



# Roadmap to Exam Speaking Success

Nine days to Exam confidence



Dear Exam Candidate

Passing an advanced English exam is a tremendous achievement but is not something that comes without a great deal of effort.

And for many students, the Speaking exam is the most difficult to prepare for. What will the examiner be grading you on? Which aspects of speaking do you need to improve? How can you get the practice you need?

We've written a free 9-day mini-course to help you organise your time and take practical steps to improve your English proficiency. This course is suitable for students preparing for any advanced English Speaking exam, particularly Cambridge exams such as BEC Higher, BULATS, CAE, CPE, IELTS, ICFE and ILEC. It will help you:

- 1) know exactly what to expect in the Speaking exam.
- 2) understand how you'll be assessed.
- 3) identify areas that you need to work on before the Speaking exam.
- 4) get as much speaking practice as possible before the big day.

Improve your chances of passing the Speaking exam with top grades.

Try the tasks we suggest over the 9-day mini-course and I'm sure your chances of passing the Speaking exam with the grade you're hoping for will improve significantly.

Best wishes

*Peter Travis*

Flo-Joe

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# Day 1

## Take up the Challenge

Time to commit to improving your speaking skills

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### The Splendid Speaking website



To find out how the Splendid Speaking website can help you with your speaking skills see our video at: [splendid-speaking.com](http://splendid-speaking.com)

### Introduction

If you're reading this the chances are you're facing an English Speaking exam and want to make sure you're successful on the big day.

What can you do in the time available to increase your chances of passing with the highest possible grade? Well, three things are essential:

***Goal 1: Make sure you know what to expect in the exam so you can prepare efficiently and avoid any nasty surprises on the big day.***

***Goal 2: Be aware of your strengths in speaking English and the areas you need to work on.***

***Goal 3: Take every opportunity to practise!***

The good news is that by starting this mini-course you've taking a giant step towards achieving these goals.

However, let's start with a reality check. If you think about it, speaking is the one skill that many students get the least amount of practice in.

Imagine you're lucky enough to be attending a weekly one - hour lesson in a class of 12 students given up entirely to speaking - that's 60 minutes.

Take off ten minutes for late arrivals, greetings and administration at the start and end of the lesson - that's 50 minutes left.

The teacher might talk for about 30% of the lesson including giving instructions, feedback etc. - that's about 35 minutes left.

If you work in pairs for the entire lesson that's about 17 minutes speaking time for you each week. If you work in small groups of three for the entire lesson that's about 11 minutes speaking time for you per week! In a whole-class discussion for the entire lesson that means you have about 3 minutes speaking time per week!

The likelihood is you'll take part in a variety of speaking tasks so the figures will be somewhere in between. However, there'll also be lots of interruptions, questions and sometimes someone else who talks a lot ..... the times above are probably a little generous!

This is why your teacher will advise you to take every opportunity to speak English, both in class and in your own time.

And this mini-course will make exactly the same recommendations. To get the most from the time that remains until your exam day, you'll need to commit to practising your English speaking skills.

However, we're pretty sure if you make this commitment and try the tasks we suggest over the next eight days, your chances of passing the speaking exam with the grade you're hoping for will improve significantly.

This is what we'll be covering over the following 8 days:

- Day 2:** Get to know your Speaking exam with our '10-Question Quiz'.
- Day 3:** Assessment criteria: find out exactly what the examiner wants from you.
- Day 4:** Know yourself: learn what you do well and where you need to improve.
- Day 5:** Get speaking partners at a time and place that suits you.
- Day 6:** Speaking exercises: make the most of your speaking opportunities.
- Day 7:** Talk successfully online: tips for online communication.
- Day 8:** Get a progress report: how to get feedback on your speaking skills.
- Day 9:** Tips for the big day: some final advice for a successful exam.

Each day there'll be a task and here is today's:

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## Task

This task is an easy one to start with but very important nonetheless.

