

University Center Abdelhafid Boussouf-Mila

Faculty of Economics, Commercial &

Management Sciences

Lecture five: talking about leisure & hobbies at the workplace



Addressed To first Year Students-Semester 1

Prepared & Presented by:

Ms. Sara MEZHOUD

Teacher of English Language

Academic Year 2023-2024

Introduction

Discussing hobbies and leisure activities at the workplace is an excellent way to connect with colleagues, build rapport, and reduce stress. It helps in building a friendly and cooperative work environment, as long as it is done appropriately and respectfully. This lesson will cover how to talk about hobbies and leisure activities in a professional setting.

2. Why Talk About Hobbies and Leisure at Work?

Build Relationships: Sharing personal interests helps you connect with colleagues on a human level.

Reduce Stress: Talking about something enjoyable can help take the focus off work pressures and relax the mind.

Boost Morale: When employees discuss their hobbies, it can create a positive and supportive workplace culture.

Improve Team Dynamics: Learning about each other's hobbies can lead to better collaboration, especially when they align (e.g., a team-building activity).

3. How to Introduce the Topic of Hobbies

When starting a conversation about leisure or hobbies at work, it's important to be respectful and sensitive to the context. Here are a few ways to introduce the topic:

Casual Conversation Starters:

"What do you like to do outside of work?"

"I just started a new hobby. Do you have any hobbies you're passionate about?"

"I heard you like [activity]. How did you get started with that?"

Group Settings:

During team breaks or casual meetings, mention something about your own leisure activity, and ask others to share.

"I've been learning to cook recently. Anyone here into cooking or trying new recipes?"

Workplace Events or Team-Building:

“We’re planning a company outing next month. What kind of activities do you enjoy outside of work?”

“In our next team-building activity, we could include something based on our team’s hobbies. Any ideas?”

4. What to Discuss: Types of Hobbies and Leisure Activities

There’s a wide range of activities people may enjoy in their personal time, including:

Sports and Physical Activities: These can be great for team bonding (e.g., running, swimming, tennis, cycling).

Arts and Crafts: Painting, photography, knitting, or pottery can spark creative conversations.

Books, Music, and Films: Reading, listening to music, watching movies, and attending live performances are all great topics.

Travel and Adventure: Discussing places people have visited or dream of visiting can lead to inspiring conversations.

Gaming: Video games, board games, or card games can be fun for tech-savvy or gaming enthusiasts.

Volunteering and Social Causes: Talking about charitable activities, social work, or community service can inspire others.

Cooking and Baking: A popular hobby in the workplace for sharing recipes or ideas.

5. How to Maintain Professionalism While Discussing Hobbies

While sharing and discussing hobbies is valuable for creating connections, it is crucial to remain professional:

Respect Boundaries: Not everyone may want to share their hobbies, especially if they are introverted or prefer not to discuss personal matters at work.

Avoid Over-sharing: Keep the discussion light and balanced. Avoid going too deep into personal topics unless a strong bond has been built.

Be Inclusive: Ensure that the conversation does not alienate anyone. Be aware that some people may not have hobbies or may have different interests.

Respect Cultural Sensitivities: Some hobbies might not be universally appreciated or understood due to cultural differences. Be sensitive to diversity and avoid controversial or overly personal topics.

Stay Focused: While it's great to talk about leisure activities, remember that the primary focus is still work. Avoid letting discussions stray too far from the workplace environment.

6. How to Respond to Hobbies Shared by Others

When someone shares their hobbies with you, show genuine interest:

Ask Questions: "That sounds interesting! How long have you been doing that?"

Share Your Own Experience: "I've always wanted to try that. I love hiking, maybe we can plan a trip sometime."

Be Supportive: "That's amazing. I've heard that [hobby] is really great for relaxation."

7. Benefits of Sharing Hobbies in the Workplace

Fosters Teamwork: When people bond over shared hobbies, it can improve teamwork and collaboration.

Encourages Positive Communication: Casual talks about hobbies can help improve communication skills in a non-work setting.

Creates Opportunities for Networking: You may connect with someone outside of work on common interests that could lead to valuable personal or professional opportunities.

Promotes Work-Life Balance: Discussing hobbies reminds everyone of the importance of downtime and relaxation outside of work.

8. Common Mistakes to Avoid

Avoid Overwhelming Others: Don't monopolize the conversation about your own hobbies. Make sure to engage others and listen actively.

Avoid Criticizing Others' Hobbies: Be open-minded. Even if a hobby is unfamiliar to you, try not to judge or dismiss it.

Don't Force Conversations: If someone is not interested in discussing hobbies, respect their privacy and move on to another topic.

Terminology

- Hobbies – الهوايات
- Leisure activities – الأنشطة الترفيهية
- Work-life balance – التوازن بين العمل والحياة
- Team-building – بناء الفريق
- Rapport – العلاقة الجيدة
- Casual conversation – المحادثة غير الرسمية
- Shared interests – الاهتمامات المشتركة
- Stress relief – تخفيف التوتر
- Team dynamics – ديناميكيات الفريق
- Positive workplace culture – ثقافة العمل الإيجابية
- Collaboration – التعاون
- Social causes – القضايا الاجتماعية
- Volunteering – التطوع
- Bonding – الترابط
- Professionalism – الاحترافية
- Cultural sensitivity – الحساسية الثقافية
- Networking – الشبكات الاجتماعية
- Inclusivity – الشمولية
- Work environment – بيئة العمل
- Communication skills – مهارات الاتصال