete Jana's descriptions using the words below.

accounts | customer service | dispatch | human resources | marketing |
production | purchasing | quality control | research and development | sales

- a. "This is where our products are tested to make sure they work properly and meet the required standards. It's the _____ department."
- b. "This is the _____ department, where people who have bought our products can get help by telephone if they have questions or problems."
- c. "Over here, you can see _____. Sometimes it's also called the personnel department. The staff here are responsible for hiring new employees and keeping records about our employment, such as how long we've worked here or when we take our holidays."
- d. "Here's the _____ department, where our buyers work. They buy everything the company needs, from production materials to office supplies."
- e. "This is the _____ department. The people here develop advertising strategies for our products. They also do research to make sure we are offering our customers what they want to buy."
- f. "Sorry about the noise from all the machines. As you can see, this is where our products are made. It's the _____ department."
- g. "This is the _____ department, where we keep track of how much money the company spends and how much money we earn. Of course, these employees also send out letters to customers who are late paying their invoices."
- h. "The engineers you see here work in the _____ department. They create new products for us to sell."
- i. "This is the _____ department. Can you see the lorries parked outside? Some of them are waiting to pick up shipments going to our customers, and others want to make deliveries to us."
- j. "There's always a lot of activity in the _____ department. This is where our representatives contact customers by phone to convince them to buy our products. As you know, the reps try to arrange as many customer visits as possible."



9 Work with a partner and match the English job titles to the German job titles.

accountant | customer service representative | managing director |
~~bilingual administrative assistant~~ | personnel manager | purchasing manager |
 receptionist | sales representative

- a. Fremdsprachenkorrespondent/in bilingual administrative assistant
- b. Vertriebsmitarbeiter/in _____
- c. Geschäftsführer/in _____
- d. Einkaufsleiter/in _____
- e. Empfangsdame/Pförtner _____
- f. Personalchef/in _____
- g. Kundenservicemitarbeiter/in _____
- h. Buchhalter/in _____

10 Discuss in small groups and report to the class.

Which department would you like to work in? Why?
 Whose job do you think is most stressful? Least stressful? Why?
 Which departments might employ bilingual administrative assistants?
 What types of correspondence would they write? To whom?

VOCABULARY TIPS

accounts department	Buchhaltung
customer service	Kundenservice
dispatch	Versand
human resources	Personalabteilung
quality control	Qualitätskontrolle
research and development	Forschung und Entwicklung
staff	Belegschaft
accountant	Buchhalter/in
personnel	Personal
purchasing manager	Einkaufsleiter/in

D Language practice

11 Read these common phrases used in greetings and introductions. Then write the letter of each phrase next to the description of its use.

- Nice meeting you.
- That's Susan Reichert, our sales manager.
- This is my assistant, Kevin Olson.
- Pleased to meet you.
- Nice to see you.

_____ is used when you meet someone for the very first time.

_____ is used when saying good-bye.

_____ is used when you greet someone you have met before.

_____ is used when the person you are introducing is part of the conversation.

_____ is used when you introduce someone you can see but who cannot hear you.

12 Identify the problem in each of the sentences below.

CD 1 1 Then make the corrections and check your answers by listening to the CD.

- My name is Schmidt. *My name is Johanna Schmidt.*
- I am team assistant. _____
- Can I have your coat? _____
- Sit down. _____
- How was your voyage to our office? _____
- I like to introduce Marie Littman, our export manager. _____

13 Fill in the blanks with the correct preposition.

at (x2) | for | from | in (x3) | of | on | to (x3)

- a. The meeting will be held _____ our headquarters _____ Augsburg
_____ 10:00 a.m. _____ 4:00 p.m. _____ Friday, 11 February.
- b. We take pleasure _____ inviting you _____ the conference, which will be held
_____ the Westin Hotel _____ Berlin.
- c. Please refer _____ the attached document _____ details _____ the agenda.

E Listening and speaking skills

- 14 Read the text and fill in the blanks with an appropriate word. There is one
CD 1 2 extra word. Then listen to the conversation on the CD and check your answers.

appointment | delay | great | Here | late | pity | something | have | terrible |
that | this | weather | wrong

