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CELPIP Speaking Templates

One template for each of the eight CELPIP Speaking tasks: the steps in order, the seconds each step gets, phrases for every step, the mistakes that cost marks and a sample answer.

How to use them

- Learn each template's name and its steps in order first. The name is what you remember during the preparation time.
- Fill every step with details from the question in front of you. A template is a skeleton, not a script: memorised paragraphs sound rehearsed and miss what the task asks.
- Say your answer out loud with a timer, and move to the next step when its seconds are up. On CELPass, a pacing bar under the timer does this for you.

The eight templates

Task 1, Giving Advice: Three Tips and a Wish

Hi	Tip 1	Tip 2	Tip 3	Wish
10s	25s	25s	15s	10s

Task 2, Talking about a Personal Experience: The Mini Movie

Scene	Action	Ending	Feeling
10s	25s	15s	10s

Task 3, Describing a Scene: The Tour Guide

Overview	Area 1	Area 2	Back	Mood
10s	20s	15s	10s	5s

Task 4, Making Predictions: The Detective

Start	Guess 1	Guess 2	Guess 3	Ending
5s	15s	15s	15s	10s

Task 5, Comparing and Persuading: Choose, Compare, Convince

Choice	Compare 1	Compare 2	Ask
10s	20s	20s	10s

Task 6, Dealing with a Difficult Situation: Kind but Clear

Hello	Problem	Reason	Solution	Thanks
10s	15s	15s	15s	5s

Task 7, Expressing Opinions: Say It, Prove It, Say It Again

Opinion	Reason 1	Reason 2	Other side	Again
10s	30s	30s	10s	10s

Task 8, Describing an Unusual Situation: Paint It in Words

Hello	Overall	Details	Unusual	Advice
10s	15s	15s	10s	10s

Practise every task with an AI score and the pacing bar: celpass.com/speaking-practice-course

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SPEAKING TASK 1 · GIVING ADVICE · 30S TO PREPARE · 90S TO SPEAK

Three Tips and a Wish

Greet them, give up to three tips that each come with a reason, then end with a warm wish.

Hi	Tip 1	Tip 2	Tip 3	Wish
10s	25s	25s	15s	10s

1. Hi · 10s **Opening.** Greet the person by name, react to their news and show you understand why it's hard. Keep it to about 10 seconds.
   Hey Maria, thanks for telling me about this. *I can totally see why you're torn.*
   That sounds like a tough spot to be in. *Congratulations, first of all!*
2. Tip 1 · 25s **Advice 1 + reason + example.** Give your strongest suggestion, explain why it helps and add one concrete detail. Aim for about 25 seconds.
   The first thing I'd do is... *If I were you, I'd start by...* *One thing that might help is...* *The reason I say that is...*
3. Tip 2 · 25s **Advice 2 + reason + example.** Move to a different angle of the problem (money, time, people, health) so the two ideas don't overlap. About 25 seconds.
   Another thing to think about is... *On top of that, you could...* *It might also be worth...*
   For example, when my cousin was in the same situation...
4. Tip 3 · 15s **Advice 3 (if time allows).** Add a short third suggestion, often a practical next step or a backup plan. About 15 seconds; skip it if your first two points ran long.
   My last suggestion would be to... *And just in case, you could also...* *One more quick idea:*
   Whatever happens, make sure you...
5. Wish · 10s **Closing.** Sum up your advice in one sentence and end warmly, with encouragement or an offer to help. About 10 seconds.
   So, to sum up, I'd... *Anyway, those are just my thoughts.* *I'm sure you'll make the right call.*
   Let me know if you want to talk it through. *You know I'm here if you need anything.*

Mistakes that cost marks

- Describing the problem instead of advising.
- Stopping after 40 seconds with one idea.

Sample answer (CLB 9–10)

Your friend Daniel has been offered a job in another city. The pay is better, but he would have to leave his family and friends. Give Daniel some advice.