- 1) How much time can you put aside each week to prepare for your Speaking exam? List times in the week you can do some self-study. Put them in your diary.
- 2) Do something to remind yourself of your commitment ... putting some stickers around the apartment/house with 'Speak English' written on them will do for a start!

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# Day 2

## Get to Know the Exam

Discover what the big day has in store

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### Splendid Speaking Exam Guides



Try our FREE exam guides for many of the popular advanced English Speaking exams.

### Introduction

Welcome to Day 2 of 'Your Roadmap to Speaking Exam Success'. Hopefully you're now surrounded by stickers at home reminding you of your commitment to speaking English. (See yesterday's lesson if you have no idea what I'm talking about!)

Let's go back to yesterday and get a reminder of the first of the three goals we identified:

***Goal 1: Know what to expect in the exam so you can prepare efficiently and avoid any nasty surprises on the big day.***

Knowing your Speaking exam inside out will increase your confidence and enable you to prepare efficiently. In today's task, you'll become totally familiar with the structure of your exam with our ten-question quiz. (Tomorrow we'll look at assessment and what the examiner will be expecting from you.)

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### Task

- 1) Go to your exam board website (see our list of links on Page 24) and download the handbook for your particular exam.
- 2) For a summary of some of the main advanced exams, have a look at the exams section on the Splendid Speaking website.  
[www.splendid-speaking.com/exams/index.html](http://www.splendid-speaking.com/exams/index.html)

Using these resources, answer the following 10 questions:

## **Your Speaking Exam**

- 1) How many sections are there in your Speaking exam?
- 2) How long is each section?
- 3) What's the focus of each section? Answering questions? Making a long turn? Taking part in a role-play, simulation or discussion?
- 4) Are you interviewed alone or with a partner?
- 5) What kind of questions are you likely to be asked in the 'getting-to-know-you' section?
- 6) What do you have to do in the long-turn?
- 7) Do you have time to prepare for your long turn and if so can you make notes?
- 8) If you're being examined with another candidate, do you have to do anything at the end of your partner's long turn?
- 9) If your exam has a role-play or simulation activity, is the task given to you in writing?
- 10) If there's a discussion stage, do you talk with a partner, the examiner or both?

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# Day 3

## Assessment Criteria

Find out what the examiner will be looking for

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### Splendid Speaking Recordings



Listen to other advanced English students taking part in exam-style speaking tasks.

Each recording comes with feedback.

### Introduction

Welcome to Day 3 of 'Your Roadmap to Speaking Exam Success'. Hopefully you now have a clear idea what you have to do in your Speaking exam. Today we'll look at how you'll be assessed.

If you've had the chance to look at the handbook for your exam you'll know that each section of the Speaking Paper has a particular focus. For example, during the opening 'getting-to-know-you' phase the focus is usually on your ability to use language for social purposes, such as making introductions and answering questions. In the long turn section the focus will be on skills such as being able to speak at length clearly, using language to state an opinion, being able to describe, compare and contrast etc. In the discussion stage you'll need to show you're able to keep a discussion going, ask for and give opinions, agree and disagree, develop comments made by your partner or the examiner and generate new ideas.

How well you do in these tasks will depend on your proficiency in English and the examiner will use general criteria to grade you. Most exams will include the following criteria:

Grammar and vocabulary  
Discourse management  
Pronunciation  
Interactive communication (in paired interviews)

It's important that you understand what all these criteria mean so that you have a clear idea of how you'll be assessed - which brings us to today's tasks.

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## **Task**

1) For a general idea of what these criteria mean try our quiz on exam assessment criteria on the next page. You can try an interactive version of the quiz here:  
[www.splendid-speaking.com/exams/speaking\\_assessment.html](http://www.splendid-speaking.com/exams/speaking_assessment.html)

2) Once you're clear what these areas mean, refer to your handbook to get an accurate picture of how the criteria apply to your exam. See Page 24 for a list of websites.

