

Unit 1: Talking With Your Customer

Day 1

Objectives:

Customer Service Skills	Job Readiness Skills	Grammar and Pronunciation Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify main customer service/retail sales responsibilities and jobs.• Tell others about past customer service work and preferences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Listen to the goals and life plan of another person.• Write 5 personal goals and 4 personal dreams.• Plan to accomplish a personal goal via 5 written steps.• Identify customer service jobs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use the modal construction <i>would like to</i> to indicate a wish.• Use an adverbial clause beginning with <i>because</i> to indicate reason.

Materials/Preparation:

- New student binders
- World map (on classroom wall)
- Pins with plastic flags
- *Stand Out 4* Audio CD, Track 3 (if you have permission to use this in your program)
- Student Book Unit 1

Key Vocabulary:

customer	represent
customer service	ring up
goal	sales associate
qualifications	teller

Notes to Instructor:

Write your name and that of the course on the board. Make sure everyone signs in.

The first day of class is the best time to begin creating a positive, energetic class dynamic. Take your time on the introductory activities, and save the paperwork and most of the policies for the end of the class session. One exception to this guideline is the introduction of the SSLC usage policy. It is a good idea to address this policy before break so that students do not bring food or drinks back into the classroom.

Warm-up: Line Up

20 minutes

Set up

1. Welcome class. / Introduce self. / Announce agenda:

- a. get to know each other
- b. talk about customer service
- c. talk about the course and our goals
- d. fill out forms

2. Ask one student how long s/he has been in the country. Write the question and the answer on the board. Have students repeat:

- Q: How long have you been in the United States?
A: I've been here for 5 years.

Process

3. Ask students to stand up. Then, ask them to line up according to the number of years they have been in the country (the person with the most years at one end; the person with the least years at the other). Tell them they must ask and answer the questions amongst themselves in order to line up correctly. Assist where necessary.

Reportback & Feedback

4. Once students are lined up, check as a group to find out if they did so correctly.

Wrap up

5. Pair students up according to the results (i.e., pair up the two who have been here the shortest/longest amount of time, etc.) Ask the pairs to sit down together at the tables.

Activity: Interview and Introduction

25 minutes

Set up

1. Write the following three questions on the board:

What is your name?

Where are you from?

What is special or unusual about you?

2. Choose a student and model the exchange, writing the model answers on the board. The third question can cause confusion, so give a few example answers for yourself.

Process

3. Ask students in pairs to interview each other. Circulate to assist.

Reportback & Feedback

4. Ask students to take turns introducing each other to the class. Take notes on their names and their special and unusual characteristics. When they are finished, go through your notes and ask the class to identify their classmates by name based on the information you supply. For example, “Who has five children?”, “Who is from Madagascar?”, “Who likes to play the guitar?”

Wrap up

5. Finally, pass out the flagged pins for the map and ask students to come up and put a pin in their place of origin. Afterwards, take a moment to show the points of origin of the classmates, highlighting those who might come from the same place, the most far-away places, etc.

Presentation: Introduction to the Course

25 minutes

Note to Instructor: Take this opportunity to introduce the course to students and take their questions.

Set Up

1. Give an overview of the goals of the course and some examples that illustrate each:
 - a. Learn and practice customer service skills
Examples: greeting the customer, describing products, asking good questions, using the telephone, using a cash register, handling angry customers
 - b. Prepare to get a customer service job
Examples: practicing for interviews, writing a resume and reference list, filling out online applications, learning how to search for jobs, improving computer skills
 - c. Improve English – especially listening and speaking for the workplace, but also reading and writing as well

Process

2. **Portfolio:** Emphasize the fact that the course is intensive and job-focused. We give a lot of support to their search for a job, which is a key aspect of the course. As such, students will be developing their portfolio during the class. The portfolio is a packet of information and tools that students can use in their job search and during interviews. It will eventually contain their resume, reference list, and job search and interview tools. At the end of the course, they will receive a black folder in which to keep their portfolio. For now, they will just keep their portfolio pieces in the Portfolio section of their binder, and in the side pockets of the binder itself. Emphasize that they should keep any papers that they receive or use in class – never throw anything away.

3. Also emphasize the fact that the class will constitute a learning community. We should learn each others' names right away and help each other to improve as much as possible throughout the next 8 weeks, and beyond. If you are able, tell a few anecdotes from your experience about previous students who have had successful experiences in the class.

Wrap Up

4. Pass out student binders. Tell students the binders are theirs to keep. They should bring them every day *or* leave them at the SSLC each day. Occasionally they will receive handouts which they should hole-punch and put directly into their binders, in the corresponding unit section.

5. Students should also bring a notebook in which to write their daily class notes and a pen or pencil each day.

Note to Instructor: This is a good time to take a break. Before break, you may want to give students a brief tour of the SSLC. Point out where the restrooms are, explain that they can use the small refrigerator to keep their food for break (as long as they keep things clean.)

Presentation and Activity: Introduction to Customer Service

25 minutes

Set Up

1. Ask students: "What is customer service? What are the responsibilities in a customer service job?" and write their ideas on the board. Elicit the following:

- help people
- answer questions
- sell products & take orders
- provide technical service
- obtain information from customers
- represent the company; be the "face" of the company for the public
- give information
- speak on the telephone
- ring up customers
- handle problems

Process

2. Lead students from these general answers into a discussion of what jobs are customer service jobs. List them on the board as they are volunteered. Elicit the following and help define unfamiliar terms:

- sales associate (in a store)
- help desk position
- web-based company position
- bank teller
- call center operator
- secretary

3. Find a couple students who already have (or have had) jobs in customer service. Ask those students what they liked and disliked about those jobs and why. Encourage them to use adverbial clauses beginning with *because* to provide reasons for their preferences. Model the construction on the board:

Example: I liked my banking job because I enjoy mathematics.

4. Ask students to get into groups of three and discuss what customer service jobs they have done in the past, if any (in their home countries *or* in this country.) Ask them to discuss what they *liked* and *disliked* about those jobs and *why*. Encourage them to use adverbial clauses beginning with *because*, using the example on the board as a model.

Reportback & Feedback

5. Ask volunteers to report back to the class. As a group, discuss students' experience and how that might be helpful throughout the course. Encourage the use of *because*. Encourage and practice the clear pronunciation of past tense verb endings.

Transition

6. Move from this discussion into the next activity, in which students will listen to someone's goals and then write their own. Mention the fact that we are talking about the jobs we did in the past (or perhaps in the present), while in this course we will be preparing for our future. The first part of this preparation involves setting goals.

Activity: Setting Goals

30 minutes

NOTE: This activity is only to be used if your course has permission to use Stand Out 4. See the Bibliography for Stand Out 4 publication information.

Set Up

1. Elicit the definition of *goal* from the class. Write the group's definition(s) on the board and help them arrive at a consensus on the definition.

Process

2. Tell students they are going to read about the goals of Bitá, an Iranian immigrant. Ask students not to use a dictionary or translator during the first reading. They should just read for general meaning.

3. Ask: "What are Bitá's goals?"
"What is she doing to make her goals a reality?"
"What is her dream?" ("What would she like to do?")

Take time to discuss the difference between a goal (a concrete achievement within a given, realistic time frame) and a dream (a wish for the future, which may or may not be achieved within a given time frame.)

Also, highlight the difference between the modal *will* (used here with goals) and the construction *would like to* (used here to express dreams). Ask students the following:

Tell me about a dream you have for your future.

Elicit a few students' dreams and encourage them to use *would like to*. Write a few example sentences on the board.

4. Ask students to write 3-5 of their own future goals, and their dreams. Circulate to assist with grammar and expression. When they are finished writing, elicit a few goals from volunteers.

