

Low Pressure English: A Practical Guide to Overcoming English Speaking Anxiety

The English Confidence Emergency Kit

A Practical Guide for Those Who Know English but Freeze When It's Time to Speak

You Probably Know More English Than You Think!

If you're reading this guide, you likely already have a good understanding of English. You might understand films, read emails, follow conversations, and even work in English daily. However, when faced with an unexpected question, your mind may go blank. Sound familiar? The issue often isn't your English skills; it's your confidence. This guide isn't about achieving perfect English. It's about trusting the English you already know. You don't need perfect English to communicate—just enough to achieve your desired outcome.

Setting the Right Mindset



Remember, people are more interested in understanding you than judging your grammar. Your goal is connection, not perfection. Communicate first, perfection comes later.

Exercise 1: Proving Your English Skills

1. Set a timer for 60 seconds.
2. Record a voice note answering: "What did I do yesterday?"
3. Speak for one minute without stopping or correcting yourself.
4. Listen to your recording and reflect:
 - What did I do well?
 - What was easier than expected?
 - What words or phrases came naturally?



Developing Your Emergency Phrases

Often, speaking anxiety comes from the belief that you have to reply or talk straight away. You don't! Practice these phrases until they feel natural:

- "Let me think about that for a second."
- "That's a good question."
- "One moment, Let me explain that another way."
- "I'm not sure how to say that in English."
- "Give me a moment to think."

These phrases grant you time, which builds confidence and enhances your English.

Exercise 2: Buying Yourself Time

1. Record another voice note, starting with: "That's a good question. Let me think about that for a second."
2. Answer: "What are your plans for next weekend?"
3. Reflect on how a few extra seconds impacted your response.



Mastering the Initial Conversation

The First Two Minutes

The opening moments of a conversation are often the most challenging. However, they're usually similar across lots of situations, meeting a colleague, a neighbor, or speaking to customer service. Conversations typically follow this structure:

1. Greeting
2. Introduction
3. Explaining your purpose (Why are we talking)
4. Setting expectations if needed (Can you speak slowly for me please?)
5. Continuing the conversation

Crafting Your Confidence Script

Practice these lines until they feel second nature:

- "Hi. How are you?"
- "Good, thanks. How are you?"
- "I'm Alex."
- "Nice to meet you."
- "English isn't my first language, so I may need a little extra time sometimes."
- "Thank you for your patience."

- "I wanted to ask you about..."



Most people become more supportive when they understand your needs.

Exercise 3: Role-Playing Both Sides

1. Record yourself as both person A and person B in a conversation.

Person A:

"Hi."

"How are you?"

"I'm Sarah."

"Nice to meet you."

Person B:

"Hi."

"I'm Alex."

"Nice to meet you too."

"English isn't my first language, so I may need a little extra time sometimes."

"Thank you for your patience."

"I wanted to ask you about..."

Switch roles and repeat until it feels "boring". Remember, boring means your brain is recognizing the situation as safe.

Communicating Effectively

Good, Better, Best

Many English learners accidentally believe there is only one correct answer. There isn't. Look at these examples.

Question: "When will you send the report?"

- Good: "Later."

- Better: "I will send it later."
- Best: "I'll send it this afternoon."

All responses communicate successfully. Remember, communication is not a test; the goal is understanding, not perfection.

Let's try some more:

Question:

"Can you join the meeting tomorrow?"

- Good: "Yes"
- Better: "Yes, I can join."
- Best: "Yes, I can join the meeting at 10am."

Question:

"What did you do at the weekend?"

- Good: "Saw my friend."
- Better: "I visited my friend."
- Best: "I visited my friend and we went for lunch together."



Your Next Step

If this guide helped you feel a little more confident, imagine what could happen with regular practice and support.

At Low Pressure English, I help adults build confidence speaking English in real-life situations—without pressure, perfectionism, or fear of making mistakes.

Ready to take the next step?

Visit Low Pressure English to learn more about coaching, conversation practice, and confidence-building support.

You already know more English than you think. Now it's time to trust it.