

**Pre-reading task**

You are going to read an article about how companies develop relationships with their customers, suppliers and other influential business partners. Before you read, think about where you work. Have you ever been to lunch with or received a gift from someone you have a business relationship with? How did it affect your relationship?

# Corporate Entertainment

By Russell Evans

**A** Companies are in the business of making money. To do this they must build and keep relationships with the people they work with. And one way to establish and develop connections with customers is to make them feel special. By treating your clients as VIPs, perhaps you can ensure that they don't find new suppliers for the goods and services you provide. When given the choice between a company which takes you out to a nice lunch and one which expects you to buy your own sandwiches, the choice for most is obvious. For this reason, it is common in the business world for organisations to have an entertainment budget for taking their clients out.

**B** Corporate hospitality can take many forms. At one end of the range, some organisations produce key rings, pens or calendars which can be given as small gifts to the people they do business with. A step up from this is a lunch or dinner with a favoured customer in a good restaurant. The company hopes that by removing you from the office environment, spending a little cash on you and perhaps getting you a little drunk, it can agree a deal which might not be achievable in a more formal business setting. Towards the top end of the scale, many major sporting venues now offer 'corporate boxes' for the guests of the companies that pay for them. A VIP suite at the ground of a top English Premiership football team can cost as much as £5,000 per person per match. Corporate entertainment packages for the London Olympic Games in 2012 cost £55,000 for a group of ten people. There are many cheaper options, but whatever the budget, the emphasis is always on making the lucky customer feel special. Corporate boxes have the best views of the action, free drinks and world-class food, all in comfortable air-conditioned surroundings. And although the cost of these boxes varies with the sport and venue, one thing is certain: they are out of the reach of ordinary sports fans who just want to watch a tennis tournament or a game of football.

**C** There is a popular saying that there is no such thing as a free lunch. This means that companies always expect something back when they give you a gift. So if an organisation gives you a 'free lunch', what exactly does it expect in return? Most corporations will tell you that company hospitality has been part of business culture for as long as people have been trading. They will say that taking clients out for the day is a form of face-to-face marketing which helps to make existing relationships stronger and build new ones. Others may claim that hospitality allows companies to reward loyal customers. These benefits are important, but is there an even more straightforward explanation? According to a website offering advice for new companies, the chief executive of one particular British plc says that his company has a simple formula. For each £1,000 the company spends on entertainment for clients, it wants an extra £5,000 in income from those customers. Another UK company in Information Technology says that when they spend £150,000 on hospitality, they want to see revenue increase by £1,000,000. And the managing director of a recruitment firm says the company wants a return on its expenditure of twenty times the cost for existing customers and ten times the cost for new clients. 'Free lunches' for customers, it seems, can cost five, ten or twenty times the value of the meals.

**D** A free pen is not likely to influence a major business decision, but is that true for a visit to an expensive sporting event? When companies are spending thousands of pounds on you, they clearly expect something in return. Where is the dividing line between acceptable business practice and corruption? These questions can raise difficult questions for the business community and for governments. Recent laws in both the UK and USA have tried to separate hospitality and illegal activity. The UK government's advice is that hospitality is legal, so companies can continue to provide tickets to sporting events, take clients to dinner and offer gifts to clients if those things are reasonable and not excessive. Bribery, on the other hand, is not legal. If you spend too much on customers, you can get into trouble. If the entertainment encourages your clients to act improperly, or rewards them for having acted improperly, you may be acting illegally. And if you are trying to influence a decision-maker into doing something improper for you in return, such as award you a big contract, you may find yourself in court.

**E** If you think the distinction between offering proper hospitality and seeking improper influence is not clear, you are not alone. There is a mismatch between what businesses traditionally do in their own interest, and what governments think they should be allowed to do. In these circumstances, the best advice is to be very cautious when offering or receiving hospitality. And the next time you are drinking free champagne on a luxury yacht as you watch the Grand Prix at the invitation of a company that wants your business, try not to let that affect any business decisions you make.



© Mat Wright

You should spend about 20 minutes on questions 1–14 below, which are based on the reading passage.

**Questions 1–5**

This article has five paragraphs, labelled A–E. Choose the correct heading for each paragraph from the list of headings (i–viii) below. You do not need to use all the headings.

**List of headings**

- i. Be careful when giving or accepting gifts
- ii. Difficult distinctions
- iii. Five-star hotels and company yachts
- iv. From a key ring to a week at Wimbledon
- v. Hospitality and tax loopholes
- vi. Keeping the customers happy
- vii. Return on investment
- viii. Unhappy clients are bad for business

- 1. Paragraph A                      Heading .....
- 2. Paragraph B                      Heading .....
- 3. Paragraph C                      Heading .....
- 4. Paragraph D                      Heading .....
- 5. Paragraph E                      Heading .....

**Questions 6–10**

Complete the sentences below. Use **ONE WORD** from the text for each answer.

- 6. Many companies include a hospitality ..... in their annual accounts which is intended to pay for all corporate entertainment.
- 7. Taking clients out for a meal can often result in a more favourable ..... than might be reached in an office environment.
- 8. One of the claims of businesses is that corporate entertainment is a way of rewarding clients who are .....
- 9. According to the author, it can be difficult to decide if expenditure on gifts and hospitality is acceptable, or if it crosses the line into .....
- 10. UK law says that for gifts to be legal, it is essential that they are not excessive and are .....

**Questions 11–14**

Are these statements **TRUE**, **FALSE** or **NOT GIVEN** according to the text?

Answer **TRUE** if the statement agrees with the text.  
 Answer **FALSE** if the statement contradicts the text.  
 Answer **NOT GIVEN** if there is no information on this.

- 11. Corporate entertainment has a long history in the world of commerce.
- 12. One leading UK firm expects a return of £15 for each £1 it spends on hospitality.
- 13. The financial rewards and influence which companies seek from hospitality raise some serious issues about right and wrong.
- 14. The author sees a clear distinction between what is legal and what is not.

11. YES; 12. NOT GIVEN; 13. YES; 14. NO  
 1. vi; 2. iv; 3. viii; 4. iii; 5. i; 6. budget; 7. deal; 8. loyal; 9. corruption/bribery; 10. reasonable;

**Pre-reading task**

You are going to read an article about email. Before you read, think about the following questions: How many emails would you say you receive a day? Can you remember what the last email you sent was about? Do you read all your emails? How do you decide which ones to read and which to delete?

# Email

By Cath McLellan

**A**  
It is difficult to remember how offices functioned before email became the main form of corporate communication. These days, the first thing most office workers do in the morning is check their email – a ritual which has become almost automatic, and one that is repeated throughout the day. A report by the McKinsey Global Institute in 2012 found that on average, 28 percent of the working day is spent checking email. And although it can be a highly efficient communication tool, some people long for the slower-paced days of letters and faxes, when you could work without interruptions from email notifications. Technology has improved many things about the way we work, but it has created new distractions in our workday. Although these may sometimes be welcome, what is the effect on efficiency, especially considering that more than 100 billion business emails are sent and received each day?

**B**  
Some experts say that, to reduce the amount of time that we spend (and sometimes waste) on email, we should firstly unsubscribe from all the emails that we don't actually read. On average, we receive 416 commercial messages per month, most of which either stay unread in the inbox or are immediately deleted. In addition to the sheer number of emails we receive, large attachments are also a problem. They take up valuable space on our systems. As a general rule, an email with attachments should be no bigger than 10MB. The McKinsey report also concluded that making use of social collaboration platforms, such as wikis or other web applications, could make corporate communications far more efficient and less time-consuming.

**C**  
In recent years the boom in mobile digital technology means that there is now no escape from work email. Many people have access to company email 24 hours a day on smart phones and other devices. Although this makes flexible working easier, it also means that employees are constantly 'on', and perhaps feel obliged to deal with work issues outside of the office. In fact, in France legislation has recently been passed to ensure that workers in the consultancy and technology sector do not come under pressure to check email at home. The idea of the legislation is to protect the 35-hour working week and to ensure that workers disconnect from the office in their free time.

**D**  
But email is definitely here to stay and, despite the fact that it is so widely used, it is surprising that many people still make basic errors when using email for business communication. Because email has become such a common form of communication both in our professional and personal lives, many people find the issue of formality problematic. In other words, people use much more informal language than they would if writing a letter. But when it comes to register, a business email is very similar to a business letter, and for this reason the language we use should depend on similar considerations. For example, we should think about how well we know the person we are writing to, what the context of the message is, and whether the person has invited us to refer to them using their first name. Email should not be confused with instant messaging, where the use of informal language, abbreviations and even emoticons is acceptable. Email is a lasting record of communication, so as a general rule you should never write anything that you would not want your boss to read. Employers also usually have a right to monitor any communication that happens on company equipment and on company time, and it is worth remembering this. The company policy on email monitoring should be clear, but as a general rule it is wise to assume that whatever you write from your work email address is not private. There have been several cases both in Europe and the US where people have lost their jobs over writing offensive or personal emails on the company's system.

**E**  
As people spend more and more time online, they also have less patience with overlong and complicated messages. The abbreviation 'tl;dr' is becoming common online. It stands for 'too long, didn't read' – emails should be concise, to the point, and clearly organised so that the main message is clear. If you need to include lots of information, add an attachment or a link to a webpage, because the danger is that if you write too much, the recipient may simply ignore the whole message.



© Mat Wright

**F**  
So how can you increase your email efficiency? Don't file your messages into folders – this might seem like an efficient use of time, but in fact it is what the email program's search function is for. Unsubscribe from all those promotional emails that you never read. Keep your emails short and to the point, and if it is quicker and easier, why not just have a chat face-to-face, or pick up the phone?

You should spend about 20 minutes on questions 1–13 below, which are based on the reading passage.

**Questions 1–4**

Complete the sentences below. Use **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS AND/OR A NUMBER** from the text for each answer.

1. According to a recent report, what proportion of our time at work is spent responding to electronic communications?
2. What is widely believed to be an acceptable maximum size for an email?
3. What does the abbreviation 'dr' in the phrase 'tl;dr' stand for?
4. In which industries in France are workers' rights protected with regards to digital communication?

**Questions 5–10**

For questions 5–10, decide which paragraph contains the information. Answer **A, B, C, D, E** or **F**. You can use each letter more than once.

Which paragraph...

5. offers expert advice about how to manage office communication better?
6. gives advice about formality when writing emails?
7. suggests anon-digital alternative to using email?
8. mentions dismissals as a result of inappropriate email use?
9. gives a potential disadvantage of technology on our leisure time?
10. talks about an apparently sensible way of organising email which is in fact a waste of time?

**Questions 11–12**

Below is a list of problems with the use of email in the workplace. Which **TWO** are mentioned by the writer in the article?

- A. People accidentally forwarding a message instead of replying
- B. People writing too informally when using email
- C. Employees using time at work to send personal or inappropriate emails
- D. Grammatical and spelling errors in business emails
- E. People not checking email attachments for viruses

**Question 13**

Choose the answer **A–D** which best summarises the main ideas of the text.

- A. Email is an efficient communication tool which makes our working lives easier.
- B. Email means that companies can now monitor what their employees are doing much more effectively.
- C. Email has had a huge impact on how we work, but isn't always efficient.
- D. Email is the most efficient way of communicating but needs to be more like letter-writing.

1. 28 per cent. 2. 10MB. 3. didn't read. 4. technology and consultancy. 5. B. 6. D. 7. F. 8. D. 9. C. 10. F. 11. B/C. 12. C/B. 13. C.

**Answers**

**Pre-reading task**

You are going to read an article about equal opportunities at work in the UK. Before you read, think about your own situation. Does your company have an equal opportunities policy? Why? Which groups of people do you think have been helped by equal opportunities law?

# Equal Opportunities

By Russell Evans

On 25 November 1898, a photographer from an English seaside town put an advert in a local newspaper for a 'young lady' to work in his studio. He wanted someone to help him develop black-and-white photos and to work as a receptionist. Why did he want a woman for this job and not a man? Perhaps he imagined that a female worker would be more artistic or cheaper to hire than a male. He may have believed that a young woman on his reception desk would make a better impression on his customers. Unfortunately, we will never know as the photographer died in 1907. Anybody working in the modern business community would immediately see a problem with the advert. By advertising for a 'young lady', the advert discriminated against men and older people. This means that it stopped them applying for the job.

In the UK, there have been laws for many years to stop discrimination like this. The photographer's advert today would be against the law, and the photographer could be taken to court. UK law says that employers cannot treat one person less favourably than another because of a personal characteristic, such as gender, having a disability, or age. Other 'protected' characteristics include your race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, whether you are married or single, whether you have or want to have children, your sexual orientation (gay, straight, etc.) and your religion or lack of one. You could be breaking the law if you don't hire someone because of any of these reasons, or don't pay one person as much as another for doing the same work.

