

智能英语



BETTER WAYS
to

Communicate

交流用语

海蒂·普拉特



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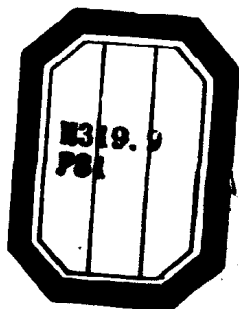
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1

How To Start



Receptionist: Yes? (*her voice rises sharply*)

Mr Janson: Yes what?

Receptionist (*impatiently*): What do you want?

Mr Janson (*irritated*): I want some courtesy — but I would also like to see your account, Mr Ng.

詹森先生被惹恼了,这完全在意料之中。和陌生人交谈时,面无表情是很糟糕的做法。面带微笑

总是没错的。当然,也有些笑被称为“牙膏广告式微笑”,看上去太做作,谁也不会相信。其实,只要对陌生人持起码的友好态度,自然就会笑得亲切。

在某些文化中,用一个词来提出问题或回答问题,是合乎习惯的。但在英语中,这样提问或回答时,必须配上正确的语调。尖锐的升调常是挑衅的信号。如果那个女孩音调稍稍降一点,并用和缓的升调,她说的“yes”(什么事?)听起来就舒服多了。

但是,最好再加上一些别的话,来表示礼貌和友好。比如:

(Yes), *may I help you?*

或者(视情况而定):

How can I help you?

May I assist you?

Can I be of assistance?

What can I do for you? (重读 *do*)

Are you looking for someone? (重读 *looking*)

在某些情况下,尤其当陌生人走进房间或走向柜台的时候,说一些友好的问候语是很好的开始。诸如

Good morning, Good afternoon

但是,话语一定要亲切自然,这样听起来才不会过于正式或老套,才像真正的问候。

和某些人的观点相反,礼貌与亲切并不互相排斥。有礼貌是给他人以某种程度的尊重,并不意味着

着用冰冷正式的语言排斥他们。接待员和其他与公众打交道的人可能会担心把话说得太亲切。像对待久未见面的朋友一样对待陌生人,还是皱着眉头上下打量他,效果完全不同。后一种方式表示你愿对他友好地微笑,不愿帮助他。

当然,如果陌生人的回答很粗鲁或过份亲热,那就另当别论。我们会在后面有关章节中,讨论如何处理这种情况。

当然,我们也不是常和陌生人说话。在很多情况下,是跟很熟悉的人谈话,比如同事、朋友或家人。不管跟谁讲话都可以使用微笑原则。微笑总比愁眉苦脸的效果好得多。愤怒、尖锐、上升的声音,会让人感觉到要有麻烦了,而且他们也会提防你。例如:

Mum! What have you done with my T-shirt?

Where's my T-shirt? (called out in a sharp strident voice)

不如说:

(in a quieter voice) Oh Mum! I can't find my T-shirt. Have you seen it anywhere?

在某些文化中,见到朋友时,经常要说一大堆客套话,要问到对方的家人、他们的健康情况等等。在说英语的国家,特别是在年轻人中,没有这种客套话。但是有一种方式很受欢迎,就是谈话一开始就表现出对别人很感兴趣,关心他们的需要或经历。这比大谈特谈自己的麻烦事要强得多。例如:

Rosemary: (*with a friendly smile*): Hi Doris!

Haven't seen you for a long time! Have you been away for a holiday?

Doris: Yes, I have. I've been to... (*or*) No, actually I was looking after Dad...

(*Doris likes Rosemary and her approach. She compares her favorably with Ann whom she had met the day before outside a department store*)

Ann: (*Looking grim and miserable, charges up to Doris*): Doris! I had the most awful experience! That woman in the BoBo boutique was so rude to me. And this wasn't the first time. I...

(*Ann hadn't seen Doris for weeks but she was obviously only interested in her own affairs*)

谈话的对象是陌生人也好,是亲密的家人也罢,我们都要以正确的方式开始谈话。实际上,在语言交流的每个环节中都要注意方式。好的开端能产生好的印象,而且做到以下几点并不难:对人微笑,避免使用尖锐的声调,体谅别人。其中最后一点是最重要的。

Why Not Explain?



Head Waiter (*abruptly*): Excuse me! (*sharp rise of the voice on 'me'*) You cannot sit here!

Jennifer (*somewhat irritated*): Oh, why not?

Head Waiter (*scowls at her*): This table is reserved.

Jennifer: Oh, is it? What about that one? (*points to the next table*)

Head Waiter (*curtly*): Also reserved. You sit over there! (*points to a table in another, less attractive section of the coffee house*)

Jennifer (*angrily*): I won't sit anywhere in this place. Come on, Josie! We'll look for another place to eat.

Josie: I don't think he meant to be rude, Jenny. Maybe he was just busy.

