**Speaking Lesson 5**

**Description**

The topic of this lesson is work. Practice of vocabulary related to remote working is used to give guidance on completing a Part 4 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 different ways of working * to raise awareness of the requirements of the Part 4 Speaking tasks * to develop techniques and strategies for this task type based on practice of a sample task. |
| **Time required** | 45-50 minutes |
| **Level** | Suitable for B2-C2 |
| **Materials required** | * Student’s Worksheet 1: Linguaskill Business Student’s Speaking Part 4 – sample task (working from home) * Worksheet 2: Linguaskill Business Speaking Part 4 – sample response (working from home) |

**Procedure**

1. Divide learners into four groups. Tell two of the groups that they are business owners, and the other two groups that they are employees. Write on the board *Working from home.* Tell one ‘business owners’ group to be positive and the other to be negative. Do the same for the ‘employees’ groups. Ask learners to discuss in their small groups the advantages/disadvantages of working from home from the perspective they have been given. After two or three minutes, give the learners in each group a number from 1 to the total number of learners in that group. Ask learners to move and sit with learners with the same number. The new groups should have one representative from each of the original groups. Learners now share the ideas from their original discussion. In feedback, ask learners who benefits most from working from home.
2. Ask learners how they reached their conclusion about working from home and elicit the idea of considering arguments both for and against the topic. Explain that this is what they need to do in Part 4 of the Linguaskill Business Speaking test.
3. Give learners a copy of **Student’s Worksheet 1** which has an example Linguaskill Business Speaking Part 4 task on the topic of working from home. Ask them to read the task then turn the sheet over. Learners talk to a partner and try to remember the task requirements without looking at the worksheet. They then turn the worksheet over to check. Ask learners if they have any questions about the task.
4. Now give learners a copy of **Student’s Worksheet 2**. This has some sample responses to the task. Learners evaluate the responses with a partner.
5. Use feedback to brainstorm onto the board key tips for this task type: give a balanced argument – consider arguments for and against; justify your comments with reasons and examples; reach a clear conclusion.
6. Tell learners they will now practise the task. Ask them to look again at **Student’s Worksheet 1** and give them 40 seconds to make notes. Then say *Please begin speaking now.* You can either ask all learners to speak at the same time, using low voices, or to take turns speaking to a partner. The partner can give feedback on how well they did. Monitor while learners are speaking and give feedback on task performance and examples of functional expressions used. You can also note errors for delayed error correction.
7. Check learners remember the task requirements by asking some spot questions:

*How long do you have to think about your response? [40 seconds]*

*How long do you speak for? [90 seconds]*

*Can you take notes? [Yes]*

*Is it important to discuss both sides of the argument? [Yes. Consider arguments before and against the statement and give reasons.]*

*Is it important to link your ideas? [Yes. Use cohesive devices to produce a coherent extended response.]*

*Do you need to reach a conclusion within the time limit? [Yes. Practise the task so you know what 90 seconds feels like and you are able to reach a conclusion within that time.]*

1. Finish the lesson by asking learners to discuss how they would feel about working entirely from home.

**Student’s Worksheet 1**

**Linguaskill Business Speaking Part 4 – sample task**

**This is an example task from Part 4 of the Linguaskill Business Speaking test. Read the task.**

**First you will read a statement. Then you will have 40 seconds to prepare what you are going to say. You will then have 90 seconds to talk about the statement.**

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

*Working from home benefits businesses more than individuals.*

You should:

• consider arguments both for and against this statement

• reach a conclusion, providing reasons to support your final argument.

**Student’s Worksheet 2**

**Linguaskill Business Speaking Part 4 – sample response**

**Read the transcript of how three different candidates answered the question on Worksheet 1.**

**How well did they do?**

**Make notes in the table below.**

**Candidate 1**

Working from home is becoming more and more common and it’s a great way for people to save money. By this I mean, they don’t need to pay commuting costs and they also save lots of time by not having to travel to and from work each day. Working from home also means people are available for appointments and deliveries during the day. For example, it can be really difficult to get an appointment to see a doctor or a dentist outside working hours. If you work from home, you can just find time for this in your working day. What is more, if you are at home, you can be sure you will never miss a delivery. To sum up, I would say the benefits of working from home are obvious.

**Candidate 2**

The benefits of working from home are often talked about, but these are usually the benefits for the individual. Things like saving time and money by not having to travel to work, for example. From the point of view of the business, there are also some benefits, such as needing less office space and encouraging employees to take responsibility. However, we should also consider the negative points. A business whose workers are all home-based may not be able to control productivity. By this I mean, how can they control how long and how efficiently staff are working? I think it is possible that some workers may not be completely honest about how hard they are working. This may be why some companies are changing their policies and asking workers to return to the office.

**Candidate 3**

Some people may say that working from home is the best option for both businesses and employees. It is becoming increasingly common. Businesses often disagree. Businesses prefer employees to come into the office at least one or two days a week. Some employees also prefer to spend at least part of their week in the office. In a nutshell, there are advantages and disadvantages on both sides.

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|  | **Strengths** | **Issues** |
| **Candidate 1** |  |  |
| **Candidate 2** |  |  |
| **Candidate 3** |  |  |

**KEY**

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| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Strengths** | **Issues** |
| **Candidate 1** | * Includes examples to support the comments. * Uses cohesive devices to link ideas coherently. * Gives a conclusion. | * Only focuses on the benefits. * Only talks about employees. |
| **Candidate 2** | * Talks about businesses and employees. * Uses cohesive devices to link ideas coherently. * Includes examples to support the comments. | * Does not mention negative points for employees. * No clear conclusion. |
| **Candidate 3** | * Considers positive and negative viewpoints from both sides. * Gives a conclusion. | * Does not give examples to support the comments and conclusion. * Does not talk for long enough. * Uses short sentences and very few cohesive devices to link ideas. |