So what is the reason for all this? Although the law about discrimination has a long history, the basic idea is very simple. It is about fairness. If you need someone to teach science, the only thing you should think about is how good they will be at teaching science. It does not matter if your science teacher is a man or a woman, or where they were born, or if he or she has a disability. These personal characteristics do not affect the person's ability to teach; they should not be used to assess suitability. If you gave the job to a man when there was a better qualified woman applicant, you would be treating her less favourably than the man. This would be unfair and illegal.

Some of the largest and most successful companies in the world see that there are clear business advantages to treating people fairly. For example, Google says it wants a workforce with a broad range of attributes, experiences and points of view. It says having employees from many kinds of different backgrounds makes the company stronger, and produces better, more innovative work. ICBC is the world's biggest company. It says a variety of people with different ideas provides the essential fuel for success and progress. The United Nations has said that having people from as many different backgrounds as possible working together is as important for progress in human culture as biodiversity is to the world of nature. Leading economists agree that companies, countries and regions that have effective equal opportunity policies make more profits and can grow faster than organisations and places that do not.

So why doesn't everyone agree that fair employment policies at work are a good idea? One factor may be the fear some people have of others who are different. They may be prejudiced against foreigners, for example, or believe in old-fashioned and unfair ideas about women working. They may believe that people with disabilities cannot work as well as able-bodied people, or may dislike gay people. Another factor is that not everyone fully understands the idea of equal opportunities. In the early days of laws against discrimination, some people thought that the law would be used to give jobs to people who were less qualified to do them. This is simply not true. The law says clearly that you can't choose someone who is less qualified than someone else. In other words, the best person still gets the job. There is really only one situation in which a person with a 'protected characteristic' can be given special treatment. That is when the person is one of two equally qualified applicants. In that case the employer can employ the person with the 'protected characteristic' if that kind of person is under-represented in the workforce.

The photographer in the English seaside town lived at a time when nearly all business was local, but the world is very different now. These days it is easier and cheaper to do business with customers and businesses from all around the globe. If your company does not employ and value people from many different backgrounds, how can it expect to successfully sell its products to customers from many different backgrounds? The message is simple: to survive in the modern business world, you need to embrace diversity and equal opportunity.



© Mat Wright

You should spend about 20 minutes on questions 1–13 below, which are based on the reading passage.

**Questions 1–7**

According to the article, are the following statements **TRUE**, **FALSE** or **NOT GIVEN**?

Answer **TRUE** if the statement agrees with the text.

Answer **FALSE** if the statement contradicts the text.

Answer **NOT GIVEN** if there is no information on this.

1. We know why the photographer wanted to hire a young woman.
2. The photographer's advert would be against the law now.
3. 'Protected characteristics' include a person's political opinions.
4. A person's country of origin is not a relevant criterion when employing someone to teach science.
5. Leading companies think that their diversity and equality policies increase creativity.
6. Everyone agrees that giving equal opportunities is a desirable goal.
7. Diversity was poorly understood when it first became accepted.

**Questions 8–13**

Choose the best answers (A–D) for the questions below.

8. The seaside photographer wanted someone to help ...
  - A. as a receptionist and typist in his studio.
  - B. because he was overworked.
  - C. with photographic and reception duties.
  - D. because his previous receptionist left.
9. It is against UK law ...
  - A. to use irrelevant criteria when selecting new employees.
  - B. to hire someone who is not qualified to do the job.
  - C. to use qualifications and experience as criteria when selecting new employees.
  - D. to hire someone with a 'protected characteristic' who is as qualified as someone else.
10. Major corporations have adopted equal opportunity and diversity policies ...
  - A. because they believe that this is good for society.
  - B. to avoid being taken to court.
  - C. in order to maximise their profits and ensure long-term sustainability.
  - D. because their shareholders believed it was the right thing to do.
11. The United Nations is concerned that ...
  - A. a lack of equality around the world could increase social tensions.
  - B. human culture cannot develop unless it protects the differences between people.
  - C. regions which do not ensure fairness in employment will fall further behind other regions economically.
  - D. wealthier nations are not doing enough to encourage diversity in poorer countries.
12. Some people do not support equality and diversity policies ...
  - A. because they misunderstand how these policies operate.
  - B. because they have been unfairly discriminated against in the past.
  - C. because they think that such policies are too expensive to implement.
  - D. because they believe that it is impossible to identify the real reason why someone with 'protected characteristics' was not employed by a particular organisation.
13. What is the best title for the article?
  - A. A history of UK employment law
  - B. The best person for the job
  - C. Increasing your profits in a global economy
  - D. The effects of racism and sexism in business

**Answers**

12. A; 13. B  
 1. FALSE; 2. TRUE; 3. NOT GIVEN; 4. TRUE; 5. TRUE; 6. TRUE; 7. FALSE; 8. C; 9. A; 10. C; 11. B;

**Pre-reading task**

You are going to read an article about how to deal with angry customers. Before you read, think about the following questions: Does your company have a customer service policy? Does it train staff to deal effectively with dissatisfied clients? What do you think are the main challenges for staff in a customer service role?

## In the Customer's Shoes – How Empathy Can Transform Angry Customers into Loyal Ones

By Julie Dawn Fox

When an angry client walks into your workplace or calls the helpdesk, it can be difficult for staff to control their natural reactions. They may feel threatened by the shouts and complaints and be tempted to shout back or defend the organisation. Unfortunately, these reactions will only make the situation worse. Using empathy to consider the situation from the customer's point of view, however, will help turn a problem into an opportunity to rebuild and strengthen the customer relationship.

Think back to a time when you experienced a problem that made you furious with the organisation responsible. Even if your complaint was dealt with effectively, imagine how you would feel if the customer service representative refused to listen to you, or accept that the organisation might have made a mistake, or simply apologise. Would you want to do business with that company in the future? Now consider how you would feel if you were allowed to explain the problem, and its consequences, to someone who appeared to care and understand and who promised to take responsibility for reaching a solution. Would you be more likely to trust the business and give them a second chance?

Organisations that treat customer complaints as an opportunity to improve instead of a nuisance are more likely to succeed in the long term. By using the information provided by unhappy customers, businesses can identify and correct their failures and make their systems better so that all their clients have a more satisfying experience. In theory, it sounds easy. In practice, when faced with a distressed client, it helps to know the most effective way to handle the situation.

**A**  
Don't make the problem worse by shouting back or telling an angry person to calm down. Take a deep breath, control your own emotions and let them explain what's happened.

**B**  
Think from your customer's perspective; their complaint may involve personal details that they don't want to broadcast to a room full of people. Try to find a quiet place to talk; giving them privacy and sitting down with them can help to calm the situation and allows you to stay focused on what they need to tell you.

**C**  
Show that you are taking them seriously and that you want to understand the situation by using active listening techniques. Nodding and making listening noises like 'yes' and 'I see' demonstrate that you are paying attention. Make notes of the important details and wait until you have all the information before offering any explanations or solutions.

**D**  
Don't take it personally. In most cases, the customer isn't angry with you, they are frustrated with your organisation. Remembering this can help you stay calm and objective and resist the temptation to justify the situation or deny responsibility, even if the customer has made the mistake or is being unreasonable.

**E**  
Show the customer that you understand the problem, and why they feel the way they do, by paraphrasing the situation. This also allows the customer to correct you or to be more specific if necessary. This is where empathy is really important. Really try to put yourself in the customer's shoes to appreciate how they felt at the time of the problem. It's often the knock-on effects of the problem that has made your customer so upset.

**F**  
Apologise. Again, whatever the problem is, it's unlikely to be your fault but saying that you're sorry they have experienced this problem can make a huge difference to the customer.

**G**  
Find out what the customer thinks the solution should be. If that isn't possible or appropriate, agree on a reasonable outcome.

**H**  
It may not be possible to decide what to do without further investigation. If this is the case, the customer is likely to feel more confident about the prospect of a satisfying resolution if you offer to take personal responsibility for looking into the situation or making sure the solution is implemented. Even if you don't have the authority to approve a refund or take the necessary action, the customer doesn't need to know about the company's internal procedures. Make good use of the trust you have earned so far and promise to see it through.

**I**  
Make a diary note to check that whatever action you promised has been taken, then contact the customer to find out if they are satisfied with the outcome.



© James Glossop / Guzelian

**J**  
Prevention is better than cure and each customer complaint provides valuable information that has the potential to improve the experience of your other customers. If complaints highlight a common problem that could be avoided, push for changes to be made within your organisation. You may not be able to prevent all future complaints, but you can certainly reduce them by being proactive.

You should spend about 20 minutes on questions 1–14 below, which are based on the reading passage.

**Questions 1–6**

The passage has ten pieces of advice labelled A–J.  
Which paragraph contains the following information?  
Choose A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I or J.

- an opportunity for improvement
- repeat and clarify information
- the importance of following up
- relax, it's not your fault
- make a personal commitment to the customer
- not in public

**Questions 7–12**

Complete the summary of the article by choosing one word (A–L) for each space. There are more words than you need.

**Summary**

Organisations that take customer service (7) ..... have a better chance of future success. It's important that staff who are faced with angry customers are able to control their own (8) ..... and look at the situation from the customer's perspective. Learning how to treat furious customers with (9) ..... and consideration for their feelings and accepting (10) ..... for agreeing and delivering relevant (11) ..... can make the customer feel valued and repair the relationship. Complaints should be treated as opportunities to review and improve the way the business operates for the (12) ..... of all customers.

- |                          |                         |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>A.</b> solutions      | <b>G.</b> benefit       |
| <b>B.</b> privacy        | <b>H.</b> importance    |
| <b>C.</b> seriously      | <b>I.</b> emotions      |
| <b>D.</b> details        | <b>J.</b> mistakes      |
| <b>E.</b> responsibility | <b>K.</b> respect       |
| <b>F.</b> contempt       | <b>L.</b> uncomfortable |

**Questions 13 and 14**

The list below contains things that can make an angry customer feel even worse. Which TWO are mentioned by the writer of the article?

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>A.</b> being told to come back later | <b>D.</b> being insulted by a member of staff |
| <b>B.</b> having to complain in public  | <b>E.</b> being made to feel stupid           |
| <b>C.</b> not being given a refund      | <b>F.</b> not receiving an apology            |

1. J; 2. E; 3. I; 4. D; 5. H; 6. B; 7. C; 8. I; 9. K; 10. E; 11. A; 12. G; 13. and 14. B and F (in any order)

**Pre-reading task**

You are going to read an article about preparing for job interviews. Before you read, think about the following questions: When did you last have a job interview? What was the interview for and what did you do to prepare for it? Do you think it is better to 'be yourself' in an interview, or to adapt your behaviour according to the job or the organisation?

# Job Interviews

By Cath McLellan

**A**  
When recruiters advertise for a post, they probably think that they are searching for 'the best person for the job'. But the reality is that, despite all the information on an applicant's CV, the interviewers' final decision will rely heavily on a face-to-face meeting. In fact, companies don't necessarily hire the ideal candidate, but rather the person who performed best in the interview.

This and the old saying that 'first impressions last' are perhaps two reasons why job interviews are so terrifying for so many people. What you look like, how you shake hands, even the way you sit can all play a crucial role in the outcome before you've even answered a question.

Often we focus on our verbal communication, preparing stock answers to typical questions and thinking about the questions we will ask at the end. However, there are studies to suggest that humans form quick, and often accurate, opinions of people based on stereotyping and rapid observations in the first half a minute of meeting them. These quick judgements are a throwback to our evolutionary past, when often we would need to decide very quickly if a new person was a potential threat or not. In a job interview they could mean the difference between success or failure.

**B**  
Often candidates are focused on themselves in the interview, but it is worth remembering that it is an opportunity to show what you can offer a company, not what a company can offer you. Anything you say about yourself in the interview should demonstrate how your skills, personality and qualifications are a good fit for the team.

Therefore it is essential to find out as much as possible about the organisation, its products, its philosophy and exactly what it does. Imagine that you have to give a presentation about the company, and think about possible questions an interested audience might have – you should be able to answer them all from your research. Spend more than just a quick five minutes looking at the company website – try to find news articles about them, read an interview with the CEO, test one of their products. Find out about their competitors and what makes them different or better. Get an idea about how formal or casual the company is, and whether there is an emphasis on teamwork or individual achievement.

**C**  
Making a friendly connection with the interviewer from the moment the interview starts is crucial to ensure a smooth experience. A 2008 study by the University of Iowa confirmed what is often said about shaking hands: that people with a confident handshake were more often seen as extroverted, gregarious and were more likely to be hired than those with a weaker handshake. Making eye contact is equally important.

Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) is an approach to communication that looks at ways to improve how we relate to others and build rapport with them. A common NLP technique, which can work well in job interview situations, is called mirroring. Some studies suggest that when we mirror somebody's physical movements and language cues, we create an automatic rapport. In this technique, one person adjusts the way they speak and the position of their body so that it is similar to the other person's. They may also use some of the same words. Although this may feel unnatural or silly at first, with practice this technique, when used subtly, can create a feeling of empathy between the interviewer and the candidate.

