

## Structures, lexis, functions and skills to be covered in Business English Upper Intermediate

Please note – all examples are intended as a guide to the level of skills, structures and text types that are appropriate to introduce at this level. The examples are not intended to be exhaustive – actual examples will depend on the needs of the groups.

### Structures

Revision and extension of all previously covered structures according to the students' needs.

New structures to include	Please tick the items you have covered	Examples
Inversion	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not only is the delivery late but it's not priced correctly.
Future Perfect Continuous	<input type="checkbox"/>	By the end of next year I will have been working here for 5 years.
Modal verbs to express various degrees of certainty	<input type="checkbox"/>	That can't have been the reason. You must be Jerry from our New York division. Small businesses can be inefficient.
Owing to/on account of	<input type="checkbox"/>	Owing to adverse weather conditions the flight was cancelled.
Participle phrases	<input type="checkbox"/>	There's someone <i>waiting</i> for you at reception, <i>compared</i> to other cities, London is very cosmopolitan.
Connectors of contrast and addition	<input type="checkbox"/>	In contrast... What's more... While.... Whereas
Whether/were to etc	<input type="checkbox"/>	Whether she has decided to move out (or not) doesn't matter / <i>Were he to</i> have signed the contract...
Perfect participles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Having said</i> that...
Ellipsis in speech	<input type="checkbox"/>	'What time will you be leaving? <i>In about</i> an hour.
Tense simplification	<input type="checkbox"/>	You can communicate in English wherever you go (not will go)
Relative clauses with a range of pronouns	<input type="checkbox"/>	The person with <i>whom</i> I dealt with was their PR manager.
Adverbial phrases	<input type="checkbox"/>	In a hurry; again and again; However hard I try... (compared with I try hard, but...)
Future in the past	<input type="checkbox"/>	Actually, I was going to re-write the report and e-mail it to you by Wednesday. She said she'd call back the same day.
Be to	<input type="checkbox"/>	We are to finish the report by Friday/ It was to have started by now.

Prepositional phrases	<input type="checkbox"/>	By law; we're committed to keeping high standards
Noun phrases	<input type="checkbox"/>	He told me about <i>the cancellation of the match</i> .
Formulaic verb phrases	<input type="checkbox"/>	Go ahead with st; keep track of st; be on track to do st
Mixed conditionals	<input type="checkbox"/>	If Jim hadn't missed the train, he would be here now; if I were more ambitious, I'd have become a university professor.

Alternative conditional structures	<input type="checkbox"/>	Should you need assistance, please contact us. As long as you let us know by Thursday next week... Weather permitting, .... Supposing you could choose between A and B
Emphatic structures	<input type="checkbox"/>	What I like most... ; the thing that ... -the place where....; the reason why... etc
Tense simplification in conditional sentences	<input type="checkbox"/>	With a bit of luck (If I we are lucky); But for his help (If he hadn't helped us...)
Subjunctives	<input type="checkbox"/>	Customers insist that businesses exchange goods with no questions asked. We would rather you kept this in the strictest confidence.
Subordinate clauses of time, purpose and consequence	<input type="checkbox"/>	The alarm was raised as soon as <i>the fire started</i> / <i>If you are not good at languages</i> , it is pointless to apply. The shares' price rocketed so that shareholders all became instant millionnaires.