## Assessment Criteria Quiz

1. Complete the gaps in each section using the words in the Word Bank. (Answers on Page 24):

### Speaking Assessment: Grammar and Vocabulary

- A) Grammar and vocabulary refers to how well you are able to use a ..... of grammatical structures and vocabulary when expressing yourself.
- B) It also describes how ..... your use of English is.
- C) The language you use also has to be ..... to the tasks you are asked to do.
- D) With all this taken into consideration, you will be assessed on how .....your use of English is.

**Word Bank: accurate, appropriate, effective, range**

### Speaking Assessment: Discourse Management

- A) This section describes how well you are able to express thoughts and ideas ..... or clearly, linking your contributions logically during monologues or dialogues.
- B) Your utterances, or things you say should be expressed with a level of ..... and fluency appropriate for the level of your exam.
- C) This criteria also describes the ..... of your contributions, which means you say enough, but not too little or too much when appropriate.
- D) During a conversation or discussion your contributions should be ..... or to the point.

**Word Bank: relevant, extent, complexity, coherently**

### **Speaking Assessment: Pronunciation**

A) Pronunciation describes how well your utterances are comprehensible to the listener. You will be assessed on things such as ....., which means how well you pronounce strong and weak syllables within individual words.

B) It also relates to ....., which is your ability to connect words together naturally with stress on appropriate words.

C) Your use of .....should be possible to express a range of attitudes and meanings.

D) You should also be able to pronounce individual ..... (for example consonant clusters, vowels and diphthongs) effectively.

**Word Bank: intonation, rhythm, sounds, stress**

### **Speaking Assessment: Interactive Communication**

A) This criteria relates to your ability to get dialogues started: that is to ..... communication.

B) It also describes how well you respond appropriately to utterances without too much .....

C) It covers how good you are at ..... during conversations or discussions.

D) Finally, it relates to your ability to ..... conversation when the unexpected happen such as interrupting, gaining control or .....

**Word Bank: hesitation, initiate, repair, turn taking**

2. Read the following statements made about different speakers and decide which of the following criteria they relate to. (Answers on Page 25):

- i) Grammar and Vocabulary
- ii) Discourse Management
- iii) Pronunciation
- iv) Interactive Communication

A) *'The speaker answered questions very briefly when longer, more detailed responses would have been better.'*

B) *'The speaker found it difficult to deal with a comment or question they didn't understand.'*

C) *'The speaker repeated the same words and expressions rather too often.'*

D) *'The speaker focused too much on speaking accurately so their speech was very hesitant.'*

E) *'The speaker had very flat delivery with little use of intonation to express feelings or opinions.'*

F) *'The speaker talked too much and rarely asked their partner questions.'*

G) *'The speaker had difficulty pronouncing certain vowels and consonant clusters.'*

H) *'The speaker found it difficult to use language to express their ideas and opinions effectively.'*

3. How do these criteria relate to your exam? Download your exam handbook and check how Speaking assessment works for you.

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# Day 4

## Know Yourself

Learn what you do well and what needs improving

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### The Splendid Speaking Course



Find out how **The Splendid Speaking Course** can help you learn the speaking skills you need to face your Exam with confidence. Visit: [splendid-speaking.com](http://splendid-speaking.com)

### Introduction

Welcome to Day 4 of 'Your Roadmap to Speaking Exam Success'. If you've completed the tasks from Day 2 and 3 you now have a clear idea of the structure of the Speaking exam and how the examiner will grade you. Here's a reminder of the second goal we identified on Day 1:

***Goal 2: Know your strengths in speaking English and the areas you need to work on.***

There's no short cut to improving your general proficiency in English as measured by your use of grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and discourse management. Your English is currently at a particular level and this will only improve over time depending on the amount of practice you put in. This is why you need to take every opportunity both in class and during self-study to improve your English speaking skills. This will come about by practising ALL skills, not just speaking. Your vocabulary will grow the more you read in English, the more you listen to spoken English the better your pronunciation will become.

But what other steps can you take to improve your spoken English in preparation for the exam?

