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### Episode #255

### Butter Up

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*Georgiana: Today, we will discuss the meaning of the phrase "butter up"...*

*Student: "How interesting, Georgiana! You know I am on a diet, but this morning I had some toast with butter, and let me tell you, it was delicious..."*

*Georgiana: Sorry to interrupt, but the expression "butter up" has nothing to do with food. :)*

*Let me explain it to you.*

Hey everyone, welcome back to another episode of the podcast. I'm Georgiana, your English teacher, and my mission is to help you speak English fluently. And if you want to help me, **share** the podcast. That would mean a lot. Thanks.

Before you start listening to the episode, make sure to get the transcript on my website: [SpeakEnglishPodcast.com](http://SpeakEnglishPodcast.com) It's free!

Great! Let's start!

Let's take a closer look at the expression "**butter up**" and how it is commonly used.

When someone tries hard to please others to gain their favor or personal benefits in the workplace, it's known as 'buttering up.'

This behavior can be observed in various professional settings such as offices, schools, and even politics, where individuals go to great lengths to please their superiors or influential colleagues.

A classic example of 'buttering up' is an employee who frequently praises their boss, hoping to gain favor or secure a promotion.

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Another example is a student who compliments their teacher, aiming to receive better grades or special privileges.

So, how is "buttering up" viewed in Western society? Opinions can differ. On one hand, some people consider it a negative behavior, often associated with insincerity or manipulation.

On the other hand, in certain situations like the business world, some people see it as a useful social skill. They believe that being good at giving compliments and networking can help you progress in your career or create new opportunities. Whether "buttering up" is accepted or not depends on the particular workplace culture and what individuals think.

Here are some other expressions that are similar to "buttering up":

**#1 Sucking up to someone:** Excessively praising or pleasing someone, especially someone in authority, to gain favor.

**#2 Kissing up or Kissing someone's boots:** Acting overly flattering toward someone in authority.

**#3 Playing up to someone:** Behaving in a way intended to please or show respect to someone.

**#4 Apple-polishing:** Currying favor through flattery or servile behavior.

**#5 Flattering:** Complimenting someone excessively to win their favor or approval.

**#6 Brown-nosing:** Similar to "sucking up," it involves ingratiating oneself to gain favor, often through excessive praise or flattery.

**#7 Playing the game:** Engaging in strategic behavior or actions to gain advantages or achieve success, often involving flattery or pleasing others.

**#8 Bending over backward:** Going to great lengths or making excessive efforts to please or accommodate someone.

Now, what are your thoughts? Do you believe "buttering up" can be useful? Are you comfortable engaging in such behavior or receiving it from others? I'm not a big fan of it, but I won't deny that receiving a compliment can feel good from time to time. :)

Let's continue with a point-of-view story.

## POV-Story

(Learn grammar in context)

I will tell you the same story twice. So make sure to focus on the changes.

You can find these techniques fully implemented in my [premium courses](#).



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Okay! Let's start!

In the past, Jake always tried to impress his boss. He had a strange habit of laughing at his jokes, even when others didn't find them funny. On this particular day, they had an important presentation about the company's financial predictions, and something unexpected occurred.

As usual, Jake couldn't help bursting into laughter every few minutes, thinking it was just

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another round of jokes. Surprisingly, this time, his laughter started to spread throughout the room. The tension gradually faded away, and even the boss eventually joined in the laughter. Confused yet intrigued, he asked Jake why he found the presentation so amusing.

Caught off guard but sensing an opportunity, Jake quickly came up with an explanation. He mentioned how he found the boss's clever use of words and comparisons about money incredibly amusing.

To Jake's surprise, the boss was delighted with his response and commended him for finding humor in such a serious topic. From that day on, Jake became known as someone who added a cheerful and playful element to their meetings. His unintentional ability to make people laugh made him an appreciated member of the team.

Over time, people at work started to know Jake as someone who brought joy and positivity.

Almost by accident, he became an important and respected member of the company, showing how humor could make a difference in the workplace.

**Great! Let's listen to the same story from Jake's point of view in the present tense.**

I'm Jake, and I always try to impress my boss. I have this strange habit of laughing at his jokes, even when others don't find them funny. Today, we have an important presentation about the

company's financial predictions, and something unexpected happens.

As usual, I can't help but burst into laughter every few minutes, thinking it's just another round of jokes. Surprisingly, this time, my laughter starts to spread throughout the room. The tension gradually fades away, and soon enough, even the boss joins in the laughter.

Confused yet intrigued, he asks me why I find the presentation so amusing. Caught off guard but sensing an opportunity, I quickly come up with an explanation. I mention how I find the boss's clever use of words and comparisons about money incredibly amusing.

To my surprise, the boss is delighted with my response and commends me for finding humor in such a serious topic. From that day on, I become known as someone who adds a cheerful and playful element to our meetings. My unintentional ability to make people laugh has made me an appreciated member of the team.

Over time, people at work start to know me as someone who brings joy and positivity. Almost by accident, I become an important and respected member of the company, showing how humor can make a difference in the workplace.

Okay! That's the end of this short exercise. Notice that the changes between grammar points are subtle but important.

It's better to see the changes in the proper context.  
And with a story, it is much easier to remember all this.

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Okay! We have reached the end of this episode.  
See you soon! Bye! Bye!



*Georgiana*

founder of  
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