

FREE CELPIP PRACTICE

CELPIP Speaking Templates

A template for all eight CELPIP Speaking tasks: the structure, a time budget for each part, sentence starters, phrases that score, and a CLB 9+ example.

How to use these templates

- Learn the order of the parts first, then the starters. Say the order out loud until you don't need the page.
- Fill every blank with a detail from the prompt in front of you. Raters score how well you answer that task, so never memorise whole paragraphs.
- Practise out loud with a timer, and move to the next part when its time is up.

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- Speaking Task 1, Giving Advice: Feel · Tip · Tip · Cheer
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Try a template on a real question, free

Answer a real CELPIP speaking question on the clock and get an instant AI score:
celpip.examhero.ca/question-bank

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

Feel · Tip · Tip · Cheer

Show you understand the problem, give two specific tips, each with a reason, and end on encouragement.

Feel · Tip 1 + Why · Tip 2 + Why · Cheer**1. Feel**

10s

Say the person's name and show you understand their problem.

- Hi _____, I heard you're _____. That sounds stressful, but I have a couple of ideas.
- Hey _____, I know _____ can be tough. Here's what I'd do.

Phrases: I completely understand · that must be frustrating · I've been there myself

2. Tip 1 + Why

35s

One specific tip, then the reason it works.

- First, I think you should _____. The reason is _____.
- My first piece of advice is to _____, because _____.

Phrases: it would be a good idea to · the main reason is · that way, you could · it's worth considering

3. Tip 2 + Why

35s

A second, different tip, with its own reason.

- Second, why don't you _____? That's because _____.
- Another thing you could try is _____, since _____.

Phrases: why don't you · another option would be · on top of that · this would help you

4. Cheer

10s

Sum up both tips in one line and encourage them.

- So, try _____ and _____. I'm sure it'll work out. Good luck!
- Anyway, I really think _____ will help. Let me know how it goes!

Phrases: I'm sure you'll · let me know how it goes · you've got this

Worked example

Your friend Maria wants to get in shape but says she has no time because of her job. Give Maria some advice.

Feel: Hi Maria, I heard you want to get in shape but your job keeps you really busy. I totally understand, so I have a couple of ideas for you.

Tip 1 + Why: First, I think you should walk or cycle to work instead of driving, at least two or three days a week. The reason is that you don't need to find extra time for it. Your commute becomes your workout, and you'll probably arrive at the office with more energy than after sitting in traffic for half an hour. You'll save money on gas and parking too.

Tip 2 + Why: Second, why don't you try short home workouts in the morning? There are plenty of free twenty-minute videos online. That's because twenty minutes is easy to fit in before breakfast, and you won't have to pay for a gym or travel anywhere.

Cheer: So, try changing your commute and doing quick morning workouts. I'm sure you'll feel the difference in just a few weeks, and you'll have more energy at work too. Good luck!

Mistakes that cost marks

- Vague tips like "you should exercise". Name the specific place, app or action.
- A tip with no reason. The "why" is what earns Content/Coherence.
- Four or five rushed tips instead of two developed ones.

Drill this template and practise the timing: celpip.examhero.ca/templates/speaking-task-1-giving-advice

STAR Story

Situation, Task, Action, Result: a complete story with a beginning, middle and end in 60 seconds.

Situation · Task · Action · Result

1. Situation

10s

Who, when, where, in one or two sentences.

- I'd like to talk about the time I _____. This was _____ ago, when _____.
- A few years ago, I was _____ in _____.

Phrases: back in · at the time · a couple of years ago

2. Task

10s

The problem or goal that started the story.

- The problem was that _____.
- I had to _____, but _____.

Phrases: the challenge was · out of nowhere · to make things worse

3. Action

30s

What you did, step by step, in the past tense. This is the longest part.

- So first, I _____. Then _____. After that, _____.
- I decided to _____, so I _____.

Phrases: I immediately · after that · eventually · it took us

4. Result

10s

How it ended and how you felt. Then stop.

- In the end, _____, and I felt _____.
- Looking back, _____ taught me _____.

Phrases: in the end · I was so relieved · it taught me

Worked example

Talk about a time when you helped a friend with something important.

Situation: I'd like to talk about the time I helped my friend Mark move. This was last spring, when he got a new job downtown.

Task: The problem was that his moving company cancelled the night before, and he had to be out by noon.

Action: So first, I borrowed my brother's van. Then we packed everything into boxes from six in the morning. The hardest part was his sofa. It didn't fit in the elevator, so we carried it down five flights of stairs, step by step.