## Speaking functions

Functions	Please tick the items you have covered	Examples (extension of Upper - Intermediate)
Greeting people and responding to greetings	<input type="checkbox"/>	- Hello, you must be James from Taurus Computers. - And you must be Gary, Gary Bings? I've heard so much about you.
Asking about and describing a company and its organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Our company's HQ is based in Brussels. Then there are regional directors in our European branches.
Asking about and describing jobs and responsibilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	- What is the CEO responsible for? - Well, most importantly, he accounts to shareholders for company results.
Leaving, taking and simplifying messages	<input type="checkbox"/>	She said she would call back the same time tomorrow.
Planning future events and tasks	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tomorrow I'm flying to Tokyo where I'll be chairing a meeting on Wednesday afternoon.
Confirming and changing plans	<input type="checkbox"/>	Just to let you know: I'll not be coming on 20 <sup>th</sup> as planned. I've had to postpone the trip till 22 <sup>nd</sup> .
Asking for and giving permission	<input type="checkbox"/>	Would that be OK to use your computer?
Giving and receiving instructions	<input type="checkbox"/>	First of all, clients are to be contacted every quarter with updated offers.
Making enquiries, reservations, orders and conferences	<input type="checkbox"/>	I am looking to book a suite for three nights between 16 <sup>th</sup> and 20 <sup>th</sup> January. Do you have any vacancies?
Inviting, making, accepting and refusing offers	<input type="checkbox"/>	- Does that sound acceptable? - Totally. You have a deal.
Negotiating contracts	<input type="checkbox"/>	If we offered you a 10% discount, would you consider increasing your order?
Clarifying	<input type="checkbox"/>	What have in mind is.... That's not what I'm saying. The point I'm trying to make...
Making arrangements	<input type="checkbox"/>	I wonder if next Monday suits you better.

Giving presentations	<input type="checkbox"/>	First, I'm going to touch on A. Next I'll discuss B. There'll be an opportunity to ask questions towards the end.
Expressing and justifying opinions	<input type="checkbox"/>	In my perspective, ..... The main reason for X is.... The argument just doesn't stack up.
Describing trends and changes	<input type="checkbox"/>	More and more people are accepting even lower-paid jobs.
Questioning about satisfaction	<input type="checkbox"/>	Would you recommend this product to someone else?
Socialising	<input type="checkbox"/>	Formal and informal phrases; small talk
Structuring discourse	<input type="checkbox"/>	Starting and ending conversations, changing a subject, interrupting, turn taking etc.
Dealing with communication breakdown	<input type="checkbox"/>	Asking for repetition / clarification, paraphrasing, repeating, apologising for uncertainty, asking for guidance. Example: You've lost me there. I'm not sure I'm with you. I didn't quite catch the last point.
Things to say in awkward social situations	<input type="checkbox"/>	Apologising, changing the subject, making humorous remarks: Anyway, that'd be a long story.

## Pronunciation

Pronunciation should be integrated and systematically taught throughout all lessons. Ensure when presenting new target language you pay sufficient attention to related phonological issues.

Skills	Please tick the items you have covered	Examples
Continued focus on the phonemic alphabet (both for production and recording pronunciation)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Minimal pairs (focus on problem sounds)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Shop [ʃɒp] vs chop [tʃɒp] , sheep [ʃi:p] vs cheap [tʃi:p]
Production of correct word stress & sentence stress	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>A</u> dvertise vs. ad <u>ve</u> rtisement. <i>What did you say?</i>
Practice in using word/sentence stress and intonation to express meaning	<input type="checkbox"/>	'I <i>didn't</i> say that' vs. 'I didn't <i>say</i> that' vs. ' <i>I</i> didn't say that'
Practice in placing stress on the appropriate word in compound nouns	<input type="checkbox"/>	He works in [new YORK]. He works for a [NEW york] company. They deal in [HAIR conditioners].
Production of contracted forms	<input type="checkbox"/>	'I would've helped you', 'You should've told me'
Word linking, intrusive /j/, /r/ and /w/	<input type="checkbox"/>	Anna and Tom, blue and red,
Weak forms vs. strong forms	<input type="checkbox"/>	Auxiliary verbs, prepositions
Silent letters	<input type="checkbox"/>	Psychology
Homophones	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rows - rose
Homographs	<input type="checkbox"/>	Minute, bow, row, tear
Assimilation	<input type="checkbox"/>	London Bridge
Elision	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sandwich, postcard
Consonant clusters	<input type="checkbox"/>	Crisps, contract, finished
Using intonation to convey meaning	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sarcasm, mixed/strong feelings
British and American English	<input type="checkbox"/>	Schedule [ʃedju:l] vs [skedʒəl]

## Reading and listening skills

- greater emphasis on speed reading
- reading for inferred meaning
- understanding nuances and shades of meaning
- introducing a variety of texts encountered in corporate practice or business (contracts, memos, e-mails, leaflets, newspaper articles, etc.)

