

C1

PHONE & VIDEO CALLS

DIALOG · 5 MIN.

Reading the Mood When Everyone Has Their Camera Off · Podcast

Every camera is off and nobody speaks — how to read pauses, tone and silence in English video calls.

Listen to the episode +
comprehension test:

<https://www.englisch-lehrer.com/podcasts/reading-the-mood-when-everyone-has-their-camera-off>

NAME

DATE

BRICK 1 · LEARN THE KEY PHRASES

● ○ ○

Read the eight phrases with meaning and example. You will hear all of them in the episode.

ENGLISH	DEUTSCH	EXAMPLE
to read the mood	die Stimmung lesen / einschätzen	<i>With twenty cameras off, it is almost impossible to read the mood.</i>
budget cut	Budgetkürzung	<i>The team went quiet right after the budget cut was announced.</i>
folded arms	verschränkte Arme	<i>I could see folded arms across the room before anyone said a word.</i>
to process something	etwas verarbeiten / sacken lassen	<i>Give the client a moment to process the price increase.</i>
to jump in	sich einschalten / dazwischenreden	<i>Feel free to jump in at any point during the call.</i>
a flatter tone	flacherer / ausdrucksloserer Tonfall	<i>Her flatter tone told me the news had not landed well.</i>
a door to walk through	ein einfacher Einstieg zum Mitreden	<i>A low-risk question gives quiet colleagues a door to walk through.</i>
to follow up one-to-one	individuell nachfassen	<i>After the town hall, we follow up one-to-one with the team leads.</i>



BRICK 2 · FILL THE GAPS



Complete the missing word from the conversation.

get

become

take

make

six

three

ten

sixty

01 Small correction, Max: 'bekommen' is 'to _____' — 'become' means 'werden'.

02 Yes — and then I count to _____ in my head before I say anything else.

BRICK 3 · TRUE OR FALSE?



Tick one. T = true, F = false.

01 Max read last quarter's silence as agreement.

T ☐ F ☐

02 Priya challenged the timeline during the call, as she usually does.

T ☐ F ☐

BRICK 4 · ORDER



Number the steps of the conversation (1–5).

01 ☐ They agree on the plan for Thursday: ask, wait, follow up one-to-one

02 ☐ Hannah points out the long pause after the budget cut

03 ☐ Hannah explains her low-risk question and the six-second wait

04 ☐ Max asks Hannah how she thinks the call went

05 ☐ They notice that Priya said nothing at all

BRICK 5 · YOUR VERSION



Write two sentences of your own using phrases from Brick 1.

.....

.....

.....

MINI-CHECK – CAN I DO THIS YET?

☐ I can announce a delay politely.

☐ I can propose an alternative.

☐ I can promise written confirmation.

Listened twice and ticked everything? Then you are ready for the real conversation.



Cut-out flashcards

× Cut out, fold on the line – English in front, German on the back. Or practise digitally:

<https://www.englisch-lehrer.com/podcasts/reading-the-mood-when-everyone-has-their-camera-off>

to read the mood

With twenty cameras off, it is almost impossible to read the mood.

die Stimmung lesen / einschätzen

budget cut

The team went quiet right after the budget cut was announced.

Budgetkürzung

folded arms

I could see folded arms across the room before anyone said a word.

verschränkte Arme

to process something

Give the client a moment to process the price increase.

etwas verarbeiten / sacken lassen

to jump in

Feel free to jump in at any point during the call.

sich einschalten / dazwischenreden

a flatter tone

Her flatter tone told me the news had not landed well.

flacherer / ausdrucksloserer Tonfall

a door to walk through

A low-risk question gives quiet colleagues a door to walk through.

ein einfacher Einstieg zum Mitreden

to follow up one-to-one

After the town hall, we follow up one-to-one with the team leads.

individuell nachfassen

Answer key

Check only when you have finished. Every answer comes with the **why**.

BRICK 2 · FILL THE GAPS

01 **get**

False friends: "bekommen" is "to get"; "become" means "werden". "We'll get feedback" is correct, "become feedback" is not.

02 **six**

Hannah counts to six in her head — the deliberate pause feels long but nearly always gets someone talking.

BRICK 3 · TRUE OR FALSE?

01 **True**

True — he admits he read the quiet as consent.

02 **False**

False — she usually challenges every timeline, but today she said nothing at all.

BRICK 4 · ORDER

- 01 **1.** Max asks Hannah how she thinks the call went
- 02 **2.** Hannah points out the long pause after the budget cut
- 03 **3.** They notice that Priya said nothing at all
- 04 **4.** Hannah explains her low-risk question and the six-second wait
- 05 **5.** They agree on the plan for Thursday: ask, wait, follow up one-to-one

KEEP PRACTISING LIVE

Want to practise these phrases in a real conversation?

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