



All Ears English Episode 142:

Skype Me Maybe: Top 3 Don'ts for Meeting English Speakers Online

Gabby: This is an All Ears English Podcast, Episode 142: "Skype Me Maybe: Top 3 Don'ts for Meeting English Speakers Online."

[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]

Lindsay: So, Gabby, how can our listeners become insiders with All Ears English?

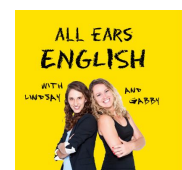
Gabby: Go to www.AllEarsEnglish.com/100. It's 1-0-0.

Lindsay: What can they get there?

Gabby: That's where you get on our email list, our insider list, where we have conversations with you on email and even sometimes on Skype.

Lindsay: But it's not just getting on the list, there's something even more awesome, there, that they can get, right?

Gabby: That's right, because 100 means "100 Most Common Phrases in the English Language," an e-book that we made just for you.



Lindsay: Super useful and up till (until) today, (uh), 900 people have downloaded this e-book. So it's awesome.

[Instrumental]

Lindsay: In this episode, learn the top three mistakes that might be killing your connections with Americans before they even start.

[Instrumental]

Gabby: Hey, Lindsay. What's up?

Lindsay: I'm doing great, Gabby. So do you wanna (want to) – I, I hear you're working on your English. Are you working on your English?

Gabby: Yes.

Lindsay: Okay.

Gabby: I'm working on my English.

Lindsay: Okay. Great.

Gabby: And actually, (um), I was wondering if you would be able to meet, (uh), me online to, (like), practice English sometime.

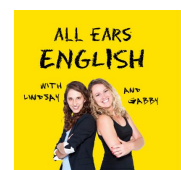
Lindsay: Oh, okay. Sure. I'd be happy to, to do that with you. And, and here are three times that I'm available: next Friday at 2:00, next Saturday at 1:00 or next Sunday at 9 p.m. So just let me know. If you wanna (want to) go home and look at your schedule, just let me know what time works for you and get back to me.

Gabby: Well, just, (um), give me your Skype ID and I'll see you there sometime.

Lindsay: (Um)... Oh, that's kinda (kind of) weird. So actually what do you mean by sometime? (I mean)...

Gabby: (I mean)...

Lindsay: I, I do...



Gabby: ...(like), (you know), if I happen to be online, then I'll send you a message.

Lindsay: (Um), okay. So, that doesn't really work for me so much, to be honest.
(Um), actually, (you know), I'm -- and my job is teaching English and my, my, my day is busy, to be honest. So I really...

Gabby: Oh.

Lindsay: I need to know the time because, (you know), I'm, I have other people to meet with and I have things to do. So what time...

Gabby: Okay.

Lindsay: ...could you meet?

Gabby: Oh, what, what was that? The first time you said?

Lindsay: Friday at 2:00.

Gabby: Yeah, maybe. I can maybe do that. Maybe.

Lindsay: Maybe?

Gabby: Yeah, Friday at 2:00 maybe. I don't know, I might have something else going on. But if I don't...

Lindsay: (Um).

Gabby: If I'm, if I'm free, then I'll see you then, maybe.

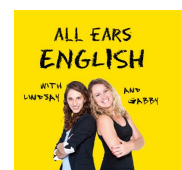
Lindsay: (Um), okay. Now, I'm confused. So I think I'm just gonna (going to) move on to another student. (Um), anyways, good luck with your English. But...

Lindsay: Okay, guys...

Gabby: Wow.

Lindsay: That's a realistic picture of what's happened a few times or what could happen.

Gabby: Right.



Lindsay: (Um), and this issue involves culture, it involves language, it involves a misunderstanding...

Gabby: Absolutely.

Lindsay: ...and a difference in the way we conduct our schedules.

Gabby: Right. So we know that, (um), when you're learning a language, one great tool is to meet people online to exchange language, (right), to practice English. And a lot of people are using Skype or Google Hangouts. And, (um), in order to meet someone online, you have to make some kind of plan, right. (Um), but, but there's an issue here because, (uh), some cultures are more, (um), time-oriented, (right). Some, some might have a little loser vision of time and scheduling. So when you're scheduling to practice or when you want to practice English, (uh), online, we have, we have some suggestions...

Lindsay: Yeah.