- Tom:** (*enters office*) Good morning. My name is Tom Scanlon. I'm with TechPro and have an (a) _____ to see Bettina Richter at 9:00.
- Eva:** Hello, Mr Scanlon. I'm Eva Trier, Ms Richter's assistant. She has just phoned to say she's running (b) _____ but should be here within about ten minutes. Would you like to (c) _____ a seat while you wait?
- Tom:** Yes, thanks.
- Eva:** Can I get you (d) _____ to drink, a cup of coffee or some water?
- Tom:** A cup of black coffee would be (e) _____, thanks.
- Eva:** (*a couple of minutes later*) (f) _____ you are.
- Tom:** Thanks. Lovely (g) _____ today.
- Eva:** Yes, isn't it. They're predicting rain at the weekend, though.
- Tom:** That's typical! I hope the forecast is (h) _____. I've got a camping trip planned and I'd hate to have to cancel it.
- Eva:** Yes, that'd be a (i) _____. Oh, here's Ms Richter now. Ms Richter, I'd like to introduce Tom Scanlon of TechPro. Mr Scanlon, (j) _____ is Ms Richter.
- Bettina:** Pleased to meet you Mr Scanlon. I'm so sorry about the (k) _____. The traffic was (l) _____ this morning.
- Tom:** No problem, Ms Richter. Thank you for taking the time to meet with me. And you can call me Tom.
- Bettina:** All right, Tom. Then I'm Bettina. Would you like to come this way?

Role play: Welcoming a visitor

- 15 Role-play the following situation using the prompts. Cover up your partner's column with a sheet of paper while you are doing the role play. Listen carefully to what your partner says and respond appropriately.

Student A:

Sie arbeiten als Vertreter/in für Backmeister in Kanada. Sie nehmen zum ersten Mal an der Vertretertagung teil und sind gerade mit dem Flugzeug aus Vancouver angekommen. Sie fangen das Gespräch an.

Student B:

Sie arbeiten am Empfang bei Backmeister GmbH in Heidelberg. Die diesjährige internationale Vertretertagung fängt heute an und die ersten Teilnehmer treffen ein.

Student A – Besucher

Freundliche Begrüßung.

Stellen Sie sich vor und nennen Sie den Grund Ihres Besuchs.

Gerne. Ihr Mantel ist vom Regen nass; kann man ihn aufhängen?

Sie hätten gerne einen Apfelsaft.

Sie sind gestern von Vancouver nach Frankfurt geflogen (16 Stunden) und haben in Frankfurt übernachtet.

Per Mietwagen. Sie sind von der deutschen Autobahn begeistert.

Eine Woche. Sie wollen nach München.

Die Financial Times, bitte.

Danke.

Student B – Empfang

Freundliche Begrüßung. Fragen Sie, ob Sie behilflich sein können.

Äußern Sie Freude über den Besuch. Verkaufsleiter noch nicht im Hause. Bieten Sie Platz an.

Natürlich. (Mantel aufhängen.) Getränk anbieten: Kaffee, Saft, Wasser? Andere Teilnehmer noch nicht angekommen.

Sie bringen das gewünschte Getränk und fragen nach der Reise.

Fragen Sie, wie der Gast nach Heidelberg gekommen ist.

Fragen Sie nach der Länge des Aufenthalts in Deutschland.

Schön. Bieten Sie eine Zeitung an: International Herald Tribune oder Financial Times.

Zuversicht, dass Verkaufsleiter bald ankommt.

F Writing practice

16 Draft an invitation using the following information. Use formal language.

EcoSolutions GmbH is hosting a conference on recycling technology. They want to send an email inviting possible participants. The email will be sent by Astrid Hansen, marketing manager.

- friendly opening sentence
- 3 March 201_
- 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- Embassy Hotel, Tulpenstr. 3, 20532 Hamburg
- schedule: 9:00 welcome, 9:30–12:30 presentations, 12:30–2:00 buffet lunch, 2:00–4:00 interest group meetings, 4:00 concluding remarks by Georg Langen, president of EcoSolutions
- presentations by experts on latest developments
- opportunity to network and share ideas
- request response (if attending or not)
- more details after registration
- optimistic closing

17 Schreiben Sie im Namen von Jana Gerber eine E-Mail an Simon Crewell, Peterson Ltd, in der sie sich für seinen Besuch bedankt. (Siehe Übung 8.)
Verwenden Sie einen informellen Schreibstil, da Jana und Simon sich persönlich kennen.

- Dank für Besuch letzte Woche
- schön, ihn kennengelernt zu haben
- Hoffnung, dass ihm die Führung gefallen hat
- Zuversicht, dass Besuch in der Firmenzentrale ihm bei seiner Tätigkeit als Vertriebsmitarbeiter helfen wird
- viel Erfolg dabei wünschen
- bei Fragen kann er jederzeit anrufen oder eine E-Mail schicken
- beste Grüße

G Exam preparation

18 Kurz gefasste schriftliche Mitteilung

Bearbeitungszeit: 30 Minuten

Situation:

Sie arbeiten bei Backmeister GmbH in Heidelberg und sind eine Kollegin von Tanja Buchner. Frau Buchner ist anderweitig beschäftigt und hat Sie gebeten, in ihrem Namen eine E-Mail zu schreiben.

