

Summary

Neil is reluctant to present a video called The Perfect English Gentleman. He told his boss that he has a face for radio. What does he mean? Listen to the programme to find out.

Transcript

Note: This is not a word-for-word transcript

Yang Li

Hello and welcome to the English We Speak from BBC Learning English. I'm Li. Neil... Hey, where is Neil? Although he's great presenter he's often late. Oh, here he comes!

Neil

Sorry, sorry Li, I'm here now. Sorry, I'm a bit late.

Yang Li

Wow Neil, you look so different today: a suit and tie - what's happening?

Neil

Well, I have to present our video: 'The Perfect English Gentleman' it's called.

Yang Li

That sounds fun. Don't you want to do it?

Neil

Not really.

Yang Li

Why not? You are a great presenter. Everyone loves your voice.

Neil

Well, it's not my voice that's the problem. Look at this massive, broken nose and spotty skin, my missing teeth, and long greasy hair... Li, I'm pretty ugly. I kept saying to my boss that I have a face for radio, but he insisted I present the video. What can I do?

Yang Li

Did you say you have a face for radio? But you don't need to show your face as a radio presenter, do you?

Neil

That's exactly the point, Li. If you say someone's got a good face for radio, it's an indirect way of saying they are not very good looking!

Yang Li

I see. I like this phrase 'a face for radio' - an indirect way of saying someone is not very attractive. Here are some examples:

Examples

Man: Jane looked beautiful at her wedding.

Woman: Really? She must have had a good make-up artist because, to be honest, she's got a face for radio.

Man: No one's going to choose me at this speed-dating event.

Woman: Why on earth not? You're such a warm-hearted guy.

Man: Thanks. But you have to admit, I've got a face for radio.

Yang Li

So that's 'a face for radio' - our expression today. Hey Neil, I think I have got a solution for your video presenting problem... How about this for a good opening line? Do you want to hear it?

Neil

Go on then.

Yang Li

(clearing her throat): 'This modern English gentleman has got a face for radio. Just shut your eyes, relax and listen...'

Neil

Now you're making fun of me, Li!

Yang Li

OK, seriously, I think you will be just as good on video as you are in front of a microphone. You have a unique way of saying things which is clear, funny and engaging. What face could beat that!

Neil

Thanks Li. I feel a lot more confident now! Just pass me that mirror... Actually I'm not that bad looking, am I?

Yang Li

No, you're not. You've got a face for TV and a voice for radio!

Neil

Hey, thanks Li, you've made my day!

Both

Bye!