> Hi Daniel, congratulations on the offer! That's really exciting, and I can see why it's a hard decision.
>
> First, I'd suggest you look closely at the whole package, not just the salary. Rent in the new city might be much higher, so check whether you'd really have more money at the end of the month.
>
> Second, think about how often you could come home. If it's a short flight or a few hours by train, you could visit your family once a month, and with video calls you'd still feel close to everyone.

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> My last piece of advice is to ask the company whether you could start with a trial period, or even work remotely a couple of days a week. A lot of employers are flexible now, and it would make the move much easier.
>
> So, compare the real costs, plan your visits, and see if they'll be flexible. Whatever you decide, I'm sure you'll make it work, and you know I'll come and visit!

Practise this template on a real question: celpass.com/celpip/speaking/task-1-giving-advice

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SPEAKING TASK 2 · TALKING ABOUT A PERSONAL EXPERIENCE · 30S TO PREPARE · 60S TO SPEAK

The Mini Movie

Set the scene, play the action in order, show how it ended, then say how it felt.

Scene	Action	Ending	Feeling
10s	25s	15s	10s

1. Scene · 10s **Opening: when and where.** Answer the prompt in one sentence and set the scene: roughly when it happened, where you were and who was there. About 10 seconds.
   I'd like to talk about the time I... *A few years ago, when I was living in...*
   One experience that really stands out is... *Last summer, my friend and I...*
2. Action · 25s **What happened.** Tell the main events in order with past-tense verbs and one or two vivid details (a sound, a feeling, something someone said). About 25 seconds.
   At first, I... *Then, out of nowhere,...* *I remember that...* *After that,...* *The tricky part was...*
3. Ending · 15s **How it ended.** Say how the situation was resolved so the story feels finished. About 15 seconds.
   In the end,... *Eventually,...* *Luckily, it all worked out because...* *By the time we got home,...*
4. Feeling · 10s **Closing: feeling or lesson.** Finish with how you felt or what you learned, which links the story back to the question. About 10 seconds.
   Looking back, I realize... *That experience taught me...* *I'll never forget how...* *Ever since then, I've...*

Mistakes that cost marks

- Spending half the time on background and running out before the ending.

Sample answer (CLB 9–10)

Talk about a time when you helped a neighbour or a stranger. What happened, and how did you feel afterwards?

> Last winter, right after a big snowstorm, I looked out my window and saw my neighbour, Mrs. Chen, trying to shovel her driveway. She's in her eighties, and she had to stop every few seconds to catch her breath.
>
> So I grabbed my boots and went over. At first she insisted she was fine, but I told her I needed the exercise anyway, and she finally laughed and handed me the shovel. The snow was wet and heavy, so it took us almost an hour to clear the driveway and the path to her door.
>
> When we finished, she invited me in for tea and showed me photos of her grandkids. Honestly, I felt really warm inside, even though my hands were freezing. Ever since then, I check on her whenever it snows, and we've actually become good friends.

Practise this template on a real question: celpass.com/celpip/speaking/task-2-personal-experience

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SPEAKING TASK 3 · DESCRIBING A SCENE · 30S TO PREPARE · 60S TO SPEAK

The Tour Guide

Show the whole picture first, then walk the listener through it in one direction and end on the mood.

Overview	Area 1	Area 2	Back	Mood
10s	20s	15s	10s	5s

1. Overview · 10s **Overview.** Say where the scene is and the main thing happening, in one or two sentences. About 10 seconds.
   This picture shows a busy... *It looks like it's a sunny afternoon at...*
   Overall, it's a lively scene with lots of people... *The scene takes place in...*
2. Area 1 · 20s **First area.** Start in one place, such as the foreground or the left side, and describe two or three people and what they are doing. About 20 seconds.
   In the foreground,... *On the left-hand side, there's...* *Right in the middle,...* *A woman in a red jacket is...*
3. Area 2 · 15s **Second area.** Move in one direction to the next part of the picture and add specific details: clothing, colours, objects and actions. About 15 seconds.
   Next to her,... *Moving to the right,...* *Behind them,...* *Just across from...*
4. Back · 10s **Background.** Briefly describe the background, the weather or anything that adds atmosphere. About 10 seconds.
   In the background, you can see... *Further back,...* *Off in the distance,...* *Above them,...*
5. Mood · 5s **Closing impression.** End with one sentence about the overall mood so the description feels complete. About 5 seconds.
   All in all, it looks like... *Everyone seems to be...* *It's a pretty relaxed scene overall.* *It looks like a typical...*

