

BUYING TIME WHILE SPEAKING

B2-C1 | Functional language for pausing thoughtfully

1 Useful phrase patterns

Use these phrases to pause naturally while preparing a thoughtful response.

Let me consider that for a moment.

Let me consider that for a moment.

That's an interesting question.

That is an interesting question.

If I understand correctly, ...

If I understand correctly, you mean the launch date.

I'd need to think about that.

I would need to think about that.

Off the top of my head, ...

Off the top of my head, I'd choose the first option.

Before I answer, ...

Before I answer, may I check one detail?

There are a few points to consider.

There are a few points to consider.

I can't say for certain, but ...

I can't say for certain, but it seems likely.

2 Respond to the situations

Write one response that buys time appropriately in each situation. Try to use a range of phrases.

1. A manager asks for your view on a new strategy without warning.

2. A client asks why sales fell last month.

3. A colleague asks whether you support a proposed change.

4. You are asked to estimate the cost of a new project.

5. Someone asks you to compare two complex options.

6. A customer asks a detailed question about a contract.

7. A panel asks how you would solve a difficult workplace problem.

8. A colleague asks whether a new supplier will be reliable.

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B2-C1 | Suggested answers

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Possible answers

These are examples only. Other accurate and suitable responses are also correct.

Encourage students to use a range of phrase patterns from page 1.

1. Let me consider that for a moment before I give you a view.

2. That is an interesting question. I would need to review the figures.

3. If I understand correctly, you're asking whether I support the change.

4. I would need to think about that before estimating the cost.

5. Off the top of my head, the first option seems less risky.

6. Before I answer, may I check the relevant section of the contract?

7. There are a few points to consider before deciding on a solution.

8. I can't say for certain, but I'd check their recent reviews first.
