

Would You Like to Do a Language Exchange?

Key Vocabulary Terms

1. To be busy with _____
2. To have a lot going on with _____
3. To not have the time to commit to _____
4. To thank someone for _____
5. To be planning for _____
6. To already have _____, to already be doing _____
7. To not be interested in _____
8. To pass on _____

Lindsay: Okay. So hey Molly and Susan. How are you guys doing today? Thanks for coming.

Molly: No problem.

Susan: No problem.

Lindsay: All right. I'm happy to have you guys here. So today we're gonna (going to) introduce a situation that (uh) a student might be in and the student might want to know what to say in this situation. Let's imagine that a student, actually, someone has asked the student to have a language exchange together and the student doesn't actually want to do it, what could someone say to actually be, to kindly (sort of), (um) not take up an

invitation, to say no. How would you do that?

Molly: I think a lot of it depends on the relationship you have with the person because if you don't know them at all, you want to be (uh) indirect and gentle in the way that you turn them down, whereas, if

you had prior contact before, it would be easier to just directly say no.

Susan: (Uh-hm). I also think that (um) if they ask you, it's important to get back to them right away because they are waiting for an answer.

Molly: Right. Right. (Um) and I – if I were being indirect, I would want to give them a specific context or reason for, for why I didn't want the language exchange, for example, "I'm really, really busy with work or **I have a lot going on with school, so I don't think I have the time to commit to a language exchange.**"

Susan: Yes, I think time is a, a good (um) excuse or a reason to give people. (Um), such as, (you know), "I'm sorry, I'm really busy these days." You can tell them, (you know), maybe you're studying for a test and it's just eating up all your time. That's a normal thing that (um) Americans would do to give an excuse.

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Molly: Yeah. Right. And it also makes it finite so that you're not saying, "No thank you, I'm busy this week" and then the following week, they're getting back to you. It's vague enough that they understand that it's not going to happen, but it's not offending anyone.

Lindsay: Yeah, that's great. And – it's so, it's true too, right. We're all so busy, so time is always a good thing to kind of fall back on. Absolutely. Yeah, go 'head (ahead).

Susan: I think it's also important to, (you know), this goes without saying, but to be polite and say, (you know), **"Thank you for asking. (Um)**

it's so nice of you to ask." So just let them know, so let them down easily.

Lindsay: Exactly. So just to throw out some, some more phrases that we could use. One example, (you know), "I really don't have the time." What would be another one that you could use?

Molly: (Um) you could specifically talk about your schedule. "(Um) I have a busy work schedule. I have a busy school schedule. **(Um) I'm planning for a specific life** event that prevents me from being able to take something else on."

Susan: (Uh-huh).

Lindsay: Absolutely.

Susan: Or (um) “Actually I already have some conversation partners, so I’m all set. But maybe I can suggest someone else for you.”

Lindsay: Yeah, it’s always a good idea to kind of give them a backup plan, try to help them out a bit if you can. Okay. What if, oh sorry, go ‘head (ahead), did you wanna (want to) say...

Molly: I was going to say, if they’ve, if they’ve suggested a specific time to you, (um), you can also respond directly to their inquiry by saying, “Oh, I see that you’re looking for a weekend partner. I really have a lot going on on the weekend, so that won’t work for me. But thank you for, for your interest.”

Susan: Yeah, that’s right.

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Lindsay: Yeah, that's perfect. So what if – so Molly, before you said that, (you know), if it's someone you don't know so well, you want to be a little bit more indirect, but what if we know someone pretty well, what are some things that we could actually say? We could be a little bit more honest, right?

Molly: Yeah, if it was a friend, I'd just be like "Nah. Thanks for asking, **but I'm not really interested.**"

Susan: Yeah, you can just be more direct if it's a person you know. You don't have to give so many excuses and, and try to dance around it so much.

Lindsay: Right, you could say something like "**Oh that**

doesn't really interest me so much," right?

Molly: Right. Or "**I'll pass. Thanks, but I'll pass.**"

Susan: Yes. (Uh-uh).

Lindsay: Yeah that's perfect. Okay. So it's great to kind of (you know) have different phrases and different ways of saying this but we've given you guys, (you know), a handful of ways to kind of communicate to the person that you actually don't want to engage in this activity, so there you go. Thanks so much guys for helping out.

Molly: Of course.

Susan: No problem.