Start by looking at your own habits when speaking English. For example, do you worry a lot about making mistakes and therefore tend to speak slowly and deliberately? Do you wait to be asked for your opinion before saying anything during a discussion? Do you find yourself hesitating a lot when speaking at length? Habits like these mean you're not making the most of your opportunities in speaking English. Try today's task to identify areas you can work on for improvement.

## Task

Read the statements below, some of which appeared in yesterday's quiz. Grade yourself from 1 to 5 on each one. (1 = Often, 5 = Never)

### Self Assessment

- A) Do you tend to focus too much on speaking accurately at the expense of your fluency skills?
- B) Do you speak very quickly with little concern for accuracy?
- C) Do you often answer questions briefly with little detail?
- D) Do you find it difficult to deal with comments or questions you don't understand?
- E) Do you wait to be asked questions rather than initiating conversation yourself?
- F) Do you spend most of the time talking and rarely ask questions?
- G) Do you often repeat the same words and expressions instead of using a variety of vocabulary?
- H) Do you find it difficult to find the words or grammar to explain what you mean?
- I) Do you run out of things to say when making a long turn before the time's up?
- J) Do your long turns ramble rather than have structure?
- K) Do you hesitate a lot during long turns?
- L) Do you find it difficult to vary your intonation?
- M) Do you find it difficult pronouncing certain sounds such as vowels, diphthongs or consonant clusters?

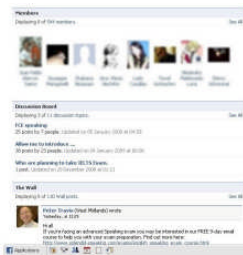
**If you scored too many 1s and 2s, set yourself the task of improving at least one grade in all areas during your exam preparation. Your English proficiency will improve as you get out of habits that slow down the development of your spoken English.**

# Day 5

## Get Speaking Partners

You're not alone – find speaking partners online

### Splendid Speaking Community



Join our community of advanced English learners.

### Introduction

Welcome to Day 5 of 'Your Roadmap to Speaking Exam Success' where we'll turn our attention to the third goal we identified on Day 1:

#### *Goal 3: Take every opportunity to practise!*

If you're looking for speaking partners and are fortunate enough to be studying as part of a class, you'll have the opportunity to arrange out-of-class get-togethers with your colleagues. (Of course, you should also make sure you take every opportunity to speak English in class as well!)

There may be native speakers working or studying in your area who would be willing to help you with your English in return for the chance to practise your language. However, care needs to be taken when meeting up with strangers face-to-face and in any case, work or study schedules may make this option difficult.

Fortunately, new technology offers lots of opportunities to join online communities made up of people looking to practise English with others. Meetings can be arranged at a time that suits you, you can speak from the comfort of your own home and in the process make new friends from all over the world.

Our own Splendid Speaking group on Facebook has hundreds of members looking for speaking partners, many of whom are preparing for exams.

In order to post messages to the group you'll need to join Facebook, and in order to speak online you'll need to set up an account with a service like Skype. Finally, armed with a pair of headphones and microphone you'll be ready to chat!

### TIP!

When looking for contacts there's no need to focus only on people preparing for the same examination as you. Most advanced speaking exams have the same task types but in a different format:

- 1) There will be a 'getting-to-know-you' part at the beginning, where the examiner will ask you (and your partner if you have one) questions to find out more about you.
- 2) You'll be asked to make a short presentation or 'long turn' where you'll have to speak for 1 or 2 minutes on your own without interruption.
- 3) There will be one or two tasks where you'll take part in a discussion and/or role play, either with a partner, with the examiner, or both.

So as far as getting speaking practice is concerned, a CPE student will be very well matched with an IELTS student aiming for 7.0 and upwards; someone preparing for BEC Higher will find they have a lot in common with someone doing BULATS or CAE.

