

□ ANECDOTE ACCESS

Stories or news items are a good way of getting students' attention, as long as they are not used too often. This procedure, which essentially involves becoming a two-minute story-teller, is popular with Business English students and appropriate, perhaps, because of the importance given to case studies on MBA courses and in the business press.

Language any

Level intermediate and above

Time 5 minutes

Tell an anecdote about a business situation from your own life or from a business book. Alternatively, tell students about something which you have heard is happening in their company or industry and ask their opinion. Be careful to leave out names and depersonalise information which might offend or turn out to be confidential.

Variation 1

Use news stories as a basis for discussion. Distribute a copy of one or more short newspaper articles or ask students to bring newspaper articles to class themselves. (The articles can be from English or local publications. If they are written in the students' own language students will simply need to explain them in class.) Get students to summarise the article(s) – without looking – before inviting comments and encouraging discussion. Alternatively, give out extracts from business books as extra optional reading material, then at the beginning of the next lesson ask *What did you think?*

Variation 2

Use other published material as a starting point. Take books or magazines into class and simply ask *What do you think of this?* when referring to something you think might be of interest and relevant to language study.

Variation 3

Use extremely easy listening extracts from coursebooks about real-life situations. After playing the extract once or twice, ask students what they think. To get students talking and to ensure that everyone understands the situation simply start with basic comprehension questions. These comprehension questions can then quickly lead into discussion questions. Video clips can be used in the same way, especially if they're easy for the students to follow.