

# Speaking techniques

## Expressions

### EXPRESSING PREFERENCES

#### PREFER

When we say that we prefer one activity to another, we can use two -ing forms. The second one can be introduced by **TO** or **RATHER THAN** (More formal)

- I prefer walking to driving. (NOT I prefer walking to drive)
- She prefers reading a book rather than watching TV.

Prefer can also be followed by an infinitive. If we use it this way, in the second part of the sentence we can use an infinitive (without TO) or an -ing form after RATHER THAN.

- She prefers to walk rather than drive/driving. We can also use nouns with the verb prefer instead of two verbs.
- I prefer the mountain to the beach.

WOULD PREFER / WOULD RATHER These expressions mean the same, but they work in a different way.

➤ WOULD PREFER + INFINITIVE (with TO) ➤ WOULD RATHER + INFINITIVE (without TO)

- I would prefer to work from home.
- I would prefer to go in July rather than in November.
- I would prefer to eat out rather than cook /cooking.
- I would prefer not to drive at night.
- I would rather not watch this movie.
- I would rather go out than stay at home.
- Would you rather stay here or go the theatre?

#### EXPRESSING WISH

Form: If only / I wish + simple past

Example: If only I had a million dollar. (I don't a million dollar and I would like to be a millionaire) Use: To express a wish in the present or in the future. • The simple past here is an unreal past. • When you use the verb to be the form is "were".

- Example: I wish I were rich!

#### EXPRESSING REGRET

Form: If only / I wish + past perfect

Example: If only I had passed the exam. (I didn't work hard, so I didn't pass the exam.)

Use: To express a regret. • The action is past. •

### Expressing Opinion

Here's a list of expressions you can use to express your opinion, agree and disagree with other people's opinions. You don't have to use all of them; choose three or four you feel comfortable using and practise them whenever you can.

#### Expressing one's opinion

I think/consider/find/• believe/suppose/feel that... As far as I know...• In my opinion...• My impression is that...• As far as I'm concerned...• I would say that...• I hold the opinion/the view that...• To my mind, ...• Speaking personally,...• I have the feeling that...• In my experience...• I'd suggest that...• I'd like to point out that...• My personal view is that• I might be wrong but ...• It seems to me that...•

#### Agreeing/supporting other people's opinion

Of course. • You're absolutely right. • Yes, I agree. • I think so, too. • That's a good point. • Exactly. • That's just what I was thinking. • I couldn't agree more. • That's what I feel, too • I (fully) agree with you • X raised some good points • He/she is quite right • I share your view • We are of the same mind •

**Disagreeing /contradicting other people's opinions** (please, make sure you express your disagreement in a polite way)

I don't agree • I'm sorry to disagree with you • Yes, but don't you think...? • I don't think so • You can't say that • That's no proof • That's not the point/the question • I take a different view • I don't agree with what you're saying I'm not so sure about that • On the contrary, I think.. • This argument does not hold water • Nonsense! • You're off your head.

### Expressing Purpose:

HOW TO EXPRESS PURPOSE?

There are two ways of expressing purpose:

1. TO & IN ORDER TO.
2. So that.

Use "to" and "in order to" to express purpose in the affirmative form. Both "to" and "in order to" expresses the same meaning when expressing purpose. Formula: to+ infinitive (verb 1) in order to+ infinitive (verb 1)

She learnt hard to pass the examination. • She learnt hard in order to pass the examination.

Use "in order not to" to express purpose in the negative form: • My father set the alarm in order not to be late. • You should be careful riding your motorcycle in order not to fall down.

We use “so that” to say that one person does something and as a result someone else can do or does not have to do something else. Formula: so that + clause

She took a taxi so that she could arrive on time. ● He turned down the music so that he would not disturb the neighbors.

### **Making Requests/Asking For Something**

In English we always use can or could to make requests with friends and colleagues. “Could” is more polite. Can / Could To make polite requests.

Example: Can I have a glass of water? Example: Could you pass me the salt? Note: You can put the word “please” in front of the subject or at the end of the sentence; however, it is not necessary. Example: Can I please have a glass of water? Example: Could I have a glass of water please?

May I Used in FORMAL situations: work, school, etc. Example: May I speak with you for a minute? Example: May I sit down? How to speak Politely in English Note: You can put the word “please” in front of the subject or at the end of the sentence; however, it is not necessary. Example: May I please speak with you for a minute? Example: May I sit down please? Would Would is used in formal situations and with friends. Would you mind...?

Example: Would you mind explaining to me...? Would you be able to...? Example: Would you be able to wash the plates for me?

### **Asking for Permission**

The first two expressions can be used in any situation. Speak with a softer voice or it will sound aggressive.

1. Do you mind...? Example: Do you mind if I sit here?
2. Would it be a problem if...?

Example: Would it be a problem if I take this chair?

3. I was wondering if you could...?  
Example: I was wondering if you could give me a hand with this project? Sorry● When we don't understand what someone says, we say “sorry?” (In a soft voice).

Example: Sorry, could you repeat that? Example: Sorry? Pardon (me)?● Pardon me is a more polite way of saying sorry. This is used in FORMAL situations.

Note: It is important to understand that you must say this in a soft voice. If you don't, it sounds aggressive. Excuse Me● Used in these three situations: 1. Asking the person to repeat. Example: Excuse me? (Said with a softer voice.) 2. Express shock at what the person said. Example: Excuse me! (Said with surprise.) 3. You didn't like the context of what they said. Example: Excuse ME!!! (Said in an aggressive voice.)