Aufgabe:

Lesen Sie die E-Mail von Backmeister GmbH an Richard Gomez (Übung 6) sowie seine Antwort (Übung 7). Beantworten Sie die E-Mail von Herrn Gomez noch heute unter Berücksichtigung der nachstehenden Anweisungen von Frau Buchner.

- Bezug auf E-Mail
- Frage, ob neue Kollegin Sharon Mann bereits ein Hotelzimmer gebucht hat
- Angebot, es für sie zu buchen, falls erwünscht
- außerdem Bitte um Erstellung eines kurzen Jahresberichts (*annual report*), der bei der Vertretertagung präsentiert werden soll
- freundlicher Schlusssatz

19 Vermerk über ein Gespräch

CD 1 3

Bearbeitungszeit: 20 Minuten (ausschließlich Aufgabendarbietung)

Situation:

Im folgenden Gespräch sind Sie Gabi Kellner, Auszubildende bei der Firma Spiel+Sport in Augsburg. Ihr Chef, Herr Peter Neumann, ist in einer Besprechung und hat Sie deswegen gebeten, seine Anrufe entgegenzunehmen. Sie erhalten gleich einen Anruf von einem potenziellen Kunden aus den USA, der Ihrer Firma in Deutschland einen Besuch abstatten möchte.

Aufgabe:

Verfolgen Sie das Gespräch auf der CD und fertigen Sie anschließend für Herrn Neumann eine entsprechende Gesprächsnotiz in Deutsch an. Sie werden das Gespräch zweimal hören.

20 Sprachergänzungstest

Bearbeitungszeit: ca. 12 Minuten

Bitte setzen Sie 20 der 23 angegebenen Wörter oder Wendungen in die Lücken des nachstehenden Textes ein.

airport | arranged | awareness | beneficial | boost | challenges | combination | companies | delayed | ensure | entering | export | important | minimizes | more | numerous | official | photographs | profits | promptly | range | reliable | travel

The world is open for business

More than ever before, _____ of all sizes are _____ the global marketplace. Companies that _____ goods to other countries hope to increase their sales and _____ and to help their company grow. Companies importing goods from other countries can offer their customers a wider _____ of products, which can _____ sales figures and make a company _____ successful.

Yet doing business internationally also presents _____ challenges. It is very important to find _____ business partners who will deliver on schedule and pay their invoices _____. International banks offer various methods of payment to _____ that goods are received and paid for. This _____ the risk for both the customer and the supplier. In addition, the shipment of the goods must be _____. Transport can be done by road, by rail, by air, by ship, or by a _____ of these. In addition, a number of _____ documents must be prepared when exporting goods. If these documents are incomplete or contain mistakes, the shipment can be _____.

Certain "soft skills" are also _____ when doing business internationally. An _____ of cultural differences can be helpful when negotiating; businesspeople from some countries tend to be very open and direct, while in other countries interactions are more formal and reserved. Effective communication is the key to overcoming these _____ and to developing long-lasting, mutually _____ business relationships.

H Useful phrases

Invitations

We are pleased to invite you to this year's sales conference, which will be held at our headquarters in Heidelberg from 2 to 4 October.

Please refer to the enclosed (*in a letter*) / attached (*with an email*) agenda for details of the schedule.

We look forward to seeing you at the conference.

Einladungen

Wir freuen uns, Sie zur diesjährigen Vertretertagung einzuladen. Sie findet vom 2. bis 4. Oktober in unserer Firmenzentrale in Heidelberg statt.

Als Anlage (*bei einem Brief*) / Anhang (*bei einer E-Mail*) erhalten Sie eine Agenda mit Einzelheiten zum Tagesablauf.

Wir freuen uns, Sie bei der Tagung begrüßen zu dürfen.

Welcoming visitors

Good morning. / Good afternoon.
How may I help you?

Ms Richter will be with you shortly.

Please have / take a seat.

Can I offer you something to drink?

Besucher empfangen

Guten Morgen. / Guten Tag.
Wie kann ich Ihnen helfen?

Frau Richter wird gleich bei Ihnen sein.

Nehmen Sie doch Platz.

Kann ich Ihnen etwas zu trinken anbieten?

Introductions

I'd like to introduce you to Frank Diehl.

This is Frank Diehl.

Pleased to meet you. / Nice to meet you.

(It was) Nice to have met you. /
Nice meeting you.

Vorstellung

Ich möchte Ihnen gerne Frank Diehl vorstellen.

Frank Diehl.

Schön, Sie kennenzulernen.

(Es war) Schön, Sie kennengelernt zu haben.

Small talk

How was your trip?

Did you have a pleasant flight?

Is this your first visit to Germany?

Lovely / Nasty weather we're having,
isn't it.

Smalltalk

Wie war Ihre Reise?

Hatten Sie einen angenehmen Flug?

Sind Sie zum ersten Mal in Deutschland?

Schönes / Scheußliches Wetter,
nicht wahr?