

BUYING TIME WHILE SPEAKING

B2-C1 | Conversation practice examples for pausing thoughtfully

Conversation: Considering an unexpected interview question

Interviewer	If you could change one thing about your previous team's working practices, what would it be?
Applicant	Let me consider that for a moment. I'd probably change how we recorded decisions after meetings.
Interviewer	Was there a particular problem with that?
Applicant	Off the top of my head , the main issue was that responsibilities were sometimes discussed but not written down.
Interviewer	What would you have introduced instead?
Applicant	Before I answer , may I check whether you mean a new tool or a change to the meeting process?
Interviewer	Either. I'm interested in what you think would have made the biggest difference.
Applicant	Then I'd start with a simple action list. A new system wouldn't help if nobody agreed who should update it.

Key phrases: Let me consider that for a moment. / Off the top of my head / Before I answer

Conversation: Responding to a broad policy question

Chair	Would a four-day working week improve productivity in our organisation?
Adviser	That's an interesting question. There are a few points to consider , including whether we're shortening hours or spreading them over fewer days.
Chair	I'm thinking of shorter hours with the same salary, not four longer days.
Adviser	If I understand correctly , we'd need to maintain the service while reducing the time each person works.
Chair	Exactly. Would you support a trial?
Adviser	I'd need to think about that. We'd have to choose a team where the effect can be measured without shifting the workload elsewhere.
Chair	Do you think such a team exists here?
Adviser	I can't say for certain, but the records team might be suitable. I'd want to speak to them before recommending it.

Key phrases: That's an interesting question. / There are a few points to consider / If I understand correctly / I'd need to think about that. / I can't say for certain, but

Create your own conversation

Choose one prompt. Use at least two key phrases and include a natural response and follow-up.

Prompt 1: Answer an unexpected interview question. Take time to think and clarify the kind of answer requested.

Prompt 2: Respond thoughtfully to a broad proposal. Clarify its meaning before giving a provisional view.