



All Ears English Episode 137:

Be More Likeable with These Six English Phrases

Gabby: This is an All Ears English Podcast, Episode 137: “Be More Likeable with These Six English Phrases.”

[Instrumental]

Gabby: Welcome to the All Ears English Podcast, where you’ll finally get real, native English conversation with your hosts, Lindsay McMahon, the ‘English Adventurer’ and Gabby Wallace, the ‘Language Angel,’ from Boston, USA.

[Instrumental]

Gabby: Lindsay, I’ve been reading our reviews on the iTunes store and I’m so happy.

Lindsay: Oh.

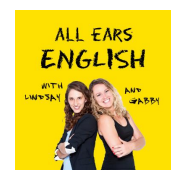
Gabby: (I mean), I love hearing what our listeners think about the podcast.

Lindsay: Oh, it’s amazing. It makes everything feel so worth it. We work so hard; we work hard for you guys and we really want to know what you think.

Gabby: Absolutely. And it’s a great way to practice your English, right?

Lindsay: There you go.

Gabby: Typing us a little message on iTunes, we’d love to see it.



Lindsay: So please go ahead on over to your iTunes store and leave a review for All Ears English. We'll be checking for them. Thanks guys.

[Instrumental]

Lindsay: Do you want people to like you when you speak English? Use these six phrases and you'll have lots of friends in your English life.

[Instrumental]

Gabby: Hey, Lindsay.

Lindsay: Hey.

Gabby: How's it going?

Lindsay: I'm doing good, I'm doing well. Thank you.

Gabby: Awesome.

Lindsay: And I'm especially doing really well because I just realized we have gone past three million downloads.

Gabby: What?

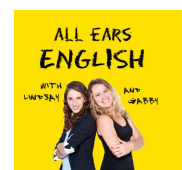
Lindsay: Isn't that awesome?

Gabby: Three million downloads. Everybody who's listening, I'm giving you a virtual high-five right now. Thank you for helping us reach more than three million downloads.

Lindsay: Wow! Thanks so much for coming back every day to listen to this, guys. And if you're not subscribed, you should join the party, join the club. Subscribe to our All Ears English Podcast and keep coming back.

Gabby: Awesome. That's great news.

Lindsay: So Gabby, what can I say to make people like me? I'm having social problems.



Gabby: (Uh), okay. There's a lot of, (um), joke answers I could give you, but (um), seriously there are some phrases that will go farther.

Lindsay: (Hm).

Gabby: And (uh), Lindsay, you showed me an article about this. I thought it was really interesting. (Um), that article was from what, smallbusiness.yahoo.com. And the title...

Lindsay: Yeah, from Inc. magazine, I think.

Gabby: Inc magazine.

Lindsay: Yeah.

Gabby: Oh, okay.

Lindsay: (Um-hm). Yeah.

Gabby: "Nineteen Words That Will Make People Like You More."

Lindsay: Yeah, so...

Gabby: Interesting.

Lindsay: Yeah, we went over them and we decided which ones we agree with and don't agree with...

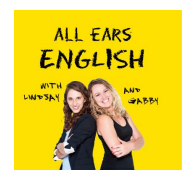
Gabby: (Uh-huh).

Lindsay: ...and we've added a couple of our own.

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: So let's start with our own.

Gabby: Yeah, great. So one tip that, that we, (um), we want to, to use is just asking someone else, "How 'bout (about) you?" (You know), (um), obviously this is for the middle of a conversation, not the beginning or the end. But when you're talking with someone, you're having a conversation, just show that you're interested in them. Ask "How 'bout (about) you?"



Lindsay: Yeah. It's so easy to ask this because it could come at the end of any statement that you make.

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: Right. So simple and so natural. And this will also allow you to take the focus off of yourself...

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: ...if you're feeling awkward. Again, we talk about connecting with people, always put it back in their corner.

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: "How 'bout (about) you?"

Gabby: Yeah. "How 'bout (about) you?" All right. Great. So, there's another tip, (um)...

Lindsay: Yeah, (I mean), I really like it when people use, (uh), my name.

Gabby: Right.

Lindsay: Because it's the most beautiful sound in the English language in my opinion.

