

Learner Report

28/10/18

Learner: Hideki Iwanaga

Client: Adobe

Position: Sales Manager

Needs/ goals:

Hideki was a mature-aged Japanese executive who needed more fluent English in preparation for greater involvement in English communication activities at Adobe, Tokyo and especially for trips abroad for Adobe, including to Las Vegas in November each year. He has spent the past 2½ months in Sydney on a new exchange program to learn English and learn and share business practices and has the full support of his superiors in Tokyo.

Hideki arrived in Sydney at strong B2 level (intermediate level on the Common European Framework scale). He lacked confidence in speaking and interacting (professionally and socially) with English speakers. An improvement in this area was his primary goal. He was seeking greater fluency in his speaking and listening skills primarily for his Las Vegas sales conference and associated workshops and seminars.

Other goals included:

- Vocabulary extension
- Pronunciation correction/ improvement
- Speaking practice (flow/ strength of delivery)
- Cultural awareness improvement and improvement in social interaction
- Presentation skills and confidence in presenting
- Thinking/ analysing/ solving problems in English only
- Grammar improvement

His time in the Sydney office was spent primarily working with Australian employees at Adobe, learning about/ discussing sales approaches and visiting clients (Adobe products resellers). He also socialised with these colleagues frequently and was warmly included in this regard, attending many social events where he was able to steadily work on his speaking and listening, and socialisation goals.

Our work:

We addressed all of the issues of need above. Grammar was primarily done at home, with questions/ uncertainties relating to it being brought to the next session for clarification. Other areas (above) were worked on in our sessions.

From the middle of September, my sessions with Hideki were reduced from 3 sessions per week to 1 session per week due to other work commitments I had. This was a great opportunity for him to engage with two different trainers employing different styles of communication and session delivery approaches.

Two of Hideki's presentations were video recorded, the first in the 2nd week (at the end of June) and again one session (one week) before the final session (at the end of August). There are very clear differences (=improvements) in the fluency (accuracy and confidence), range of vocabulary, and delivery style in the two videos taken almost exactly two months apart.

A typical session:

- Conversation (with error identification/ correction)
- Going over previous session's homework (grammar)
- Pronunciation practice
- Business analysis (Adobe Sydney/ Tokyo practices)/ business culture analysis (Australia/ Japan)
- Area of work for that session. It could be:
 - Analytical language
 - Giving expert opinion and advice in a confident manner

- A reading task or aspect of Hideki's Adobe Japan business practices and commentary as expert in that topic (explaining the merits/ drawbacks of particular practices)
- Listening skills
- Australian corporate culture, particularly pertaining to socialisation

Grammar

Grammar explanation was followed by grammar exercises (with answers) given for homework.

Grammar topics covered were:

- Conditionals
- Gerund and infinitive
- Unreal time (wishes/ hopes/ prefer) and subjunctives
- Past tenses
- Present perfect tenses
- Passives
- Mixed grammar (all past, present, future tenses)
- Reported speech
- Linking words and phrases
- Phrasal verbs

Successes

- Fluency: evidenced in video recording and in feedback from Hideki's colleagues in Sydney.
- Confidence in word choice, grammar, social English
- Cultural understanding
- Thinking/ analysing/ solving problems in English. In the final two sessions we did logic (brainteasers) and mathematical (mainly arithmetic) problem solving and Hideki performed well using only his 'English brain'
- Listening skills
- Hideki has become again a student of the language and analytical of it, as he was when he was younger.
- Hideki has a new set of challenges he is looking forward to. He understands that his set of competencies has expanded a great deal, as has of course his market value, and is appreciative of this.
- Hideki's pronunciation has markedly improved, especially sounds such as:

<u>R</u> ule	<u>T</u> hief	<u>T</u> rouble	<u>A</u> ndrew
<u>R</u> elate	<u>T</u> hat	<u>T</u> ruth	<u>S</u> ignificant
<u>L</u> aw	<u>V</u> iew	<u>S</u> tew	
<u>L</u> ark	<u>F</u> ind	<u>S</u> tray	

Next steps

- Hideki must speak English every day after leaving Sydney. Fortunately he has already arranged for this with a Native English speaking colleague in Adobe Tokyo.
- Hideki will travel next month to Singapore for work and also will look after a colleague from India who will work for a number of months in the Tokyo office. These experiences will be excellent preparation for his annual Adobe trip to Las Vegas later in November.
- He will buy a grammar book (he was recommended two (Vince: Advanced Language Practice and West: Recycling Advanced English) and do the exercises regularly. He has made great improvements but regular contact with grammar is needed and this must be self-directed.

I have enjoyed coaching Hideki and it was a great pleasure to see such a marked improvement over the two months, due mainly to his excellent attitude toward improving his communication abilities in English at work and at social events with his colleagues.

Regards
Raymond