5. Now, draw students' attention to instructions in the book. Play track 3 (starting at 0:12) of the Standout 4 CD twice. Pairs can compare answers. Review answers with students. The answers for this section are below:

Steps	Completion Date
Step 1: Study English.	Spring 2004
Step 2: Register for college.	Fall 2004
Step 3: Get degree.	Spring 2008
Step 4: Become an intern.	Summer 2008
Step 5: Get license.	Winter 2009
Step 6: Become a partner in a firm.	2010

6. Finally, ask students to turn to the sheet (**SB 1:3**) where they wrote their own goals, choose *only one*, and fill in the chart for that goal in Part C of **SB 1:2**.

Reportback & Feedback

7. Ask a few volunteers to present their plan to the class. Discuss responses as a class and give individual feedback where possible.

Presentation: SSLC and course policies

15 minutes

1. Pass out and review the SSLC usage policy form with students. Give students time to read and sign it. In your discussion of the policies, emphasize the following:

- Always check in at the front desk before entering the facility.
- Computers at the SSLC are for learning and job search; books are to be used here.
- Attendance policy: No more than 3 unexcused, and 6 total, absences are permitted.
- An absence is excused if the student telephones ahead of time and if the excuse is one which would be appropriate in a workplace (e.g. illness).
- Arrive on time or early. If you are going to be late, call ahead (just like a workplace).
- Turn off cell phones. Never answer them in class. You can make calls outside during break.
- No food or drink (except for water) inside the classroom.
- The SSLC / Montgomery College inclement weather policy.

Wrap up

25 minutes

The last half hour of class time can be used for filling out the necessary forms. Announce that tomorrow we will practice greeting the customer.

Unit 1: Talking With Your Customer

Day 2

Objectives:

Customer Service Skills	Job Readiness Skills	Grammar and Pronunciation Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe and model a customer service attitude. • List key components of greeting the customer. • Practice greeting the customer. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify syllables and produce stress of multi-syllabic words. • Produce the <i>schwa</i> sound. • Use the modal construction <i>would like to</i> to inquire about and state wishes. • Use an adverbial clause beginning with <i>because</i> to indicate reason. • Pronounce word-final [ng] clearly.

Materials/Preparation:

- 4 index cards
- SSLC Tape: Greeting the Customer
- Photocopies of **TG 1:36**, *Words for Syllable Activity*, each copy cut and shuffled – one copy per student pair
- Flip chart paper or posterboard (optional)

Key Vocabulary:

appropriate	greet	pushy	unclear
attitude	greeting	rude	
courteous	inappropriate	shift	
eye contact	manage	stress	
friendly	polite	syllable	

Notes to Instructor:

It is a good idea to write the day's goals on the board. Go over them with students before class begins and review them again at the end.

Today you will begin teaching syllables. For more background on the teaching of syllables and pronunciation generally, see Gilbert 2005 Clear Speech Teachers Resource Book, Units 1 & 3.

Warm-up: Find Someone Who...

20 minutes

Set Up

1. Begin the class by asking a few students what they *would like* to do in class today. Get a few different suggestions from them, and use these suggestions to ask other students about their preferences.

Examples: *Sumana, would you like to practice greeting the customer today?*
Francois, would you like to use the computers today?

Yes, I would.

No, I wouldn't.

Write at least one of the questions, and both a negative and a positive answer, on the board as a model. Have students practice the pronunciation of the questions and answers. Have them pay special attention to the pronunciation of the negative response and the consonant cluster [dnt].

Process

2. Students should read the instructions for Part A on **SB 1:4, Find Someone Who....** Go through the example with the class before they begin. Circulate to assist. Congratulate the first person to get a name on every blank.

3. Review the findings as a class. Ask follow-up questions of some students to get the reasons behind their wishes and encourage them to use to adverbial clauses beginning with *because*.

Reportback & Feedback

4. Ask students to complete Part B. Ask volunteers to present their answers to the class. Find out if other students in the class agree or disagree with their classmates.

Presentation and Activity: Greeting the Customer

40 minutes

Set Up

1. Introduce the topic by asking students, “What is the first thing you should say to the customer?” In the top left corner of the whiteboard, write a few of their suggestions (example: *Hello. How may I help you today?*) Explain that this is called “greeting” the customer and that will be the first customer service skill that you practice together. Leave what you have written. You will use it later.

2. Write the words *appropriate* and *inappropriate* at the top of the board, leaving plenty of space between and below each word. Explain that there are appropriate ways to behave and appropriate things to do when you greet the customer. There are also inappropriate things to say and do. Refer to the suggestions in the corner of the board and write *Greet the customer politely* under *appropriate*. Make sure students understand the definition of *polite*, *appropriate*, and *inappropriate*, and practice the pronunciations of the words.

Process

3. Ask students to get into pairs or small groups, and come up with ideas about what one should remember to do when greeting a customer (i.e., what is appropriate), and what one shouldn't do (i.e., what is inappropriate).

4. After 6 or 7 minutes, bring the class together again. Ask for groups to report some of their ideas. Write them on the board under appropriate and inappropriate, and take time to discuss and elaborate where necessary. Encourage students to use *should* and *shouldn't*, and *appropriate* and *inappropriate*. Point out that many of these behaviors are not only relevant to greeting the customer, but are key parts of the *customer service attitude*. Review the cultural notes in and below the table below before you teach this section, and be sure to cover all or most of the following points:

Appropriate	Inappropriate
Greet the customer politely.	Don't stand too close to the customer.
Be friendly, courteous, and professional.	Don't touch the customer.
Speak clearly and slowly enough to be understood.	Don't be unclear or talk too fast.
Greet the customer promptly [within the <i>first 10 seconds</i>].	Don't be pushy. [Instead, be professional and relaxed.]
Make and maintain eye contact.	Do not chew gum or eat. That is rude.
Smile! [This shows you are interested and friendly.]	Avoid saying things that are too personal or casual.
Acknowledge everybody in the shopping party.	

Instructor Notes: Take time to elaborate upon the key points above as they are suggested by students and where necessary. Be sure to point out that these behaviors are key parts of the customer service attitude – not just greeting the customer. Also, remember that some students come from cultures with significantly different practices regarding personal space, touch, and other practices. Keep in mind the following:

- In the United States, the distance between a sales associate and a customer should be at least 2 feet, and is often up to 4 feet or farther. Americans generally prefer more personal space than people in Mediterranean and Latin American countries, and more than men in Arab countries. (New York Times, November 16, 2006, *In Certain Circles, Two is a Crowd*).
- The United States is generally a touch-avoidant culture. It is generally recommended that, in a work environment, people not touch at all (except for handshakes). (Richmond, V. P., & McCroskey, J. C. 2004. *Nonverbal behavior in interpersonal relations*. 5th Ed., Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.) Some students may find this surprising.
- Spend a few minutes discussing what it means to “speak clearly”. Point out that it is not only clear pronunciation. It is also speaking slowly and loudly enough to be understood (but not too slow and not too loud!)

4. The last step of the presentation is to generate and practice the remaining “stock expressions” for greetings. Generally speaking, the verbal greeting has two parts: 1. a basic greeting or acknowledgement of the customer’s presence, and 2. a question that creates an opening for discussion. Using this two-part structure, elicit some stock expressions from students and add them to the existing list in the corner of the board OR write them on poster board or flipchart paper that can be left on the wall for future reference:

Hello. How may I help you?

Good afternoon. How can I help you today?

Good morning. What can I help you with today?

Hello. Are you looking for something special today?

Tell students that the customer may respond to the greeting by asking for help with something. However, he or she may also just say that they don’t need any help. In that case, the sales associate can say:

Certainly. If you need any help, just let me know.

5. Lead the class in practicing the pronunciation of the stock expressions (with smile and appropriate intonation!)

Performance & Feedback

6. Finally, ask students to pair up, stand up, and practice greeting each other several times. Circulate and remind students to smile, speak clearly, make eye contact, etc.

