

Class 13: Transitions From Small Talk



**LEVEL UP!
TO SPEAKER**

Warm Up Activity

Play American Football

Review

Football slang

Introduce the Topic

Motive: Transitions are different in the US than in Belarus. Good speakers know how to use culturally appropriate transitions.

When transitioning, it is important to remember to be **polite** and to **use proper conversation etiquette**. Remember that America is a less direct culture than Belarus. This means that we need soft transitions. When your conversation partner seems really excited about a topic or has not switched the subject, you need to remember to give a reason for switching to business. This makes the transition softer and more pleasant.

- I'd love to talk football with ya, but I really need to get these answers. Remember we're 7 hours ahead of you. So...
- I'd love to talk more about this, but my boss is giving me the death stare. So...
- I could talk football for hours but I've got to get these numbers in by the close of business today. So...
- I could talk about the weather all day, but I'm kind of in a rush. Can I ask you a few questions about the project?
- I'd love to shoot the breeze with you, but...

Sometimes the conversation naturally has a pause. In these cases it is appropriate to simply switch the topic to business without a reason for switching topics.

- Getting back to the reason I called...
- Anyway, I called for those numbers.
- So, (short pause) do you have those numbers?

Sometimes *they* call *you* asking for information. In that case you may need to switch the topic back to business.

- What can I do ya for? (*informal*)
- What can I do for you today?
- So, to what do I owe the pleasure of this call today?
- I'm sure you didn't call *just* to talk about the weather, how can I help ya?
- How can I help you?
- How's our project going?
- What's the latest?
- So, why are calling today?
- So what's up?

The follow are often responses to the question "Can I ask you some questions about the project?" or "I have some questions/information for you."

- Fire away.
- I'm all ears.
- Go ahead, shoot.

Interactive Learning

Practice switching between topics

Off Topic

Leveling Up with English board games!

Small Group Discussion

Practice transitions

Big Group

Are there differences in how men and women change topics in conversation?

Are there differences in how salesmen and programmers change topics in conversation?

Preview Next Lesson and Homework

Email me 2 sample conversations where you call, small talk, and then transition to business.

Email me 2 sample conversations where someone calls YOU, makes small talk, and then you transition to business.

The next class will be a review for your first midterm exam!