Introducing yourself

There are many business situations where you have to introduce yourself and talk about your company and job, for example at meetings, training courses, workshops, and conferences. Introductions can be very difficult, particularly in another language. The language used is fairly formal and the following section will help you be prepared for this. Many of these phrases are also useful in other situations, for example, when socialising.

Different ways of introducing yourself

Examples

Good morning everyone. My name is Susanne Faulhaber from CSF Systems in Berlin. We develop and market software for the travel industry. I joined the company in 2004. I'm responsible for the company's international sales, which means that I spend most of my time travelling throughout Europe. I manage a team of 6 people.

I'm Bernd Schönfelder, Product Manager at Amitek GmbH, where I have been working since 2001. Amitek produces parts for the automotive industry. We are based in Munich and we are one of the largest engineering companies in Bavaria. Before joining Amitek, I worked for a smaller engineering company in Ingolstadt. I'm married with two children aged 4 and 8.

I'm Jens Bauer and I work for Arabella Services in Hamburg. The company plans and manages corporate events for large multinational companies. I work in operations and I am responsible for ensuring that events run smoothly and within budget. I have worked at Arabella Services since leaving college in 2005. Hamburg is a great place to live because in my free time I can get into my boat and go sailing. And it gives me the opportunity to go swimming and listen to some great jazz in my free time.

Your name and company

– My name is ... / I´m ...

– I work for ... *(not "am working for")*

– I'm sales manager for ... (*you are the only sales manager*)

– I'm an account manager at ... (*you are one of several account managers*)

– The company produces software / machines / ...

– We develop (*or:* we market) ...

– I'm a freelance consultant / journalist.

Your work and responsibilities

– I'm responsible for European operations / I look after ...

– I work in banking. (*alternatives:* marketing, sales, accounting, product development, research, HR etc.)

– I manage a team of 8 people.

– I support our sales team.

– My job involves ...

– I report to the Business Development Director.

Job titles

It is often difficult to translate German job titles and you may have to use a different job title when talking in English. The most important thing is to choose a title that reflects your position and level of responsibility. You will find that the word "manager" is used more often in English than in German. In international business, a manager title is normal if you are the only person responsible for a particular key

function or activity in your company; for example "Marketing Communications Manager" instead of "Marketing Communications Specialist".

How long you have been with your current company

– I have been working for Whitehouse Electronics since 2003 / for 4 years.
– I have worked at Whitehouse Electronics since 2003. (*not "am working at"*)
– I joined Whitehouse Electronics in 2003.

About you personally

– In my free time I enjoy reading, cooking and playing the piano.
– Outside of work I enjoy in-line skating and Nordic walking.
– I'm very keen on football and support our local team.
– I'm married with two children and live in Kiel.

The use of first names when talking to colleagues, business partners and even customers is standard practice (normal) throughout the English-speaking world. It does not imply any special relationship. Using only your family name / surname may create barriers in business relationships. When introducing yourself or meeting someone for the first time, it is recommended to use both your first and family name. Many English speakers will then automatically address you by your first name; others may continue to use your family name until invited to call you by your first name. To invite someone to call you by your first name, simply say, for example, "Please call me Gabi"; or to ask someone if it is OK to use their first name, "May I call you David?".

Useful vocabulary:

Please note that the German translations given in this TaschenGuide relate only to the specific situations described in the sections where they appear.

socialising:	unter Leuten sein / Kontakte knüpfen / Kontakte pflegen
market something:	etwas vermarkten oder verkaufen
automotive industry:	Automobilbranche
corporate events:	Firmenveranstaltungen

Telephoning

Despite the growth in email, many customers still prefer to talk to someone personally, rather than communicate in writing; it's often quicker to resolve a problem this way and helps to build good customer relationships. English speakers put particular importance on "politeness" when telephoning. This section provides you with the necessary phrases and vocabulary to make telephoning fun and effective.

Calling someone

When making a telephone call it's advisable to be well prepared! If your call involves discussing figures or dates, spend a few moments thinking about how to say them in English before you dial. Telephoning is sometimes difficult because we are not able to use non-verbal communication or body language to help us.