Wrap Up

7. Explain to the class that they will be practicing greetings more later in the unit.

Post-break Activity: A Guessing Game

10 minutes

Set Up

1. During or right before break, write one of the following words on each of four index cards: *appropriate, rude, unclear, pushy*. Privately and one-by-one, take aside four students and ask them to play a small role for the class after break. They will be the sales associates and will greet you, the customer, in the manner described on the card.

2. Write the four words on the board. When the class assembles again after break, explain that they will have to watch their classmates (sales associates) greet you (the customer), and then guess what word describes the greeting.

Process

3. Have one of the volunteer students with cards come up to the front of the room. Leave the room and come back in through the door, looking around as though you were a customer. Role play the greeting scenario with each of the four volunteer students.

Reportback & Feedback

4. After the role play is finished, and the class has guess the word that describes the greeting, discuss why they chose to describe the greeting in that way. What were the characteristics that made it pushy, rude, etc.

Transition

5. Use this discussion to transition smoothly into the listening activity that follows.

Activity: Greeting the Customer 1 & 2 – Listening

25 minutes

Set Up

1. Ask students to read the instructions on **SB 1:5**, *Greeting the Customer 1* . Emphasize that, if they feel that a greeting they hear is inappropriate, they must write why they think so.

Process

2. Play the tape, *Greeting the Customer*, at least two times. Discuss the answers and the reasons with the students. Encourage students to use adverbial phrases beginning with *because* to state their reasons.

Here are the **answers** to the worksheet:

	Appropriate or Inappropriate?	Why?
1	Inappropriate	Rude
2	Appropriate	
3	Inappropriate	Too fast
4	Appropriate	
5	Inappropriate	Too fast and too pushy
6	Inappropriate	Unclear. [A little. This one could go both ways]

3. Ask students to listen to the tape two more times. As they listen, they should fill in the blanks on **SB 1:6**. *Greeting the Customer 2*, with the missing words.

Reportback & Feedback

4. After they listen, students should compare their answers with a partner. Review any difficult spellings on the board and give individual feedback where possible.

Transition

5. The last greeting in the previous activity may have been judged inappropriate because it is somewhat unclear. Use this fact to transition into the presentation on syllables by stating that speech clarity has a lot to do with rhythm and intonation in English –in other words, the music of the language. Syllables are the basic building blocks of English rhythm. If we pay attention to syllables, we can speak more clearly.

Presentation and Activity: Syllables

25 minutes

Set Up

1. Introduce the concept of syllables. Write the words *sale*, *retail*, *customer*, and *appropriate* on the board. Ask students to listen to you say the words. Then, say them again, this time clapping the syllables out lightly as you say them. Next, ask students to say the words together as a group, clapping the syllables as they speak.
2. Explain that you clap once for each *syllable*. Ask students to identify how many syllables are in each of the words on the board.

Process

3. Ask students to pair up, and give each pair a face-down stack of vocabulary word cards from **TG 1:36, Words for Syllable Activity**. Ask them to practice together, pulling one card at a time and counting the syllables in each word. Insist that they either lightly clap or tap their fingers in order to count the syllables.

Reportback & Feedback

4. Circulate to listen and assist, taking notes on words that seem to be particularly difficult.
5. Do not collect the cards after students have finished. As a whole class, discuss the number of syllables on some of the difficult words (like *chocolate*) and practice. Give individual feedback.

Presentation and Activity: Stress

Set Up

1. Use the preceding whole-class discussion on syllables to transition into an introduction of the concept of *stress*. Model the pronunciation of a few of the difficult words you have been discussing and point out that you give more vocal emphasis to one of the syllables over others. The vowel in this stressed syllable is particularly long. For example, the first syllable in *radio* is stressed. As such, the [a] sound is noticeably longer than the [i] and the [o].

Read a few words from the cards and have students repeat words after you, focusing on stress and vowel length. Have them name the number of the syllable where the stress is found (e.g., the *first* syllable).

Process

2. Using your own stack of cards, read words one by one. Instruct students to silently indicate the number of the syllable where the stress is located by holding up the corresponding numbers of fingers. (This ensures that some students will not distract others by giving the answers aloud too quickly.) Watch the fingers and repeat words if some indicate the incorrect number.
3. Once you feel that students understand the concept of stress and can identify it in words, introduce the concept of the *schwa*. Explain that the unstressed vowels in a word are often pronounced as a *schwa*, or a very short, unclear vowel sound. It is very common in English.

Write the following words on the board. Model their pronunciation and then have students repeat. Identify the syllables that have a *schwa*. Identify the stressed syllable in each word.

America *customer* *associate* *professional* *company* *technical*

Point out that *not all* unstressed syllables have a *schwa* sound. Some unstressed vowels are simply short and clear, while stressed vowels are long and clear. The schwa is short and unclear.

Practice & Feedback

4. Students should now return to the same pairs. This time, one student can read a word to his/her partner, and the partner can say where the stress is located. Then, both students should practice the pronunciation of the word, with attention to the *schwa* sound. Circulate to assist.

Assessment: Syllables and Stress

20 minutes

Set Up

1. Ask students to open to **SB 1:7**, *Syllables and Stress: Assessment*, and go over the instructions with students.

Process

2. Read the list of the words below, saying each word twice. Instruct students to write the words that they hear.

- | | |
|---------------|---------------|
| 1. retail | 6. supervisor |
| 2. attitude | 7. chocolate |
| 3. employment | 8. represent |
| 4. sales | 9. polite |
| 5. service | 10. need |

3. Now, say each of the words again once. Ask the students to write the number of syllables in each word on the blanks provided. Do one example on the board with the word *professional* to make sure that students understand what to do.

4. Say each of the words once again. This time, ask students to underline the stressed syllable in each word. Model the example word *professional* on the board to make sure students understand what to do.

5. Say each of words a final time. Ask students to circle any syllable that contains a *schwa*. Model this on the board with the word *professional*.

Reportback & Feedback

6. You can either collect the assessments and record how students performed, or use peer- or self-correction process.

Wrap up

5 minutes

Remind students that the class has focused today on the customer service attitude, greeting the customer and also on syllables and stress. Awareness of syllables and stress can help us speak more clearly and be understood by others. Day 3 of Unit 1 begins with a focus on speaking clearly, so it is useful to call students' attention to these points at the end of Day 2.

You may choose to wrap up the class by asking students to revisit their list of stock phrases for greeting the customer that they created in the beginning of class. They can practice pronouncing the greetings again – this time, with attention to syllables, stress, and the pronunciation of unstressed syllables. Here again are some stock phrases for greetings:

Hello. How may I help you?

Good afternoon. How can I help you today?

Good morning. What can I help you with today?

Hello. Are you looking for something special today?

Certainly. Let me know if you need any help.

Homework: Reading Activity: *Determining a Customer's Needs* on **SB 1:10** and questions on **SB 1:11**.

Unit 1: Talking With Your Customer

Day 3

Objectives:

Customer Service Skills	Job Readiness Skills	Grammar and Pronunciation Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greet the customer. • Use appropriate terms of address and titles. • Determine customer needs. • Ask general open-ended questions. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulate word endings to enhance comprehensibility. • Produce question intonation. • Produce stress of multi-syllabic words.

Materials/Preparation:

- *Mix & Match Cards, TB 1:43* , copied onto cardstock, cut, and shuffled
- Cut-out magazine images of different people (see SSLC Instructor Resource Shelf)
- SSLC Audio Tape: *What are his interests?*
- Flipchart paper or posterboard (optional)

Key Vocabulary:

anticipate	Mr.	tune in
determine	Mrs.	
impression	Ms.	
Ma'am	Sir	
Miss	skill	
motive	standard	

Notes to Instructor:

Last night's reading homework, *Determining a Customer's Needs*, will be discussed during today's class. You may also wish to take some time at the end of class to go over the answers to the homework and answer any questions. Collect the homework and review it in a timely manner in order to provide students with feedback on their work.

Please note that in Unit 2, you will need to use the computer lab. It may be advisable to schedule the use of the computer lab now for that day, or adjust your lesson plans accordingly.