Reducing pre-interview nerves is also important in terms of the physical messages we send. Even something as simple as taking a few deep breaths before the interview can calm our nerves and help us to appear more confident as we walk into the room.

**D**  
But obviously, despite all these subconscious signals that we give and receive, there is no substitute for preparation. Anticipating questions and being confident about how we answer them is also essential interview preparation.

It is no surprise then that there are so many websites with lists of typical difficult interview questions and advice on how to answer them. There are certain questions that have become clichés over the years – for example 'Where do you see yourself in five years' time?' It is important to think about how we can be more creative when answering these. Jenna Allcock is a CEO at a graduate recruitment firm and she recommends that this question is best answered by focusing on professional goals that are ambitious but realistic – and that you should avoid talking about money.

**E**  
Of course, there is no magic formula to interview success, but it is worth knowing that job interviews require a unique set of skills that may be totally unrelated to the job in question. Perhaps the key to a good interview is knowing how to be ourselves, while at the same time being the person that we think the company is looking for.



© Mat Wright

You should spend about 20 minutes on questions 1–13 below, which are based on the reading passage.

**Questions 1–5**

This article has five sections, labelled A–E. Choose the correct heading for each paragraph from the list of headings (i–viii) below. You do not need to use all the headings.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| i. A technique for making a bond                              | vi. A question of balance                   |
| ii. Always be yourself  | vii. Become an investigator                 |
| iii. Focus on the professional                                | viii. How to be the best person for the job |
| iv. Read the website!   |   |
| v. From cavemen to the boardroom: why first impressions count |   |
- 
- |                      |                      |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Paragraph A ..... | 4. Paragraph D ..... |
| 2. Paragraph B ..... | 5. Paragraph E ..... |
| 3. Paragraph C ..... |                      |

**Questions 6–10**

Do the following statements agree with the views of the writer?

Answer **YES** if the statement agrees with the views of the writer.

Answer **NO** if the statement contradicts the views of the writer.

Answer **NOT GIVEN** if it is impossible to say what the writer thinks about this.

6. Interviews are always effective for finding the best candidate for the job.
7. First impressions of people are usually incorrect.
8. Both non-verbal communication and preparing answers are important for interview success.
9. Questions that have become clichés are the most difficult to answer.
10. We should always be ourselves in interviews.

**Questions 11–13**

Choose the appropriate letter, A–D, to complete the sentences below.

11. We often make quick judgements the first time we meet someone because ...
  - A. we believe in stereotypes.
  - B. our ancestors needed to make quick decisions to survive potential dangers.
  - C. it can mean the difference between being successful or not.
  - D. we are observant creatures.
12. To prepare for an interview, the writer recommends ...
  - A. preparing a presentation on the company.
  - B. finding out what the company can offer you.
  - C. quickly looking at the company's website.
  - D. finding out about the company's ideals and direction.
13. Job interviews ...
  - A. require skills that vary according to the job we are applying for.
  - B. require skills that we may not need for the job itself.
  - C. follow a procedure.
  - D. require a balance of being ourselves and being more confident.

- |         |              |        |        |
|---------|--------------|--------|--------|
| 1. v    | 6. NO        | 10. NO | 5. vi  |
| 2. viii | 7. ON        | 11. b  | 4. iii |
| 3. i    | 8. YES       | 12. d  | 3. i   |
|         | 9. NOT GIVEN | 13. b  |        |

**Answers**

**Pre-reading task**

You are going to read an article about low-cost airlines. Before you read, think about the following questions: Have you ever flown on a low-cost airline before? How do you think they manage to offer very cheap fares? Would you consider flying long distance on a low-cost airline?

# The Success of Low-Cost Airlines

By Freddie Gay

**A**  
There's no doubt about it. Low-cost carriers have transformed the airline industry. In Britain alone, more than twenty million people fly on low-cost carriers every year, and they are fast becoming a global trend with their business model being copied across Europe, Asia and America. Because so many passengers seem willing to exchange comfort for cheaper prices, they are providing intense competition for many long-established airlines on short-haul routes. What is the secret of these airlines' success and for how much longer are they likely to do well?

**B**  
Most people want to pay less to travel and they are willing to miss out on some of the services that are usually provided as part of the package with an air ticket. Instead low-cost airlines charge extra for 'add-ons', allowing customers to choose whether or not they would like a particular service. One common add-on includes paying for check-in luggage. The cost of fuel and tax increases as the weight of a plane does, so low-cost carriers can account for these extra expenses by charging for the amount of extra weight a passenger brings on board. For those who travel light, as many who take short holidays do, it means that they do not end up having to pay any extra costs for baggage that they are not carrying.

**C**  
Paying to choose a seat is another common add-on used by low-cost carriers. While there is no business class, you can often have the luxury of extra legroom if you are prepared to pay a bit extra. If you are travelling in a group and want to sit together, you usually have no choice but to pay a fee if you want to do this. Meals are another extra that must be paid for should you feel hungry during a flight. The concept of add-ons, then, allows airlines to cut their expenditure and at the same time offer cheap basic fares, which is appealing to a large number of customers. One airline perhaps took the concept of add-ons a little too far when it introduced plans to charge for using the toilets during its flights. The plan was soon cancelled after it caused a furious reaction from its customers.

**D**  
The huge growth of low-cost carriers has been a great source of competition for long-established airlines. Speaking in an interview on the BBC's *HARDtalk* programme, the CEO of the popular budget carrier EasyJet, Carolyn McCall, stated that the company's main competitors, far from being other low-cost airlines, were actually the traditional carriers themselves. She points out that different low-cost carriers have their own unique characteristics, such as the airports that they fly to. Ryanair, a highly successful budget carrier, often flies to smaller airports located outside main cities. Easyjet targets the main airports of capital cities, which provides more direct competition to big airlines that have been long established at such airports. McCall sees both airlines' strategies as having their own 'effective business models' that have found slightly different gaps in the market.

**E**  
Low-cost carriers are increasingly taking on medium-haul flights. It remains to be seen, however, whether or not they would be able to compete in the long-haul market. The first low-cost carriers were the idea of British entrepreneur Freddie Laker and were aimed only at the long-haul market. Laker Airlines offered cheap long-haul flights between the US and UK, but was unable to compete with the established airlines at the time and went bankrupt in 1982. This suggests that entering the long-haul market is a risky strategy for low-cost airlines. Indeed, McCall says it is 'a different kind of business' and does not believe it would be sensible for EasyJet to expand into this market at the current time.

**F**  
Despite the risk, some airlines have decided to give budget transatlantic flights another try. Most notably, Norwegian Air Shuttle has started flying from Europe to the United States using the new Boeing Dream liner aircraft. These planes are more fuel-efficient than other aircraft and this is one way in which costs can be cut. However, it has faced criticism for its other cost-saving measure, which involves registering its business in Ireland but hiring staff from countries in Asia under local contracts. This allows them to pay much lower wages to their staff. Only time will tell whether or not they will succeed in the long-haul market, but they are sure to provide intense competition, which can only be good for consumers who wish to cross the Atlantic as cheaply as possible.



© John Cooper/Ikon Partnership

You should spend 20 minutes answering questions 1–13 below, which are based on the reading passage.

**Questions 1–5**

The article has six paragraphs, labelled A–F. Which paragraph contains the following information? Write the correct letter, A–F.

1. An example of the add-on strategy going wrong
2. Details of two different strategies taken by different low-cost carriers
3. Measures an airline has taken to reduce its running costs
4. A reason why low-cost long-haul flights might not be successful
5. A definition of the term 'add-on'

**Questions 6–9**

Complete the sentences below. Use **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS** from the text for each answer.

6. Many long-established airlines are concerned about the ..... that low-cost airlines are providing on short- and medium-haul routes.
7. Flying to nearby destinations more cheaply in exchange for losing out on traditional comforts ..... to a great number of people in today's society.
8. Applying low-cost business models to long-haul routes is considered to be quite a .....
9. One way in which airlines may reduce overheads is by purchasing planes which are more .....

**Questions 10–13**

Do the following statements agree with the information given in the text?

Answer **YES** if the statement agrees with information given in the text.  
Answer **NO** if the statement contradicts the information given in the text.  
Answer **NOT GIVEN** if there is no information about this in the text.

10. Providing optional add-ons allows airlines to reduce a number of costs.
11. Carolyn McCall thinks that low-cost airlines follow exactly the same business plan as each other.
12. Long-haul budget airlines failed in the past because they used a different business model to today's budget airlines.
13. It is unlikely that budget airlines will be able to conquer the long-haul market.

1. C  
2. D  
3. F  
4. E  
5. B  
6. intense competition  
7. is appealing  
8. risky strategy  
9. fuel-efficient  
10. YES  
11. NO  
12. NOT GIVEN  
13. NOT GIVEN

**Answers**

**Pre-reading task**

You are going to read an article about mistakes people make when they are marketing a new product. Before you read, think about the following questions: What do you think about your own company's marketing campaigns? Have any of them ever gone wrong?

# When Marketing Goes Wrong

By Andy Keedwell

**A** The power of effective marketing has a long history. In the 19th century, a new product, soap, became available to everyone in England at a low price. Every British soap producer faced fierce competition. Their answer was to focus on promotion and to come up with attractive visuals, catchy slogans and competitions to increase sales. Producers who were successful increased their profits because of a focus on product, price and promotion.

**B** Yet it can all very easily go wrong. However clever the advertisement, a product that nobody wants is not going to sell. In the soft drinks sector, one manufacturer found to their dismay that their product had very poor sales in Australia – customers simply did not like the taste. One of the most well-known stories of failure is that of New Coke. Hoping to maintain its leading position, Coca-Cola changed its hundred-year-old secret formula. Tasting sessions had showed it was likely that 'New Coke' would outsell its predecessor. The opposite happened. Customers stayed loyal to the original version and Coca-Cola switched back at great cost after only 79 days. It was a huge marketing mistake.

**C** In the motor industry there are also stories of products that the public simply did not want. In 1957, Ford introduced a new model, Edsel. Following an investment of \$400 million, it was promoted as an 'entirely new kind of car' but the company sold only 25 percent of the cars they produced and lost \$350 million. Customers complained about bad workmanship and the new product's design. Ford found it difficult to produce the car efficiently and, unhelpfully, the car was in direct competition with other Ford vehicles. However, perhaps Ford's biggest mistake was to misjudge demand from the American public. America had just entered an economic recession, so people had less money to spend. The last thing people wanted was a large, expensive car that used a lot of fuel. The public did not even like the name of the car! Product, price and promotion had all interacted to produce a marketing disaster.

**D** On special promotions, companies may underestimate demand and spend a lot more than they budgeted for. A classic case is that of Hoover, a vacuum cleaner company, which offered two free air tickets to anyone who bought a vacuum cleaner for more than one hundred pounds. The tickets cost far more than the appliance. Sales increased 30% but the cost of the promotion was massive. The company lost over £40 million and in the end it was put up for sale. Similar examples include a fast-food company which gave away a free meal every time the United States won a medal in the Olympics (America was particularly successful that year) and a café chain which offered a free meal to anyone tattooed with their logo.

**E** Customers may find a different meaning in publicity than the promoters intended. Promoters sometimes ignore cross-cultural differences and accidentally cause a great deal of offence which may have a huge impact on sales. Names, symbols and even colours are all possible danger areas. Pepsi Cola made an enormous mistake in some regions in changing the colour of its vending machines to light blue, a colour associated with death. Many advertising agencies have translators who make sure that brand names in one language do not translate as anything negative or rude. When they are not effective, the results can be costly as well as amusing. Some mistranslations include a fast-food company in China which advised customers to bite their fingers off, the Microsoft computer system Vista which means 'ugly lady' in some languages and the name of a soft drink which translated as 'toilet water'.

**F** Some marketers even seem to make errors that any sensible person would not make. The jeweller Gerald Ratner once reduced the value of his company by £500 million when he suggested that his products were of very low quality and would not last as long as a cheap sandwich. He's not the only one: the director of a cut-price clothing company once remarked that his customers only wore his suits in court after being arrested. Even the famous pop group, the Beatles, fell into this trap when they chose an extraordinary image of themselves covered in blood and chopped-up dolls to be used for an album cover picture – the image was quickly withdrawn and is now an expensive collectors' item. And what about the ice cream producer who built an eight metre tall tower of ice in the middle of New York on a hot summer's day and was surprised when it melted?

**G** The message for successful marketing companies is never to make assumptions about your target audience unless you have carried out thorough market research – exactly what Ford did not do with the Edsel. Advertising is a powerful tool, but what was in the mind of the promotional designer might be interpreted differently by a customer reading the advertisement. This is shown by a well-remembered advertising blunder, from more than sixty years ago, for a new brand of cigarettes. In a brilliantly designed advert, a man walks miserably through the rain while melancholy music plays. He lights a cigarette, smiles sadly and the slogan runs 'You're never alone with a Strand'. Although people loved the advert and the accompanying music, they invariably associated the cigarettes with loneliness: only 3 percent of smokers ever bought the cigarettes. Even creative, memorable promotion can go disastrously wrong!