Skills and sub-skills	Please tick the items you have covered	Example text types
Hypothesis or fact	<input type="checkbox"/>	Business report
Key words	<input type="checkbox"/>	Newspaper article
Intentions Informal	<input type="checkbox"/>	Letters and e-mails
Opinions	<input type="checkbox"/>	Reviews (products, services)
Instructions	<input type="checkbox"/>	Manuals
Locations and directions	<input type="checkbox"/>	Travel guides
Gist	<input type="checkbox"/>	Reviews and contracts
Questions	<input type="checkbox"/>	Job interviews
Agreement	<input type="checkbox"/>	Formal and informal meetings
Distinguishing fact from opinion	<input type="checkbox"/>	Debate / discursive argument
Identifying relevant information	<input type="checkbox"/>	Summaries/reviews
Style recognition	<input type="checkbox"/>	Formal, informal, humorous etc.
Listening to multiple speakers	<input type="checkbox"/>	Authentic texts: TV debates or business reports on TV
Permission	<input type="checkbox"/>	Regulations

## Writing skills

In addition to the Business English Upper - Intermediate list for writing, exam type skills for advanced level exams to be practised are as follows:

- greater focus on register and style in a variety of text types
- writing at speed under pressure – note taking, identifying key information
- purpose-based planning e.g. developing mind-maps, linear notes, scatter diagrams from brainstorming

Skills and sub-skills	Please tick the items you have covered	Example text types
Informal / formal register	<input type="checkbox"/>	Formal correspondence / informal internal corporate communication such as e-mails and notes
Synonyms vs antonyms	<input type="checkbox"/>	All
Text organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	All
Presenting points of view	<input type="checkbox"/>	A report
Developing summary skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	Summary writing
Taking notes	<input type="checkbox"/>	Study notes
Presenting a report	<input type="checkbox"/>	Report on web / newspaper based research.

## Suggested vocabulary areas

Business sectors	<input type="checkbox"/>
Types of company	<input type="checkbox"/>
Job roles and responsibilities	<input type="checkbox"/>
Departments	<input type="checkbox"/>
Business travel	<input type="checkbox"/>
Finance	<input type="checkbox"/>
Communication channels	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recruitment methods and procedures	<input type="checkbox"/>
Meetings	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advertising and promotion methods	<input type="checkbox"/>
Communication	<input type="checkbox"/>
Company culture	<input type="checkbox"/>
Competition	<input type="checkbox"/>
Image and Reputation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Team building	<input type="checkbox"/>
Customer service / after-sales service	<input type="checkbox"/>
Raising finance and Investment	<input type="checkbox"/>
Management styles	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ethical issues	
Take-overs and mergers	<input type="checkbox"/>
The future of business	<input type="checkbox"/>
Motivational factors	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Learner training

<b>Keeping vocabulary records</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Using a monolingual dictionary</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Using the Language Activator</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Using a thesaurus**

**Using other available resources e.g.**

- **Libraries ( books, newspapers, magazines, DVD's, talking books)**
- **The internet**
- **Learning support**
- **London**

**Defining individual aims**

**Reflecting on learning**

**Attitudes to errors**

**Dealing with unknown vocabulary**

**Exam preparation for the Business English Certificates Vantage (BEC Vantage)**

**Reading (Parts 1 to 5)**

**Writing (Parts 1 and 2)**

**Listening (Parts 1 to 3)**

**Speaking (Parts 1 to 3)**