Result: In the end, we finished at eleven forty-five. We were exhausted, but Mark was so grateful, and I felt really proud of us.

Mistakes that cost marks

- Spending 40 seconds on the setup and never reaching the end of the story.
- Switching between past and present tense. The story happened, so keep it in the past.
- Choosing a story that's too complicated to tell in a minute. Simple is safe.

Drill this template and practise the timing: celpip.examhero.ca/templates/speaking-task-2-personal-experience

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

Camera Pan

Start with the whole picture, then move across it like a camera, so the listener can follow and picture it.

Wide shot · Left · Centre · Right · Mood

1. Wide shot

10s

One sentence about the whole scene: where it is and what's going on.

- This picture shows a busy _____ on a _____ day.
- It looks like _____ at _____.

Phrases: this picture shows · it seems to be · a lively scene

2. Left

15s

The people or things on the left: who they are and what they're doing.

- On the left, there is _____ who is _____.
- In the foreground on the left, I can see _____.

Phrases: in the foreground · on the left-hand side · next to

3. Centre

15s

The middle of the picture, usually the main action.

- In the middle, _____ are _____.
- Right in the centre, _____ is _____.

Phrases: in the middle of · right behind · surrounded by

4. Right

12s

The right side and the background.

- On the right, _____. In the background, _____.
- Over on the right, I notice _____.

Phrases: in the background · on the far right · in the distance

5. Mood

8s

One sentence on the feeling of the scene.

- Overall, it looks like a _____ day for everyone.
- Everyone seems _____.

Phrases: overall · cheerful · chaotic · relaxed

Worked example

Describe a picture of a city park on a summer afternoon.

See the picture this answer describes:

celpip.examhero.ca/templates/speaking-task-3-describing-a-scene

Wide shot: This picture shows a busy city park on a sunny summer afternoon.

Left: On the left, there's an elderly man sitting on a bench reading a newspaper, and next to him a young girl is walking a small brown puppy.

Centre: In the middle, a group of children are splashing each other in a fountain, while their parents are watching from a picnic blanket and eating sandwiches. One little girl is laughing so hard that she has dropped her toy boat.

Right: On the right, there's an ice cream truck with a long line. In the background, two teenagers are playing frisbee near some tall trees, and a jogger is running along the path.

Mood: Overall, it looks like a relaxed, happy day for everyone.

Mistakes that cost marks

- Jumping around the picture at random, which is hard for the listener to follow.
- Naming objects without saying what people are doing. Use -ing verbs: "is reading", "are playing".
- Spending the whole minute on one corner and never reaching the rest of the picture.

Drill this template and practise the timing: celpip.examhero.ca/templates/speaking-task-3-describing-a-scene

3 Clues

Three predictions, each backed by something you can see in the picture, then a one-line wrap-up.

Clue 1 · Clue 2 · Clue 3 · Wrap-up

1. Clue 1

20s

Your strongest prediction, and the clue in the picture behind it.

- In the next few minutes, I think _____ is going to _____, because I can see _____.
- First, I predict that _____ will _____, since _____.

Phrases: is going to · I predict that · because I can see

2. Clue 2

20s

A second prediction about a different person or area.

- Also, _____ will probably _____. I notice that _____.
- It's likely that _____, because _____.

Phrases: will probably · it's likely that · I notice that

3. Clue 3

15s

A third, shorter prediction.

- Finally, _____ might _____ because _____.
- I imagine _____ will _____ soon.

Phrases: might · I imagine · sooner or later

4. Wrap-up

5s

One line on how the scene will change.

- So overall, the scene is about to get _____.

Phrases: about to · a lot more

Worked example

Look at the same city park picture. What do you think will happen next?

See the picture this answer describes:

celpip.examhero.ca/templates/speaking-task-4-making-predictions

Clue 1: In the next few minutes, I think the kids in the fountain are going to splash the man reading his newspaper, because I can see they're getting closer and closer to his bench, and he hasn't noticed them yet. He'll probably be quite annoyed, but maybe he'll laugh about it.

Clue 2: Also, the puppy will probably run off after the frisbee. I notice it's already pulling on its leash and looking around, so the girl will have to chase it across the grass.

Clue 3: Finally, the ice cream truck might sell out soon, because the line keeps getting longer and it's such a hot day.

Wrap-up: So overall, the park is about to get a lot more chaotic.