© Mat Wright

You should spend about 20 minutes on questions 1–14 below, which are based on the reading passage.

**Questions 1–5**

Read the statements which describe marketing strategies below. Match each statement 1–5 to a paragraph A–G in the text which describes a problem which the marketing strategy will solve.

**Example:**

Organise competitions to encourage people to buy your products. **A**

1. Make accurate forecasts about the financial implications of your promotion.
2. Use your common sense and avoid negative comments about your product.
3. Think about price and demand as well as your marketing strategy.
4. Ensure you are really giving your potential customers exactly what they want.
5. Present your product in a way that will appeal to the international market.

**Questions 6–10**

Look at the following statements (questions 6–10) and the **List of products** below. Match each statement with the correct product, A–H. You do not need to use all the products.

6. They loved the promotion but for all the wrong reasons .....
7. Even the company who produced it described it as low quality .....
8. Its failure was the result of a range of a number of different factors .....
9. A change in design resulted in widespread disappointment .....
10. Its brand name had the potential to upset many female consumers .....

**List of products**

- |                      |                           |
|----------------------|---------------------------|
| A. Ratner jewellery  | E. Hoover vacuum cleaners |
| B. New Coke          | F. Ford Edsel             |
| C. Pepsi Cola        | G. Microsoft Vista        |
| D. Strand cigarettes | H. British soap           |

**Questions 11–14**

Do the following statements agree with the views of the writer?

Answer **YES** if the statement agrees with the views of the writer.

Answer **NO** if the statement contradicts the views of the writer.

Answer **NOT GIVEN** if it is impossible to say what the writer thinks about this.

11. The secret to successful marketing is the development of new products. ....
12. Customer preferences vary widely from one market to the next. ....
13. Online promotion is likely to be the most successful way to sell. ....
14. Minor changes to how a product is promoted can result in marketing failure. ....

- |               |                |
|---------------|----------------|
| 11. NO        | 1. Paragraph C |
| 12. YES       | 2. Paragraph E |
| 13. NOT GIVEN | 3. Paragraph B |
| 14. YES       | 4. Paragraph A |
|               | 5. Paragraph D |

**Answers**

Pre-reading task

You are going to read an article about operations management. Before you read, think about some of the processes that you have in your workplace. Are they well organised and efficient or is time wasted? How could you improve the way your company operates?

# Operations Management

By Ian Betteridge

**A** Operations management is about designing processes to be as efficient as possible. Whether your company produces goods or provides services, wasted time can be the difference between commercial success and failure. As a manager, what can you do to find out exactly how well time is being used in your organisation? It's not simply a matter of watching your workers and deciding who looks busy or of counting the hours they spend in front of their desk.

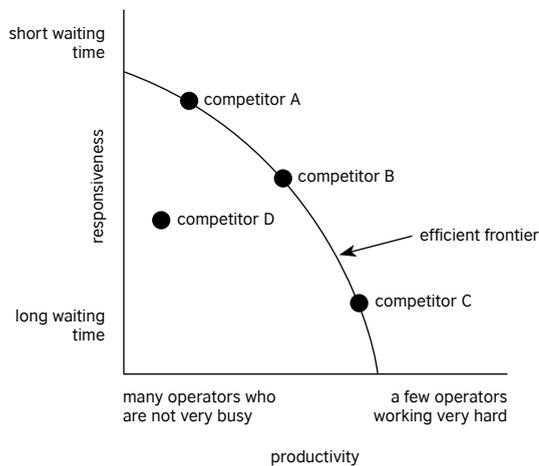
**B** One of the most important concepts in operations management is the idea of the bottleneck. Imagine you are driving to work and there has been an accident on the road ahead. The police have closed one lane of the road and the cars are all being squeezed into the other lane. All the traffic slows down and the result is that you are late for an important nine o'clock meeting. The accident caused a bottleneck. The same idea works on your factory floor. Every manufacturing process can only be as fast as the slowest part – the bottleneck.

**C** Take for example a factory that makes boxes. There are three machines in the box-making process. The first machine cuts the card into the right shape, which takes 8 seconds. The second one folds the card, which takes 12 seconds. The final machine sticks the parts together, which takes 6 seconds. It takes 2 seconds to move the box between each stage of the process. You might think that the factory can make a box every 30 seconds because that's the number you get if you add all the times together, but you would be wrong. When one machine is working on one box, the others are working on other boxes. There is more than one box being made at the same time. That means that the factory can produce a box as quickly as the slowest part of the manufacturing process. In this factory the bottleneck is the folding machine, which takes 12 seconds. This factory can produce 300 boxes per hour.

**D** If the factory manager invested in another folding machine, she could cut the time spent folding the cardboard by half, but this wouldn't double the number of boxes produced per day. Why? Because even though the folding process would now take only 6 seconds on average – two at the same time in 12 seconds – the new bottleneck would be the cutting machine, which still takes 8 seconds per box. She might still decide to buy the new folding machine though. At 8 seconds per box, her operation could produce 450 boxes per hour, which is a 50% increase in production. That could well be worth the money.

**E** The concept of inventory is also important. Your inventory is the amount of goods that your company is processing at the moment. There are good reasons for keeping inventory. Delays in the supply chain or variations in seasonal demand may mean that it is more efficient to keep some stock available, or bulk purchasing may make it cheaper. Yet keeping too much around is expensive in storage costs. An efficient operation is one where the smallest possible amount of inventory is stored.

**F** It's not only with the production of goods that operations management is useful, but also in the service industry. Perhaps your company has a call centre for your customers to get help with your products. Obviously you want them to wait for the shortest time possible – you want a high responsiveness – but this means that you will have to employ many phone operators, who will spend a lot of their working day just waiting for your customers to call. Your labour productivity will be extremely low. If you have a small staff then you will have great productivity but terrible responsiveness, and annoyed customers as well. So, how do you set your staffing levels? Well, one thing you can do is to draw a graph with some data drawn from your competitors' responsiveness and productivity. Draw a line through your most efficient competitors. This is the efficient frontier in your industry. Decide where you want to position yourself along this line, and then try to make improvements to move beyond it.



© Mat Wright

**G** It is important to remember that there is no operational solution that fits every situation and the automobile industry offers an example of this. The Ford production system was built around economies of scale. Huge production runs meant little set-up time for machines and very efficient processes. This had two effects. It limited variety and pushed prices down. Cars were affordable for the first time, although they were all exactly the same. Even before the Second World War, millions of cars were being produced and sold in the US every year. After the war, the Japanese carmaker Toyota tried to copy the Ford system but it failed badly. Demand was in the low thousands instead of the millions, so huge production runs and economies of scale couldn't apply. Instead, Toyota started developing its own system based on very lean, efficient operations and small production runs that enabled the manufacturer to offer a variety of options. Gradually managers reduced inventory in the system to find bottlenecks and inefficiencies in their operations. Today the Toyota Production System is a model of efficient operations. So whatever business your company is in, take the time to sit down and calculate very carefully indeed how efficiently you get your work done.

You should spend about 20 minutes on questions 1–13 below, which are based on the reading passage.

Questions 1–6

This article has seven paragraphs, labelled A–G. Choose the correct heading for each paragraph from the list of headings (i–x) below. You do not need to use all the headings.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| i. Calculating improvements to the operation     | vi. The tension between production and responsiveness |
| ii. The benefits and dangers of keeping stock    | vii. An example of a manufacturing bottleneck         |
| iii. What is Operations Management?              | viii. Long queues mean angry customers                |
| iv. Two valid approaches to designing operations | ix. Why Japanese cars are the best                    |
| v. Accidents slow down traffic                   | x. Defining the term 'bottleneck'                     |

Example: Paragraph A–iii

- |                |                |
|----------------|----------------|
| 1. Paragraph B | 4. Paragraph E |
| 2. Paragraph C | 5. Paragraph F |
| 3. Paragraph D | 6. Paragraph G |

Questions 7–10

Complete the sentences below. Use **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS AND/OR A NUMBER** from the text for each answer.

- The speed of an industrial assembly process is limited by its.....
- One reason for keeping inventory is that you may have different ..... at different times of the year.
- If your responsiveness is low then your customers will be .....
- Being on the ..... represents having the best balance between worker productivity and response times for customers.

Questions 11–13

Are these statements **TRUE**, **FALSE** or **NOT GIVEN** according to the text? Answer **TRUE** if the statement agrees with the text. Answer **FALSE** if the statement contradicts the text. Answer **NOT GIVEN** if there is no information on this.

- The Ford Model T was only available in black.
- Toyota is a more successful car company than Ford.
- The Toyota Production System is based on keeping lots of stock available.

- |        |                              |                        |               |
|--------|------------------------------|------------------------|---------------|
| 1. x   | 5. vi                        | 9. annoyed             | 12. NOT GIVEN |
| 2. vii | 6. iv                        | 10. efficient frontier | 13. FALSE     |
| 3. i   | 7. bottleneck / slowest part | 11. NOT GIVEN          |               |
| 4. ii  | 8. demand                    |                        |               |

Answers

**Pre-reading task**

You are going to read an article about setting goals. Before you read, think about the following questions: How do you usually set goals in your personal and professional life? How do you come up with a plan? What helps you stay motivated?

# Setting Goals: The power of words

By Engeli Haupt

We all have personal and professional ambitions, whether these include wanting to run a marathon, enter a poetry contest, learn to cook or make a career move. According to *Forbes* magazine, only 8 per cent of people actually achieve their New Year's Resolutions. Why are so few of us successful in completing the steps between wanting and doing? Your success may depend on the very first stage: setting your goals. Unless you know where you're heading it's hard to know if you're on the right track. Effectively setting goals can be very motivating and can make the difference when it comes to achieving your objectives.

**A** First of all you should question your motivation and incentives. Is it really something you would like to do? You need to do some soul-searching and ask yourself why you really want to climb that mountain, or paint it, or move it for that matter. Do you want that challenging position because of the external rewards like money or status, or because you will find it interesting and exciting? If the answer to this question is simply 'Because I want to!' you need to dig a little deeper, as not having a clear motive will just end in frustration.

**B** Whatever your motivation, in business it often helps to be SMART. This is an acronym that can be used to guide you when establishing your goals. Be:

- Specific, not general. Don't just say 'better', specify how.
- Measurable. Decide at the start how you will measure your success.
- Attainable. It is not an impossible task for you.
- Relevant. Ask yourself how it fits into your future plans.
- Time-bound. Having a clear time frame will help you plan and execute it!

**C** Once you've written down your plan, it's time to zoom in a bit closer. Think of all the different steps involved and try to break the whole task down into manageable chunks. This could be the time to get out that notebook and start making some spider diagrams or listing bullet points. This planning stage also requires you to take into account all the resources involved: time, money, people, equipment, etc. Start with where you want to be and plan backwards to where you are now. This will help you to spot obstacles before you run into them going forwards.

**D** Next, there is one important thing left to do: follow your plan! This is not always an easy thing to do, but here are some strategies that can help.

Rudyard Kipling said that words are the most powerful drug in the world. Modern science has proven that words affect our brains. When you see negative words your brain releases stress-producing hormones and neurotransmitters. Positive words, on the other hand, lower physical and emotional stress, which means that we feel better and are more likely to be motivated and active. So give yourself a little pep talk once in a while; remind yourself of all the positive things to come from achieving your goal.

**E** Visualisation is yet another powerful tool used by many famous sportsmen and performers. According to experiments, the brain does not distinguish much between visualising and actually practising or rehearsing something, which is good news for us. This means that it is a proven technique that can help set you up for success. By imagining yourself doing something perfectly, you are actually increasing your chances of executing it flawlessly in real life.

**F** Another strategy recommended by experts is keeping track of your progress in a diary, log or chart. Sharing this with your partner, friends, family or on a social network can also be a great motivator. When it comes to personal fitness, many apps are available that allow you to do just that and increase your chances of making it happen.

**G** While it is important to give it your best and make things happen, sometimes we need to deal with unexpected situations and our plans need to change accordingly.

If for any reason you decide to give up on your goal, try to replace it with something else! Also, try to think outside the box and keep up with the latest trends; there might be a more effective way for you to get to the finish line. So, think smart, plan, formulate, visualise, track and adapt and you'll be well on your way to success.



© Mat Wright

You should spend about 20 minutes on questions 1–13 below, which are based on the reading passage.

**Questions 1–7**

This article has seven paragraphs, labelled A–G. Choose the correct heading for each paragraph from the list of headings (i–ix) below. You do not need to use all the headings.

- |                      |                      |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Paragraph A ..... | 5. Paragraph E ..... |
| 2. Paragraph B ..... | 6. Paragraph F ..... |
| 3. Paragraph C ..... | 7. Paragraph G ..... |
| 4. Paragraph D ..... |                      |

**Headings**

- |                                 |                         |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|
| i. The power of words           | vi. Track it            |
| ii. Be flexible                 | vii. Setting sub-goals  |
| iii. Get an app                 | viii. Being realistic   |
| iv. A clever way to write goals | ix. Seeing is believing |
| v. Your reasons for doing it    |                         |

**Questions 8–11**

Complete the sentences below. Use **ONE WORD ONLY** from the text for each answer.