Mistakes that cost marks

- Listing objects without saying what people are doing.

Sample answer (CLB 9–10)

Describe the picture to a friend who cannot see it.

The picture shows a busy beach on a summer afternoon: a lifeguard on a tall chair is blowing a whistle, two children are building a sandcastle in the foreground, a family is unpacking a picnic under a striped umbrella on the left, a man is selling ice cream from a cart on the right, and sailboats are out on the water in the background.

> This picture shows a busy beach on a hot summer afternoon.
>
> In the foreground, two little kids are building a sandcastle. One of them is filling a bucket with wet sand, and the other is patting the walls into shape.
>
> On the left-hand side, a family is setting up a picnic under a big striped umbrella. The mom is unpacking sandwiches from a cooler, and the dad is spreading out a blanket.
>
> Over on the right, a man in a white cap is selling ice cream from a little cart, and a few people are lining up to buy cones.

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> Right in the middle, a lifeguard is sitting up on a tall chair, blowing her whistle at someone in the water. And in the background, several sailboats are drifting across the water.
>
> Overall, it's a lively, cheerful scene, and everyone seems to be enjoying the sunshine.

Practise this template on a real question: celpass.com/celpip/speaking/task-3-describing-a-scene

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SPEAKING TASK 4 · MAKING PREDICTIONS · 30S TO PREPARE · 60S TO SPEAK

The Detective

Make three guesses about what happens next, each proved by a clue you can point to in the picture.

Start	Guess 1	Guess 2	Guess 3	Ending
5s	15s	15s	15s	10s

1. Start · 5s **Opening.** Say in one sentence that you'll predict what happens next in the scene. About 5 seconds.
   - *Based on what's going on in the picture, here's what I think will happen next.*
   - *I think a few things are about to happen.*
   - *In the next few minutes,...*
   - *Looking at this scene, I can imagine...*
2. Guess 1 · 15s **Prediction 1 + clue.** Pick the most obvious situation in the picture, predict what happens and name the clue that tells you. About 15 seconds.
   - *The man on the left is probably going to...*
   - *Since the sky is getting dark,...*
   - *I bet that...*
   - *Judging by..., I think...*
3. Guess 2 · 15s **Prediction 2 + clue.** Move to a different person or area and vary your future form. About 15 seconds.
   - *As for the woman near the counter, she'll most likely...*
   - *It looks like... is about to...*
   - *There's a good chance that...*
   - *Because..., she might...*
4. Guess 3 · 15s **Prediction 3 + clue.** Add one more prediction, ideally a small consequence or a reaction from another person. About 15 seconds.
   - *Then, I imagine...*
   - *When that happens,...*
   - *After that, they'll probably...*
   - *I wouldn't be surprised if...*
5. Ending · 10s **Closing.** Wrap up with a short overall prediction about how the scene ends. About 10 seconds.
   - *All in all, I think...*
   - *In the end, everyone will probably...*
   - *So overall, it'll likely turn out...*
   - *By the end of the day,...*

Mistakes that cost marks

- Describing the picture again instead of predicting.

Sample answer (CLB 9–10)

Using the same picture, predict what will probably happen next.

The same beach picture: a lifeguard on a tall chair is blowing a whistle, two children are building a sandcastle near the water, a family is unpacking a picnic under a striped umbrella, a man is selling ice cream from a cart, and sailboats are out on the water.