其实,乔丝说得对。咖啡屋的领班刚刚知道有两个女服务生不能来上班了。他必须赶快封闭一个分区的座位。由于找不到更好的方法,他只好冲到每张桌子旁,把“已预定”的牌子放在上面。

他对待詹尼弗和乔丝的方式有什么不当之处呢?有以下几点:

他开口说的第一句话“*Excuse me!*”就有问题。如果他用友好的方式、适当的语调来说,并且在说“*me*”的时候,声音缓缓上升,那么,这句话说得还算有礼貌。正如前面(第一章)提到的,使用尖锐上升的声音,表示你对别人不耐烦或很生气。正是这样的声音惹得詹尼弗生气了,特别是还加上了一句否定的命令:*You cannot sit here!* (你不能坐在这儿!)原因是:*Also reserved*. (这张桌子也被预定了。)

正如詹尼弗想的那样,这是条不可信的理由。一间空空的咖啡屋里,整整一个分区的座位都被预定了,这样的情况不是一点不可能,但是也太凑巧了。

咱们还是先来看看那个否定的命令吧。即使是孩子听到这样不加任何解释的命令也会生气:*You can't... you mustn't... you shouldn't*。他们想知道 *why* (为什么)。成年人也是如此。

解释一下不能做或禁止做某事的理由(如果理由正当的话),常常会化解别人的对立情绪,并且会开个好头。比如:

Doorman: *You can't enter the store by this door.*

Some oil was spilled on the floor near the door and we are trying to clear it.

或者更好：

Doorman: *I'm sorry, You can't enter . . . Unfortunately some oil was . . .*

再比如：

Announcement by one of the floor managers: *None of the lifts can be used at the moment . We have had a failure in the electrical system . We regret the inconvenience to our customers .*

建议提供不同的方案,例如：

Doorman: *There is another entrance to the store just around the corner .*

Floor Manager: *We hope to have everything fixed shortly but you may like to use the stairs just to your right .*

领班原本可以这样对詹尼弗说：.

Sorry, madam , we are not serving lunch in this section of the coffee house today. I'm afraid we have an unforeseen shortage of staff.

或者,如果有团体预订了座位,他也可以说些这样的话：

I'm afraid all the tables in this section have already been booked, madam. We are expecting a large party of tourists shortly.

想法没有实现时,谁都会失望。比如说,商店的门被堵住了、电梯坏了、好座位已经订出去了,等等。减少人们失望情绪的好对策就是提供其它的选择,比方说,附近有另一扇门,可以走楼梯等等。

领班还可以这样对詹尼弗和乔丝说:

Let me (May I) show you to a nice table over there.

或:

There is a nice table over there. Would you come this way, please?

他甚至可以一边领她们到座位上去一边说些这样的话:

I'm so sorry about this, but you know how it is...

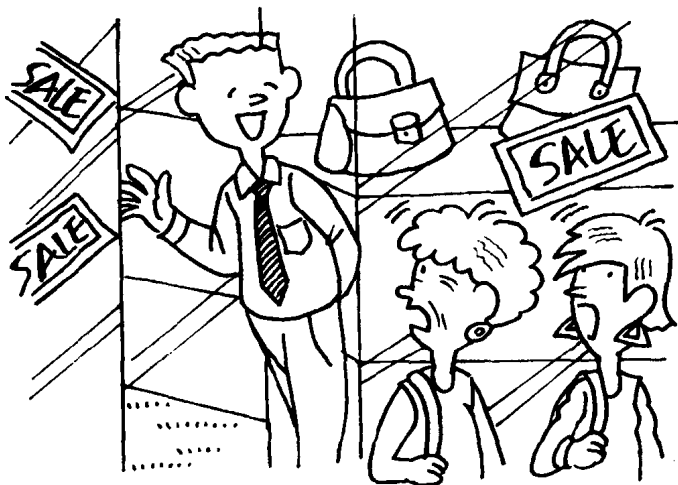
詹尼弗平时对人和气,通情达理。如果听到这样的话,她就会作出完全不同的反应:她会同情领班,和他闲聊,还会觉得他挺招人喜欢。如果得到良好的服务,两位女士很可能会同意坐到差一点的位子上去的。

但是,詹尼弗听了领班的第一句话就生气了,也不满意他唐突的举止。她的反应要比平时激烈,

事情也变得更糟了,谈话就这样嘎然而止。

在人类各种交流中,谈话的开头非常重要,因为它们会影响后面要发生的事情。交谈中,一上来就甩出命令而不加以解释或解释不够,都会惹人生气,所以要尽可能避免这种做法。

What Do I Call You?



Salesman: (*calls out*): Want to buy nice bag, auntie?

Petra to Margaret: I think he means you.

Margaret (*angrily*): That's pretty rude!

Petra: I don't think so. Shopkeepers around here often call older women 'Auntie' and younger women 'Miss'. It's quite okay.

Margaret: Well, I'm still annoyed. At least, he should have called me 'Miss'