How to avoid sounding rude while speaking English?

Do you always speak a sentence in your head before actually speaking it loud just to find out if it sounds rude? Do you think the way you communicate comes across as offensive to others? Speaking English and speaking polite English are two different arts and both can be mastered with practice. For English learners, it is always difficult to take care of the thin line between sounding rude and polite. Suppose you are in a foreign country and you ask the waiter, 'give me coffee,' you may get a strange look. This is because people don't like being told what to do. Instead, if you say, 'Can you get me a coffee?' it will be much more appreciated. Let us today learn how to sound polite when speaking English.

Polite Request

Rules to politeness

English language comes with its set of formalities and if you respect that, you will never come across as rude in your communication. Let us look at some basic rules of politeness.

Ordering - When you want to order something, use a phrase such as, Can or Could I. e.g. can you pass me the newspaper? Can I have a sugar-free coffee please? If you are in a formal gathering, you can use the phrase, May I. e.g. May I contribute in today's finding? May I join you for the big meeting tomorrow?

Asking- When you want to ask for permission, use a phrase such as, do you mind or would it be a problem. e.g. Do you mind going over that slide once again? Would it be a problem if we edit the conclusion part? When you ask somebody in a softer tone using these expressions, the other individual will feel comfortable as we are asking for his/her opinion as well. They have a choice to say yes/no.

Requesting - When you want to request something, you can use a phrase such as I would like to. e.g. I would like to see that report first thing in the morning. If you say I want, you may come across as a little rude.

How to say a 'No' without sounding rude?

This is a tricky part. When you want to say a no, you can use an expression such as – I'm afraid I can't. This will help especially in a formal setting where a direct no is not accepted well by the people. A direct no can be considered impolite. e.g. I'm afraid I can't give you a two-day leave next week as a big meeting is scheduled during that weekend.

Simple, isn't it. These tips will help you communicate in a polite manner. To learn more, join our online spoken English class and gain a mastery over speaking fluent English.

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- By Chander Madan

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