Gabby: ...some advice. We'd like to share our top three don'ts, which I exhibited in this, (uh), conversation here trying to schedule...

Lindsay: Yeah.

Gabby: ...some practice with Lindsay.

Lindsay: Yeah. Gabby made a lot of mistakes here.

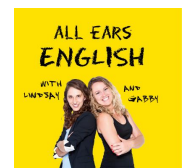
Gabby: Oh man! So our first tip is not setting. This is what not to do, right?

Lindsay: This is the mistake...

Gabby: The mistake.

Lindsay: ...you might be making.

Gabby: A mistake you might be making is not setting a specific time. What's wrong with not setting a specific time?



Lindsay: Okay. So, this is from my perspective as an English speaker, as an American person. The way I feel when you respond to my e-mail like that and you say, "Oh, (um) I'm not sure what time. I'll just -- maybe I'll see you on Skype." I feel like, (um), it's rude.

Gabby: It's not important to the person, right?

Lindsay: (Like), you don't really care about...

Gabby: Right.

Lindsay: ...practicing because...

Gabby: Right.

Lindsay: ...if you cared, then you would actually set a time.

Gabby: That's right.

Lindsay: You would be very conscientious about the time.

Gabby: That's right.

Lindsay: And it feels flaky.

Gabby: Right.

Lindsay: What's flaky?

Gabby: (Like), you're not a responsible or reliable person. Now, I understand that you don't always know what's going to happen with your schedule. Things come up...

Lindsay: (Uh-hm).

Gabby: ...(right)...

Lindsay: (Uh-hm), (uh-hm).

Gabby: ...things change. And I, I think maybe that's why some people are reluctant to schedule something definitely because if you schedule, (uh), let's say, Friday at 1 o'clock and then something happens...



Lindsay: Yeah.

Gabby: ...and you can't make it, then that's really offensive, right?

Lindsay: Right.

Gabby: But, (um), we, we can't take it seriously...

Lindsay: Right.

Gabby: ...if you don't schedule a specific time.

Lindsay: Yeah.

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: So the recommendation here is if you think there could be anything that would interfere with your ability to meet with the person, your partner...

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: ...whoever it is on Skype at that time, don't even schedule a time at that time.

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: Schedule time that you know you will be in front of the computer.

Gabby: Right.

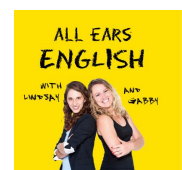
Lindsay: And if there aren't any times you know you'll be in front of the computer, maybe Skype meetings are not the best option for you.

Gabby: Yeah. That's right. Maybe you need a more independent English learning program, perhaps, (you know), purchasing a course, a video course that you can watch anytime on your own time.

Lindsay: Or just the podcast, right?

Gabby: That's right.

Lindsay: Our podcast is a great way to listen on demand...



Gabby: Any time.

Lindsay: ...when you want.

Gabby: Any time. That's right. Okay. (Um), the next tip for a "don't," the next mistake...

Lindsay: (Uh-hm).

Gabby: ...is not giving enough advanced notice.

Lindsay: (Uh-hm).

Gabby: So, (um), let's say, (you know), I (want to) meet Lindsay Friday at 1 o'clock. And right now, it's Friday at 12 o'clock.

Lindsay: Yeah.

Gabby: So I write Lindsay, I say, "Okay, I'm available at 1 o'clock"...

Lindsay: Right.

Gabby: ...in, in one hour.

Lindsay: Right. Let's imagine I had sent you that, or you had sent me that e-mail three days before...

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: ...and I hadn't heard from you.

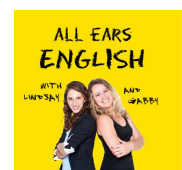
Gabby: Right.

Lindsay: Right? (Um), and then all of a sudden, it's the time or it's one hour before the time...

Gabby: Right.

Lindsay: And you're saying, "I wanna (want to) meet you at this time." Again, it's a little bit -- it's rude, it's offensive, it's...

Gabby: Right.



Lindsay: ...it's disrespectful because...

Gabby: Right.

Lindsay: ...we can't just stop what we're doing and jump on Skype.

Gabby: That's right. That's right. Exactly. So, what would be an appropriate amount of time, (uh), (like), the minimum amount of time to schedule? I, I would say, (um), a day in advance...

Lindsay: Yeah.

Gabby: ...24 hours.

Lindsay: I think 24 hours.

