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ESP: HOW TO TEACH BUSINESS ENGLISH USING THE INTERNET

Be prepared. You may teach students who have roles you know very little about. In order to prepare, it is advisable to find out a little about their jobs in general terms. This will stand you in excellent stead when it comes to asking questions and setting contexts.

Business contexts. The structures that business English students have to learn are in principle the same as general English students. The difference is in context and vocabulary. Websites that are not necessarily intended for business audiences can be an ideal resource for business English teachers. For example, students could visit an airline website to practice travel vocabulary and structures.

Writing practice. The Internet also offers lots of authentic writing practice. From beginner level through to advanced, your students will be able to practice their writing skills within a business context using the Internet. One of the most important writing skills your students are likely to need is writing effective business emails. The correct tone, structures and layout are all components students need to learn.

Researching for projects and presentations. The Internet is an excellent research tool. By allowing your students to research a particular topic using the Internet, they can prepare either individually, in pairs or in small groups for a presentation or a piece of writing. Where books may be out of date or hard to come by, the Internet offers a host of free information that is current and relevant. Presentation skills are extremely useful, as is the ability to write concise reports, therefore you are allowing students to practice vocabulary related to their field in addition to giving them the chance to do relevant research

Internet jargon. A useful addition to any business English course is a lesson in Internet terminology. From a student being able to say their email address correctly (explaining that @ is pronounced 'at') to being able to understand and use English language websites with confidence, it may be worth spending some time on teaching useful Internet-related vocabulary and phrases.

Numbers. The Internet provides a lot of materials that can be used to practice structures in a context familiar to your students. To practice numbers, prices and currencies, why not create a real situation by letting students use a commercial website. Your choice of website can depend on the vocabulary you want to teach or revise.