> Based on what's happening in this picture, I think a few things are about to happen.
>
> First, the lifeguard is blowing her whistle, so someone is probably swimming out too far. She's likely to call them back to shore, or even jump down from her chair and run into the water.
>
> Meanwhile, the two kids are building their sandcastle really close to the water, so I bet a wave is going to wash part of it away. They might be upset for a minute, but they'll probably just start building again.
>
> As for the family under the umbrella, once they finish unpacking, they'll sit down and eat. And since it's so hot, I wouldn't be surprised if the kids ran over to the ice cream cart right after lunch.

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> All in all, it'll probably be a busy but fun afternoon at the beach.

Practise this template on a real question: celpass.com/celpip/speaking/task-4-making-predictions

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SPEAKING TASK 5 · COMPARING AND PERSUADING · 60S TO PREPARE · 60S TO SPEAK

Choose, Compare, Convince

Say your choice, compare it with their option on two points, then ask them to agree.

Choice	Compare 1	Compare 2	Ask
10s	20s	20s	10s

1. Choice · 10s **Opening: state your choice.** Address the family member, acknowledge their option politely and say which one you prefer. About 10 seconds.
   - *I know you really like the..., but I think the... is a better choice.*
   - *I see why you picked..., but hear me out.*
   - *I've looked at both, and honestly, I think we should go with...*
   - *Can I make a case for the...?*
2. Compare 1 · 20s **Comparison 1.** Compare one specific detail from both options, using a comparative, and explain why it matters to the family. About 20 seconds.
   - *First of all, mine is... cheaper than yours, which means...*
   - *While yours..., mine...*
   - *If we go with the..., we'll...*
   - *The big difference is...*
3. Compare 2 · 20s **Comparison 2.** Compare a second detail, ideally one the other person cares about, and turn their option's strength into a smaller point. About 20 seconds.
   - *I know yours has..., but...*
   - *On the other hand,...*
   - *That might sound nice, but in reality...*
   - *Think about how much easier it would be to...*
4. Ask · 10s **Closing: ask them to agree.** Sum up the key advantage and ask politely for agreement. About 10 seconds.
   - *So, what do you think? Can we go with...?*
   - *I really think it's the smarter choice for all of us.*
   - *Would you be willing to give it a try?*
   - *Does that make sense?*

Mistakes that cost marks

- Only describing your option without comparing it with theirs.

Sample answer (CLB 9–10)

Your family wants to go out for dinner together once a month. Choose the option you prefer. Then persuade your father, who prefers a different option, that your choice is better.

Option A: a buffet restaurant five minutes from home. $25 per adult, children eat free.

Option B: a family cooking class downtown. $40 per person, and you eat the dinner you make together.

Your father's choice: ordering takeout and eating at home. About $15 per person.

> Dad, I know takeout is the cheapest option, but hear me out, because I think the buffet is a better choice for our monthly dinner.
>
> First of all, the price difference isn't as big as it looks. Takeout is about fifteen dollars each, but at the buffet the kids eat free, so for our family it works out to about the same. And with takeout, we'd probably end up paying delivery fees and a tip anyway.
>
> Second, the whole point is to do something special together. If we order in, we'll just eat in front of the TV like any other night. At the buffet, nobody has to cook or clean up, including you, and everyone can pick

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> exactly what they like.
>
> Plus, it's only five minutes from home, so it's just as convenient. So what do you say? Can we give the buffet a try next month?

Practise this template on a real question: celpass.com/celpip/speaking/task-5-comparing-and-persuading

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SPEAKING TASK 6 · DEALING WITH A DIFFICULT SITUATION · 60S TO PREPARE · 60S TO SPEAK

Kind but Clear

Raise the problem gently, give your real reason, offer a way forward and keep the relationship warm.