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: I think for scheduling and for cancelling, 24 hours.

Gabby: That's right.

Lindsay: Now, this is not just for English lessons, it's for anytime you're meeting someone.

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: Again, to practice your English or to...

Gabby: Any appointment.

Lindsay: Any kind of appointment with a colleague. Really...

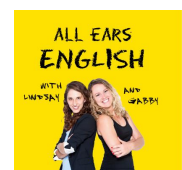
Gabby: Meeting.

Lindsay: ...any appointment when you're dealing with someone in the U.S.

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: I think we're speaking for the U.S. here.

Gabby: Yes.



Lindsay: I can't speak for England and Australia.

Gabby: Right.

Lindsay: It's for the U.S.

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: Any time you're meeting a colleague, (uh), networking opportunity on Skype, give 24 hours notice to cancel...

Gabby: Right.

Lindsay: ...and to schedule in advance.

Gabby: Just like in real life. And that leads us to the, the third mistake that you might be making is treating Skype as different than in-person, not giving a Skype meeting the same importance as meeting someone face-to-face. Remember that across that screen, there's a real person waiting for you.

Lindsay: Yeah, real person who's given up something else to meet with you.

Gabby: Exactly. So, treat your online appointments just as you would treat your real life face-to-face appointments and give them the priority that they deserve. So...

Lindsay: Yeah.

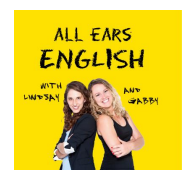
Gabby: ...so Lindsay mentioned, (you know), if you can't make it, try to cancel 24 hours in advance, right?

Lindsay: (Uh-hm).

Gabby: If something happens, an emergency, whatever, the best thing you can do is contact the person you're trying to meet as soon as possible. The worst thing you could do is not contact them...

Lindsay: Oh, god.

Gabby: ...because you feel embarrassed, or something.



Lindsay: We call that a no-show.

Gabby: Yeah. Or getting stood up.

Lindsay: Really bad. Really bad.

Both: Yeah.

Gabby: So, the, the three mistakes again, not setting a specific date, not giving enough advanced notice and not treating an online meeting as important as a face-to-face meeting. And we offered some solutions, right?

Lindsay: (Uh-hm). Yeah.

Gabby: (You know), making sure that your schedule is open and you set a specific time when you're definitely available.

Lindsay: Yeah.

Gabby: Right? At least 24 hours or one day in advance and giving that meeting the priority it deserves because online meetings are more and more frequent, and they're going to take the place, I believe they're going to take the place of face-to-face meetings...

Lindsay: Pretty soon.

Gabby: ...more and more.

Lindsay: Yeah.

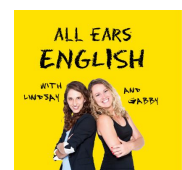
Gabby: Right.

Lindsay: And I think that success in life and business and whatever it is really comes down to getting into the head of the person you're working with.

Gabby: That's right.

Lindsay: And so, what we've given you guys today is we've given you a glimpse of the way that a lot of Americans think about scheduling.

Gabby: Right.



Lindsay: So think about how you think about scheduling and compare that to what we've just told you today and just consider that before you setup an, a meeting with someone in the U.S. "What are they gonna (going to) think about this if I don't show up?" Or, "What are they gonna (going to) think about this if I cancel..." (you know)...

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: "...an hour before?"

Gabby: Right.

Lindsay: How are they gonna (going to) feel?

Gabby: Right. And this topic is not to make you feel bad about yourself or guilty, but just to plan...

Lindsay: (Uh-huh).

Gabby: ...for success...

Lindsay: Yeah.

Gabby: ...and, and communicating with Americans.

Lindsay: Yeah. We want you guys to succeed and we're here to help you do that...

Gabby: That's right.

Lindsay: ...when it comes to the U.S.

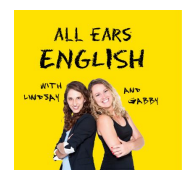
Gabby: That's right.

Lindsay: So there you go.

Gabby: If you have any questions or doubts, (like), if you want to know, (um), when is it okay to cancel a Skype meeting, leave us a comment...

Lindsay: Yeah.

Gabby: ...on our blog post, (uh), AllEarsEnglish.com/142.



Lindsay: Yeah. Perfect. See you guys soon. Thank you.

[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.

