
BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

English at Work

1: Hot desking



NB: This is not a word-for-word transcript

LANGUAGE FOCUS: Asking someone to behave differently - *I hope you don't mind me mentioning this, but..., Would you mind not (verb+ing)? Could I ask you to...? It would be great if you could...I'd really appreciate it if you...*

Narrator

Hello and welcome to English at Work. You've joined us at an exciting time in the history of Tip Top Trading – the leading manufacturer of plastic imitation fruit. There's been some restructuring and Paul, the boss, has gone and been replaced by a new dynamic manager, Anna, who has some big ideas...

Anna

Morning everyone. Hope you all had a lovely weekend...

[everyone grunts a reply]

...good, good. Now I've been thinking over the weekend...

Tom

Yeah, yeah, she has – but not about what to cook for dinner or where to go on holiday!

Anna

Hmm Tom, we might be married now but let's not talk about personal matters in the office. No as I was *trying* to say, I was thinking about how to make our life in the office better. We need to talk more...

Tom

Doesn't Denise do enough talking already?

Anna

Thank you Tom. No, I think we need to mix you all up a bit... so it's time to try hot desking.

Denise

Hot desking?! You mean not having my own desk? Just sitting at whichever one is free? I can't do that! I'd have to move my staplers and my rubbers and pens and souvenir snow globe from Egypt.

Tom

Yeah... and what about my bad back? I can't keep changing desks every day...

Narrator

Come on Anna, it's time to take control. Stop them moaning – get them to love your new idea.

Anna

But how? What can I say?

Narrator

Well, be polite but be firm and say things like...

It would be great if you could try it.

I'd really appreciate it if you could have a go for a trial period.

Anna

Right thanks – I'll have a go.

Narrator

That's the spirit Anna!

Tom

So Anna – yeah, this hot desking is your 'big idea' yeah? I've never known it work before and, quite frankly, it's going to be a disaster.

Anna

Tom, you remember when I cooked rhubarb crumble for you and you said you'd never eat anything red?

Tom

Yeah... so?

Anna

Well, you gave it a try – in the end you liked it, didn't you?

Tom

Well... erm... [lost for words]

Anna

Well, **it would be great if you could** give this idea a try.

Denise

But I like my desk – I get to look out of the window at all the hunky builders.

Tom

You don't Denise?!

Anna

Look Denise - **I'd really appreciate it if you** would have a go... for a trial period.
So come on... stand up everyone... let's hot desk. ... [small commotion/groans]

Denise

[grumpily] I'll just put my things in this box shall I...

Tom

[moving around] Denise, I'll go and sit in your chair then – just for today. [sitting down]
Ooo, your chair feels hot – is that why they call it *hot desking*?! Oi, you've left your snow globe behind. [starts to shake it] Ooh!

Denise

I'll take that thank you Tom... and what about you Anna? Are you still going to sit in your cosy warm office?

Anna

No Denise – I'm going to lead by example – I'm going to hot desk too – I'm going to sit... erm... over here... oh dear!

Narrator

Are you OK Anna – you sound shocked?

Anna

This desk is filthy – there are crumbs all over it and... old coffee cups too. Oh dear.

Narrator

I think you need to lay down some ground rules about keeping desks tidy.

Anna

Ground rules?

Narrator

The basic rules that everyone needs to follow. Tell your team...

Would you mind not eating at your desk, and...

I'd really appreciate it if you could keep your desks clean and tidy.

Anna

OK, thanks.

Anna

[to team] Excuse me everyone... if we want hot desking to work **I'd really appreciate it if you** could keep your desks clean and tidy and... **would you mind not** eating at your desk. This desk is disgusting... and... urghhh... who stuck chewing gum here?

Tom

Looks like your hot desk idea is going to stick Anna!

Narrator

What a joker! The team might not like to change but Anna's done her best to convince them to have a go with the help of these phrases...

It would be great if you could...

I'd really appreciate it if you would...

Would you mind...?

I'd really appreciate it if...

Oh dear – nobody's going to want to share a desk like that. I wonder if Anna's new idea is going to come unstuck? See you next time. Bye!