

## The Golden Rules of Good Study

By Dónal Thompson



You've said 'Yes'. This year you are going to learn English. You have your dictionary ready, your computer configured and the Human Resources department have assigned you a level.

### What happens now?

The first thing you need to do is plan. We will send you a Study Plan but you may need to adapt it. Between now and the end of your course there will be times when it is easy to study and times when it will be difficult to study. Holidays, children, busy work periods and possible illness will all eat into your time. Expect the unexpected. If you will have no time at Easter or summer, then study more now. Can you study before you leave home in the morning? Or at lunchtime? Or when the kids are in bed? Plan now when you are going to study. Don't improvise.

Reserve a place for your studies. A quiet corner at home or maybe the boss will lend you his office at lunchtime. Try to find a place with as few distractions as possible.

When you are studying, tell people. If you can't be available for your family for two hours, explain it to them. Tell them when you will be available. They are your family. They love you. They will want to help. At work, if you study at lunchtime, tell your colleagues. Tell them that you can't have lunch with them, or answer their phone or sit around chatting. Explain to them that this is important to you.

Switch off your mobile telephone when you study.

You are not alone when you study. You have a Tutor. Your tutor is an experienced English teacher who understands the special difficulties and challenges that learning with a computer ('e-learning') can bring. Your tutor does not assume that you are a computer expert.

But your tutor is not telepathic. You must tell your tutor if you have any difficulties. If your problem is technical and your tutor cannot help, s/he can point you in the right direction.

### Golden Rule N°1 : Speak to your tutor.

The Lingua method of language learning blends various components together. The common element is the program 'Tell Me More'. Follow the order of the exercises from left to right unless your Tutor gives you another instruction. There is a well-researched learning path in Tell Me More and if you follow it, you will learn. Just because you study on a computer, does not mean that you can be undisciplined. If you're not sure, follow the second golden rule.

### Golden Rule N°2 : Speak to your tutor.

You will also receive supplementary exercises automatically from within the Tell Me More program. We call these 'SiACCOs', after the program we designed to create them. SiACCOs are an integral part of your course and you should always do them as

soon as you can. You can ask for more SiACCOs too. If there is a grammar point you want to practise, then ask your tutor for more exercises. You will receive the results of your work immediately after sending it. SiACCOs are covered by the third golden rule.

### Golden Rule N°3 : Speak to your tutor.

Some students will have virtual classes. We call these 'Centras' after the program we use to establish the classes. These are real-time classes where you, your tutor and three or four other students will be simultaneously connected. These classes are a perfect opportunity to ask questions and practise your English communication skills. They are also a lot of fun! Never miss a Centra. They're important.

From time to time you tutor may send you instructions for exercises in the LINGUANET CLUB. This is another tool that can be used to practice and improve your grammar & vocabulary using a variety of exercise material and explanations. Not all courses are the same and so this may or may not happen.

Another part of your course may be telephone chats. These are twenty minutes conversations about a given theme. You can suggest themes for the chats too. It is quite possible that your chat will go off at a tangent. You may start talking about fast-food and end up talking about philosophy. That depends on you. These phone calls are not examinations. They are twenty minutes where you have a tutor's 100% attention. Try to have the phone calls in a quiet place where you will not be interrupted.

### Golden Rule N°4 : Speak to your tutor.

Every week we publish a Weekly Letter. This is a chance to read an article and comment about it on our webpage. You can register for free at [www.weeklyletter.com](http://www.weeklyletter.com) and read

online, download the article or listen to a podcast. This is a great opportunity to interact with tutors and other students. For those of you with an interest of Business English we have a weekly article designed to help you with the English used in commerce.

Studying while you're working is not the easiest thing in the world. You will have times when you are tired and frustrated. Don't worry. You're not alone. All of our tutors have been students and all of our tutors have learned a language. They understand the highs and lows.

### Golden Rule N°5 : Speak to your tutor.

You have said 'Yes' This year you are going to learn English. You are joining a club with more than 979,956,000 members. You will be able to travel all over the globe and book into hotels, rent cars, find your way around and understand what's happening. As you progress you will have access to some of the finest literature in the world. What you do this year will stay with you for the rest of your life.

Congratulations!

*Ps: Don't forget to speak to your tutor!*