**Making small talk on the telephone**

**Level: easy**

Many people think that small talk is a difficult thing. They don’t feel secure enough, they are afraid they lack social skills or that other people are more skilled in making small talk than they are themselves. Small talk is considered even more difficult when it has to be made in a foreign language. But there are good news: everybody can learn how to make small talk!

In the world of business, small talk is made on the telephone, in a letter, in an email or in person. Normally you know your conversation partner – a fact that makes small talk easier. Conversing with somebody in person is more difficult than making small talk on the phone because on the phone there is less time than if you are, for example, at a conference.

The better you know a person the longer will probably chitchat. If you have met the person somewhere before or if you are familiar with the person’s family, you will probably spend more time on talking than if you have only corresponded with the person by mail so far.

The following sentences help you to get a conversation going:

Always give the person a friendly welcome. Say the person’s name.

With the following sentences you can continue a conversation using small talk.

● General  
“How are things at …?”   
  
● The weather  
“How’s the weather in …?”  
“It’s raining over here.”   
“The sun is shining brightly here in ….”  
“Oh, I am sorry to hear that – the sun is not shining here either.”   
“Oh, dear. It’s pouring down here as well.”  
“How nice for you. It is snowing here.”   
“I wish they weather here would be as nice as it is at your place.”

● The caller’s family  
The better you know the person the more personal questions you can ask.   
“How is your husband?”“How did you son’s exams go?”   
“Great to hear that.”   
“That’s wonderful, congratulations.”  
“That’s really sad. I hope he’s not too disappointed.”

● Holidays  
“Do you have any plans for the summer?”  
“Did you have a nice Christmas/Easter/time off?”  
  
● Ending the small talk  
“Well, it’s been a pleasure talking to you. Have a great day.”

**Tasks:**

1. Read the text and look up all the words.
2. Create an info sheet with the most important facts in German.

**Lösung:**

**Small Talk leicht gemacht**

* Small Talk zu machen ist gar nicht so schwer wie man denkt.
* Haben Sie keine Angst, dass sie im Small Talk nicht gut sind oder andere besser sind als Sie.
* Small Talk kann man lernen!

Fakten über Small Talk:

* In der Arbeitswelt macht man Small Talk am Telefon, in einem Brief, einer Email oder beim persönlichen Kontakt.
* Small Talk am Telefon ist halb so wild, denn er dauert nicht so lange, wie wenn man jemandem persönlich begegnet.
* Je besser man eine Person kennt, desto länger dauert der Small Talk - und umgekehrt.
* Am besten begrüßt man die Person mit Namen.

Hilfreiche Formulierungen für einen erfolgreichen Small Talk:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Allgemeines | How are things at …? | Wie läuft es bei …? |
| Wetter | How’s the weather in …? It’s raining over here. The sun is shining brightly here in …. Oh, I am sorry to hear that – the sun is not shining here either. Oh, dear. It’s pouring down here as well. How nice for you. It is snowing here.  I wish they weather here would be as nice as it is at your place. | Wie ist das Wetter in …?  Hier regnet es.  Hier in … scheint die Sonne.  Oh, das tut mir Leid. Aber hier scheint die Sonne auch nicht.  Oh, Sie Armer. Hier schüttet es auch.  Wie schön für Sie. Hier schneit es.  Ich wünschte, das Wetter hier wäre so schon wie bei Ihnen. |
| Familie | How is your husband?How did you son’s exams go? Great to hear that. That’s wonderful, congratulations. That’s really sad. I hope he’s not too disappointed. | Wie geht es Ihrem mann?  Wie sind die Exam Ihres Sohnes gelaufen?  Freut mich zu hören.  Das ist toll. Glückwunsch.  Das ist wirklich schade. Ich hoffe, er ist nicht zu enttäuscht. |
| Ferien | Do you have any plans for the summer? Did you have a nice Christmas/Easter/time off? | Haben Sie Pläne für den Sommer?  Hatten Sie schöne Weihnachten/schöne Ostern/einen schönen Urlaub? |
| Small Talk beenden | It’s been a pleasure talking to you. Have a nice day. | Es war schön, mit Ihnen zu sprechen. Ich wünsche Ihnen einen schönen Tag. |