Mistakes that cost marks

- Describing the picture again. That was Task 3; this task is about what will happen.
- Predictions with no evidence, like "a UFO will land". Every prediction needs a clue.
- Using only "will". Vary it with "is going to", "will probably", "might" and "it's likely that".

Drill this template and practise the timing: celpip.examhero.ca/templates/speaking-task-4-making-predictions

Pick · Beat · Close

Say your choice, show on two points why it beats the other option, then reassure them and ask them to agree.

Pick · Beat 1 · Beat 2 · Close

1. Pick

10s

Greet them and name your choice right away.

- Hi _____, I've looked at both options, and I really think _____ is the better choice.
- Hey _____, I know you like _____, but hear me out on _____.

Phrases: hear me out · I'm convinced that · the better choice

2. Beat 1

20s

The first point where your option beats theirs. Compare them directly.

- First of all, _____ is much _____ than _____. _____, whereas _____.
- The biggest difference is _____. With _____, _____, but with _____, _____.

Phrases: much more ... than · whereas · not as ... as · compared to

3. Beat 2

20s

A second, different point, compared directly again.

- On top of that, _____ is _____, while _____.
- Plus, _____ gives us _____, which _____ doesn't.

Phrases: on top of that · while · by far the · a lot cheaper

4. Close

10s

Answer their worry and ask them to agree.

- I know you liked _____, but _____. So, shall we go with _____?
- Trust me, _____ is the smarter choice. What do you say?

Phrases: trust me · what do you say · shall we go with

Worked example

You and your sister are choosing a family vacation. You chose the beach house; she prefers the mountain cabin. Persuade her that the beach house is the better choice.

Pick: Hi Lena, I've looked at both places, and I really think the beach house is the better choice for us.

Beat 1: First of all, it's much more relaxing than the cabin. At the beach house, the kids can play in the sand while we sit and read, whereas the cabin has steep hiking trails and nothing nearby for the kids.

Beat 2: On top of that, the beach house is only a forty-minute drive, while the cabin is over three hours away. That's almost a whole day of driving we'd save on the trip.

Close: I know you liked the mountain views, but the beach has amazing sunsets too. So, shall we book it?

Mistakes that cost marks

- Only praising your own option. This task is a comparison, so talk about both.
- No comparative language. The rater listens for "cheaper than", "not as", "whereas" and "by far".
- Sounding unsure. Persuading means sounding confident and friendly.

Drill this template and practise the timing:

celpip.examhero.ca/templates/speaking-task-5-comparing-and-persuading

Soften · Reason · Offer

Show you understand and give your answer politely, explain why, then offer something that helps. Firm but kind.

Soften · Reason · Offer

1. Soften

20s

Show you understand their side, then give your answer clearly and politely.

- Hi _____, I completely understand that _____. Unfortunately, I won't be able to _____.
- _____, I know how much _____ means to you, so this is hard to say, but _____.

Phrases: I completely understand · I really appreciate · unfortunately · I'm afraid I can't

2. Reason

20s

A real, specific reason, not a weak excuse.

- The thing is, _____. On top of that, _____.
- The reason is that _____, so _____.

Phrases: the thing is · it's simply that · I've already committed to

3. Offer

20s

A solution or compromise that helps them anyway.

- However, what I can do is _____. That way, _____.
- How about this: _____? I think that would _____.

Phrases: what I can do is · that way · how about if · meet you halfway

Worked example

Your manager asks you to work during your vacation next week to finish an urgent report. Choose: agree, or politely refuse.

Soften: Hi Karen, thanks for calling. I completely understand that this report is critical for the team. Unfortunately, I won't be able to work on it while I'm on vacation next week.

Reason: The thing is, it's my first vacation in two years, and I'm visiting my family overseas. I won't have my work laptop, and the internet there is very unreliable, so I honestly couldn't do the work properly even if I tried.

Offer: However, what I can do is stay late tonight and tomorrow to finish the first half. I'll also leave detailed notes for Sam so he can complete it. That way, it'll still be done on time.

Mistakes that cost marks

- Over-apologising. One "unfortunately" is enough, and repeated sorries sound weak.
- Sounding blunt or rude. The rater listens for tact.
- Ending without an offer. The offer is what makes a refusal sound reasonable.

Drill this template and practise the timing: celpip.examhero.ca/templates/speaking-task-6-difficult-situation

OREO Opinion

Opinion, Reason with Example (twice), Opinion again: the same shape as Writing Task 2, spoken in 90 seconds.