Hello	Problem	Reason	Solution	Thanks
10s	15s	15s	15s	5s

1. Hello · 10s **Opening.** Greet the person you chose and gently bring up the topic. About 10 seconds.
   Hi Sam, do you have a minute? There's something I need to talk to you about. *Hey, I'm glad I caught you.* *I wanted to talk to you before...* *This is a bit awkward, but...*
2. Problem · 15s **Explain the situation.** Say clearly what the problem or decision is, without blaming anyone. About 15 seconds.
   The thing is,... *I just found out that...* *I've realized that I double-booked myself.* *I've noticed that...*
3. Reason · 15s **Give your reason.** Explain why you've made this decision, showing you've considered the other person's feelings. About 15 seconds.
   The reason is... *I know this isn't what you were hoping for, but...* *I really didn't want to let you down, but...* *I hope you understand that...*
4. Solution · 15s **Offer a solution.** Suggest an alternative or compromise so the relationship stays positive. About 15 seconds.
   How about if I...? *Would it be possible to...?* *To make it up to you, I could...* *What if we...*
5. Thanks · 5s **Closing.** Apologise or thank them again and check that they're okay with the plan. About 5 seconds.
   Again, I'm really sorry. *Thanks so much for understanding.* *Would that work for you?* *Let me know what you think.*

Mistakes that cost marks

- Talking about both people instead of speaking to the one you chose.

Sample answer (CLB 9–10)

You agreed to drive your friend Carlos to the airport early on Sunday morning. Then your sister calls: her babysitter has cancelled, and she needs you to watch her children on Sunday morning so she can go to a job interview. Choose ONE: talk to Carlos and explain why you can't drive him, OR talk to your sister and explain why you can't babysit.

> Hi Carlos, do you have a minute? I really hate to do this, but I need to talk to you about Sunday.
>
> My sister just called, and her babysitter cancelled at the last minute. She has a job interview on Sunday morning that she's been preparing for for weeks, and there's nobody else who can watch the kids. I know I promised to drive you, and I feel terrible about letting you down.
>
> So here's what I was thinking. I'd be happy to book you a cab for Sunday morning, and I'll cover the fare, since it's my fault you need one. Or, if you'd rather, I could ask my roommate if he's free, because he's always up early on weekends.

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> Again, I'm really sorry. Would either of those work for you? And I'll definitely be there to pick you up when you get back.

Practise this template on a real question: celpass.com/celpip/speaking/task-6-difficult-situation

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SPEAKING TASK 7 · EXPRESSING OPINIONS · 30S TO PREPARE · 90S TO SPEAK

Say It, Prove It, Say It Again

Take a side, prove it with two reasons and examples, answer the other side, then say your side again.

Opinion	Reason 1	Reason 2	Other side	Again
10s	30s	30s	10s	10s

1. Opinion · 10s **Opinion.** Answer the question directly in the first sentence and preview your reasons. About 10 seconds.
   In my opinion, cities should... | *I strongly believe that...* | *Personally, I'm against... for two main reasons.* | *I think it's a good idea, and here's why.*
2. Reason 1 · 30s **Reason 1 + example.** Give your strongest reason and support it with a concrete example from your experience, your city or common knowledge. About 30 seconds.
   The main reason is that... | *First of all,...* | *For example, in my neighbourhood,...* | *A good example of this is...*
3. Reason 2 · 30s **Reason 2 + example.** Give a second, different reason with its own example, so it doesn't repeat the first. About 30 seconds.
   Another reason is... | *On top of that,...* | *Take... for instance.* | *I've seen this myself when...*
4. Other side · 10s **Counterpoint (optional).** If time allows, briefly acknowledge the other side and explain why your view still holds. About 10 seconds.
   Some people might say..., but... | *I understand that..., however...* | *Of course, there are downsides, like..., but...* | *Even though..., I still think...*
5. Again · 10s **Conclusion.** Restate your opinion in different words and summarise the reasons. About 10 seconds.
   So, overall, I believe... | *That's why I think...* | *For these reasons,...* | *All things considered,...*

Mistakes that cost marks

- Changing your opinion halfway through.
- Repeating the same reason in different words.

