

- ▶ 4 Watch Versions 1 and 2 from 25.34 to 28.53 again, listening to the sound. As you watch this time, note the differences in the way Dr Linden handles the questions. Mark whether he does (✓) or does not (×) carry out each stage in the checklist below. The first one has been done for you.

Checklist

Version 1 questions			Version 2 questions		
welcomes the question					
1 ×	2 ×	3 ×	1 ✓	2 ✓	3 ×
takes time to think before answering					
1	2	3	1	2	3
clarifies the question					
1	2	3	1	2	3
accepts criticism positively					
1	2	3	1	2	3
replies positively					
1	2	3	1	2	3
checks the questioner is satisfied					
1	2	3	1	2	3

Post-viewing

- 5 Work with a partner to practise handling questions. Each person should choose one of the topics (a-b below), and their partner should ask them questions about it.

- a The balance of work and home life
- b National stereotypes

Take two or three minutes to formulate and anticipate questions before you start. Use the checklist in Viewing 4 to help you. (If possible, record your performance and use the recording for feedback.)

Language focus Asking and answering questions

Direct questions

*Do you have any plans for a new production plant?
Where do you plan to locate it?*

Polite questions and answers

QUESTIONS

Do	you mind	if I ask you	if/whether... what/where/etc... about...
Would		telling me	
	Could/Can you tell me...		
	I'm interested to know...		
	I'd like to know...		

ANSWERS

*Go ahead/Please do/Certainly.
That's a good question.
That's interesting.*

Statement questions and answers

QUESTIONS

*All the space was booked for an October launch...?
(question intonation)
It worries me that we don't have any replacements in the
pipeline. Doesn't it worry you too?*

ANSWERS

A positive statement question is looking for the answer 'yes':
*It's going to be late, isn't it? I'm afraid so.
You've got problems with the assembly? Yes, a few.
The suppliers have done their job. Is that right? Yes, as far
as I know.*

A negative statement question is looking for the answer 'no':

We haven't won the contract, have we? No, it doesn't look like it.

I wasn't a success? Not much of one.

We aren't going to make it on time, are we? I'm afraid not.

If the answer contradicts the statement, the word *actually* is often used:

The plant's going to close, isn't it? Well, actually, I've just heard the company is employing more staff.

Clarifying a question

If I understand you correctly, you are saying/asking...

I didn't quite catch that.

Could you go over that again?

I'm not sure what you're getting at.

Avoiding giving an answer

Perhaps we could deal with that later.

Can we talk about that on another occasion?

I'm afraid that's not my field.

I don't have the figures with me.

I'm sure Mr (...) could answer that question.

That's interesting, but I'd prefer not to answer that today.

Checking the questioner is satisfied

Does that answer your question?

Is that clear?

May we go on?

2 You are going to hear six questions. Listen and choose the best response to each question. Check your answers in the key on page 65.

a

- 1 No, of course not.
- 2 Please do.
- 3 No, that's a problem.

b

- 1 Well, actually, it's confidential.
- 2 Yes, I do.
- 3 Certainly.

c

- 1 You could say so.
- 2 That's right.
- 3 I'd prefer not to.

d

- 1 I need a break.
- 2 I don't need a break.
- 3 That's a good idea.

e

- 1 No, they aren't.
- 2 You're wrong.
- 3 Actually, some are at headquarters.

f

- 1 Any moment.
- 2 That's a difficult question.
- 3 That's interesting.

3 Put the questions and answers in these three dialogues in the correct order. Check your answers in the key on page 66.

a

A: I'd like to ask you about next year's promotion campaign.

B: We've got a meeting next week to decide. I'll let you know straight away, if that's OK.

A: Excuse me, could I interrupt?

A: Sure, that'll be fine.

B: Sure, what exactly would you like to know?

A: Well, could you tell me at this stage whether you have fixed a budget?

B: Of course.

b

A: Would you mind telling us when you're going to retire?

B: When is it?

A: May I ask a question?

B: That sounds fine. I'll look forward to it.

B: Not at all. I'm planning to stop work just after Christmas.

A: Oh good! We'd like to invite you to our Christmas party. Can you come?

A: It's on the 24th from seven onwards.

B: Go ahead.

c

A: I see what you mean. Yes, of course we've looked at all the options and we think this is the best one.

A: Are there any questions?

A: I'm afraid that's all we have time for now. Perhaps you'd like to talk about that later.

B: Well, you know, other possibilities such as relocating to a cheaper area.

B: Yes, I wonder if you have considered any other options?

A: I'm not sure what you're getting at.

B: But surely relocation would be better for the staff?



T 18: Ad IV) Handling questions. Put the following responses into 4 groups: responses to
Good questions (Thank people for them)
Difficult questions (Ask the audience what they think, say you don't know)
Unnecessary questions (You've already given the information, answer briefly)
Irrelevant questions (Try not to sound rude)

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. I'm afraid I don't see the connection. | 6. Well, as I said/mentioned earlier ... |
| 2. Sorry, I don't follow you. | 7. I'm afraid I don't have that information with me. |
| 3. I think I answered that earlier. | 8. That's a very good question. |
| 4. Good point. | 9. I don't know that off the top of my head. |
| 5. Interesting. What do you think ? | |

GOOD	DIFFICULT	UNNECESSARY	IRRELEVANT

(Adapted from Powell:Presenting in E.)

T 19: What would you do or say in the following situations ? Match the situations and possible responses

Situations:

1. Instead of asking a question, the person strongly, rather angrily, disagrees with you.
2. Instead of asking a question, the person states his viewpoint that agrees with yours.
3. The person says that some of your information is innacurate, but you are absolutely sure that you are correct.
4. The person says that some of your information is innacurate, and you are not sure whether your information was correct or not.
5. The person asks a question that will require a very long, complicated answer.

Responses:

1. Do not regard this as an attack. You can say: „I appreciate your bringing this to my attention. I'll have to recheck my sources to see what is correct.“
2. If possible, give your source of information. If you cannot do so, you can say: „I believe that my information is correct, but I will certainly recheck my facts.“
3. You can say: „That's an interesting question, but it would také much too long to answer it. Perhaps we can discuss it later.“
4. Listen politely, then restate your point of view, with additional evidence, if possible. Do not argue with the person. If he/she repeats their position, you can say: „Well, we'll have to agree to disagree on this point.“ or „Unfortunately, there's no time to go into this more deeply right now.“
5. Show how this person's ideas support your own point of view. You can say: „Yes, that fits in exactly with what I was saying.“

(Based on IALS TESP materials 1997)

Elaborated by Milada Pavlovská