Warm up: The Gossip Game

20 minutes

This warm up activity re-focuses students on clear speaking, which was discussed on Day 2 of this unit.

Set Up

1. Ask students to get into a large circle or a line, with some space between each person. It is wise to ask an advanced student to be the first person in line or stand nearest you in the circle.
2. Ask students to tell you what *gossip* is. Make sure that everyone understands the definition, and tell them that the game you are going to play is called *The Gossip Game*.
3. Announce that you are going to whisper a sentence in the ear of the person nearest you. S/he, in turn, will whisper it to the next person. The sentence can be said *only* two times to the same individual. It is important to speak clearly, but not so loudly that the next person in line can hear the sentence. Note that this is an excellent time to quickly review how to ask for repetition: *Could you repeat that, please?* Practice this phrase with students before you begin.

Process

4. Start the game. Use one of the following sentences (or make one up):

She wants to buy a yellow dress.
He is looking for some sports socks.
She wants to buy a gift for her mother.

Miss Parker would like a large coffee.
We are sold out of size 11.
I want to buy a flat screen T.V.

5. Ask the last person in line to tell the class what s/he heard. It will most likely be something different (perhaps very different) from the original sentence. Discuss why this is – what were the problems? Did you feel that the person next to you spoke too quietly? Too quickly? With an accent?

Discuss what can be learned from the activity. Emphasize that, in order for others to understand us, we must speak clearly. Despite the fact that we may have accents, we can use techniques (like attention to syllables and stress, speaking more slowly, etc.) to help others understand us.

6. Draw students' attention to the fact that consciously and clearly articulating the *ends* of words is a key to helping others understand. Ask students to refer to **SB 1:8, *Speaking Clearly***. Have students practice pronouncing these sentences, paying particular attention to their pronunciation of the ends of the words. First let them listen to you pronounce the sentences, then have the class do it together as group. Next, ask each individual to read a sentence aloud.

Reportback & Feedback

7. Finally, have students practice pronouncing the sentences in pairs, constructively critiquing each other's articulation of the ends of words. Circulate among students to assist and to give individual feedback.

Transition

8. Use the discussion about clear speech, above, to transition into a review of yesterday's lesson on greeting the customer.

Presentation: Terms of Address

20 minutes

Note to Instructor: It is very likely that questions regarding the use of titles (Mr., Mrs., etc.) will come up during this presentation and activity. You must distinguish between terms of address and titles, so tell students that you'll discuss titles later in today's class. Make a clear distinction between terms of address, which are used when you do not know the person's first or last name (and sometimes when you do know that information), and titles, which are used with a person's last name). Terms of address are more common and usually more appropriate in the interactions between the customer and the retail sales associate that we commonly deal with in class.

Set Up

1. Remind students of yesterday's overview of greeting the customer. Write the stock phrases back on the board (or refer to the poster paper on the wall):

Hello. How may I help you?

Good afternoon. How can I help you today?

Good morning. What can I help you with today?

Hello. Are you looking for something special today?

Process

2. Gather a few of the magazine pictures together. You should choose a picture of a middle-aged woman, a man, and a girl or young woman. Show the picture of the middle-aged woman and ask the class, *How would you greet her?*

Attempt to elicit the word *Ma'am*. For example, *Good afternoon, Ma'am. How may I help you?* Emphasize the correct pronunciation of *Ma'am*. Many students pronounce it exactly like the word *Mom*, which could be confusing or even insulting to customers they address in this way.

Do the same with the other two pictures. Elicit and practice *Sir* and *Miss*.

Point out that these terms of address are useful because you do not need to know the customer's name in order to use them.

Notes to Instructor: As a class, discuss the U.S. cultural aspects of deciding when to use *Ma'am* or *Miss*. Point out that, in the United States, the basis for the decision between these two forms of address is not clear cut. Generally, one could say that *Ma'am* is used for married women or those who are clearly middle-aged or older. *Miss* is used for girls, unmarried women, or, often, for women who are clearly younger than middle age. However, there is definitely a gray area when addressing women who are roughly between the ages of 20-40. When marital status is not obvious, some prefer to use only *Miss*, so as not to accidentally offend the customer, while others feel that *Ma'am* is more respectful, and so tend to use that most frequently. Tell

students that, in ambiguous cases, they will have to use the form of address with which they feel most comfortable. Both are useful in establishing a tone of respect in the greeting.

This may be a good time to point out that one should avoid using terms such as *honey* and *sweetie* when addressing a customer. This is too informal and can be irritating or insulting to some customers.

Presentation: Titles

15 minutes

Set Up

1. Show students one of the magazine pictures again; e.g., the picture of the man. Tell them his name is *Roger Duncan*, and write that name on the board. Ask a volunteer to greet the man. State that it is fine to greet the man with *Sir*, but if he is a repeat customer, it would be more appropriate to greet him with *Mr. Duncan*. Try to elicit this from the class, and write *Mr. Duncan* on the board.
2. Present and/or elicit the following points about the use of titles in the United States:
 - a. The use of titles is a way of showing respect and a degree of formality in interactions with customers and others.
 - b. Titles are used with the customer's last name. They are not to be used with the customer's first name. For example: *Mr. Duncan*, never *Mr. Roger*. The latter is not necessarily rude, it just sounds strange to the native speaker.

Process

3. Using the magazine pictures, elicit the titles for women: *Mrs.*, *Miss*, and *Ms.* Write them on the board. Students will likely already understand the distinction between *Mrs.* and *Miss*. You will need to spend some time discussing the difference between *Mrs.* and *Ms.*, in terms of meaning, usage, and pronunciation. Make the following points about the distinction between *Mrs.*, *Miss*, and *Ms.*, using examples of people you all know (yourself or SSLC staff) to illustrate your points:
 - a. *Mrs.* is used with women who you know are married.
 - b. *Miss* is used with women who you know are single.
 - c. *Ms.* is used when you do not know the marital status of a woman, or when that status is unimportant. In the United States, *Ms.* is increasingly the preferred title in the workplace. It can be used with women of all ages, though girls and very young single women are still most commonly addressed as *Miss* (plus last name).

Note to Instructor: In past Customer Service ESOL classes, students have brought up that their children's teachers are often called by a title followed by a first name, e.g., *Miss Linda*. This is actually an exception to the general rules regarding titles above. This practice is common among women in elementary schools, and seems to also be more common in the African-American community and in the south. If students bring this up, discuss it and make the point that, ultimately, the individual will decide how he or she would like to be discussed. Exceptions always exist, but the general rule is still to use titles with the last name of the individual.

Reportback & Feedback

4. As a group, practice the pronunciation of the titles written on the board, with special attention to the distinction between *Mrs.* and *Ms.* Ask students to identify the number of syllables in each of the words, and point out the fact that *Mrs.* ends in [s] while *Ms.* ends in [z].

Wrap Up

5. Wrap up by reiterating the fact that correct usage of terms of address and titles is important in showing politeness and respect toward the customer. Politeness and respect are, in turn, key components of the customer service attitude.

Role Play: Greeting the customer and terms of address

45 minutes

Set Up

1. Ask students to quickly review some of the characteristics of an appropriate greeting. Write their suggestions on the board. Tell them that this activity will present an opportunity to get more practice in greeting the customer.

Process

2. Ask students to pair up and give each student one of the magazine pictures. Instruct them to spread out as much as possible and take turns playing the customer and the sales associate, greeting each other appropriately (according to the picture). Encourage them to role play the entire interaction, starting with the customer entering the “store”. However, remind them that this is a very short role play – they are to stop the interaction after the greeting is completed. Announce that they’ll be doing the role play in front of the class, so they may wish to practice a few times.

Note that students may have trouble deciding whom to make eye contact with – the picture or their classmate! Instruct them to make eye contact with their partner, but address him or her as if he or she were the person in the picture. That way, they can still practice the different greetings while also practicing eye contact.

