

# 外資系 裏技英語 Episode 5

## Gaining Approval

Often in an international company the hardest part of the job is not selling to customers, but selling internally. This is called **“gaining approval”** or **“getting a plan approved.”** If your head office doesn't agree to a plan, how can you implement it? That is why learning to gain approval is an essential skill as an employee of an international company.

You must identify who the gatekeeper is, and build a positive relationship with him/her. Involve them early in the process to give them ownership in the process. Remember that the gatekeeper has a job to do, so do not expect them to simply approve a plan. They will likely want to have some input so that they feel they are important. This is annoying, and creates more work for you. You need to steer them in the direction you want. So, give them a choice!

### Stage 1: Ask for Help

Create ownership by telling the gatekeeper that you need help. The following phrases are very useful:

*“I would like your opinion on...” “I need your help with...” “Can I get your input on...” “Could you assist me with...”*

### Course A: Find the Correct Plan

The easiest way to make the gatekeeper feel important in the process is to provide multiple plans and ask them to choose one. The secret is to guide them to the one that you want. Do not simply give them your idea and expect them to say “yes.” They will likely want to have some input, no matter what.

- Give at least 2 options.
- Make sure that one is clearly the best option.
- Provide some information about each option, and be prepared to answer some questions about one.

Expect to have a small discussion with the gatekeeper, and make it sound like their final decision was all their idea.

### Course B: Plan with a Problem

Alternatively, you can provide a plan that you like, but add one element that the gatekeeper can alter or remove. Be creative, and knowing the gatekeeper's preferences can help. Examples could include:

- A poster with an ugly colour border.
- A video with an inappropriate musical background.
- A plan for a meeting with important overseas clients, with the catering provided by McDonald's.
- An important letter printed on pink A4 paper.
- Merchandising for your company with the wrong version of the company logo.

Make it easy for the gatekeeper to remove an item to make the perfect plan -- your original plan!

### Wordfind

Find the key-words used in this lesson.

R	B	Z	O	Q	N	B	G	E	R
M	E	I	W	T	I	C	A	T	O
M	F	P	N	S	Y	H	I	A	T
I	L	N	E	Y	U	I	N	L	A
W	W	L	R	E	B	L	I	U	V
J	L	I	S	D	K	D	N	P	E
H	S	T	H	W	G	E	G	I	L
N	I	N	I	E	G	M	T	N	E
P	A	U	P	F	Q	M	X	A	L
L	A	V	O	R	P	P	A	M	G

APPROVAL, BUY-IN, CHILD, ELEVATOR, GATEKEEPER, GAINING, GENIUS, MANIPULATE, OWNERSHIP, SELL

### Stage 3: Say Thank You for Your Great Idea

Praise the gatekeeper for their excellent decision. This will prevent them from regretting their decision afterwards and it will make working with the gatekeeper in the future easier. Phrases could include the following:

*“Yes, you're right. That is better.” “I think that's an excellent choice.” “Wow, great decision.” “I really appreciate your input.”*

### Sharing the Stage

Here are some useful phrases to make the gatekeeper *feel* like they are an important part of the process. Use the 2nd person “we” as much as possible.

*“As we decided last time...”*

*“As you know...”*

*“I would like your opinion on...”*

*Always make sure that the comment the gatekeeper makes is the one you're happy with.*

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