



..... DELTA  
..... Business  
..... Communication  
..... Skills

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# Presenting



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# Dealing with problems and questions

THIS UNIT LOOKS AT:

- strategies for coping in unexpected situations
- useful phrases for dealing with problems and questions



**Context** 1 a **Have any of these things happened to you when you were giving a presentation?**

- Your mobile phone went off.
- Someone in the audience kept interrupting you.
- Your microphone wouldn't work.
- You couldn't understand the question someone asked you.
- Your laptop computer crashed.
- You didn't know the answer to a question.

b **What other unexpected events have you had to deal with during a presentation? Add these to the list above. What did you do/say?**

2 5.1 **Listen to six presentation extracts.**

- 1 What problem does each speaker experience?
- 2 Do they deal with the situation effectively? Why? / Why not?

**Tip** See Unit 2 for more about using equipment and visuals effectively.

**Presentation** 1 5.2 **Listen to two of the speakers again and decide if these statements are true or false.**

*Dealing with questions*

- A** 1 The woman fails to hear the first question.  
2 The woman answers the question immediately.
- B** 3 The man checks he understands the question.  
4 The man is unable to reassure Marina.

**2 Fill in the missing words and phrases to complete the extracts. Check your answers in the transcript for audio 5.2 on page 60.**

**A Woman:** 1 \_\_\_\_\_ a bit, please? I didn't 2 \_\_\_\_\_ what you said.

**Man 1:** Sorry. I said, what about fees for delegates?

**Woman:** I'll 3 \_\_\_\_\_ very shortly. Just before I do ...

**Man 2:** Can you tell us about the workshop sessions?

**Woman:** 4 \_\_\_\_\_ leaving questions until I've finished, please?

**B Woman:** I'd like to ask whether the rumours are true.

**Man:** 5 \_\_\_\_\_ rumours about possible department closures?

**Woman:** Yes, we've heard that HQ are going to close our events department.

**Man:** Well, I 6 \_\_\_\_\_ your worries, Marina, but I can confirm there'll definitely not be any closures.

**Tip** It is not always acceptable to interrupt a speaker.

**3 a Put the phrases from Exercise 2 into the correct part of the table.**

Asking someone to repeat the question	
Checking you have understood the question	
Avoiding answering the question	I'll come to that very shortly.
Dealing with interruptions	
Giving your opinion tactfully / putting a different view across	

**Tip** Can, could/would and would you mind (+ -ing) are used to make polite requests.

**b Now put the cards on page 50 into pairs to find more phrases. Add these to the table.**

**4 What would you say in these situations?**

1 Someone asks you a tricky question and you would prefer not to deal with it now.

*That's an interesting question ...*

2 Someone asks you a question that your colleague knows more about.

*Martin, ...*

3 Someone asks you a question too quickly for you to understand.

*I'm sorry, ...*

4 Someone interrupts you in the middle of your presentation.

*Could ...*

**Tip** Don't panic if someone asks you a tricky question. Give yourself time to prepare an answer (e.g. *Let me see/think ...; Well, ...; That's a very good question ...*).