2. Circulate around the room, observing and assisting where necessary. Note problems to address later, but do not interrupt a role play in action. Pay special attention to all aspects of clear speech.

Reportback & Feedback

3. After the activity, bring the class back together. This may be a good time to briefly address any general problems that arose during the activity.

4. This has been the first role play of the course. Introduce the feedback phase of the role play activity by establishing the expectations and protocol for giving each other feedback. Make the following points and establish understanding and agreement before moving on to step #5:

- a. In this course, students will have plenty of opportunities to practice their customer service English skills. Many of these opportunities will be in the form of role plays.
- b. After practicing the role plays in pairs or small groups, they will be able to perform them in front of the class.
- c. Students may be nervous or uncomfortable about performing in front of their classmates. This is natural, and role plays will very likely become less nerve-racking as time goes on. Clearly, this process will help students be less nervous when they have to use these English skills on the job.
- d. The instructor and students form a learning community. The purpose of giving feedback is to help each other learn and improve. We must always be respectful of others' efforts and polite but honest in our feedback. Every person has strengths and weaknesses.

5. Ask students to open to **SB 1:9**, *Greeting the Customer Role Play Peer Evaluation*. Give them a few minutes to read the form. Tell students that they can use the form to take notes on each role play they watch and to use as a guide when giving feedback afterwards. However, they should not do a lot of writing during the each role play. They should be very quiet and give their full attention to each pair.

You (the instructor) should quickly fill out the instructor version of the *Evaluation*, **(TG 1:40)** for each "sales associate" during and right after the role play, during the feedback discussion.

Performance & Feedback

6. One by one, pairs should perform their role play in front of the class, taking turns being the customer and the sales associate. Be sure the class is completely quiet and attentive before allowing each pair to begin. Afterwards, first ask the class, *What did they do well?* Discuss the responses. Then, ask the class, *What could they improve?* Discuss the responses. If students have difficulty giving constructive feedback, refer them to their Feedback Forms for ideas (Polite phrases for giving feedback will be introduced in tomorrow's class. Try to make note now of how students phrase their feedback.). Make sure you have filled out your Instructor Feedback Form as fully as possible before moving on to the next pair.

Wrap Up

7. Wrap up the role plays by discussing any loose ends and/or practicing those elements that seemed most challenging, including any pronunciation challenges.

Transition

Move to the next activity by asking students the following question: *After you greet the customer, what is the next step?* Elicit their ideas and move to the next presentation.

Presentation and Listening Activity: Determining customer needs **25 minutes**

Set Up

1. The next step after greeting the customer is determining customer needs. After a sales associate finds out what a customer needs, he or she can find ways to meet those needs. Ask students, *How can you find out what a customer needs?* Try to elicit the two best responses (which were covered in the last night's reading):

- a. Ask the customer questions
- b. Observe the customer

Explain that the class will first focus on asking questions. Tomorrow, you will discuss observing the customer.

2. Tell students they will hear a sales associate ask a customer about her interests. Ask them to listen for the questions the sales associate asks.

Process

3. Play SSLC tape *What are his interests?* once.

4. Ask students to open to **SB 1:12**, *What are his interests?*, and read the instructions for Part A. Play the tape again and ask them to complete Part A. You may need to play the tape twice.

5. Review students' answers as a group, discussing any that caused confusion. The answers to both parts may be found on **TG 1:42**, *What are his interests?*

6. Call students' attention to the fact that the sales associate asked various questions to find out the customer's particular needs. Then, ask students to read the instructions for Part B. Play the tape again and ask them to complete Part B.

Practice & Feedback

7. Review the answers as a group, writing the answers on the board in order to model correct spelling. Practice the pronunciation of the questions as a group and then in pairs. Circulate to assist and give individual feedback.

Transition

8. Refer students to question #8 on last night's homework on **SB 1:11**, *Determine a Customer's Needs*. Ask volunteers to give their answers to that question to open a discussion about why questions and the reasons to use them.

Presentation: General Open-ended Wh-questions

30 minutes

Set Up

1. Explain that sales associates try to use *open-ended questions* to determine customer needs:
 - a. These questions encourage conversation because they require more than a one-word answer.
 - b. They help you get as much information as possible from the customer.
 - c. Most open-ended questions are wh-questions.

Example: *What is the special occasion?*
What can I help you find today?

- d. Closed (or “dead-end”) question those that can be answered with just a yes or no. They don’t require any more information of the customer, and can be “conversation killers”. They are used to confirm facts.

Example: *Is there a special occasion?*
Is this for someone else?
(The customer can just answer “no” and walk away!)

Process

2. Ask students to tell you what words wh-questions usually begin with. Write them on the board: *who, what, when, where, why, and how*
3. Ask students for some examples of good general open-ended questions to ask a customer after you greet him or her. This is partly a review, since some general open-ended questions were part of the greetings they have already practiced. However, this discussion will take the topic further and generate more open-ended questions that are general in nature.

Write students’ suggestions on the board or on flipchart paper/poster board that you can hang up and re-use. If students suggest closed questions, discuss why they are closed and how the question can be made more open and encouraging of conversation. Try to elicit the following:

How can I help you? What can I help you find today? What is the special occasion?

What can I do for you today? Who are you shopping for? What are you looking for?

There are a few yes/no questions that are also commonly used by retail sales associates, and which can also encourage conversation. These can be learned and practiced as well.

Are you looking for something special today? Is there something I can help you find?

Point out that students should avoid saying, *Who are you buying for?* The preferred question is *Who are you shopping for?*

4. Practice the pronunciation of the questions as a class. First, model the pronunciation and ask students to listen. Focus students not only on pronunciation of the sounds and syllables, but also the intonation of the sentence:

- a. Draw long arrows above the sentences so that students can simultaneously see and hear the rising intonation of the questions – the “music” of English.
- b. Model the de-emphasis of structure words (indicated by reductions) and the emphasis on focus words (indicated by the extra length on the stressed syllable of that word.)
- c. Model and point out the fact that when you ask the questions with a smile, they seem more polite and inviting.

Practice & Feedback

5. Have students repeat the questions after you a couple times. Then, have individuals repeat after you. Finally, have students take a few minutes in pairs to practice the pronunciation of the questions. Circulate and listen, giving students individual feedback.

Note to Instructor: For further explanation of de-emphasizing structure words and emphasizing stressed syllables, see Gilbert, Judy. 2005. Clear Speech. Third Edition, Unit 7.

Activity: General Open-ended questions

30 minutes

Set Up

1. Assign *Mix & Match Cards*, **TB 1:43**, randomly to students. Each should have about 4.
2. Ask students to read their cards and make sure everybody understands all the words on their cards. Explain the rules of the game:
 - a. The goal of the game is to be the first person with 4 matching cards. For example, 4 cards labeled with the word *toaster*.
 - b. They are to circulate among their classmates. Playing the role of sales associate, they should greet their classmates appropriately and ask an open-ended question (from among those on the board) to find out what their classmate is looking for. Their classmate would ask for an item that she already has in her hand – again, with the goal of ending up with 4 such items.
 - c. Then, the two students would switch roles, so that the other student would have a chance to practice the open-ended questions, and get matching cards.
3. Model the interaction a couple times with students in the class:

Sales Associate:	Good afternoon! What can I help you find today?
Customer:	I'm looking for a toaster.
Sales Associate:	Certainly. I have two toasters here.
Customer:	I'll take them both. Thank you!
Sales Associate:	Thank you.

Process & Feedback

4. Circulate among the students as they play the game and assist where necessary. Try to give feedback to each student.

5. Afterwards, point out who the winner and runners-up are, by writing their names on the board. Discuss any difficulties that arose and practice the pronunciation and intonation of the open-ended questions once more.

