

BBC Learning English

How to...

Introduce people (formal)



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Jackie: Hello, this is *How to...* from bbclearningenglish.com with me, Jackie Dalton. In this programme, we'll look at what to say when you meet someone for the first time in formal contexts... how do you introduce yourself or other people in a polite way?

We are going to hear a conversation between two people who haven't met before. Imagine it's at a conference. Bob wants to introduce himself to Mary. As he approaches her, she is talking to someone else. Listen to this conversation and the language he uses to introduce himself.

Bob and Mary

Hello, excuse me... I'm sorry, I don't mean to interrupt...um, I just wanted to introduce myself, um, I'm Bob Reddington from Reddington Papers.

Oh, hello, nice to meet you. I don't believe we've met before.

Um, no we haven't. I have seen you from afar at a- I think it was one of Charles's pool parties.

Jackie: He starts off with a simple greeting: 'Hello...' he then apologises for coming up to her while she is speaking to someone else.

Bob

Hello, excuse me... I'm sorry, I don't mean to interrupt...

Jackie: After he's apologised for interrupting, he goes on to tell her who he is.

Bob and Mary

I just wanted to introduce myself, um, I'm Bob Reddington from Reddington Papers.

Jackie: So you can say, 'I just wanted to introduce myself...' or I like to introduce myself...' followed by your name and in business contexts, often what you do. Or you could say 'I'd like to introduce myself...' I'm Jackie, I'm a producer for the BBC. What does Mary say in response to Bob?

Bob and Mary

Hello, excuse me... I'm sorry, I don't mean to interrupt... I just wanted to introduce myself. I'm Bob Reddington from Reddington Papers.

Oh, hello, nice to meet you. I don't believe we've met before.

Jackie: 'Nice to meet you,' she says – a very common response when you meet someone for the first time. You could also say 'Pleased to meet you.' She follows it with. 'I don't believe we've met before.' That's a polite way of acknowledging that you're meeting someone for the first time – or even checking that you haven't met them before, in case you can't remember!

Mary

Oh, hello, nice to meet you. I don't believe we've met before.

Um, no we haven't. I have seen you from afar at a- I think it was one of Charles's pool parties.

Jackie: Now we'll hear a conversation between Mr Jones and Miss Smith. Mr Jones is the director of a company. Miss Smith is an employee. She knows who he is, but he hasn't met her yet. Listen to how she introduces herself.

Mr Jones and Miss Smith

Uh, good evening, um, Mr Jones, isn't it?

That's right, yes, hello.

Hi, it's a lovely party you've put on here.

Oh, well, glad you're enjoying it!

I don't think we've actually met formally yet.

No, no I don't think we have.

My name's Miss Smith and I work in accounts.

Jackie: She says, 'I don't think we've actually met formally yet.' A nice thing to say when you have had some kind of contact or link with another person (like you've seen them in the same building or spoken briefly), but you haven't actually exchanged names. After that, you can go on to tell them who you are.

Mr Jones and Miss Smith

I don't think we've actually met formally yet.

No, no I don't think we have.

My name's Miss Smith and I work in accounts.

Oh, ok.

Jackie: So that's language for introducing yourself. How about if you want to introduce someone else? Listen to this conversation. What phrase is used to introduce someone?

Mrs Sullivan, Professor Kostenko and Mrs Chapman

Oh, professor Kostenko, have you met my colleague, Mrs Chapman?

Hello Mrs Chapman, pleased to meet you.

Hello Professor, very nice to meet you too.

Jackie: 'Have you met...?' An easy way to introduce one person to another.
'Have you met Mary?' 'Have you met my friend?'

Mrs Sullivan

Have you met my colleague, Mrs Chapman?

Jackie: And it's greeted with the kinds of phrases we heard before.

Professor Kostenko and Mrs Chapman

Hello Mrs Chapman, pleased to meet you.

Hello Professor, very nice to meet you too.

Jackie: 'Pleased to meet you...' Very nice to meet you...' Now listen out for the slightly different structure used to introduce someone here.

Mrs Sullivan, Professor Kostenko and Mrs Chapman

Professor Kostenko, there's someone I'd like you to meet, it's Mrs Chapman.

Hello, Mrs Chapman, it's a pleasure to meet you.

Likewise.

Jackie: 'There's someone I'd like you to meet...' - a very pleasant way of introducing someone.

Mrs Sullivan

There's someone I'd like you to meet...

Jackie: Just as we can say 'I'd like to introduce myself,' you could also say 'I'd like to introduce you to...' For example: 'Professor Kostenko, I'd like to introduce you to Mrs Chapman.' When he is introduced, Professor Kostenko says 'It's a pleasure to meet you.'

Professor Kostenko

Hello, Mrs Chapman, it's a pleasure to meet you.

Jackie: ...A variation on 'nice to meet you'. How does Mrs Chapman respond?
Listen again.

Professor Kostenko and Mrs Chapman

Hello, Mrs Chapman, it's a pleasure to meet you.
Likewise.

Jackie: 'Likewise' – a word we can use to return a compliment or polite statement. It means 'I feel the same way'.

Professor Kostenko and Mrs Chapman

It's a pleasure to meet you.
Likewise.

Jackie: Let's finish with a recap

I don't mean to interrupt.

I just wanted to introduce myself.
I'd like to introduce you to...
There's someone I'd like you to meet...
Have you met...?

I don't believe we've met before.
I don't think we've actually met formally yet.

Pleased to meet you.
Nice to meet you.
It's a pleasure to meet you.
Very nice to meet you.
Likewise.