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## GLOSSARY

**cubicle** – a small work area made from four low walls that do not reach all the way to the ceiling

\* At this company, only the president has an office. Everyone else works in cubicles.

**to boot up** – to turn on a computer or another electronic machine

\* Every morning, he takes off his jacket and pours a cup of coffee while his computer is booting up.

**agenda** – schedule; calendar

\* I gave my assistant access to my agenda so that he can schedule meetings for me.

**inbox** – the electronic space that holds unread emails and emails that have not yet been filed or deleted; a box or area on one's desk where other people can leave new things for one to read or to act on

\* I looked in my inbox just a few minutes ago but I still hadn't received your email.

**inter-office** – within an office (not among offices); inside one office

\* He likes delivering inter-office mail, because it lets him walk around during the day when he gets tired of sitting at his desk.

**to start in** – to begin to work on a project; to begin to sort through something

\* She decided to start in by reading the proposals. She would call the consultants later.

**conference call** – a phone call with more than two person on the line

\* The conference call had participants from Japan, France, and the United States. It was early in the morning for some, and late in the evening for others.

**head office** – the main office building in a company with offices in more than one location

\* All of the company's important decisions are made at the head office.

**lunch hour** – an hour during the day when an employee eats lunch, often 12:00-1:00 p.m.

\* When the weather is nice, I spend my lunch hour eating outside.



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**to pack a lunch** – to bring food from home to eat at the office or at school during the lunch break

\* Walking on that mountain may take most of the day so we decided to pack a lunch in case we get hungry.

**supervisor** – boss; manager; a person who has responsibility over the work of other employees

\* The clerks at the store think Randolph is a wonderful supervisor because he is understanding even when they make mistakes.

**to head down** – to walk downstairs; to walk along a hallway

\* To get to the museum, you need to head down Main Street and then turn right onto Second Avenue.

**host(ess)** – a restaurant employee who takes customers to their tables

\* The hostess said that we should sit here but I'd rather sit by the window.

**entree** – the main dish; the main course; the main food that one orders at a restaurant

\* I don't think I can finish an entree by myself. Do you want to share the baked chicken or the vegetable pasta?

**appetizers** – small dishes of food that are eaten before the main dish

\* Let's order a few appetizers while we're waiting for the rest of the group to get here. I'm hungry!

**to wave (someone) down** – to get someone's attention by waving one's hand in the air

\* Quick! Wave her down before she leaves! She forgot her bag.

**to split the check** – to pay a restaurant bill in equal parts; to pay for only those things one orders

\* On their date, Tanya wanted to split the check but Sam insisted on paying for the whole meal.

**quitting time** – the end of the business day; time to leave work and go home

\* At quitting time, he remembered to call his wife to ask if she would like him to buy anything at the store on his way home.



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## **CULTURE NOTE**

### **Drinking Water**

People use water every day to “meet their needs” (do what is required). Access to public water sources that are safe and reliable is “crucial” (necessary; very important) for the health and “prosperity” (success) of a society.

“Tap water” (water that comes out of the faucet) not only provides Americans with water for daily activities like drinking, “bathing” (taking a bath or shower), and cooking, but also is used to deliver “fluoride” (a substance that contributes to the health of teeth).

During the past “century” (100 years), many improvements in the health, prosperity, and “longevity” (how long someone/something lives) of the U.S. population can be “attributed to” (explained by) improvements in water quality. Water “treatment” (using a process or chemicals to improve the quality) and “disinfection” (removing harmful substances and cleaning) have made U.S. tap water one of the safest and healthiest drinking water supplies in the world

Adding fluoride to our tap water has also helped reduce the amount of “tooth decay” (rotting of teeth) experienced by the public. Both the disinfection and fluoridation of public water systems are among the greatest public health achievements of the 20th century.

Although the United States has one of the safest drinking water supplies in the world, new “challenges” (possible problems) require the country to continue to work to protect the water supply. A “primary” (main; important) concern is the fact that the drinking water “infrastructure” (structures and facilities), which includes the “pipes” (long, hollow tubes used for moving liquid from one place to another) that bring water to our homes, is “aging” (getting older) and needs to be “upgraded” (improved) or replaced.



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English as a Second Language Podcast

## ESL Podcast 36 - At My Desk and at Lunch

### COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 36: At My Desk and at Lunch

This is English as a Second Language Podcast episode 36. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development, in beautiful Los Angeles, California.

In this episode, we're going to see Lucy working at her desk and go out to lunch with her supervisor. Let's get started.

[Start of story]

I get to the office and sit down at my desk. I share a cubicle with another employee, Jim, but he only works in the afternoons so we don't usually get in each other's way too much. I boot up my computer and look at my agenda for today. I had about 30 new emails in my inbox but I decide not to read them right away. There were some new inter-office paperwork in my inbox too, but I decide to look at them a little later. First, I wanted to start in on a report that I had to finish today. I had a conference call at the end of the day with the head office, but I had most of the day to get it done.

Before long, it was the lunch hour. I didn't pack a lunch so I ask my supervisor if she wanted to have lunch together. We head down the street to a sit-down restaurant. The hostess shows us to a table in the back of the restaurant. The waiter arrives a few minutes later and we order entrees, no appetizers, since we need to get back by 1:00. The waiter was very busy so I had to wave him down to get the check. He brought the bill, and my supervisor and I split the check. We walk back to the office and I get back to work. Just four more hours until quitting time!

[End of story]

When we say we are at our desk, we mean we are sitting next to or by our desk.