Wrap-up

Ask students to name the topics you covered today:

- terms of address and titles
- determining customer needs by asking open-ended questions
- greeting the customer

Also, remind students that you had your first role play today. There will be another role play tomorrow. Tomorrow's class will begin with some practice on giving constructive feedback and suggestions to classmates and co-workers.

Unit 1: Talking With Your Customer

Day 4

Objectives:

Customer Service Skills	Job Readiness Skills	Grammar and Pronunciation Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Express opinions and make suggestions in a workplace context. Observe the customer. Ask specific open-ended questions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify at least 3 personal employment references. Identify and write own current job skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use wh-questions and responses. Produce question intonation. Use simple expressions for offering suggestions and giving advice

Materials/Preparation:

- Copies of **TG 1:44**, *Giving Feedback*, cut into cards and stacked - one stack per student pair
- An article of clothing (a shirt, skirt, or suit jacket, preferably)

Key Vocabulary:

broke	observant
browse	part-time
cash register	resume
clue	sales associate
efficient	specials
fail	stress
feedback	type
in a hurry	wholesale

Notes to Instructor: Specific open-ended questions, introduced today, can be difficult for students to master. They often have trouble with formation of the questions, and deciding which questions are most appropriate for in a given situation. Emphasize that there will be plenty of time to practice open-ended questions throughout the course – today is just the beginning.

Warm-up: Find Someone Who...

20 minutes

Set Up

1. Ask students to open to **SB 1:13**, *Find Someone Who*. Explain that this warm-up activity is another way to get to know their classmates better. It is another “Find someone who...” activity, similar to the one you did earlier in the week (Day 2). Go through the instructions and the example with students.

You may need to practice question formation with students before they begin the activity. With lower-level students especially, take time to elicit the correct questions for each number before they begin (e.g., *Do you grocery-shop on Sunday nights?*)

Process

2. Ask them to circulate among their classmates, asking questions, with the goal of writing a different classmate’s name in each blank. The “winner” is the first person to fill all the blanks. Walk among them and assist with question formation and to make sure they are writing names in the blanks only when their classmates answers positively to a question.

Reportback & Feedback

3. Write the names of the winner and the runners-up on the board. Bring the class back together and review the answers by asking the whole class questions with *who*: *Who grocery-shops on Sunday nights? Who works part-time now?* Have students identify their classmates. Ask follow-up questions to get more information.

4. Discuss key vocabulary in the activity as it comes up:

wholesale sales associate part-time resume type grocery-shop

5. Discuss any difficulties in question formation. Students will need to be able to correctly form yes/no questions using the simple present and the present perfect. Ask students whether these questions are *open-ended* or *closed* questions, and why they think so. (They are closed.)

Transition

6. The next presentation and activity has to do with giving suggestions, advice, and feedback. Transition into it smoothly by focusing students on their classmates answers to #9-11 on the activity sheet. Some students will not be able to answer *yes* to these questions. While not treating these students as deficient in any way, bring up the fact that these skills are useful to have when looking for a job. Ask students what *polite advice* or *helpful suggestions* they might give their classmates who answer *no* to these questions.

Examples: *I suggest that you... practice using email.*
Perhaps you could... take a typing class.
I think you should... write a resume as soon as possible.

Write a few of the students’ suggestions on the board (however they are worded) and move on to the next presentation/activity.

Presentation and Activity: Giving feedback

20 minutes

Set Up

1. Remind students that yesterday, you had your first role play in class. You discussed things they thought that their classmates did well, and things they felt they needed to improve. On the job, it is also important to be able to give *feedback*; that is, to make suggestions for improvement, give advice, and express opinions. That ability is expected of employees in most U.S. workplaces. Write the word *feedback* on the board.

Process

2. Refer students back to the suggestions on the board. If they did not use the polite openers highlighted in bold above, elicit those now or introduce them. Explain that these are polite, non-confrontational ways to begin a suggestion to a classmate or a co-worker. Practice the pronunciation of the suggestions on the board as a whole class. Focus students' attention on pronouncing the ends of the words *suggest*, *could*, and *should*, and on the vowel sound in *could* and *should*.

3. You should also bring up polite openers for expressing that a classmate or co-worker has done something well. Elicit these and practice them as in #2, above.

Example: *I really liked it when...you smiled at the customer.*

4. Ask students to get into pairs, and give each pair a face-down stack of problem cards from **TG 1:44, Giving Feedback**. Explain that they should take turns pulling a card from the stack and telling their partner about their problem. The partner should make suggestions for ways to address the problem, using the polite openers on the board.

5. Model one or two in front of the class with an advanced student, and then allow them to begin. Circulate to assist. Try to give feedback to each student on the content, grammar, or pronunciation of his or her responses.

6. If pairs end earlier than others, suggest that they bring up a few real problems that they are willing to share and get their partner's feedback on that problem.

Reportback & Feedback

7. Bring the class back together and see if there are any questions. Ask volunteers to model a few interactions. Make sure they understand the words *fail*, *broke*, *cash register*, and *stress*. Give students a couple more problems (either from the cards or from your own experience) and ask for their feedback as a group.

Wrap Up

8. Remind students that they should try to use these polite openers when they give their classmates feedback during role plays in this class.

Presentation and Activity: Observing the Customer

25 minutes

Set Up

1. Remind students that yesterday you talked about determining customer needs. Ask them, *What are two ways to determine customer needs?* Elicit the answers from yesterday:
 - a. Ask open-ended questions.
 - b. Observe the customer.
2. Ask students to tell you why observing the customer will help you determine their needs. Elicit ideas from the group. If students do not do it themselves, bring up the concept of observing customers for *clues* about their needs. Write the word *clues* on the board and discuss its meaning. Ask students to give you examples of such customer clues.

Process

3. Ask students to open to **SB 1:14** and take 6-7 minutes to read *Be Observant*. Encourage them to avoid using a dictionary, and instead use the context to figure out the meanings of new words.
4. After students have read the article, ask follow-up questions to check comprehension (see below). Ask students to come up with definitions or other ways to say the underlined words.

Follow-up questions:

What are some clues you can use to get to know a customer?

What can you say if the customer appears to be in a hurry?

What kind of questions can you ask a customer to learn about his interests?

5. Ask students to pair up and read the directions for *You Be The Detective* on **SB 1:15**. They should work together to pair the appropriate responses with the customer clues. Circulate to assist and give feedback to individuals. The answers to the questions are on **TB 1:45**.

Reportback & Feedback

6. As a whole class, call on volunteers to give the answers to the questions, discussing those that may have been difficult or confusing, and any new words.

Transition

7. Direct students' attention back to the reading. Ask them to remind you what the reading suggests you do when a customer is focusing on a specific item in the store (answer: engage the customer in conversation and ask more specific open-ended questions to find out more information.) Transition into the next presentation and activity, in which they will practice how to ask these specific open-ended questions.

Presentation: Specific open-ended questions

20 minutes

Set Up

1. Hold up the article of clothing you have brought to class (shirt, skirt, or jacket, preferably). Ask students to name the article of clothing.

Process

2. Tell students that when you go shopping for a shirt (or skirt, jacket, etc.), you normally don't look just for any shirt at all. You go looking for particular characteristics or features of the shirt. Ask:

What features are important to you?

Elicit the following and write them on the board:

style material size color

3. Ask students to try to name the style, material, size, and color of the clothing you are holding up. Use open-ended questions:

What style is the shirt?

What size is the shirt?

What material is the shirt made of?

What color is the shirt?

Tell students these words – style, material, size, and color – are category words. They describe categories of features. For example, material is a category that could include denim, cotton, polyester, silk, and many other fibers. What other category nouns can students come up with? (*flavor, kind, model, type, brand, manufacturer....*)

Tell students that next week, they will spend a lot of time learning the vocabulary used to talk about features. For now, just focus on how to ask specific open-ended questions using these category nouns.

