

Debate skills for women in the workplace

Level: Advanced (C1–C2)

Time: 60–90 minutes

Business topics: HR, Career planning, Coaching and mentoring, Leadership and management

Business language focus: Soft skills, work place roles, gender

Activities: In this lesson, students will:

- read a business article and look at the language necessary to understand and talk about it;
- discuss aspects of the article in greater depth;
- research a common soft skill and prepare a presentation on the skill to deliver to the group.

Materials: One copy of the worksheet per student, internet access for Exercise 6

Group size: All of the tasks can be completed in pairs or groups, so that as much communication as possible takes place in the class. However, this lesson plan can also be used in a one-to-one teaching situation.

This lesson is based on an authentic article, republished here with its full, original text.

The article talks about how debate training can improve women's confidence.

1. Warmer

Students discuss the questions in pairs.

2. Key words and expressions

Students read the sentence and search for words and expressions in the text with a similar meaning

Key:

1. *commercial barrister*
2. *embed into the foundation*
3. *empowerment*
4. *struggle with confidence*
5. *predominantly*
6. *empathetic listening*
7. *internship programmes*
8. *confrontational*
9. *lose their temper*
10. *premise*

3. Understanding the article

Students read the article and decide if the statements are true or false. They then correct the statements they think are false.

Key:

1. *False. It was a problem in the past and still is a big problem.*
2. *True.*
3. *False. Women are often interrupted by men.*
4. *True.*
5. *False. People think you're born with confidence but it is a skill you can learn.*

4. Discussion

In small groups, students discuss the questions which pick up on and expand on topics and quotes from the article. Hold a short whole-group feedback session and compare and contrast each group's answers and input.

5. Wider business theme – soft skills

A Learners discuss the questions in pairs. Then lead a short open class discussion to ensure everyone has the same definition of soft skills – *skills that are not central to core work (hard skills) but make doing work easier.*

B Divide the class into groups of two or three and give each group a different soft skill card (or several cards if you don't have enough groups for one card each). Ask the groups to prepare a short presentation on the topic using the internet to help them.

- C After each group has presented, lead a short discussion and ask the class to vote on what they think is the most important skill.



One-to-one teaching

Ask the student to choose one or two of the skills and prepare a presentation for homework, which they deliver at the start of the next lesson.

Soft skills cards – Exercise 6

Communication	Leadership	Creativity
Problem solving	Relationship building	Flexibility
Time-management	Negotiation skills	Leaning

Teacher's notes