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## Task

- 1) If you don't already have an account with an online communication tool such as MSN or Skype, sign up for an account. Visit the 'Guides' page on the Skype website: [www.skype.com/help/guides](http://www.skype.com/help/guides)
- 2) Join our group on Facebook and post a welcome message: [www.splendid-speaking.com/extras/facebook.html](http://www.splendid-speaking.com/extras/facebook.html)
- 3) Take time to read our safety tips about communicating online: [www.splendid-speaking.com/products/safety.html](http://www.splendid-speaking.com/products/safety.html)

# Day 6

## Speaking Exercises

Make the most of your speaking opportunities

### Get Speaking



Download our free weekly 'Get Speaking' Task Sheet or subscribe to Volumes 1 and 2 for all 26!

### Introduction

Welcome to Day 6 of 'Your Roadmap to Speaking Exam Success'. What follows are some suggestions to help you use your time as profitably as possible.

What better and easier way to start than speaking to yourself? OK, not in public or you may get some strange looks, but when you find yourself alone you have the perfect opportunity to practise for the long turn in your exam.

1) Try an oral diary - at the end of each day talk about 2 things that happened that you feel good about, 2 things you wished you'd done better. This is good practice in past tenses and in speculating with the use of conditionals and modals such as: 'I wish ...', 'If only ...' 'I should have ...'.

2) There's a popular radio show on the BBC called 'Just a minute' where guests have to speak for one minute on a given subject. Try this yourself - it's great practice in timing yourself ready for the exam and will give you lots of practice in speaking at length on a subject. Write a series of statements on different cards. For example:

*Everyone should become a vegetarian.*

*People are too materialistic.*

*Describe the best place you've ever visited.*

You could simply come up with very general terms to talk about such as: 'skateboards', 'happiness', 'window shopping' etc.

With the timer ready, pick a card at random and get speaking!

3) If you're studying for an exam like CAE which asks you to describe or comment on photographs, practise using graphics from magazines or newspapers. Give your talk a simple structure:

A) Introduce the photo(s) with a statement on the general theme or subject matter. For example, 'This/These photo(s) show(s) .....

B) Describe what you can see. For example, in the foreground ... in the background, on the left ....

C) Practise speculating on what might be going on or what might have led up to the scene(s). For example: 'The people might be ...', 'It's possible that ...'.

4) When speaking with your new contacts an obvious activity will be some 'getting to know you' conversations. Concentrate on giving full answers to your partner's questions and remember to help the conversation along by asking your partner questions and showing interest in what they say. The examiner is likely to ask you about your family, your studies, any hobbies or interests you have and topic-specific questions if you're doing a business or professional exam. Make sure you cover similar subjects in your practice session.

5) Each week we publish a free 'Get Speaking' Task Sheet on the Splendid Speaking website for teachers to use in class. However, if you're working independently and use tools like Skype for speaking practice, you'll benefit from the structure and tips the Task Sheets offer as well as the topic vocabulary supporting each task.

**Get Speaking!**  
Improving your communication skills and confidence in English  
www.splendid-speaking.com

**SUPPORTING THIS TASK** → The Splendid Speaking Course  
Volume 2 Unit 1: TOP TALKS

**Unit 1: The World of Music**  
Task: Presentation (1-2 minutes)

**1. Introduction:** Read the following newspaper extract and prepare a presentation outlining the importance of music in our lives.

**Harmony restored**  
Workers at a clothing factory are singing the praises of their bosses who have gone back as a disc jockey. However, the decision to limit the playing of music during working hours had harder and raised their productivity.

**2. Planning:** Spend 1 minute making notes. If it helps, use any of the following questions as the basis of your talk.  
What social or cultural significance does music have?  
In what ways can music benefit the individual?  
To what extent does music play an important role in your life?

**3. Task focus:** Try organising your talk around three main points. People often find it easy to remember and present things in threes, and using this rule of three strategy can help both you and your audience. You could deal briefly with the three issues above or focus on one issue and give three detailed examples in the main body of your talk.