Sample answer (CLB 9–10)

Some people think cities should build more bike lanes, even if it means less space for cars. Do you agree or disagree? Explain your opinion.

> I definitely agree that cities should build more bike lanes, even if it means giving up some space for cars, and I have two main reasons.
>
> The first reason is safety. A lot of people would like to cycle to work, but they're nervous about riding next to fast traffic. For example, on the main street near my apartment, I hardly ever saw cyclists until the city added a protected bike lane last year. Now I see dozens every morning, including parents riding with their kids, because they finally feel safe.
>
> The second reason is that it helps drivers too. Every person who bikes to work is one less car in traffic and one less car looking for parking downtown. Over time, that means shorter commutes and cleaner air for everyone.

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> Of course, some people argue that removing car lanes will make traffic worse, and that might be true for the first few months. But once people have a safe alternative, I think many of them will switch, and traffic will settle down again.
>
> So, all things considered, I believe more bike lanes make our cities safer, cleaner and easier to get around, for cyclists and drivers alike.

Practise this template on a real question: celpass.com/celpip/speaking/task-7-expressing-opinions

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SPEAKING TASK 8 · DESCRIBING AN UNUSUAL SITUATION · 30S TO PREPARE · 60S TO SPEAK

Paint It in Words

Say why you're calling, then paint the object from the whole shape to the small details, and say what to do.

Hello	Overall	Details	Unusual	Advice
10s	15s	15s	10s	10s

1. Hello · 10s **Opening.** Greet the listener and say what you've found and why you're calling. About 10 seconds.
   - *Hi Alex, I'm at the store right now and I've found something really unusual.*
   - *You won't believe what I'm looking at.*
   - *I'm calling because I think I found the perfect...*
   - *I need your opinion on something.*
2. Overall · 15s **Overall appearance.** Describe the object as a whole: size, shape, colour and material, compared with something familiar. About 15 seconds.
   - *It's about the size of a...*
   - *It's shaped like a...*
   - *It's made of...*
   - *It looks a bit like a... but...*
3. Details · 15s **Parts and details.** Move to the specific parts, saying where each one is and what it does. About 15 seconds.
   - *On the top, there's...*
   - *At the bottom,...*
   - *On each side, it has...*
   - *Attached to the front,...*
4. Unusual · 10s **What makes it unusual.** Explain what is strange or special about it and how it's used. About 10 seconds.
   - *What's really strange is that...*
   - *The funny part is...*
   - *I've never seen anything like it because...*
   - *It seems to be designed for...*
5. Advice · 10s **Recommendation.** Finish with what the listener should do, usually whether to buy it, and ask for their view. About 10 seconds.
   - *I really think we should get it because...*
   - *Honestly, I'd skip this one.*
   - *What do you think?*
   - *Should I go ahead and buy it?*

Mistakes that cost marks

- Using vague words like "thing" and "stuff" instead of precise vocabulary.

Sample answer (CLB 9–10)

Your friend is looking for a gift for her niece, who loves reading. In a store you see an unusual item. Call your friend, describe it, and tell her whether she should buy it.

The picture shows a bright purple, child-sized armchair shaped like an open book. The seat and back are padded like thick pages, a small reading lamp shaped like a bookmark is attached to one arm, and narrow shelves for books are built into both sides.

> Hi Jen, I'm at the bookstore, and I think I just found the perfect gift for your niece.
>
> It's a kids' armchair, but it's shaped like a giant open book. It's about the size of a small beanbag chair, so it would fit nicely in the corner of her bedroom, and it's bright purple.

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> The seat and the back are padded to look like thick pages, so it looks really comfy. On one arm, there's a little reading lamp shaped like a bookmark, and on both sides there are narrow built-in shelves where she could keep the books she's reading.
>
> What's really unusual is that it's a chair, a lamp and a bookcase all in one. Honestly, for a kid who loves reading, I think it's a great choice. Should I go ahead and grab it for you?

Practise this template on a real question: celpass.com/celpip/speaking/task-8-unusual-situation

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