Communicative English – Workplace Communication: Sharing Ideas and Information (Safety Context)

1. Why Workplace Communication Matters in Safety

In an electrical engineering environment, **clear communication** can prevent accidents, save time, and ensure everyone follows correct procedures.
Misunderstanding safety instructions can lead to **serious hazards** such as electrical shock, burns, or equipment damage.

2. Workplace Safety Discussions – Common Situations

When discussing safety at work, you may need to:

- **Report hazards** (e.g., exposed wires, faulty machines)
- **Give cautions or warnings** (e.g., "Be careful of the wet floor near the switchboard.")
- **Provide instructions** (e.g., "Turn off the main power before working on the circuit.")
- **Make or respond to suggestions** (e.g., improving PPE usage)
- **Handle interruptions politely** while staying focused on the issue

3. Key Vocabulary

Hazards-exposed wiring, live circuit, overloaded socket, damaged insulation, slippery floor, fire risk

Cautions-Be careful…, Watch out…, Keep away from…, Do not touch…, Handle with care

Instructions-Switch off…, Wear…, Ensure that…, Report…, Disconnect…, Follow…, Avoid…

4. Language for Sharing Ideas & Information in Safety Discussions

A. Making Suggestions

Useful when proposing safety improvements.

- *"I think we should…"* → "I think we should label all circuit breakers clearly."
- *"How about…"* → "How about adding a warning sign near the control panel?"
- *"Why don't we…"* → "Why don't we schedule regular safety checks?"

B. Giving a Counter-Suggestion

When offering an alternative idea:

- *"That's a good point, but maybe we could…"* → "…use insulated covers instead."

- *"I see your point, but have you considered…"* → "…installing an emergency cut-off switch?"
- *"What if we…"* → "What if we train all staff in basic electrical safety first?"

C. Agreeing

When you support someone's idea:

- *"I agree with you completely."*
- *"That's a great suggestion."*
- *"I think you're right about that."*

D. Disagreeing Politely

Always be respectful to keep a good working relationship:

- *"I understand your concern, but I think…"*
- *"I'm not sure that would work because…"*
- *"That might be risky since…"*

E. Interrupting Politely

Sometimes you need to step in during discussions:

- *"Sorry to interrupt, but…"* → "Sorry to interrupt, but I think the main breaker is still on."
- *"Excuse me, could I add something here?"*
- *"Just a moment, can I clarify something?"*

5. Sample Workplace Safety Discussion (Role-Play Example)

Context:
Two technicians (Ali & Kumar) are discussing safety in the electrical workshop.

Ali: I think we should put a "Danger: High Voltage" sign on the main control panel.
Kumar: That's a good suggestion. But have you considered using a flashing warning light instead?
Ali: Hmm… I see your point, but the sign would still help people notice the risk.
Kumar: True. Maybe we can use both — the sign and the light.
Ali: Yes, I agree. Also, I noticed some exposed wires near the testing area.
Kumar: Sorry to interrupt, but we need to report that to the supervisor immediately.

Exercises

Part A – Safety Vocabulary

Match the word/phrase to its meaning.

1. **Exposed wiring** **(_____)**
2. **Live circuit** **(_____)**
3. **Overloaded socket** **(_____)**
4. **Damaged insulation** **(_____)**
5. **Fire risk** **(_____)**

a) Wires without protective covering
b) Circuit that is carrying electricity
c) Socket with too many devices plugged in
d) Covering around wires that is broken or worn out
e) A possibility that fire may start

Part B – Giving Cautions & Instructions

Fill in the blanks with the correct caution or instruction:
(Use: *Be careful*, *Do not touch*, *Switch off*, *Report*, *Wear*)

1. _____ of the wet floor near the electrical panel.
2. _____ the main power before repairing the wiring.
3. _____ any damaged equipment to the supervisor.
4. _____ safety gloves before working on high-voltage systems.
5. _____ live wires with your bare hands.

Part C – Language for Discussion

Write the correct phrase from the box into each blank.

(How about…, That's a good point, but…, I agree with you completely, Sorry to interrupt, but…, I'm not sure that would work because…)

1. **Making a suggestion:** "_____ installing warning signs near the control panel?"
2. **Counter-suggestion:** "_____ we use insulated covers instead?"
3. **Agreement:** "_____ we should do weekly safety checks."
4. **Interruption:** "_____ I think the main breaker is still on."
5. **Polite disagreement:** "_____ it may confuse new staff."

Part D – Role-Play: Safety Meeting

Scenario: You are part of a safety meeting in your electrical workshop.
Choose your role: **Supervisor**, **Technician**, or **Safety Officer**.
Discuss the following points:

- A damaged power cable near the workbench
- No warning sign near the control panel
- Poor lighting in the storage area
- Colleague not wearing PPE

Instructions:

- Use at least **1 suggestion**
- Give **1 counter-suggestion**
- Show **agreement** and **disagreement** at least once
- Interrupt politely if urgent

Workplace Safety Hazard Chart – Electrical Engineering Context

1. Common Electrical Hazards

Hazard	Meaning	Example	Possible Injury	Urgent Action
Exposed wiring	Wires without protective covering	Broken cable in workshop	Electric shock	Switch off power, report to supervisor,
Live circuit	Circuit carrying electricity	Testing without switching off	Severe shock, burns	Turn off main power, lockout-tagout
Overloaded socket	Too many devices in one socket	4 tools in 1 plug	Fire risk	Unplug extra devices
Damaged insulation	Worn/broken wire covering	Cracked cable coating	Short circuit, shock	Replace cable immediately
Wet area near power	Water close to electrical system	Spilled water near panel	Electrocution	Clean up, warn others