**4. Language:** Tick any of the vocabulary or phrases on the left you want to use in your talk.

**Task: Discussion (15 minutes)**  
As part of a student panel you've been asked to discuss the following:  
Is the popularity of traditional music from your country being undermined by the spread of American or British pop music?  
Consider the effect across generations, the role of channels like MTV, the choice of language for vocals etc.

**LANGUAGE**  
Topic vocabulary:  
A genre of music  
Musical (that particular music)  
To sing or to sing out loud  
To have a high voice  
To have a high note  
To appear on stage  
To get into the great music  
A new wave of talent  
To make an impact  
To succeed  
To perform  
To be a star  
"It has come with that..."  
If you see with you can do it  
It's not just the music that  
It's about the people who  
It's about the people who  
It's about the people who  
It's about the people who

**RECORDING**  
Listen to a CD from  
Remember taking on a  
a similar subject. See the  
the CD and the  
[RECORDING] at  
splendid-speaking.com

**Need all 26  
'Get Speaking'  
Task Sheets?**

**Download  
'Get Speaking'  
Volumes 1 and 2  
on the Splendid  
Speaking  
website**

6) For exam practice you'll find sample questions in the exam handbook available from the exam board website. Don't forget to try our own sample questions on the Splendid Speaking website – see the task below.

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## **Task**

- 1) Download our Get Speaking Task Sheet to help you with topics to speak about.  
[www.splendid-speaking.com/products/tasksheet.html](http://www.splendid-speaking.com/products/tasksheet.html)
- 2) Sign up for our weekly newsletter for an email with news of the latest task sheet.  
[www.splendid-speaking.com/subscribe1.html](http://www.splendid-speaking.com/subscribe1.html)
- 3) Print the sample tasks from the exam handbook or from the Splendid Speaking website.  
[www.splendid-speaking.com/exams/index.html](http://www.splendid-speaking.com/exams/index.html)
- 4) Practise some of the personal actions you listed on Day 4.

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# Day 7

## Talk Successfully Online

Tips for online communication

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### Splendid Expressions



Test your advanced-level colloquial vocabulary with our daily quiz or sign up to **Splendid Expressions** for all quizzes.

### Introduction

Welcome to Day 7 of 'Your Roadmap to Speaking Exam Success'. There's never been a better time to learn a second language. New technology makes it easy to connect with others from all over the world at a time and place that suits you. However, communicating online does come with its own problems and it pays to be aware of these to make sure your online conversations go smoothly.

One significant issue is the lack of face-to-face contact when speaking online. The lack of eye contact and of body language generally will mean many of the signs and messages inherent in face-to-face communication are missing. This can sometimes cause problems, particularly if you're working in groups of three or more.

Turn-taking can be problematic as it can sometimes be difficult to know when the other person has finished speaking. If you're speaking in groups of three or more, two people can easily start speaking at once, leading to awkward negotiations regarding who should go first.

Fortunately, there are linguistic features of spoken language that act like rules to help conversation take place successfully. For example, intonation at the end of an utterance will rise or fall to show the speaker has finished. The speaker might say something like: 'Do you know what I mean?', 'Yeah?', 'You know?' with rising intonation at the end to show they're happy to hand over to their partner. If you're working in groups of three or more, turn taking will be helped even further if you name the person you're aiming the question at rather than leaving it open to the group.

These tips are particularly useful for online communication, but they're helpful communication tools in their own right and being able to use them effortlessly will be further evidence of your communication skills in the exam.

Of course, you'll need to be aware of the different time zones around the world and avoid contacting someone early in the morning or late at night. One useful website is: [www.worldtimezones.com](http://www.worldtimezones.com)

Communication tools such as Skype will usually have a text as well as a voice feature and it's always best to make contact with someone first with a text message rather than calling their voice chat immediately. Your contact will appreciate the warning and this will give them time to get ready to talk or to let you know if they're not available at that time.