Lucy gets to the office and sits down at her desk. She shares "a cubicle with another employee." A cubicle, "cubicle," is a small space in a big office where you have walls that divide the different employees. They don't have a separate office; they don't usually have a door, but they do have walls - three walls around them so they have some privacy - they have some quiet to work. But, the



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cubicles are in a larger office, so it's like a small part of an office that one person can work at or two people can work at.

In the Lucy's case, she shares her cubicle with someone else, "but he only works in the afternoons so" they "don't usually get in each other's way too much." To get in someone else's way means that you are interfering with each other - you are causing problems for each other.

Lucy says that she boots up her computer and looks at her agenda for the day. To boot, "boot," up (two words) means to start your computer - to turn your computer on. Your agenda, "agenda," is a list of things - a schedule of things that you need to do today: appointments, phone calls, and so forth; all of these would be part of your agenda.

Lucy says that she "had about 30 new emails in" her "inbox." Your inbox, "inbox," is in your email program, and that is the place where you find the messages that people have sent you. You can also have a inbox where you put papers that you have to work on. The opposite of the inbox would be the out box.

Lucy says that there are "some new inter-office paperwork in" her "inbox too." Inter-office, "inter-office," means between offices. Inter means between two different offices. So, inter-office paperwork would be things, letters, memos, other business forms that you would give to another office in your company. If you are in the accounting department, you take care of the money; you might send information to the sales department; that would be inter-office paperwork.

Paperwork, "paperwork," (one word) just refers to any form, letter, memo, anything on paper that is related to your business. Sometimes people use this expression, paperwork, to describe unnecessary forms or paper forms that you have to complete that cause a lot of problems - that take a lot of time. Someone may say, "There's too much paperwork to get a visa to the United States" - a lot of paperwork.

There's a joke in offices about putting paperwork in the circular file. A file, "file," is usually a place where you put business documents that are related to each other. Circular, "circular," means round. The expression, circular file, refers to a wastebasket or a trash basket, a place where you would get rid of something - throw something away. So, someone may say, "Well, I'm going to put this in my circular file," that is I'm going to throw it away. Of course, it's not really a file. If it were a file, you would keep it in a filing cabinet. I worked at a job, many years





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have lunch together." A supervisor, "supervisor," is another name for your boss - the person who tells you what to do. In my life, that would be my wife!

Lucy says that she and her supervisor "head down the street to a sit-down restaurant." To head, "head," somewhere means to go somewhere or to go in the direction of something. To "head down the street" just means to go down or to walk, in this case, on "the street to a sit-down restaurant," a restaurant where you can have a more formal meal.

"The hostess shows" them "to a table in the back of the restaurant." A hostess, "hostess," is the woman, in this case, in a restaurant that says hello to you when you come in the restaurant - that greets you, and she asks how many people are in your party, meaning how big is your group - how many people are in your group, and then she takes you to a table. The male version of this would be a host, "host." So, a hostess is always a woman and host is a man.

In very expensive restaurants - in what we would call fancy restaurants, restaurants where you have to dress very nicely and you pay a lot of money for your food, they sometimes have what's called the maitre d', a maitre d', which is the person that takes reservations and shows you to your table.

In this story, the hostess shows Lucy and her supervisor "to a table." To show someone to a table means to take them to a table. When I go into a restaurant, sometimes they look at me and they show me the door, meaning they take me to the door and say, "Goodbye, we don't want you in our restaurant." Happens to me all the time, I'm not sure why.

"The waiter arrives" at their table "a few minutes later" and Lucy and her boss "order entrees," not "appetizers." An entree, "entree," is the main part of your meal, what we would call the main course, "course." Your meal has different parts. There's the main course, which is the entree, that's the biggest part of the meal where you would get, for example, chicken or steak or the largest part of the food you are eating. An appetizer, "appetizer," is something you eat at the beginning of the meal, usually it's a smaller portion of food. Perhaps you would have some vegetables, or in many restaurants, they have appetizers that are fried food - food that you put in oil to make them brown. These are appetizers; they are things that you eat before your entree - your main meal.

Lucy and her boss "need to get back" or to return "by 1:00," so they do not have time to have an appetizer. After they finished their meal, Lucy waved down the waiter. She says "The waiter was very busy so I had to wave him down." To



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wave, "wave," someone down means that you put your hand up in the air or you say something to tell the person that you want him to come over to you. To wave someone down could also be used, for example, if you had problems with your car. Your car stopped working, we would say it broke down, and you park on the side of the road and you try to wave someone down to help you. You wave your arm - you move your arm back and forth to get someone's attention.

The waiter "brought the bill," and Lucy and her supervisor "split the check." To split, "split," is the same as divide. The check, of course, is the bill - how much money you owe. So, to split the check means to divide the check; each person pays for the food that they ate.

Lucy and her supervisor walk back to their office. Lucy says, "Just four more hours until quitting time!" Quitting time is the time that you stop working. We're going to stop talking and now listen to the story at a normal speed.

[Start of story]

I get to the office and sit down at my desk. I share a cubicle with another employee, Jim, but he only works in the afternoons so we don't usually get in each other's way too much. I boot up my computer and look at my agenda for today. I had about 30 new emails in my inbox but I decide not to read them right away. There were some new inter-office paperwork in my inbox too, but I decide to look at them a little later. First, I wanted to start in on a report that I had to finish today. I had a conference call at the end of the day with the head office, but I had most of the day to get it done.

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[End of story]

Thanks to our fantastic scriptwriter, Dr. Lucy Tse, for all of her hard work. And thanks to you for listening. From Los Angeles, California, I'm Jeff McQuillan. Come back and listen to us again here on ESL Podcast.





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