- The planning stage involves breaking down your long-term goal into short-term goals and identifying the ..... you will need.
- Seeing words with a negative connotation causes our brain to release ..... chemicals.
- ..... is when you mentally rehearse an action.
- Tracking your ..... can be very motivating.

**Questions 12–14**

The list below includes advice about setting goals.

Which **THREE** are mentioned by the writer of the passage?

- Nowadays fewer people achieve their goals.
- It is essential that you know what your motivations are.
- Words can change the way we feel.
- Words are more important than actions.
- Telling your family about your progress can help keep you motivated.
- It is more important to be flexible than to achieve your goals.

**Glossary:**

Think outside the box: to think in an unconventional way and to try and see things from a different perspective

- |        |                     |              |
|--------|---------------------|--------------|
| 1. v   | 6. vi               | 11. progress |
| 2. iv  | 7. ii               | 12. B/C/E    |
| 3. vii | 8. resources        | 13. B/C/E    |
| 4. i   | 9. stress-producing | 14. B/C/E    |
| 5. ix  | 10. Visualisation   |              |

**Answers**

**Pre-reading task**

You are going to read an article about why time management is important and some techniques for improving common problem areas. Before you read, think about your own time management. Do you work in an organised, efficient way? Can you think of any ways in which you could improve, or methods you have used successfully?

## Tried and Tested Time-Management Techniques

By Julie Dawn Fox

**A**  
Do you ever feel as though you have an impossible amount of work to do? Or that there are never enough hours in the day? Do you find it hard to focus on tasks or do you delay starting them? Worse still, have you ever missed a deadline? If so, you are not alone. Unfortunately, the stress created by struggling with the many demands on your time tends to make you even less efficient and more likely to make mistakes. A lack of organisation and an inability to say no can leave you feeling as though you have no control over your workload. The good news is that, in many cases, spending a little extra time on improving your time-management skills can make all the difference. The main problem areas are usually prioritising tasks, scheduling work and restricting interruptions and time-wasters.

**B**  
Start by writing down all the tasks that need doing. If they are long, complicated projects, try to break them down into smaller, more manageable parts that you can complete in less than two hours. Once you have your list, it's time to prioritise to ensure you get the crucial work out of the way before wasting your energy on things that don't matter so much or can wait. Consider the importance of a task then factor in the urgency to help you decide if and when you need to take action. Using a matrix and category system can help with this.

	Very Urgent	Not Urgent
Very important	Do these critical tasks first. Categorise them as A or B and deal with them as soon as possible. If you often have to deal with tasks of this nature, make sure you leave enough time in your weekly work plan to include them.	These may be routine jobs or part of an ongoing project but they don't need to be done immediately. Plan to do these tasks during time you have set aside in your weekly schedule. Category B, C or D
Not important	Try to avoid these situations. Ask others to think carefully about who should be dealing with such problems and finding alternative solutions to them. You may need to schedule some time to discuss this with your boss or colleagues if you are regularly asked to get involved with inappropriate tasks. Category D or E	You probably didn't even write these on your list but if you were to keep a record of how you spend your time at work, you would probably find several time-wasting activities, such as reading unnecessary information, tidying your desk or files, checking personal emails or social media. They will draw your focus away from more important jobs if you are not strict with yourself. Category F

It's up to you whether you use a paper-based system, a simple Word or Excel document or even specific software to compile your 'To Do' list. The important thing is to make one. Many people find it helps to work on their list at the end of a working day, rather than the beginning. There are two reasons for this. Firstly, the act of reflecting on the day and prioritising tasks allows you to go home feeling in control of the situation. Secondly, you can get started on the critical tasks straight away the following day.

**C**  
Most jobs involve regular tasks as well as temporary projects and unplanned emergencies. One way of making sure you can fit everything into your working hours, or proving to your boss that you have been given too much work, is to create a schedule for each week. You can do this on a weekly or monthly basis but it should include routine tasks, seasonal or temporary projects plus extra time for unexpected problems. Use your To Do list to help you schedule time for the important tasks. Remember to include thinking, research and planning time for projects and meetings. Restrict the checking of emails to certain periods throughout the day. It's worth adding some time to review your lists and schedules to see if you're under- or over-allocating time for each area.

**D**  
Once you've established these blocks of time, you could try using the Pomodoro method, developed by Francesco Cirillo. Essentially, you use your To Do list to decide what you can realistically achieve within 25 minutes then set a timer and work on these things solidly until the buzzer goes. Take a short break of up to five minutes then repeat. After four back-to-back sessions, you should take a longer break. Make a note of how many sessions you complete as well as how many times you felt distracted or were interrupted.

**E**  
If you are being constantly disturbed by colleagues or phone calls, or find it difficult to stay focused on the task at hand, keep a record of the type and duration of these distractions. If you often have to stop what you're doing to deal with trivial requests, it's time to talk to your colleagues and agree some rules. Work out a way of signalling that you should only be disturbed for urgent and important issues, whether it's a sign on your desk or door, or even closing the door to your office. Use voicemail to control phone calls and switch off your email and social media notifications.

**F**  
Certain techniques work better for some people than others, so you might need to experiment with these to find a method of managing your time that helps you. Once you have the right systems in place, you should be able to work smarter and lower your stress levels.



© Mat Wright

You should spend about 20 minutes on questions 1–14 below, which are based on the reading passage.

**Questions 1–6**

This article has seven paragraphs, labelled A–F. Choose the correct heading for each paragraph from the list of headings (i–viii) below. You do not need to use all the headings.

- |                      |                      |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Paragraph A ..... | 4. Paragraph D ..... |
| 2. Paragraph B ..... | 5. Paragraph E ..... |
| 3. Paragraph C ..... | 6. Paragraph F ..... |

**Headings**

- i. Dealing with unpleasant tasks
- ii. Using a system to organise your tasks
- iii. The dangers of multitasking
- iv. Protecting your time and staying focused
- v. Increase your efficiency with a timer
- vi. Common time-management problems
- vii. Keep trying until you get it right
- viii. Using a timetable to plan your week

**Questions 7–11**

Complete the summary about how to create and prioritise To Do lists below. Use **NO MORE THAN ONE WORD** from the text for each answer.

- Write down all your tasks.
- Make big projects more (7) ..... by dividing the work into sections.
- (8) ..... in both the importance and the urgency of tasks.
- Very important and urgent tasks must be completed first.
- Include regular important but not urgent tasks in your weekly (9) .....
- Avoid unimportant but urgent situations by seeking (10) ..... solutions.
- Eliminate (11) ..... activities such as reading unnecessary information.

**Questions 12–14**

Choose one phrase (A–E) from the **List of phrases** to complete each key piece of information about the **Time-management techniques** mentioned in the passage.

You may use each phrase once only.

**Time-management techniques**

- 12. Scheduling ...
- 13. The Pomodoro method ...
- 14. Restricting interruptions ...

**List of phrases**

- A. is a good way of avoiding unpleasant tasks.
- B. is an effective way of focusing your attention for set periods of time.
- C. is a helpful tool for organising your working week.
- D. is only relevant for managers and supervisors.
- E. is a good way of avoiding unnecessary distractions.

11. time-wasting; 12. C; 13. B; 14. E  
1. vi; 2. iii; 3. viii; 4. v; 5. iv; 6. viii; 7. manageable; 8. Factor; 9. schedule; 10. alternative

**Pre-reading task**

You are going to read an article about the importance of planning and preparation when blogging for business. Before you read, think about your own company. Does it have a blog? Do you know who it is aimed at? Is it popular? Can you think of any ways in which it could be improved?

# Blogging for Business – the Crucial Preparation Phase

By Julie Dawn Fox

**A**  
If you want to get your business noticed online, simply having a website is no longer enough. Unless you have an extremely specialised product or service, the chances are that hundreds, if not thousands, of your competitors are fighting for your customers' attention. They are all desperate to be on the first page of results for the world's major search engines. Optimising your website using keywords and back links from other sites to get Google or Bing to notice you will only get you so far. A regularly updated blog can take you the rest of the way. If your business learns how to blog effectively, it will strengthen relationships with your existing customers and bring new ones to you, building trust and reinforcing your brand. Get blogging wrong, however, and you'll see little in the way of rewards.

**B**  
As with any marketing campaign, running a successful blog requires planning and dedicated resources. This is no quick fix for shrinking sales figures. Your business needs to invest in a strategy that may not yield significant or easy-to-measure results for several months. Long before the first blog post goes live, it's crucial to consider the who, what, where, when and how of blogging for business.

**C**  
Do you have the talent and resources in-house to set up and manage a blog? Even one blog post a week requires several hours of work. If you decide that an existing member of staff is your ideal blogger, make sure they get the time and training needed to do the job well. If you can't spare the resources or simply haven't got anyone suitable, consider hiring a freelance blogger or an agency to run your blog for you.

**D**  
If you decide to use in-house bloggers, they must be able to write in an engaging, error-free way and some specific training in writing for the web will be necessary. Nothing drives readers away faster than dense blocks of text written in overly technical or formal language. Paragraphs need to be considerably shorter than they would on paper. Simple sentences using accessible language work best. There's an art to writing headlines that make people click, and subheadings are vital to help readers skim an article and decide whether to read it or not. It's also important to end with a 'call to action': tell the reader what you want them to do next. You could encourage them to leave a comment, sign up for a newsletter or ring your helpline.

**E**  
If your company already has a website, it may have a built-in blogging facility. If not, it's possible to create a blog under a sub domain of your main site and link directly to it from your homepage. If this sounds too technical, hire a web designer to set up and customise a blog to fit your brand. Bear in mind, however, that your in-house blogger will need to learn how to use blogging software to compile and publish posts, and to deal with reader comments. Your blogger should also learn the basics of Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) and how to find and link to relevant information and source images.

**F**  
Depending on your resources and goals for the blog, you may decide to publish daily, a few times a week or less often. Remember that quality is always more important than quantity. That said, you should aim to publish a new post at least once a week, preferably on the same day of the week. There are two main reasons for this. One is that the search engines will notice the regular fresh content and treat your blog as more relevant and important than one that hardly ever gets updated. The other is that people are creatures of habit and your regular readers will come to expect a new post to arrive in their inbox on a certain day and, if you're doing it right, look forward to reading it.

**G**  
'Content is king' is a phrase that's constantly referred to in blogging circles. No one cares what the director had for lunch, unless your company specialises in certain foods. Likewise, people aren't going to read the blog if it's a continuous sales pitch for your products or services. For people to want to actually read what you publish, your content needs to be of value to them. Try to provide the answer to a problem your target customers are experiencing. The more urgent their need to solve it, the better. This is the kind of information people use search engines to find. Look at common customer queries and the exact language your ideal clients use in forums to identify helpful topics and craft searchable headlines. Plan ahead and create a content calendar so that your blogger isn't left staring at a blank screen with no idea what to write about. By scheduling your topics in this way, it's easy to avoid repetition and to factor in seasonal and newsworthy events.

**H**  
Blogging platforms may claim that you can create a free blog in a matter of minutes but a successful business blog needs plenty of preparation, resources and commitment. Planning for the long term is essential if you want to avoid the fate of the countless abandoned blogs that litter the internet.



© Mat Wright

You should spend about 20 minutes on questions 1–13 below, which are based on the reading passage.

**Questions 1–5**

This article has eight paragraphs, labelled A–H. Choose the correct heading for each paragraph from the list of headings (i–ix) below. You do not need to use all the headings.

- 1. Paragraph B .....      3. Paragraph D .....      5. Paragraph F .....
- 2. Paragraph C .....      4. Paragraph E .....

**Headings**

- i. The cost of blogging
- ii. When should you blog?
- iii. Take a long-term view
- iv. Spreading the word about your blog
- v. Blog technicalities
- vi. Why blog design matters
- vii. What should your company blog about?
- viii. Who should write the blog?
- ix. Writing for blogging success

**Questions 6–9**

Complete the sentences below. Use **NO MORE THAN FOUR WORDS** from the text for each answer.

- 6. There is an enormous amount of competition for attention on the internet if you don't have a particularly ..... product or service.
- 7. Getting other websites to link to yours and including words and phrases that are commonly used as search terms are two ways of ..... for better searchability.
- 8. An alternative to having an existing member of staff write and run your blog would be to employ a .....
- 9. When reading information online, people tend to avoid ....., especially if the language is complicated.

**Questions 10–13**

Choose the appropriate answer (A, B, C or D) for each question.

