

SCHEDULING MEETINGS: TEACHER'S NOTES

OVERVIEW

One 75–90 minute lesson in three handouts: learners notice natural phrasing (Part I), correct errors (Part II), then use the language in a live scheduling role-play (Part III). The core target is **work for somebody** (*irse/venirse bien*) with the **time as the subject**: *Does Monday at 9 work for you?*, not *Does it work for you on Monday at 9?*

- **Level:** B1–B2 business English.
- **Learners:** Spanish-speaking professionals who arrange meetings by chat, email or Teams.
- **Aims:** use *work for* in present, *will* and *would* forms; ask, accept, decline and reschedule politely; avoid common Spanish-influenced calques (*fit for you, it works for me at...*).
- **Materials:** one copy of each part per learner. Keep the answer tables in Parts I and II folded under, or hand them out after the task.

PART	STAGE	TIME
I – Improving phrasing	Noticing in 4 chats, feedback, language box	25–30 min
II – Fixing mistakes	Error correction in 4 new chats	15 min
III – Speaking practice	Build a diary, then schedule meetings in pairs	30–40 min
Wrap-up	Error feedback from the role-play	5–10 min

PART I – IMPROVING PHRASING

In each of these chats, James writes naturally and the colleague replying makes one awkward choice. Learners find the reply's awkward phrase, then use their own intuition and James's messages as a model to try to fix them.

1. **LEAD-IN (3 min).** Ask: *How do you usually move a meeting? Chat, email, call? What do you write?* Note one or two learner phrases to come back to later.
2. **TASK 1 (8 min).** Learners read the four chats and underline ONE awkward phrase per chat. Tell them it is not a grammar mistake: it may just sound unnatural.
3. **PAIR CHECK (3 min).** Partners compare and suggest a better version.
4. **FEEDBACK (8 min).** Go through the answer table. For each one, point to the phrase James uses in the same chat (underlined in the table) as the model.
5. **LANGUAGE BOX (5 min).** Drill the three rows of *work for* aloud: question, yes, no. Use the Spanish only as a check of meaning, then cover it.

ANSWER KEY

CHAT	AWKWARD PHRASE	MORE NATURAL	WHY
SOPHIE (1)	<i>Is there any chance Friday morning would fit for you instead?</i>	<i>...would work for you instead?</i>	Calque of <i>te vendría bien</i> . <i>Fit</i> takes no <i>for</i> , but is still awkward; <i>suit you</i> is possible, but quite formal. Both are more like “ <i>te queda bien</i> ” for clothes
LAURA (2)	<i>Do you have availability for 30 mins tomorrow?</i>	<i>Are you free for 30 mins tomorrow at 10?</i>	Correct but stiff, like a booking system. Very Spanglish. Between colleagues, <i>Are you free</i> matches James's <i>When else are you free?</i>

CHAT	AWKWARD PHRASE	MORE NATURAL	WHY
DANIEL (3)	<i>When does it suit you to meet instead?</i>	<i>When works for you?</i>	Dummy <i>it</i> + <i>suit</i> sounds heavy. Make the time the subject, as James does: <i>When else works for you?</i> Follows Spanish S/O structure “te va bien _____” rather than “_____ te va bien”.
ELENA (4)	<i>Can you at 15:00, instead?</i>	<i>Would 15:00 work for you instead?</i>	Missing verb: <i>Can you</i> needs one (<i>Can you make 15:00?</i>). Copy James: <i>...works for you?</i> Another L1 issue, “Puedes a las 15h?” is common in Spanish.

Accept other appropriate answers: *Can you do / make 15:00?* (chat 4); *Does Friday morning suit you?*

LANGUAGE BOX AND USEFUL LANGUAGE

- **Form:** the time is the subject, so the verb agrees with it: *Monday **works** for me*, not *Monday work for me*.
- **Present, will, would:** all three are fine. *Would* is softest, for suggestions or a senior colleague. *Will* is common when confirming a plan. They map broadly onto “me va/me irá/me iría bien.”
- **Concept check:** *Does 9 work for you?* — What is the subject of *work*? (9 o’clock).
- **Useful language:** elicit each item from the chats before showing the Spanish. Watch *I can’t make it* (no assist, a false friend of *asistir*) and *actually* ($\neq$ *actualmente*; it means *la verdad*).

