**Speaking Lesson 1**

**Description**

The topic of this lesson is training for work. Practice of vocabulary related to talking about training at work is used to give guidance on completing the Part 1 task in the Linguaskill Business Speaking Test.

**Teacher’s Notes**

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| **Aims of the lesson** | * to present and practise vocabulary for talking about training at work
* to raise awareness of the requirements of the Part 1 Speaking tasks
* to develop techniques and strategies for this task type based on practice of a sample task.
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| **Time required** | 45-60 minutes |
| **Level** | Suitable for B1-B2 learners, with an additional activity suitable for C1-C2 learners.  |
| **Materials required** | * Student’s Worksheet 1: Speaking Part 1 – task summary
* Student’s Worksheet 2: Giving and justifying opinions (B1-B2 learners)
* Student’s Worksheet 3: Giving and justifying opinions reasons (C1-C2 learners) [Optional]
* Student’s Worksheet 4: Linguaskill Business Speaking Part 1 – sample task
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 **Procedure**

1. Explain that the lesson will introduce learners to the format of Part 1 of the Linguaskill Business Speaking test. Learners will be introduced to different ways of talking about opinions and will have the opportunity to practise a sample task.
2. To familiarise learners with the requirements of the task, give them a copy of **Student’s** **Worksheet 1** and ask them to work with a partner to decide whether the statements about the task are true or false. During feedback, use the information in the key to check full understanding of the task requirements. Draw learners’ attention to the focus of bullet point 3, i.e. the need to justify their opinion.
3. Divide the class into two groups. Draw two faces on the board ( and ). Write *Work training courses* under the faces. Ask one group to think about all the positives and the other to think about all the negatives of doing training for work. Learners write some ideas of their own, then share with other people in their group. Ask learners to stand up and talk to someone from the other group and compare ideas. In whole-group feedback, note some of the main points under the faces on the board (i.e.  developing a career, opportunities for higher salaries, personal satisfaction /  time away from the job, training that is boring or not relevant). Check understanding of vocabulary as necessary.
4. Give learners **Student’s Worksheet 2** and ask them to decide whether the comments about work training courses are positive or negative. Check responses, then write the first positive comment example on the board. Underline and circle as shown: *I’d say any training course is useful, as it gives staff the opportunity to develop their work skills*. Elicit from learners that the underlined part is a way of expressing an opinion, and the circled part explains the opinion. Ask learners to work with a partner to do the same thing with the other comments on **Student’s Worksheet 2**. In feedback, check responses and focus on key language issues, such as the use of *because* followed by a clause and *because of* followed by a noun structure. Discuss with learners how these examples show ways of giving a full and appropriate response to the third bullet point, which requires them to explain and justify their opinions.

*NOTE: This exercise is suitable for learners working at B1/B2 level. If you have learners working at higher levels, you may wish to replace or supplement this exercise with the following extension activity.*

1. [**Optional**] Give learners a copy of **Student’s Worksheet 3**, which has some more comments candidates could make about work training courses. Ask learners to complete the comments and decide whether they can be used to give an opinion or to give a reason for an opinion or an action. Learners check with a partner before checking with the whole class. In feedback, check understanding of any familiar vocabulary. *NOTE: These expressions are more suitable for learners working at C1 level and above.*
2. Give learners a copy of **Student’s Worksheet 4** which has a sample Linguaskill Business Speaking Part 1 task on the topic of work training courses. Explain that the practice they have been doing is connected to bullet point three. Ask learners what else they need to talk about to complete the task [**KEY:** what the course was about and why they went on the course]. Note that the task instruction tells them they must talk about a useful training course, so they need to talk about the positive elements of training.
3. Tell learners they are going to practise the task. They are all going to do it at the same time, using low voices. If space permits, move learners so that they are not sitting too close to each other. Give learners 40 seconds to prepare before they start speaking. After one minute, tell learners to stop speaking. Ask them to reflect on their performance, using questions such as: *Did you keep talking for the full minute? Did you organise your comments clearly? Did you talk about all three bullet points? Did you give reasons for your opinions?*
4. When learners have had a chance to reflect, tell them they can have another go at the task. This time, they work with a partner. One learner speaks and the other learner listens to give feedback on the reflection points in the previous stage. They then swap roles. Monitor to make notes for error correction and feedback on task achievement.
5. Finish the lesson by asking learners to discuss some training they would like to do in their job. If some learners are not currently in work, they can talk about what training they think would be useful.