- 10. Which of the following writing techniques are NOT suggested by the writer as good practice for bloggers?
  - A. Keeping sentences brief and uncomplicated.
  - B. Creating enticing headings.
  - C. Using bullet points.
  - D. Prompting the reader to take action.
- 11. According to the writer, businesses should publish new content ...
  - A. on different days of the week.
  - B. whenever there is something relevant to write about.
  - C. as often as possible.
  - D. regularly and predictably.
- 12. According to the text, the most appealing content for your blog ...
  - A. contains valuable information for your customers.
  - B. shows the human side of your business by sharing staff eating habits.
  - C. highlights the most important features of your products.
  - D. contains images or video.
- 13. According to the writer, setting up a business blog ...
  - A. is a quick way of gaining new customers.
  - B. only takes a few minutes.
  - C. requires preparation and planning.
  - D. should only be done by professionals.

1. iii; 2. viii; 3. ix; 4. v; 5. ii; 6. specialised; 7. optimising your website; 8. freelance blogger; 9. dense blocks of text; 10. C; 11. D; 12. A; 13. C

**Pre-reading task**

You are going to read an article about why body language is important and some techniques for appearing more confident in stressful situations, such as giving a presentation. Before you read, think about presentations you have attended. Have you noticed the body language of the presenters? What made one presenter appear more or less confident than another?

## How Using the Right Body Language Can Improve Your Presentations

By Julie Dawn Fox

**Message in a body**

When preparing for an important job interview or presentation, you might worry about finding the perfect words or the most impressive graphics for your slides. While it's important to use words and visuals effectively, don't make the mistake of ignoring the messages your body is sending. According to the respected psychologist Albert Mehrabian, more than 65 per cent of face-to-face communication is conveyed through gestures, facial expressions and body posture. Think about the last time you noticed two people arguing in public. Even if you couldn't hear their conversation, you could probably tell who was angry and how the other person was feeling by watching their reactions. Similarly, when someone is delighted about something, it's usually apparent in their shining eyes, excited gestures and wide smile. Much of this bodily communication is unconscious and sometimes contradicts the actual words and tone of voice we use. For example, even if someone tells you they are fine, they aren't always convincing, especially if they look miserable or avoid your eyes.

**Look me in the eyes**

Eye contact, or lack of it, can be misleading. Some people think that if others refuse to look them in the eye, they must be lying. However, in some cultures, young people are taught that it's rude to look directly at someone older or in a position of authority so be careful not to make assumptions. Similarly, those who are lying might maintain eye contact for an unnaturally long time in an attempt to convince you that they are being truthful. In Western business culture, however, it's extremely important to make eye contact with your audience if you want them to take you seriously. Even if you have the most wonderful presentation, if you walk into the room with your head down and shoulders rounded, no one will listen to you.

**Walking tall**

The way you stand can make all the difference to the way people perceive you. You may not feel especially confident before a presentation or interview so take a few moments to compose yourself both physically and mentally before entering the room. Smiling not only puts others at ease, it also sends chemical signals to your brain which help to relax you. Likewise, straightening your back and shoulders and standing with your feet firmly apart make you appear more self-confident. Good posture also releases hormones into your body which reinforce the impression that you are in control and know what you are talking about. Conversely, if you round your shoulders as an unconscious form of self-protection, others may see this as a sign that you are weak and probably not worth listening to.

**No barriers**

Another common protective gesture is folded arms. They literally form a barrier between people and you might find yourself doing it when you feel nervous or uncomfortable. You should certainly avoid folding your arms when speaking in public, but what about your audience? If they are watching you with crossed arms, don't panic. There could be a number of reasons for this; they might be cold or simply want to comfort themselves because they are feeling anxious or uneasy. One way of removing this 'barrier' between you and them is to ask for a show of hands. This not only forces your audience to change position, it also actively involves them in your talk by getting them to participate and make decisions.

**Hide your nerves**

Many presenters reveal their nervousness through small, unconscious gestures like playing with their hair, a ring or a watch strap. Try to learn about what you do when you're stressed, and make an effort to control these nervous gestures. If you aren't sure what you do in stressful situations, ask a close colleague to watch you or video yourself while rehearsing for your presentation. Small repetitive movements distract your audience from your message and make you seem less confident. If you have a habit of touching your jewellery, remove it before you start your presentation. Avoid wearing clothes you can play with, and take control of your hands by joining them behind your back if you find yourself tempted to touch your hair or face.

**Putting on the show**

It's always important to rehearse your speech or presentation so you are confident about what you want to say. But next time you have to speak in public or deal with an uncomfortable situation at work, make sure your body doesn't send the wrong signals. Put your shoulders back, stand tall and walk confidently into the room with a smile on your face. Make a personal connection with your audience by catching their eye, even if only for a moment or two. Resist your distracting habits and remove barriers between you and your audience by asking them questions.



© British Council

You should spend about 20 minutes on questions 1–13 below, which are based on the reading passage.

**Questions 1–5**

Choose one phrase (A–H) from the List of phrases to complete each Key point below. The information in the completed sentences should be an accurate summary of the points made by the writer.

**Key points**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Body language communicates ...              | 3. Folded arms and rounded shoulders are ... |
| 2. Avoiding eye contact is not necessarily ... | 4. It's important to try to control ...      |
| 3. Smiling can help you ...                    |  |

**List of phrases**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| A. look and feel more confident and relaxed.                         | E. a sign of weakness.                                  |
| B. a way of making your audience more involved in your presentation. | F. an indication that someone is not telling the truth. |
| C. more information than words do.                                   | G. often interpreted as defensive gestures.             |
| D. any nervous gestures that could distract your audience.           | H. appear aggressive.                                   |

**Questions 6–10**

Complete the sentences below. Use **NO MORE THAN FOUR WORDS** from the text for each answer.

- What type of communication is mostly expressed through bodily and facial movements?
- How long might someone hold eye contact for if they want to convince you that they are telling the truth?
- In which culture is making eye contact especially important for your credibility?
- In what position should your feet be when you are standing confidently?
- What can you request from the audience to remove barriers such as crossed arms?

**Questions 11–13**

Choose the appropriate answer (A, B, C or D) for each question.

- According to the article, which of these is an indication that someone is very happy about something?
  - bright eyes
  - head tilted back
  - rounded shoulders
  - playing with jewellery
- Which of these is NOT given as a possible reason for someone to fold their arms?
  - not feeling warm enough.
  - a protective reaction when feeling intimidated.
  - showing disapproval or disagreement with the speaker.
  - making themselves feel better
- Which of these tips is NOT mentioned in the passage as a way of controlling nervous habits?
  - Remove jewellery before the presentation.
  - Drink plenty of water.
  - Hold your hands together.
  - Find out what your unconscious behaviour is by asking a colleague.

1. C; 2. F; 3. A; 4. G; 5. D; 6. face-to-face; 7. an artificially long time; 8. Western business; 9. firmly apart; 10. a show of hands; 11. A; 12. C; 13. B

**Answers**

**Pre-reading task**

You are going to read an article about business travel. Before you read, think about these questions: Have you ever been on a business trip? Did you see anything of the place where you were, or did you spend the whole time working? What are some of the advantages of travelling for business? Are there any disadvantages?

# Business Travel

By Cath McLellan

**A**  
In spite of the growth in digital communications and the long-held belief that in the near future we will all be working from home using hand-held devices, the reality is that the business travel market continues to grow rapidly. Companies spent over \$262 billion on business travel in the USA in 2012, and that figure has continued to rise, despite slow economic recovery. But is it really true that the handshake and face-to-face meetings really still play an essential role in the world of international trade?

**B**  
Of course, business travel encompasses a whole range of activities, often referred to in the industry as MICE – meetings, incentives, conferences and events. Incentive trips are perhaps at the more glamorous end of the business travel spectrum. These might be trips given as rewards for outstanding performance, or team-building trips before a big project. Research has shown that incentive trips are both an effective way to motivate staff and cheap, compared to paying out large bonuses for workers who perform well. They can also foster a sense of company loyalty amongst staff, meaning they are more likely to stick with the organisation. The number of travel companies specializing in these types of trips would suggest that incentive trips really are a cost-effective motivational tool for management.

**C**  
But more commonly when we think of business travel we think of international meetings and conferences. It is not uncommon that a sales rep might begin the week in Paris, spend Tuesday in Brussels, take the overnight flight to New York, fly back via Boston and be back in London by the weekend. Many would say that this type of travel is unnecessary now that meetings can be conducted across continents in real time at the click of a mouse. Time is wasted sitting in airports, experiencing long delays, finding lost luggage and taking taxis to hotels. There is also a significant environmental impact from so much international travel. For big multinational companies, air travel is often the main contributor to their overall carbon emissions. Indeed, for the management consultancy firm PWC, air travel accounts for 41 percent of all their CO2 emissions. There are predictions of a threefold increase in air travel by 2050; something that big businesses cannot ignore if they want to be taken seriously as 'green' companies. On the other hand, many business experts argue that, especially when meeting clients for the first time, there is simply no substitute for face-to-face meetings. But is it really necessary to send a team of people to these meetings, or could the customer be equally impressed by just one or two delegates from the company? These are questions that organisations could consider more carefully.

**D**  
Regular business travel can also have a negative impact on employees' physical and mental well-being. Far from being a way to see the world at the company's expense, for many, business travel means lonely nights spent in featureless corporate hotels and sleepless nights on long-haul flights. It can also put a strain on family relationships with so much time spent away from home. If they are lucky, workers might have a couple of hours before going to the airport to catch sight of a local monument or take a walk outside the hotel or meeting room. Seasoned business travellers have some advice on how to make the ordeal of business travel less painful. Firstly, you should develop an effective packing strategy, be loyal to airlines and hotels to maximise your access to special benefits and upgrades, and always charge your laptop and phones before flying. Perhaps most importantly, find out the best way for your body to cope with jet lag.

**E**  
For some, of course, business travel still offers an exciting opportunity to see a new place, take advantage of some of the corporate perks associated with staying in top business hotels and also to meet colleagues from around the world. Conferences can be a good opportunity to do this, as delegates rarely sign up for every talk that is being given, preferring instead to head to the bar or for an evening's corporate entertainment. It could be that this is where some of the more important deals are struck and working relationships formed. People relax and get to know each other on a more personal level while enjoying some of what the different location has to offer. Perhaps this is the real reason why, despite the seemingly superfluous nature of business travel in the 21st century, it continues to grow.



© John Cooper/Ikon Partnership

You should spend about 20 minutes on questions 1–13 below, which are based on the reading passage.

**Questions 1–5**

This article has five paragraphs, labelled A–E. Choose the correct heading for each paragraph from the list of headings (i–ix) below. You do not need to use all the headings.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| i. How to make business travel bearable | vi. Is so much business travel really essential? |
| ii. Motivating workers through travel   | vii. The personal touch in deal-making           |
| iii. The importance of the handshake    | viii. The upside of corporate entertainment      |
| iv. Cost-effective business travel      | ix. Forming a green reputation                   |
| v. Business travel on the rise          |  |
- 
- |                      |                      |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Paragraph A ..... | 4. Paragraph D ..... |
| 2. Paragraph B ..... | 5. Paragraph E ..... |
| 3. Paragraph C ..... |                      |

**Questions 6–8**

Complete the sentences below. Use **ONE WORD** from the text for each answer.

- Rewarding high-performing staff with trips is ..... in comparison to paying bonuses.
- Incentive trips can encourage a feeling of ..... to the company.
- By 2050, the number of flights taken each year is expected to increase .....

**Questions 9–13**

Do the following statements agree with the views of the writer?

Answer **YES** if the statement agrees with the views of the writer.

Answer **NO** if the statement contradicts the views of the writer.

Answer **NOT GIVEN** if it is impossible to say what the writer thinks about this.

- Business travel can waste a lot of time.
- Meetings over the internet can sometimes be problematic.
- Companies need to reduce their carbon emissions from travel if they want to maintain an environmentally friendly reputation.
- In follow-up meetings, face-to-face contact is generally more effective than other forms of communication.
- Attending conferences is not an effective way to make new business contacts.

- |           |                           |
|-----------|---------------------------|
| 1. (v)    | 6. cost-effective / cheap |
| 2. (ii)   | 7. loyalty                |
| 3. (vi)   | 8. threefold              |
| 4. (i)    | 9. YES                    |
| 5. (viii) | 10. NOT GIVEN             |
|           | 11. YES                   |
|           | 12. NOT GIVEN             |
|           | 13. NO                    |

**Answers**

**Pre-reading task**

You are going to read an article about some of the reasons why businesses fail to communicate clearly. Before you read, think about your own business situation. Why is clear communication important to your business? Can you think of any examples when your organisation failed to communicate clearly? In what ways was the message unclear?

# Communication Breakdown

By Russell Evans

**A**  
In 2003, a customer sent an email to an online retailer to ask if they still sold blank CDs. The company replied, 'We are currently in the process of consolidating our product range to ensure that the products that we stock are indicative of our brand aspirations. As part of our range consolidation we have also decided to revisit our supplier list and employ a more intelligent system for stock acquisition. As a result of the above certain product lines are now unavailable [from us], whilst potentially remaining available from more mainstream suppliers.' The customer, having eventually decided that the reply meant no, sent the question and reply to the Plain English Campaign, who awarded the retailer with their Golden Bull Award for the worst example of written tripe\*. Clear communication is widely acknowledged to be one of the keys to business success, so why do so many companies fail at the task of sending clear messages to their employees and customers?

