

Chinese for Business

Lecturer: Huimin Xie Ph.D.

Language

English

Course description and objectives

This course is for students who have acquired Chinese language and culture basics, in particular, the Romanized spelling system, pinyin and the writing system, Chinese characters. In this course, students will be guided through a series of topics in their “journey” in China as an expat: greetings at the work setting; self-introduction, socializing with colleagues; making inquiries; setting up appointments; visiting companies etc. Text and multi-media materials are used and authentic communicative tasks are implemented.

At the end of the course, students are expected to be able to:

- conduct conversations with sympathetic native speakers on the topics covered
- understand the relevant Chinese socio-cultural norms
- comprehend texts in Chinese characters

Audience

The course is open to all students enrolled in Bocconi.

However, native speakers of Chinese are not allowed given the nature of the course.

Prerequisites

In order to attend the class in a productive way, students are advised they have some basic knowledge of Pinyin, the Romanized spelling system and recognize some basic Chinese characters. Here are a few resources you can follow to learn Pinyin and Chinese characters before attending this course:

- a) Learn Chinese alphabet pronunciation series for complete beginners – about 2 hours' lessons
https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLWXYZU_NJb_fGUFuJpqjn4vYLzpTZqhC0
- b) Learn Chinese tone series for complete beginners – about 2 hours' lessons
https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLWXYZU_NJb_c3gv5RaeD-z1y-hPC_ky9



- c) Learn to write and type Chinese character for complete beginners – about one hour's lessons: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLWxyZU_NJb_e-WehXnNDYm7GwoXUmqoks

Duration

20 hours

Guidelines

Registration:

You can sign up for the course only through the yoU@B student Diary, in the "sign-up for various activities" box (please note: this box appears only when registrations open. It will not be visible before then).

Cancellations must also be submitted through the Diary **by the registration deadline**.

No other cancellation methods will be accepted.

Registration will be confirmed a few days before the course starts via a message in the yoU@B student Diary.

Attendance:

- Attendance of **75% or more** of class hours: obtainment of the **Open Badge**
- Attendance of **less than 25%** of class hours: **Exclusion List**

Teaching Mode

In-class sessions in physical presence. Remote participation will not be offered.

Calendar

Lesson	Date	Time	Room
1	Wed 25/03/2026	18:15 - 19:45	205 (Sarfatti)
2	Mon 30/03/2026	18:15 - 19:45	205 (Sarfatti)
3	Tue 31/03/2026	18:15 - 19:45	205 (Sarfatti)
4	Wed 01/04/2026	18:15 - 19:45	205 (Sarfatti)
5	Mon 13/04/2026	18:15 - 19:45	205 (Sarfatti)
6	Wed 15/04/2026	18:15 - 19:45	205 (Sarfatti)

7	Mon 20/04/2026	18:15 - 19:45	205 (Sarfatti)
8	Wed 22/04/2026	18:15 - 19:45	205 (Sarfatti)
9	Mon 27/04/2026	18:15 - 19:45	205 (Sarfatti)
10	Wed 29/04/2026	18:15 - 19:45	205 (Sarfatti)

Syllabus of the course

Lessons	Contents	Details
Lesson 1	Course overview; Get to know each other; Greetings; Leave-taking;	<p>A. <u>Useful classroom expressions in Chinese;</u></p> <p>B. <u>Functions:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Greet a coworker when meeting for the first time; 2) Greet a coworker at different times of the day. 3) Say goodbye appropriately during the conversation. <p>C. <u>Key cultural notes:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) First name and last name; 2) The importance of titles
Lesson 2	Meeting the company manager; Meeting the company staff;	<p>A. <u>Functions:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Conduct small talks when introduced to the manager for the first time; 2) Seek information about company staff <p>B. <u>Key cultural notes:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Countries and languages; 2) Key cities in China 3) Language distributions in China
Lesson 3	Family members and relatives; Marital Status	<p>A. <u>Functions:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Conduct small talks between colleagues who have got acquainted with each other; 2) Ask someone's age in different ways;

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3) Talk about one's family, such as their relationship to you, their occupations, ages etc. 4) Ask about someone else's family
		<p>B. <u>Key cultural notes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Acceptable topics of small talks in China; 2) Kinship terms and the usage within and outside families
Lessons 4-5	Company types	<p>A. <u>Functions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Introduce and talk briefly about your company: its size, type, location etc. <p>B. <u>Key cultural notes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Joint ventures and wholly owned foreign enterprises
	The size of the company	<p>A. <u>Functions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Count till 200; 2) Compare two or more people and things; <p>B. <u>Key cultural notes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Politeness in Chinese: Response to compliments;
Lessons 6-7	Inquiries: Inquire about someone's whereabouts	<p>A. <u>Functions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Inquire about someone's whereabouts; (2) Locate someone; (3) Express the distance between two locations; <p>B. <u>Key grammatical structures and vocabularies:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Modal verbs 能, 会, 可以 (2) Prepositional phrase 离...很近/很远; adverb 只; <p>C. <u>Key cultural notes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) 中关村 "computer City " Expatriates in China;

Inquiries: Inquire about someone's profession

- A. Functions:
- 1) Inquire after someone's profession;
 - 2) Express time, days and dates;
 - 3) Describe the location of an activity;
- B. Key Grammatical Structures and vocabularies:
- 1) Preposition “在” ; 还没有;
- C. Key cultural notes:
- 1) Business hours;
 - 2) Chinese concept of time

Lesson 8-9

Make appointments: Setting up an appointment

- A. Functions:
- 1) Set up appointments;
 - 2) Obtain someone's contact information;
 - 3) Interact appropriately with one's superior and subordinates in a Chinese business;
 - 4) Express days, weeks and years
- A. Key cultural notes:
- 1) Politeness in Chinese: addressing colleagues of different social status

Make appointments: Reschedule an appointment

- A. Functions:
- 1) Reschedule appointments;
 - 2) Coordinate schedules with others to reach a mutually agreeable meeting time;
- B. Key grammatical structures and vocabularies:
- 1) 给 as a verb and a co-verb; adverbs 才 就;
 - 2) Verb reduplication;
- C. Key cultural notes:
Invitation, appointment and punctuality

Lessons 9-10	Visiting: Visiting a company for the first time	A. <u>Functions:</u> 1) Interact appropriately when first meeting a business partner; 2) Exchange business cards; 3) Express the duration and frequency of an activity; B. <u>Key Grammatical Structures and vocabularies:</u> 1) Adverb 刚; preposition 从; 2) Structures and phrases in expressing duration and frequency; C. <u>Key cultural notes:</u> 1) Business cards; 2) Politeness;
	Visiting: Introducing Products and Plants	A. <u>Functions:</u> 1) Discuss companies and manufacturing plants; 2) Comment on the products; B. <u>Key grammatical structures and vocabularies:</u> 1) Prepositional phrase 对...感兴趣; adverbial phrase. 太...了; 2) Cleft structure: 是...的 C. <u>Key cultural notes:</u> 1) Special economic zone and Free Trade Zone

Suggested Bibliography

Kuo J.C.M., *Startup Business Chinese (level 1): An Introductory Course for Professionals* (online textbook), Cheng&Tsui Company, Boston 2007
 The online version is available from the publisher's website

Other teaching materials will be available on BBoard.

Available seats

This activity is limited to **110** participants. No further registrations will be accepted once this number has been reached or after the registration period has closed. Please note that you can withdraw from the course only before the registration deadline.