4. Point out that when they are talking to a customer, sales associates can ask a variety of specific questions to get more information. Write a few on the board. Practice the pronunciation of the questions (including question intonation) and call students' attention to the different verbs one can use to form the questions:

*What style of shirt **do you like**?*

*What kind of hat **do you prefer**?*

*What color sweater **are you looking for**?*

*What size shoes **do you wear**?*

*What fabric **appeals to you**?*

Activity: Specific open-ended questions

20 minutes

Set Up

1. Ask students to open to **SB 1:16**, *What do you prefer?*, and read the instructions.

Process

2. Ask students to work individually to fill in the blanks with the appropriate characteristic from the box at the bottom of the page. Do the first item together as a class, and then circulate to assist while they do items 2-5.
3. After they are finished, ask them to pair up and take turns playing the customer and sales associate roles.

Circulate among students to assist with pronunciation and intonation. Try to give each student individual feedback at least once.

Reportback & Feedback

3. Bring the class back together and ask volunteer pairs to model each exchange for the class. Give individual feedback. Address issues of pronunciation and intonation, practicing each open-ended question at least once as a group.

Wrap Up

4. Direct students to **SB 1:17**, *Open-Ended Question Grid*. Show them that this grid is there for their use as they practice forming specific open-ended questions. It may be useful for them in the role plays you will do later in class today.

Additional Activities: Specific open-ended question practice

Note to Instructor: Depending on the level of your students and the class time you have, you may have need of additional supported practice activities for open-ended question formation. On **SB 1:18-19**, you will find two additional activities:

Opening Doors with Open-Ended Questions
Practice with Open-Ended Questions

On **TG 1:46-47**, you will find the instructor copy of these activities with suggested answers.

One or both of these could be used in class today (postponing the role play) or in the following week, as needed, to build students' skills. They can also be assigned as written homework or done orally in pairs or small groups.

Role Play: Observing the customer and open-ended questions

40 minutes

Set Up

1. Pair students up and ask them to open to **SB 1:20**, *Observing the Customer: Role Play*. Assign each pair one of the role plays. (If time, each pair can do more than one role play). Instruct them to spread out as much as possible and take turns playing the customer and the sales associate, acting out the scenario, greeting the customer appropriately, and asking open-ended questions. Encourage them to role play the entire interaction, starting with the customer entering the “store”. However, remind them that this is a short role play – they are to stop the interaction after the sales associate has asked the customer only a few questions. They should not continue on to “closing the sale”. Announce that they’ll be doing the role play in front of the class, so they may wish to practice a few times.

Process

2. Circulate among students, observing, assisting, and giving feedback where necessary. Note problems to address later, but do not interrupt a role play in action. Pay special attention to all aspects of clear speech.
3. After the activity, bring the class back together. This may be a good time to briefly address any general problems that arose during the activity.

Performance & Feedback

4. Ask students to open to **SB 1:21**, *Observing the Customer Role Play Peer Evaluation*. Give them a few minutes to read the form. Tell students that they can use the form to take notes on each role play they watch and to use as a guide when giving feedback afterwards. However, they should not do a lot of writing during the each role play. They should be very quiet and give their full attention to each pair.

Quickly fill out the instructor version of the *Evaluation (TG 1:48)* for each “sales associate” during and right after the role play, during the feedback discussion.

5. One by one, pairs should perform their role play in front of the class, taking turns being the customer and the sales associate. Be sure the class is completely quiet and attentive before allowing each pair to begin. Afterwards, first ask the class, *What did they do well?* Discuss the responses. Then, ask the class, *What could they improve?* Discuss the responses. Insist that students use the skills they practiced at the beginning of the class to give polite, constructive feedback (see activity above). Make sure you have filled out your Instructor Feedback Form as fully as possible before moving on to the next pair.

Wrap Up

7. Wrap up the role plays by discussing any loose ends and/or practicing those elements that seemed most challenging, including any pronunciation challenges.

Presentation: Job Skills

25 minutes

Set Up

1. Remind students that preparation for the job is a key part of the course. One of first steps in preparing to get a job is to focus on the skills that one already has. All of us – even those who have not had much work experience previously – have skills that will serve us well on the job.
2. Ask students to take a moment to think back on their previous work experience. If they do not have work experience, they can think about times that they have volunteered, participated in an organization, or even cared for children or others. Ask them to think about what they did well in those situations.

Process

3. Give an example from your own job experience. Go through your example with the students while writing on the board. On the left-hand side of the board, write an example of something you do well. Then, talk about how you *know* that you do it well? Write that evidence in the middle of the board. Then, list the other people who know that you do this well. Write the list of those people, and their titles or positions, on the right-hand side of the board. For example:

<i>I can teach English well.</i>	<i>I know I am good at it because my students learn quickly, and because they tell me they enjoy my classes.</i>	<i>My supervisor, Ms. Smith, and my co-worker, Mr. Dyson, know that I teach well.</i>
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3. Have students open to **Portfolio Workbook p. 2, Job Skills Worksheet**. Ask them to fill in the boxes with their own skills and reflections, just like you did on the board.
4. Circulate to assist with expression, spelling, etc. Give students feedback on their examples. At this point, their answers can be general and focus on both work-related and non-work-related skills and experience. However, this sheet will serve as a basis for the reference list, so try to focus students as much as possible on their work or volunteer experiences, especially in their answers for the third column. They should identify at least 3 potential references.

Reportback & Feedback

5. Bring the class back together and ask each student to give one of their skills, explain how they know they are good at it, and say who else knows they are good at it. As each student gives his or her example, try to initiate a class discussion about *what adjectives might describe that student*, based on their example. For example, if a student says that she takes care of the elderly well, ask the class to come up with a few words that might describe her skills; e.g., *patient, caring, gentle*. Write the adjectives on the board (or on a piece of flipchart paper that can be posted on the wall after this activity). By the end of this discussion session, you should have a lengthy list of adjectives on the board that describe positive traits, most of them job-related. Here is a partial list of some useful adjectives to elicit. (Note that these will be useful again when students practice interviewing skills and write resumes):

<i>clear spoken</i>	<i>considerate</i>	<i>cooperative</i>	<i>generous</i>	<i>punctual</i>
<i>friendly</i>	<i>honest</i>	<i>loyal</i>	<i>organized</i>	<i>patient</i>
<i>reliable</i>	<i>team player</i>	<i>helpful</i>	<i>motivated</i>	<i>flexible</i>
<i>eager</i>	<i>effective</i>	<i>assertive</i>	<i>hard-working</i>	

Wrap Up

6. Tell students that we will use this paper (**Portfolio Workbook p.2**) to begin writing our reference lists next week, so they should keep it in their binder.

Wrap-up

Review the main points of today's class. Introduce the Mystery Shopper homework series and assign the first one (below).

Homework: Mystery Shopper 1

This is the first of several Mystery Shopper homework assignments. Ask students to open to **SB 1:22** and go over the instructions with them. They should go to any retail store, observe and/or have an interaction with a sales associate, and then write about their experience at home later on the activity sheet. For this assignment, they should focus on how the sales associate greets the customer and what kinds of questions s/he asks.

Emphasize that students should do this observation over the weekend and be ready to discuss it and turn in their work at the beginning of the next class.

Words for Syllable Activity

Note to Instructor: The following four sheets of word cards can be photocopied and cut out for student use in the syllable activity described on **TG p. 11**. Print the words out on card stock and separate sets into labeled envelopes for re-use in future classes. Don't forget to make a stack of cards for yourself!

sundress	snack food	discount
Wheaton	sports socks	workplace
title	finish	formal
coffee	housewares	flat screen
wedding	daughter	blue jeans
camera	greetings	mother
married	single	lady
pushy	inappropriate	wallet

counter	letter	toaster
customer	courteous	listening
looking for	shopping	mall
co-worker	history	salary
manager	resources	Maryland
Washington	work permit	Virginia
work permit	green card	eye contact
temperature	telephone	phone number
animal	president	bicycle

Africa	El Salvador	recently
technical	overtime	charity
benefits	boutique	vice president
chocolate	safety hazard	supervisor
stationery	living room	job title
post office	dinner set	casual
radio	polite	appeal
prefer	unclear	back home
first aid	T.V.	size ten

consider	important	department
politely	opinion	harassment
deduction	vacation	good morning
uncomfortable	America	employee
represent	workers' rights	Would you like
understand	human	resources
friendly	manage	rude
shift	syllable	sales associate
reference	resume	qualifications

Determine a Customer's Needs **INSTRUCTOR COPY WITH ANSWERS**

Part B - Instructions: Using *your own words*, answer these questions about the article on the previous page.