**B**  
One of the main causes of poor communication is when the writer fails to consider who will read it and why. The writer waxes lyrical in the hope of impressing his colleagues or his boss. He combines long sentences, complex grammar structures and as many difficult items of vocabulary as possible, in the literary equivalent of the peacock's tail. The writer is showing off his language skills rather than communicating as clear a message as possible to his customers. If writers could only stand in the shoes of their readers, perhaps they might abandon their fancy grammar and vocabulary and discover that clear, concise writing is much more impressive.

**C**  
In some businesses, there are a large number of highly technical words which have a particular meaning to the people who work in that field. In the medical profession, for example, a doctor may advise you that you have a 'chronic' condition, meaning that you might have this illness for a long time. It may or may not be serious, but the doctor will know that many chronic diseases are the easiest to control with medication and lifestyle changes. But many people may not understand the use of the word 'chronic' in its special, technical sense. A patient like this could think that their sickness is more serious than it really is, or even that they could die. So if your business is one in which technical terms are common, make sure that when you communicate with your customers you use as little jargon as you can. If some unfamiliar words with special meanings cannot be avoided, make sure that you explain them clearly.

**D**  
Even when you have been working for an organisation for a long time, it is still possible to be totally baffled by an email that overuses abbreviations and acronyms. If you have ever received an email from your CFO about YTD expenditure and the necessity of submitting outstanding POs no later than COB on 31 March, you will know exactly how irritating and confusing acronyms and abbreviations can be. They may shorten the message, but they also make it much harder to understand. This is doubly true for people outside the organisation, who of course may not even be able to guess what they mean. Only use such abbreviations if you need to refer to the particular person, organisation or thing more than once, and be sure to write out in full what the letters stand for the first time you use them. Remember that what you believe to be a well-known acronym in your region or industry may be completely unknown in another industry, or among your customers, or in another part of the world. Business may be global, but abbreviations are not.

**E**  
The language of the law – often referred to as legalese – can be particularly troublesome. Throughout history, the legal profession has set itself apart from the rest of society by using its own kind of language which seems to non-lawyers to be designed to confuse. There is of course a kind of cruel logic to this. If the only people who can understand what lawyers write are other lawyers, then people will always need lawyers! The insurance industry, for example, has long been thought to be among the worst offenders – giving you rights in one part of the document which it then takes away in the small print. However, the signs are that many companies are abandoning legalese and attempting to write documents in plain English. Insurance documents which may once have been full of legalese – 'whereas', 'hereto', 'herein' and 'hereinafter' – have been rewritten so that the people buying the policies can understand their rights and obligations without help from a legal advisor.

**F**  
So to conclude, the next time a customer asks you a simple question, give her a straightforward answer in plain English. Think about what she needs to know, avoid technical terms if you can (and explain them if you can't), try not to use abbreviations or acronyms and steer clear of legalese. Try reading the message aloud to another person. Was it clear to them? Did they get it? Plain English is both faster to write and read and it's much friendlier. Most importantly, it actually says what you want it to say. Your customers will be impressed.

\*nonsense



© Mat Wright

You should spend about 20 minutes on questions 1–14 below, which are based on the reading passage.

**Questions 1–6**

This article has six paragraphs, labelled A–F. Choose the correct heading for each paragraph from the list of headings (i–ix) below. You do not need to use all the headings.

**Paragraphs**

- |                      |                      |                      |
|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Paragraph A ..... | 3. Paragraph C ..... | 5. Paragraph E ..... |
| 2. Paragraph B ..... | 4. Paragraph D ..... | 6. Paragraph F ..... |

**Headings**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| i. When shorter is not simpler              | vi. How to impress                             |
| ii. Better insurance policies               | vii. Simple advice for clearer writing         |
| iii. An award you don't want to win         | viii. The importance of grammar and vocabulary |
| iv. A special language designed to confuse? | ix. Explaining technical words                 |
| v. Global business communication            |  |

**Questions 7 and 8**

Answer questions 7 and 8. Choose the appropriate letters A, B, C or D.

- A. the retail industry
  - B. the medical profession
  - C. the legal profession
  - D. the insurance industry
7. Which kind of business is used to illustrate how jargon might confuse people?
8. Which kind of business has made improvements in the way it writes contracts?

**Questions 9–14**

Complete the summary of the article by choosing one word (A–J) for each space. There are more words than you need.

**Summary**

It is widely (9) ..... in business circles that good communication is one of the key drivers of success, but many companies and organisations fall at this first hurdle. Writers of reports, letters or emails may overlook the intended (10) ..... of their message, and instead use the writing process to demonstrate their (11) ..... with words. Other business fields have very specialised vocabulary which is known to (12) ..... but which may potentially be misunderstood by outsiders, particularly customers. A particular source of irritation even for those within a business can be the use of abbreviations and acronyms which have the effect of (13) ..... meaning rather than making it clear. Specialised legal language is also a way in which a message may be rendered (14) ....., although in recent years many companies have made their legal documentation much easier to understand.

- |                     |                  |
|---------------------|------------------|
| A. agreed           | F. mentioned     |
| B. employee         | G. obscuring     |
| C. incomprehensible | H. prowess       |
| D. insiders         | I. recipient     |
| E. jargon           | J. understanding |

1. iii 2. vi 3. ix 4. ii 5. iv 6. vii 7. B 8. B 9. A 10. i 11. H 12. D 13. G 14. C

**Pre-reading task**

You are going to read an article about dealing with cultural differences in international business transactions. Before you read, think about the following questions: Do you have to communicate with people from different cultures in your job? What kind of problems can arise during cross-cultural negotiations? What can be done to solve these problems?

# Cross Cultural Business Communication

By Freddie Gay

Cross-cultural interaction has become increasingly common in today's globalised business world. It is therefore important that anyone involved in business with organisations from other countries is aware of issues around culture and different ways of doing business. In other words, business etiquette matters. Cultural misunderstanding can lead to failed negotiations and missed opportunities. This may not only be due to breakdowns in communication caused by language. A higher standard of English in many places means that this is less of a problem than it was in the past. Instead, problems often happen because one of the parties is not following the same business conventions as the other.

One good example of how business cultures differ relates to the amount of time needed to build up relationships before finalising a transaction. Some cultures prefer to get to know each other for much longer periods than others before they commit to any agreement. This is the case in some South American countries, where, in order to build up trust, foreign companies entering the market for the first time might need to show a great deal more patience than they are used to. An article in the *Huffington Post* by international business expert Valerie Berset-Price details the case of a failed business venture in Chile. The venture was stopped when directors of a US company expected to achieve sales in the same time frame they had in the United States. They pulled out after just one year in the country, just as sales were beginning to improve. If they had known that Chileans tend to take more time before committing to an agreement, they would probably have been successful. Berset-Price points out, 'Countries have their own tempo, and seldom will they adapt to ours to meet our needs'.

A lack of cultural sensitivity could also be a main reason why Australian businesses are not doing as well in Asian markets as they wish to. Speaking in an article in Australia's *Herald Sun*, Andrew Parker, director of a multinational consultancy firm, suggests that the direct nature of Australian business negotiations is not the way such negotiations are conducted in many Asian countries. As an example, he comments, 'The mistake foreigners make in Asia is believing that silence in a meeting means acceptance'. He goes on to argue that far more training in cross-cultural negotiations is needed if Australian companies are to make the most of emerging Asian markets.

Such is the importance of understanding cross-cultural business etiquette that many business degrees are now offering modules that specialise in understanding how different cultures conduct their business affairs. At some universities, it is even possible to take a Master's degree in Intercultural Business Communication. Companies have also started responding to the demand for cross-cultural competence by investing in training courses designed to raise awareness of the reality of different business practices in different regions. This also places extra demands on the skills required for a particular job. Having a high degree of cross-cultural competence is a strength that companies are increasingly looking for when recruiting. Given the large number of courses available in this area, it is an attribute that takes some time and effort to master.

In order to become a competent intercultural negotiator, then, there are a number of skills that must be developed. Myriam Siftar, writing in the *Philadelphia Business Journal*, echoes the concerns about the problems caused by a lack of cross-cultural awareness highlighted above, and outlines the areas she believes should take priority in such courses. She states them to be, 'awareness of the effect of culture on communication, knowledge of the differences between cultures, and learning to pick up the subtle clues that can signal a problem in communication'.

While such intensive training undoubtedly places extra demands on employees, on the positive side it will provide a highly desirable skill that can improve a CV. It may also lead to a greater understanding and appreciation of different cultures. This is a positive development, as it encourages individuals to learn more about the world and enhances their interpersonal skills. On a more global level, it could result in better international relations between countries, as cultural understanding often leads to increased trust and ability to put aside differences. So, if you find yourself being sent on a training course to develop your intercultural skills, enjoy the experience. The benefits are likely to be numerous not only for you, but for the entire business world of the future.



© Mat Wright

You should spend about 20 minutes on questions 1–13 below, which are based on the reading passage.

**Questions 1–8**

Complete the summary using the list of words, A–J, below. Write the correct letter, A–J, in each space. You do not need to use all the words.

In the world of business today, there is an increasing demand for skilled cross-cultural negotiators. Not understanding the often subtle differences in the way that other countries go about their business 1) ..... can damage successful negotiations and can even slow the 2) ..... of new business links. In order to address the urgent 3) ..... for highly competent cross-cultural business personnel, there is a 4) ..... emphasis on providing training and qualifications in this area. Although this has placed high demands on students and employees, there are numerous 5) ..... for both the individual and business organisation as a whole. Furthermore, more widespread cross-cultural business 6) ..... might have positive 7) ..... for global interaction amongst countries with 8) ..... cultural backgrounds.

- A. aspirations C. growing E. implications G. falling I. need  
B. diverse D. training F. affairs H. development J. benefits

**Questions 9–10**

Choose the appropriate letter, A–D, to complete the sentences below.

9. According to Valerie Berset-Price:  
A. Central and South American companies need to show more patience when conducting business with US companies.  
B. US companies should not expect companies from different countries to complete deals in the same time frame they expect at home.  
C. US business ventures in Chile are unlikely to succeed.  
D. US companies should be aware that the Latin American market is growing slowly.
10. According to Andrew Parker, when conducting negotiations in Asia, Australian negotiators:  
A. need to be more direct.  
B. should not speak as much as they usually do.  
C. need better training and self-awareness.  
D. need to accept other points of view more easily.

**Questions 11–12**

Which **TWO** ideas are **NOT** suggested by Myriam Siftar as being integral to a course on intercultural business skills?

- A. Learning to communicate using the native language of another culture.  
B. Knowing how your own background can influence the way you interact with others.  
C. Understanding reasons behind differences in approaches amongst different cultures.  
D. Noticing the small signals that convey misunderstanding.  
E. Learning how to signal that you do not understand something.

**Question 13**

Choose one letter (A–D) from below to answer the question correctly.

11. Select the best heading for the article.  
A. Get your business culturally ready or face the consequences!  
B. Don't be a cross-cultural business failure  
C. The importance of providing cross-cultural business training for your company  
D. The challenges of cross-cultural business communication

1. F; 2. H; 3. I; 4. C; 5. J; 6. D; 7. E; 8. B; 9. B; 10. C; 11/12. A/E; 13. D

Answers

**Pre-reading task**

You are going to read an article about strategies and factors involved in making decisions. Before you read, think about the following questions: How do you normally approach big decisions? How do you normally feel about the decisions you make? We have all been told to 'sleep on it', advised to toss a coin or simply ordered to follow our hearts or heads, but what is truly behind the process of decision-making? How can we know that we are making the right decisions?

# The Science of Decision-Making

By Engeli Haupt

**A Science**

If you think that the best decision-making strategy is to keep your feelings out of it, think again. Scientists have found that emotion is the cornerstone of human reason. People who do not experience emotions in a normal way have difficulty with even basic decision-making. This is due to the way our brains work. Dopamine, which helps the brain regulate emotion, has been identified as having a very important role in the body's reward system and it changes the way the brain forms connections between neurons, called synapses. This synaptic process allows information to be processed and to flow through our brain. It is how we learn and how we can change our behaviour patterns. Decisions are normally related to some kind of reward, and how our brain views reward over time, this informs and affects our decision-making process. Choice behaviour is also influenced by our environment and previous experience. We mostly learn through trial and error.

We know that the emotional impact of loss is twice as powerful as the positive impact of gain. This explains why most of us avoid high-risk situations even when the possible reward is big. While this reaction makes sense in threatening situations, it could prevent us from trying out new experiences that could be positive.

Maimonides once said that the risk of a wrong decision is preferable to the terror of indecision. So, what do psychologists recommend when we come to a fork in the road? There are several strategies that can help us feel more confident about the decisions we make.