Opinion · Reason 1 + Example · Reason 2 + Example · Opinion again

1. Opinion

15s

Restate the question and take one clear side.

- The question is whether _____. In my opinion, I strongly agree that _____.
- Personally, I firmly believe that _____.

Phrases: I firmly believe · I strongly agree · in my opinion

2. Reason 1 + Example

30s

Your strongest reason, with a real-life example.

- My first reason is that _____. For example, _____.
- First of all, _____. I've seen this in _____, where _____.

Phrases: my first reason is · for example · this means that

3. Reason 2 + Example

30s

A second, different reason, with its own example.

- Secondly, _____. For instance, _____.
- Another reason is _____. Take _____ as an example: _____.

Phrases: secondly · for instance · a good example is

4. Opinion again

15s

Restate your side and name your two reasons.

- So, because of _____ and _____, I'm convinced that _____.
- That's why I firmly believe _____.

Phrases: that's why · because of · I'm convinced that

Worked example

Do you agree or disagree: Cities should ban cars from their downtown areas.

Opinion: The question is whether cities should ban cars from downtown. In my opinion, I strongly agree that this is an excellent idea.

Reason 1 + Example: My first reason is that it would dramatically reduce air pollution. For example, in my city the downtown core is often covered in smog in the summer, and people with asthma are told to stay indoors. Without cars, the air would be much cleaner and healthier for everyone who lives and works there.

Reason 2 + Example: Secondly, it would make downtown much friendlier for people and local businesses. For instance, when my city closed one main street to cars last summer, cafes opened big patios, street musicians started playing, and the area was packed with families every weekend. The shop owners said it was their busiest summer in years, and nobody wanted the cars to come back.

Opinion again: So, because of the health benefits and the boost to local businesses, I'm convinced that banning cars downtown is the right choice for cities like mine.

Mistakes that cost marks

- Sitting on the fence. "I agree and disagree" sounds unorganised.
- Reasons without examples. The example is what fills 90 seconds with real content.
- Running out of time before the conclusion. Keep each reason to about 30 seconds.

Drill this template and practise the timing: celpip.examhero.ca/templates/speaking-task-7-expressing-opinions

Shape · Size · Colour · Use

Describe the unusual object so the listener can picture it without seeing it, then say what it's for and what you think.

Shape · Size · Colour · Use

1. Shape

15s

Say why you're calling, what the object is, and its overall shape.

- Hi _____, I'm at _____ and I've found the strangest _____. It's shaped like _____.
- Hey _____, you won't believe what I'm looking at. It's a _____ in the shape of _____.

Phrases: shaped like · it looks a bit like · you won't believe

2. Size

12s

How big it is, compared to something the listener knows.

- It's about as big as _____.
- It's roughly _____ tall, so it would fit _____.

Phrases: about as big as · roughly · tiny · massive

3. Colour

13s

Colours, materials and the details that make it unusual.

- It's bright _____ with _____ on top, and it's made of _____.
- The strangest detail is _____.

Phrases: made of · covered in · on top of · bizarre

4. Use

20s

What it's for and whether you should get it. Ask what they think.

- Apparently, you use it to _____. I think we should _____ because _____. What do you think?
- It's meant for _____. Honestly, it would be perfect for _____.

Phrases: apparently · it's meant for · it would be perfect for · what do you think

Worked example

You are shopping for a birthday gift for your nephew and see an unusual chair. Call your sister and describe it.

See the picture this answer describes: celpip.examhero.ca/templates/speaking-task-8-unusual-situation

Shape: Hi Anna, I'm at the furniture store looking for Leo's birthday present, and I've found the strangest chair. It's shaped like a giant open hand, so you sit in the palm.

Size: It's about as big as a normal armchair, so it would fit nicely in the corner of his bedroom.

Colour: It's grass green and made of soft foam, and it's covered in little rubber bumps, like a cactus.

Use: Apparently, it's meant for reading or playing video games, and it sits on a wide round base, so it won't tip over. Leo loves anything funny, so I think it would be perfect for him. Should I get it? What do you think?

Mistakes that cost marks

- Listing random details. Go in order: shape, size, colour, use.
- Plain words like "big" and "weird". Try "massive", "tiny", "bizarre" or "eye-catching".
- Forgetting the listener can't see it. Compare it to things they know.

Drill this template and practise the timing: celpip.examhero.ca/templates/speaking-task-8-unusual-situation