1. According to the article (first paragraph), what is the sales associate's most important goal?

To satisfy the customer

2. In the second paragraph, underline the words *positive impression*. What do you think it means to make a positive impression?

(answers will vary) To help the customer have a good experience in the store

3. How can you make a positive impression on the customer? What are examples?

ring up the sale, provide advice, directions to the next department...

4. In the third paragraph, underline the word *anticipating*. What do you think it means to anticipate a customer's needs?

(answers will vary) To look ahead. To try to figure out the customer's needs.

5. According to the article, what are two ways to get information about customer needs?

careful observation and asking thoughtful questions

6. In the fourth paragraph, underline the words *buying motive*. What is another way to say *buying motive* in English? What does it mean?

(answers will vary) reason to buy

7. In the fifth paragraph, underline the words *tuning in*. What is another way to say *tuning in* in English? What does it mean?

(answers will vary) listening carefully; paying special attention

8. What are the best kinds of questions to use to determine a customer's needs? Why are these questions so useful?

WH-questions. These questions encourage conversation. They open doors.

Writing Practice: On the back of this paper, write a one-paragraph summary of the article that you read.

What are his interests? **INSTRUCTOR COPY WITH ANSWERS**

Part A. Instructions: Listen to the tape. Answer the questions. You do not need to write complete sentences.

1. The customer is buying a gift. Who is it for?

_____ her son _____

2. What is the special occasion?

_____ his birthday next week _____

3. How old is he?

_____ 12 _____

4. What are his interests?

_____ sports: baseball, basketball, soccer, swimming _____

Part B. Instructions: Listen to the tape again. The sales associate asks four questions before she suggests a product to the customer. Write the questions that you hear.

1. Good morning, _____ How can I help you today? _____ ?

2. Oh, okay. Are you _____ looking for a gift for someone _____ ?

3. I see. _____ How old is your son _____ ?

4. And what are his _____ interests _____ ?

Mix & Match Cards: General Open-ended Questions

Copy on cardstock, cut, and shuffle. Assign the cards randomly to students.

A blue dress	A blue dress
A large coffee pot	A large coffee pot
A pair of gloves	A pair of gloves
A set of queen size sheets	A set of queen size sheets
A digital camera	A digital camera
A dinner set for 8 people	A dinner set for 8 people
A toaster	A toaster
Levi's brand blue jeans	Levi's brand blue jeans
A blue dress	A blue dress
A large coffee pot	A large coffee pot
A pair of gloves	A pair of gloves
A set of queen size sheets	A set of queen size sheets
A digital camera	A digital camera
A dinner set for 8 people	A dinner set for 8 people
A toaster	A toaster
Levi's brand blue jeans	Levi's brand blue jeans

Giving Feedback: Problem Cards

Instructions: Photocopy this sheet and cut into cards. Stack the cards face down and give one stack to each pair of students. Students should take turns pulling a card, telling their partner their problem, and getting their partner's advice or suggestions about how to address the problem.

I feel very tired lately.	I arrived 30 minutes late today.	It's cold in here.
My neighbors are too noisy!	I'm broke.	I saw a co-worker stealing money!
I'm having problems with the cash register at work.	I can't sleep at night.	I have a job interview but nothing to wear.
My boss is angry with me.	I failed my English test.	I have too much stress these days.
My boss keeps asking me to go on a date.	I have a headache.	My back hurts.
I keep losing my credit card!	I get nervous speaking English on the phone.	I want to make some new friends.

You Be the Detective

INSTRUCTOR COPY WITH ANSWERS

Instructions: Before you simply ask, “Can I help you?” observe customers’ actions for clues to their needs and desires. Read the following clues and then pick a response from the box below that might help you get more than, “No, I’m just looking,” from the customer. Write the letter for the response next to the customer clue.

Customer Clue

1. The customer is picking up every object in a display. He is comparing the items to each other. ___ B ___
2. A man is browsing and picking up items that are probably for a woman. ___ D ___
3. The customer walks to one display, looks at it briefly, and then begins to leave the store. ___ A ___
4. The customer keeps picking up and then putting down the same item. She seems unable to make a decision. ___ F ___
5. The customer walks in with a shopping bag from your store, walks to a display and begins looking for something. ___ C ___
6. The customer gets a shopping cart, pulls out a shopping list and begins going up and down each aisle slowly. ___ E ___

Sales Associate Responses

- A. “I’m sorry you didn’t find what you were looking for...perhaps I can help?”
- B. “We just got those in – aren’t they lovely?”
- C. “Can I help you with a return or exchange?”
- D. “Looks like you are considering a gift – is there a special occasion?”
- E. “Let me know if you need help finding anything.”
- F. “You seem undecided...have you used that product before?”

Opening Doors with Open-Ended Questions

INSTRUCTOR COPY WITH ANSWERS

Instructions: Compare the examples of dead-end and open-ended questions. Then, turn the last few examples of dead-end questions into open-ended questions.

DEAD-END	OPEN-ENDED
Can I help you?	How can I help you?
Do you like red or green?	What color do you prefer?
Is that the brand you want?	Why do you prefer that brand?
Is this for you, or is it a gift?	For whom are you shopping?
Did you want a full skirt?	Which style skirt do you like?
Do you want a remote control?	What features are important to you?
Is it for a special occasion?	What's the special occasion?
Looking for anything special?	What are you looking for?
Did you see our coupon specials?	<i>What brings you into the store today?</i>
Do you like 100 percent cotton?	<i>What fabric do you prefer?</i>
Have you read this author before?	<i>What kind of reading material are you looking for?</i>
Is this all for you today?	<i>What else can I help you with today?</i>

Practice with Open-Ended Questions

INSTRUCTOR COPY WITH ANSWERS

Instructions: You are the sales associate. Write the open-ended question you might ask the customer in each scenario, below. Remember to begin the question with *who*, *what*, *when*, *where*, *why*, *which*, or *how*.

1. You see a woman looking at a display of toys and games, trying to decide which toy to buy. You are thinking that she probably has a particular child in mind.

How old is the child you're shopping for?

2. You work in a bakery and see that a customer is considering which cake to buy. You would like to know more about what he has planned so that you can recommend the best cake for that occasion.

What is the special occasion?

3. You work in an electronics store and a customer is looking for a particular device for her computer, but she is not sure what it is called.

Where did you see the device? What does the device do?

4. You work in a restaurant, taking carry-out and catering orders by phone. You are speaking to a customer on the phone who is having trouble deciding how many sandwiches he should order for his office party. It would help if you knew the number of people who will be at the party.

How many people are coming to the party?

5. You work in a clothing store. A teenager comes into shop for a pair of blue jeans. You have many different brands of blue jeans, but you don't have the particular brand that he wants.

Why do you like that brand? What appeals to you about that brand?

Observing the Customer Role Play Evaluation

Date: _____

Instructor: _____

Name of student playing Sales Associate: _____

Sales Associate: Checklist	
Rating Scale: 1 – needs improvement 2 – good 3 – excellent	
<i>The sales associate...</i> Greeted the customer promptly Maintained a smile Maintained eye contact Was polite and friendly Spoke clearly Observed the customer’s behavior in order to choose the most appropriate questions. Used open-ended questions to find out more information. Other? _____ _____	<i>Circle a rating:</i> 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3
Additional Comments: 	