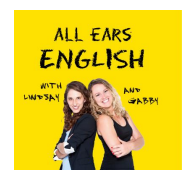
Gabby: Yeah, I wish my name was Lindsay too. (Uh), but it's not. Oh man. Okay. But seriously if you use someone's name, it shows that you really care, you care enough to remember their name and use it to show them that you care. So in the beginning of the conversation, "Oh, nice to meet you, Lindsay."

Lindsay: Yeah.

Gabby: At the end of the conversation, "It was great talking with you, Lindsay."

Lindsay: Right. Or, "So, Lindsay, what do you think about this?"

Gabby: Yeah.



Lindsay: Or, "So, Gabby, how 'bout (about) you?" Right. So always inserting their name, even if it...

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: ...feels awkward to you; to them it feels great.

Gabby: Great. Well, I know what you guys are thinking, "What if you forgot their name?"

Lindsay: Yeah.

Gabby: So, what I do, because this happens a lot to me actually, is I'm not afraid to ask for their name again, if I forgot it. So, (um), so I'll, I'll say, "Oh, I'm, I'm really sorry, what was your name again?" (Uh), (I mean), this is for the first time I meet someone. I don't know. Do you disagree?

Lindsay: No, I agree, it's just that sometimes I forget, after asking twice.

Gabby: Okay. Well, there's a trick for that. I have a trick for that as well.

Lindsay: Oh, my gosh. You write it on your hand?

Gabby: No, no. I try to associate or connect the person's name with something. So, (um), for example, (like), (uh), let's say John and (um), I don't know. Okay, so this is (kind of weird), but let's say the guy named John is, is not a tall man. He's a, he's a, he's a short man and then there's, there's a rapper in America named Lil' (little) Jon.

Lindsay: Wow.

Gabby: So, I might associate John with Lil' (little) Jon. Okay. I'm just...

Lindsay: Hey, it works.

Gabby: (You know), it works. This is where my brain goes. I'm sorry to bring you there but you have to make a connection with something you already know...

Lindsay: Yeah.



Gabby: ...to remember new information. And that's the scientific fact.

Lindsay: Right. And that's something that can work not only for remembering names but for learning English. Right?

Gabby: That's right.

Lindsay: We've talked about this before, setting up acronyms, setting up mental associations...

Gabby: Yes.

Lindsay: ...to learn. Okay.

Gabby: Absolutely.

Lindsay: The next one is one that we don't agree with. Gabby and I have both decided we completely disagree with this.

Gabby: (Um).

Lindsay: (Um), but it was presented in, in the article. (Um), they said that using "Sir" and "Ma'am" are great ways to make people like you.

Gabby: Yeah.

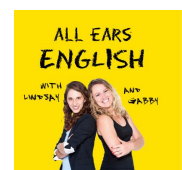
Lindsay: Why do we disagree?

Gabby: I disagree because in the US, it's too formal. It's really too formal. Now you'll hear people using "Sir" and "Ma'am" more often in the South, in the southern region of the US. However, up here in Boston, in New York, on the west coast, this is too formal. It's going to make you sound, (uh), stuck up or, or its gonna (going to) make you sound too, just too formal.

Lindsay: I think it has more of a submissive connotation to it...

Gabby: (Hm).

Lindsay: ...actually. I think it's not as much stuck up, but more submissive. More like saying...



Gabby: Okay.

Lindsay: ...I'm below you. So I'm...

Gabby: Right.

Lindsay: ...calling you "Ma'am," or I'm calling you "Sir."

Gabby: It's just not common.

Lindsay: Yeah.

Gabby: Whatever the connotation is, it's not common and I personally would, would never use this unless I wanted to show a great amount of, of respect, (um), which happens. (I mean), (uh), just the other day, I did say, "Yes, sir," because I wanted to be polite. And I don't mean to contradict myself but, (um), (you know), it's, it's very occasional, very rare that I would use this.

Lindsay: Yeah. And just remember this is really, (um), cultural, cultural in the sense of regional cultures. And so urban -- in urban areas you wouldn't hear this in the Northeast...

Gabby: Right.

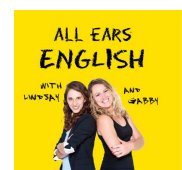
Lindsay: ...the west coast, you wouldn't hear this but in the south and more rural areas, in the south, you would hear it.