PART II – FIXING MISTAKES

Three of the four mistakes are the same one: Spanish-style *it* as the subject (*it works for me at 10*) where English makes the time the subject (*10 works for me*). Let learners discover this pattern rather than telling them first.

1. **Task 2 (6 min).** Learners find ONE mistake in each new chat, working alone. This time each mistake is a real error, not just awkward.
2. **Pair check (3 min).** Partners agree on a correction.
3. **Feedback (6 min).** After the answers, ask: *What do chats 2, 3 and 4 have in common?* Board the pattern: $\neq$ [time] + *work(s) for me*.

ANSWER KEY

CHAT	MISTAKE	CORRECTION	WHY
SOPHIE (1)	<i>Thursday at 10 work for me.</i>	<i>Thursday at 10 works for me.</i>	Third-person -s: the subject is <i>Thursday at 10</i> .
LAURA (2)	<i>it’ll work great for me Friday at 11</i>	<i>Friday at 11 will work great for me.</i>	Dummy <i>it</i> ; put the time first as the subject.
DANIEL (3)	<i>it won’t work for me at that time</i>	<i>That time won’t work for me.</i>	Dummy <i>it</i> ; same fix.
ELENA (4)	<i>When does it work best for you?</i>	<i>When would work best for you? / When works best for you?</i>	Dummy <i>it</i> ; <i>when</i> itself is the subject. <i>Would</i> is softer after a suggestion.

Quick follow-up: ask learners to rewrite Elena’s message using all three forms from the Part I language box (*works / will work / would work*). Then discuss which sounds most polite.

PART III – SPEAKING PRACTICE

Each learner builds a different week, then negotiates real meeting times, so the *work for* language has a genuine purpose. Lunch is fixed at 14:00–15:00 and Friday afternoon is blank, as in a Spanish *jornada intensiva*.

- Task 1 – build your week (5 min).** Learners write all twelve commitments (A–L) into their own diary, one per hourly slot, without showing anyone. They choose the times themselves. Suggest the four school runs go early or late (09:00 or 17:00) to keep it realistic.
- Model (3 min).** Schedule one meeting with a strong learner in front of the class, using a line from each column of the phrase bank. Include one *no* and one *How about... instead?*
- Task 2 – schedule (15 min).** Learners mingle, or rotate pairs every 3–4 minutes. Each learner books three one-hour meetings, each with a different partner, and writes the partner's name in the slot.
- Reschedule round (5 min).** Call out: *Something has come up!* Each learner cancels one booked meeting and messages that partner to move it, using Part I language (*I can't make..., Any chance we could reschedule?, When else works for you?*).
- Check (2 min).** Partners compare diaries: do both have the meeting in the same slot?

Monitoring: note errors on a sheet in three columns: *dummy it* (*it works for me at 10*), *missing -s* (*Monday work for me*), and *calques* (*fit for you, have availability*). Also listen for good natural lines to praise.

Variation for chat practice: run Task 2 in writing on Teams or WhatsApp, in real time, then display a few chats anonymously for class correction.

EXTENSION, HOMEWORK AND L1 ERRORS

For homework, learners rewrite one real scheduling message from their own inbox using the *work for* pattern and bring it to the next class. For a fast-finisher extension, have them write Sophie's reply to Chat 1 in three registers: a colleague, their boss, and a client.

SPANISH SPEAKERS OFTEN SAY	NATURAL ENGLISH	SOURCE OF THE ERROR
<i>It works for me at 10.</i>	<i>10 works for me.</i>	<i>Me va bien a las 10</i>
<i>Monday work for me.</i>	<i>Monday works for me.</i>	No -s in the Spanish verb ending to transfer
<i>Would Friday fit for you?</i>	<i>Would Friday work for you?</i>	<i>Te vendría bien</i>
<i>I can't assist to the meeting.</i>	<i>I can't make / attend the meeting.</i>	<i>Asistir</i> (false friend)
<i>Actually I'm in Madrid.</i> (meaning "currently")	<i>At the moment I'm in Madrid.</i>	<i>Actualmente</i> (false friend)
<i>in Monday / on Friday in the morning</i>	<i>on Monday / on Friday morning</i>	<i>El lunes</i> has no preposition
<i>the thirty of October</i>	<i>the thirtieth of October / October the 30th</i>	Spanish uses cardinal numbers in dates