### TIP!

It's a good idea to wear a pair of headphones when talking online. If you don't, your partner will hear both your voice and their own coming back to them. And it's worth spending time experimenting with how far away from your mouth the microphone needs to be. If it's too far away, you'll come across very faint; too close and there'll be lots of 'pops' and distortion.

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## Task

1) If you haven't yet spoken to someone online, arrange your first meeting and test your equipment. Ask your partner if they can hear you clearly. Before you log off from the computer make a note of how everything was set up to make sure your next conversation is successful.

2) Listen to some of our recordings on Splendid Speaking that feature 2 students and decide how well the participants dealt with turn-taking.  
[www.splendid-speaking.com/products/listen.html](http://www.splendid-speaking.com/products/listen.html)

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# Day 8

## Get a Progress Report

How to get feedback on your speaking skills

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### Feedback Suggestions



Try our guides for help in how to get feedback on your speaking skills

### Introduction

Welcome to Day 8 of 'Your Roadmap to Speaking Exam Success'. The more time you spend practising your English independently the more you'll want feedback on your progress and today we'll look at how to go about getting this.

They may not be an expert, but your partner will still be able to tell you whether they followed your talk clearly, whether they had any problems understanding anything you said and whether they felt you took part enough during a discussion. To help you give structured feedback to each other you could use our grading sheet on Splendid Speaking and discuss the various categories at the end of your meeting.

Agree with your partner to focus on particular functions such as agreeing and disagreeing, dealing with interruptions or asking for clarification. You may decide to assess on one or more of the personal actions you listed in Day 4 such as practising fluency, initiating discussion or structuring a long turn. Doing this will mean you'll have something focussed to talk about with your partner at the end of your talk when you give feedback to each other on how well it went.

When speaking online, Skype and other online communication tools will allow you to work in groups of three, which gives you the chance to use a third person in the role of assessor. This person should not take part in the speaking activity but simply listen and make notes about your own and your partner's performance. Again, you can use our grading sheet for guidance or ask the 'assessor' to give you feedback on any of the personal actions you identified in Day 4.

If you're looking for expert feedback from a teacher new technology can offer opportunities for this too. One solution is to post an audio file online for others to listen to. The simplest way to do this is to record yourself on one of the many services like Podomatic, Voicethread, Springdoo or Voki. You could even video yourself doing a long turn and upload this to Youtube. Once your audio or video file is live you can email someone a link to your recording for feedback. This could be a teacher who has agreed to listen or you could invite listeners to leave feedback in the comments area of the service.

### TIP!

Some services will allow you to keep your file secret from casual browsers and only allow named people to listen. Also, before posting the final audio or video file, make sure the service allows you to delete anything you create and try uploading and deleting a file first so you can learn how to do it.

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## Task

- 1) Download our grading sheet for guidelines on giving and receiving feedback:  
[www.splendid-speaking.com/products/task\\_sheets/grade.html](http://www.splendid-speaking.com/products/task_sheets/grade.html)
- 2) To post your audio file as a podcast see our guide to podcasting here:  
[www.splendid-speaking.com/extras/english\\_speaking\\_practice.html](http://www.splendid-speaking.com/extras/english_speaking_practice.html)
- 3) Other sites mentioned above where you can record yourself include:  
Podomatic  
[www.podomatic.com](http://www.podomatic.com)  
Voicethread  
[www.voicethread.com](http://www.voicethread.com)  
Voki  
[www.voki.com](http://www.voki.com)  
Youtube  
[www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)

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# Day 9

## Tips for the Big Day

Some final advice for a successful exam

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### The Splendid Speaking Course



Shortlisted for the  
British Council  
ELTON  
Award!

### Introduction

That's it ... we've come to the end of our 9-day mini-course. We hope you've found it useful and we've encouraged you to practise your speaking skills as often and as efficiently as possible.