Gabby: Also, I cringe when people say this to me. I do not like when people say, "Thank you ma'am," because 'ma'am' is usually an older woman.

Lindsay: (Mm-hm).

Gabby: Okay, it's showing respect for someone older than you. I am not an older woman. Thank you. Okay. So what about some other phrases, (um), other phrases that we agree with? "You're welcome." "Thank you," "You're welcome," "Please," and "Thank you's."

Lindsay: "You're welcome" as opposed to "No Problem." Why?



Gabby: Well, these are two different ways of saying the same thing. “You’re welcome”, “No problem.” But “No problem” -- it’s implying that it wasn’t a big deal.

Lindsay: Yeah. And what does that mean about what you just did for that person? It means it didn’t mean anything to you. So it really wasn’t that nice of a thing to do.

Gabby: No effort.

Lindsay: So, you’re saying, “Oh, it wasn’t a big deal.”

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: When you’re saying, when you say, “You’re welcome,” it’s more like you’re not making a judgment of what, about what you’ve done, you’re just saying, “You’re welcome.”

Gabby: Yeah.

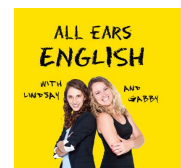
Lindsay: It’s very simple, very neutral.

Gabby: Yeah. So we prefer “You’re welcome.” (Um), there’s a couple of other phrases that I think we added to the list (like) (um) -- well, no, one, one phrase that was on the list was “How can I help you?” And another, (uh), phrase is, that we added is “What would you like me to do?”

Lindsay: (Uh-huh).

Gabby: So, (um), I had an experience just, (uh), about a week ago. I was on an airplane coming back from Hawaii and, (uh), the person sitting next to me was trying to tell me something or ask me something. I didn’t understand; it was all very indirect. And, and I, I really didn’t know what he wanted. So I just, I, I paused (uh), when, when he stopped talking, I said, “I’m sorry, (um), what would you like me to do,” trying to get some clarification. And I guess he understood, finally, that he just needed to be direct and he said, “Oh, would you mind changing seats with me?” It was “Oh, okay. Sure.”

Lindsay: Yeah, that’s interesting.



Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: “So how can I help you,” is also a phrase that you’re gonna hear when you go into a store, right? But that’s a little bit different.

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: So, we’re talking about more in conversational context.

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: Not in shopping contexts.

Gabby: Right. Right.

Lindsay: Yeah.

Gabby: Right. Exactly. So this might be a good phrase for -- you’re, you’re out with colleagues, you’re out with friends, (um), and, (uh), (you know), maybe you see some, some need for help. You can, you can just ask, “Oh, how can I help you?”

Lindsay: Yeah.

Gabby: Or just ask specifically, for example, “Can I help you with your bags?” (Uh), (you know), when, when Lindsay came over to record this morning, she had (like), ten bags and I said, “Oh, can I give you a hand?”

Lindsay: Yeah, I travel heavy.

Gabby: Now she likes me ‘cause (because) I asked her. I used the magic words.

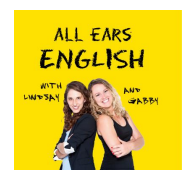
Lindsay: So helpful. You know how to do it.

Gabby: Was there anything else on the list, (um), or was that it?

Lindsay: I think that was it.

Gabby: Okay, let’s...

Lindsay: Those are...



Gabby: ...let's review them.

Lindsay: All right. Cool. So...

Gabby: So the first one was "How about you?"

Lindsay: (Mm-hm). And then using their name.

Gabby: (Mm-hm). The third one is, is we say don't use "Sir" or "Ma'am."

Lindsay: Right.

Gabby: Right.

Lindsay: And we say, (uh), saying "You're welcome" instead of "No problem."

Gabby: Yep. And then "How can I help you?" or "What would you like me to do?"

Lindsay: Excellent. Very useful.

Gabby: Yeah.

[Instrumental]

Lindsay: Thanks, guys.

[Instrumental]

Lindsay: If you wanna (want to) put your ears into English more often, be sure to subscribe to our podcast in iTunes on your computer or on your smartphone. Thanks so much for listening and see you next time.