**Student’s Worksheet 1**

**Speaking Part 1 – task summary**

**Look at the descriptions of Part 1 of the Linguaskill Business Speaking test.**

**Are the statements True or False?**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **True** | **False** |
| There are three topics to choose from |  |  |
| You can bring some notes into the test room |  |  |
| You have to speak for one minute |  |  |
| Talk about all the prompts you see on the screen |  |  |

**KEY**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **True** | **False** |
| There are three topics to choose from |  | X – there is only one given topic, but there are three bullet points to talk about. |
| You can bring some notes into the test room |  | X – learners can make notes on paper during the preparation time. They will have 40 seconds of preparation time before they have to start speaking. Learners should use the bullet points to help them prepare. |
| You have to speak for one minute | X – it’s important to fill the whole time. Learners need to cover all the points in the minute, but they should not worry if they are interrupted before they have said everything they planned to say. |  |
| Talk about all the prompts you see on the screen | X – it’s important for learners to organise their presentation so that they cover all three points. They can do this will the help of the bullet points, which provide structure by moving from general to specific description and then to expressing and justifying opinions. |  |

**Student’s Worksheet 2**

**Giving and justifying opinions**

**Look at these comments about work training courses. Decide whether they are positive or negative comments.**

* I’d say any training course is useful, as it gives staff the opportunity to develop their work skills.
* To my mind, training courses usually have a negative impact on productivity. The reason I say this is because the time taken to do training could be better spent working.
* Since training benefits the company more than the workers, my view is that staff shouldn’t be forced to attend courses.
* Because of that training, I believe I was able to move to a management position.
* A lot of the training courses take place after work, so many employees would rather not attend, and that’s my opinion as well.
* My experience of training courses organised by my company means I have no doubt that they’ll help me in my future career.
* I felt that course was unlikely to help me, due to the poor-quality activities.

**Now underline language for giving an opinion and circle language for explaining an opinion.**

**KEY (part 1 and part 2)**

**Positive**

* I’d say any training course is useful, as it gives staff the opportunity to develop their work skills.
* Because of that training, I believe I was able to move to a management position.
* My experience of training courses organised by my company means I have no doubt that they’ll help me in my future career.

**Negative**

* To my mind, training courses usually have a negative impact on productivity. The reason I say this is because the time taken to do training could be better spent working.
* Since training benefits the company more than the workers, my view is that staff shouldn’t be forced to attend courses.
* A lot of the training courses take place after work, so many employees would say they are not worth attending, and that’s my opinion as well.
* I felt that course was unlikely to help me, due to the poor-quality activities.

**Student’s Worksheet 3**

**Giving and justifying opinions [Optional, for learners working at C1 and above)**

**Complete the comments about work-based training using the words in the box**.

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**Are these expressions used to give an opinion or to justify an opinion?**

1. No \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ there were positive elements to the course, but I don’t recall many of them.
2. The company booked this particular course on the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ that it had good online reviews.
3. As for the course itself, it \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ well be that it was more useful than I realised at the time.
4. I came away with the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ that it was a complete waste of time.
5. To be perfectly \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, this course offered very little.
6. Our managers have already re-booked the course in the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of the positive feedback from attendees.
7. I can’t \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ thinking that the same content could have been covered in one day rather than three.
8. We did learn something by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of the trainer’s willingness to change the programme to suit our needs.

**KEY**

1. No **doubt** there were positive elements to the course, but I don’t recall many of them. [give an opinion]
2. The company booked this particular course on the **grounds** that it had good online reviews. [give a reason]
3. As for the course itself, it **could** well be that it was more useful than I realised at the time. [give an opinion]
4. I came away with the **impression** that it was a complete waste of time. [giving an opinion]
5. To be perfectly **frank**, this course offered very little. [give an opinion]
6. Our managers have already re-booked the course in the **light** of the positive feedback from attendees. [give a reason]
7. I can’t **help** thinking that the same content could have been covered in one day rather than three. [give an opinion]
8. We did learn something by **virtue** of the trainer’s willingness to change the programme to suit our needs. [give a reason]

**Student’s Worksheet 4**

**Linguaskill Business Speaking Part 1 – sample task**

**You will have 1 minute to talk about a topic. First, you have 40 seconds to read the task and prepare what you are going to say. You will then have 1 minute to speak.**

**You can take notes while you prepare. Please speak for all the time you have.**

**Talk about a useful training course you attended for your work.**

**You should say:**

* **what the course was about**
* **why you went on the course**
* **why you think the course was useful.**