Please get in touch if you have questions about anything we've covered ... or anything we haven't. And let us know how you do in your exam - we love to hear from our visitors. To finish, here are some final tips for the exam day:

#### In general

- 1) Listen carefully to instructions and questions.
- 2) Don't be afraid to ask for clarification if you don't understand something.
- 3) Smile and make frequent eye-contact with the examiner and your partner if you have one.
- 4) Avoid nervous habits like playing with your hair or biting your lip.
- 5) Don't apologise for feeling nervous! Be positive!

#### Conversations, discussions and role plays

- 1) Give full answers to questions when appropriate and avoid unhelpful 'yes' and 'no' responses.
- 2) When giving an opinion back it up with an example or justification.
- 3) If you're working with a partner, remember to listen as well as speak and show interest in what your partner has to say.
- 4) Be prepared to get or keep the conversation going by asking your partner questions.
- 5) During role plays work cooperatively with your partner by acknowledging points they make and avoid trying to be the one who comes up with the 'best' ideas.

## Long turns

- 1) Keep to the topic.
- 2) Structure your talk with a clear introduction main body and conclusion and use signposting words and expressions to guide the listener through your talk.
- 3) Deliver the talk with passion and conviction, using examples or a (short) personal anecdote to make a point.
- 4) We often speak quickly when we're feeling nervous so try to focus on speaking clearly and take time to pause for breath!
- 5) If you're being examined in pairs listen carefully to your partner's long turn as you may be asked to comment on what they've said.

## Finally ... would you like an easier and more effective way to improve your speaking skills and confidence as the Exam day approaches?

It's true ... there are skills, techniques and spoken language you can learn and practise that really WILL help you face the exam day with increased confidence.

Visit the Splendid Speaking website to find out more about **The Splendid Speaking Course**:

[www.splendid-speaking.com/products/exams.html](http://www.splendid-speaking.com/products/exams.html)

The screenshot shows a presentation slide titled "Unit 1: Introductions with Impact". The slide is divided into two rows of four sub-topics each. The top row includes "Introduction", "Objectives", "Lead In", and "15-Second Intros". The bottom row includes "Non-Verbal Communication", "Education Collocations", "Intensifying Adverbs", and "Connect to Practise". The slide is part of an "articulate POWERED PRESENTATION" and is currently on "SLIDE 2 OF 46".

# Appendix

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## Day 2 & 3

### Advanced-level handbooks

CAE (Certificate in Advanced English)

[www.cambridgeesol.org/resources/teacher/cae.html](http://www.cambridgeesol.org/resources/teacher/cae.html)

CPE (Certificate of Proficiency in English)

[www.cambridgeesol.org/resources/teacher/cpe.html](http://www.cambridgeesol.org/resources/teacher/cpe.html)

BEC Higher (Business English Certificate)

[www.cambridgeesol.org/exams/professional-english/bec.html](http://www.cambridgeesol.org/exams/professional-english/bec.html)

BULATS (Business Language Testing Service)

[www.bulats.org/handbook/index.php](http://www.bulats.org/handbook/index.php)

IELTS (International English Language Testing System)

[www.ielts.org/downloads.aspx](http://www.ielts.org/downloads.aspx)

ILEC: (International Legal English Certificate)

[www.legalenglishtest.org/downloads.php](http://www.legalenglishtest.org/downloads.php)

ICFE (International Certificate in Financial English)

[www.financialenglish.org/learning\\_mat.php](http://www.financialenglish.org/learning_mat.php)

## Day 3: Answers to Assessment Criteria Quiz

Q1

Grammar and vocabulary

- A) range
- B) accurate
- C) appropriate
- D) effective

Discourse management

- A) coherently
- B) complexity
- C) extent
- D) relevant.

Pronunciation

- A) stress
- B) rhythm
- C) intonation
- D) sounds

Interactive Communication

- A) initiate
- B) hesitation
- C) turn taking
- D) repair

Q2

- A) Discourse Management
- B) Interactive Communication
- C) Grammar and Vocabulary
- D) Discourse Management
- E) Pronunciation
- F) Interactive Communication
- G) Pronunciation
- H) Grammar and Vocabulary