**B Strategies**

Prototype matching is when you compare yourself to other people in the same situation. If you were deciding between eating meat and being a vegetarian, you would compare yourself to the stereotypical meat-eater and vegetarian and then decide which one is the closest match to your ideal self.

Comparison is another relatively easy strategy to use, especially when you are not an expert in the area at hand. This is when you imagine the positive and negative outcomes or features of each option. If you are deciding whether to cycle or drive to work, you might decide that cycling will make you more fit and help you save money but that driving might be safer and faster. Psychologists and researchers have found that comparison gives us confidence in the decisions we make.

We can also make decisions based on elimination. For this strategy, you need to choose an important feature and eliminate all options that do not satisfy you according to that characteristic. Let's say you are buying a car. Price or mileage could be the most important factors, so first you eliminate all the options that are over a certain price and do not meet your mileage expectations. You could then choose another characteristic, like maintenance, and rule out some further options until you are left with your best choice.

If you like numbers, you might prefer the last strategy. You can assign scores to all alternatives based on different factors. In other words, you create a table with all the characteristics you can think of and enter a score for each alternative. You then add all the different scores, which will give you a global value. This will reveal the best overall choice.

**C Factors that help or hinder**

Studies at Harvard Medical School have found that subjects' performance on a decision-making test is much lower when they haven't had enough sleep. Even if they had been given stimulants like caffeine they still did not get good results. When we are sleepy, we should not make important decisions. Our emotions also play a big role, so it would be better to postpone serious life-changing decisions if you're not feeling emotionally stable.

**D Being satisfied with your decision**

Author Barry Schwartz divides people into what he calls satisficers, who look for different options and stop the search when they find something that's good enough, and maximisers, who continue looking and examine every single possibility. In the end, the former tend to be happier with their decisions than maximisers, who feel that they have sacrificed many possibilities in making their choice.

Decision-making is a complex process that involves both emotion and reason. So, embrace your decisions and remember the words of Theodore Roosevelt, 'In any moment of decision, the best thing you can do is the right thing, the next best thing is the wrong thing, and the worst you can do is nothing.'



© James Glossop

You should spend about 20 minutes on questions 1–13 below, which are based on the reading passage.

**Questions 1–6**

The article has four sections, A–D. Which section contains the following information? Choose the correct letter, A–D.

**NB** You may use any letter more than once.

1. Sometimes the more options we look at, the happier we become with our decisions.
2. Sleep affects the decisions we make.
3. Comparing yourself to others can help you get a clearer idea of what you want.
4. The way we make decisions changes with experience.
5. You can be methodical and use numbers to make decisions.
6. How we think about decisions is largely influenced by how we view rewards.

**Questions 7–9**

Complete the sentences below. Use **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS** from the text for each answer.

7. The ..... strategy requires you to identify with others.
8. We prefer not to put ourselves in ..... because the impact of loss is much higher than the impact of gain.
9. Maimonides said that the ..... is much worse than making the wrong decision.

**Questions 10 and 11**

Choose the appropriate letter, A–D, to complete the sentences below.

10. The way we behave when making choices...
  - A. is genetically determined.
  - B. changes through our lives and is influenced by our environment and experience.
  - C. has changed now that we have so many products to choose from.
  - D. is a product of reward and reason.
11. In the process of elimination you...
  - A. should consider only one characteristic.
  - B. eliminate alternatives that do not meet your expectations.
  - C. eliminate alternatives based on the good and bad outcomes of each option.
  - D. should follow your instinct.

**Questions 12 and 13**

Which **TWO** of the following statements are **NOT** mentioned in the article?

- A. People with emotional disorders repeatedly make illogical choices.
- B. Dopamine is a chemical in the brain linked to our reward system.
- C. Most of us choose a safe decision over a more risky one because we experience loss more intensely than we experience gain.
- D. Comparison helps us feel more sure about the decisions we make.
- E. A study found that caffeine slightly increased participants' decision-making performance.
- F. Decision-making is a complicated process that involves both feelings and logic.

1. D; 2. C; 3. B; 4. A; 5. B; 6. A; 7. prototype-matching; 8. high-risk situations; 9. terror of indecision; 10. B; 11. B; 12. A/E; 13. A/E

**Pre-reading task**

You are going to read an article about dress codes at work. Before you read, think about your own situation. Does your company have an official dress code? What are you expected to wear at work? What kinds of clothes would not be acceptable? Do you think your company's policy on dress is too strict or about right?

# Dress Codes at Work

By Russell Evans

**A**  
Our clothes send messages. In our personal lives, what we choose to wear may communicate ideas to the people around us about many things, such as our gender and social status. Some people use their clothes to express ideas about politics, religion or ethnic identity, while others may show sexual orientation, marital status or attitudes towards culture or authority. A dress code is simply a set of unwritten or written rules that we follow in different circumstances. And over the course of a single day, we may switch from one kind of dress code to another – for example, when we get home from work and get ready to go out. We kick off our work shoes, shrug off our skirts and blouses, remove our ties and change into something more suitable for a night out with friends.

**B**  
If our clothes can send signals, it is not surprising that at work our employers are concerned about the messages we are sending. Employees in different occupations often meet colleagues, customers, suppliers, buyers, patients and members of the public. When employees meet these people, it is not only the words they say that are important but also the clothes they wear. Just as rude or pushy employees can have an effect on a company's bottom line, dressing inappropriately can send the wrong message about the employer. For this reason, companies naturally want to ensure that their employees project the right messages, and one way of doing this is with a dress code. By controlling what employees wear, companies hope to send the signal that they are professional, respectful, efficient and straightforward.

**C**  
Although dress codes vary across cultures, certain standards seem to be common. Clothes need to be clean and neat, and not old, worn or too casual. T-shirts with bright colours or slogans are generally considered to be unacceptable, and so are the kinds of clothes we might wear to the beach, while playing sport or when doing heavy physical work in the garden. In addition, the clothes we choose for work should be modest. In other words, clothes which don't cover the parts of our bodies between our necks and our knees, or items of clothing which reveal things like large tattoos, do not generally meet the standards of typical dress codes.

**D**  
Most people would agree that dress codes have become much more relaxed in recent years. Sixty years ago, things were a lot stricter. For example, in London in the 1950s, male civil servants and bankers would have all worn very similar dark suits, conservative ties and perhaps a bowler hat. Working women all wore long skirts and blouses, with a jacket. But attitudes began to relax during the 1960s and 1970s with changes in pop culture and fashion. This trend continued into the 1990s and, in the new computer industries of California, much more casual work clothes became acceptable. People began to believe that wearing casual clothes such as jeans and T-shirts at work could help to encourage a much more relaxed, creative atmosphere at work. Other industries outside Silicon Valley borrowed this approach, and the business world saw the arrival of 'dress-down Friday' – one day in the week when people were allowed to leave their suits or ties at home and come to work in casual clothes.

**E**  
In some kinds of work, dress codes are clearly justified for reasons of health and safety. For example, in the construction industry, companies may insist on employees wearing hard hats, safety goggles and strengthened footwear. In businesses connected with food preparation, employers may require workers with long hair to wear a hat or tie their hair up to keep it from falling into food. In the healthcare sector, hospitals and clinics may ask their workers to remove jewellery at work and to wear short sleeves to reduce the risks of infection. But in other occupations, employers may need to be very careful about how they design and implement a dress code. This is because badly worded policies about what people have to wear, or rules which are not applied consistently, may have the effect of discriminating against certain groups of people, and in most developed nations, discrimination is against the law. A requirement that everyone must wear a tie, for example, might be challenged by a person who has a skin condition which is made worse by tight-fitting clothing. Similarly a ban on head coverings or beards might indirectly discriminate against some people with particular religious affiliations.



© Mat Wright

**F**  
In order to avoid such complaints, there are a number of simple measures that a company can take when it is considering bringing in a dress code. The first is to consider whether it is necessary. If there are no health and safety implications and your employees never meet customers, why do you need one? If you decide that rules about clothing are necessary, explain your reasons to your staff, and consider how it will affect their ability to do their jobs. Meet with your employees to talk through the issues, and make sure there are ways for your staff to challenge decisions which are unreasonable. And finally, always apply your dress code consistently and fairly.

You should spend about 20 minutes on questions 1–14 below, which are based on the reading passage.

**Questions 1–7**

The text has six paragraphs labelled A–F. Which paragraphs contain the following information? Write one letter from A–F for each question. You may use any letter more than once.

1. three occupations with a particular justification for dress codes .....
2. why employers are interested in what we wear .....
3. advice about how to implement dress codes .....
4. what our clothes tell other people about us .....
5. cross-cultural similarities .....
6. getting into legal trouble .....
7. affecting a company's profitability .....

**Questions 8–14**

Answer questions 8–14 using words from the text. Write **NO MORE THAN 3 WORDS** for each answer.

8. In addition to fashion and culture, what else can our clothes indicate our feelings about?
9. In order to project an image of professionalism and efficiency, what do companies manage about the appearance of their staff?
10. Across different societies, what do people agree that working clothes should be?
11. What kinds of clothes were believed to lead to greater creativity in one particular business?
12. What can help to prevent diseases from spreading in hospitals and clinics?
13. What can companies that are careless about the application of their dress codes be accused of?
14. What should employees who believe that they have been treated unreasonably be allowed to do?

1. E; 2. B; 3. F; 4. A; 5. C; 6. E; 7. B; 8. authority; 9. what employees wear; 10. clean, neat; 11. jeans, T-shirts; 12. short sleeves; 13. discrimination; 14. challenge decisions

**ANSWERS**

**Pre-reading task**

You are going to read an article about the rise of English as a lingua franca. Before you read, think about the following questions: How many people around the world do you think speak English as a first language and as a second language? Which historical events influenced the rise of English before the 20th century? Why is English so widely spoken in today's business world?

# The Rise of English as a Lingua Franca

By Freddie Gay

English is well established as a global language. It is the most widely spoken language across the world. There are about 375 million people who speak English as their mother tongue, and 750 million people who speak it as a second language. A great amount of communication in English therefore takes place between non-native speakers. This situation has led to English being the world's lingua franca – a common language used by groups who speak different native languages. One main use of English today is to conduct business between companies and organisations in different countries. How has this state of affairs happened, and for how long will it continue?

The first major spread of English goes back to the British colonial era. Throughout the 16th and 17th centuries, English was the official language in a number of countries under British control. As English became the language of government and commerce in these places, it began to take on prestige as it was associated with wealth and power. In many countries, such as the United States and Canada, it was sufficiently well established for it to stay as the official language after the countries won independence from British rule. In some countries with large ethnic populations, such as Singapore and India, English has officially enjoyed an equal status with other languages, despite its use occurring mostly in governmental and business contexts.

Another key event that strongly contributed towards the popularity of English around the world was the industrial revolution during the mid 19th century. Within the UK during this period, there was a huge change in the nature of manufacturing processes from hand to machine. This led to mass production for the first time in human history. The invention of engines and other advances such as telegraphic communication created a massive worldwide demand for these products. As English was the medium for explaining how to both use and produce them, it became desirable for many people to speak it, especially wealthy merchants who wanted to use these new technologies.

During the 20th century, Britain lost much of its power. The United States emerged as a global superpower and its economic strength allowed it to promote its products and culture across the world. This made sure that English stayed the medium of communication in business and diplomatic affairs. The popularity of English grew further because of the United States' highly successful entertainment industry. This became famous during a technological revolution that saw radios and televisions become common household items, leading to songs and films in English arriving in people's living rooms for the first time.

Another technological revolution occurred a couple of decades ago with the development of computers, and US scientists and companies played a large part in this. As a result, American companies came to dominate in hardware and software. The rapid rise of the Internet has allowed these companies more opportunities to advertise and sell their products easily around the globe. Although today there are web pages in many different languages, English is by far the most widespread language on this global network.

It seems then that English is in a strong position in today's digital world. Is there any chance we could one day see it lose its status as the global language? Certainly some languages are becoming more widely spoken, such as Spanish and Chinese. With these languages being from countries with emerging economies, it does not seem impossible that they might replace English. Indeed, Latin was once a dominant language, which was spoken widely across Europe. With the end of the Roman Empire, this language lost its powerful status as the lingua franca and various new languages emerged. These include French, Spanish, Portuguese and Italian and are commonly called the Romance languages. Some argue that English could follow the path of Latin. In addition to Standard English, there are many regional varieties of English spoken across the world. These often have different words and grammar to Standard English. If Standard English stops being used across the world, these regional varieties might become new languages themselves.

There is reason to doubt that this will happen. In the case of Latin, there was no global economy. The circumstances are completely different in today's digital age. It is hard to imagine businesses and governments shifting to a different lingua franca after years of investment in English. English continues to grow and with more adults learning it to high levels and children who are bilingual with English as one of their native languages, an end to its dominance seems unlikely.



© Mat Wright

You should spend about 20 minutes on questions 1–13 below, which are based on the reading passage.

**Questions 1–6**

Complete the timeline below using no more than **ONE** word from the reading passage.

Timeline of Key Events in the Worldwide Spread of English

1700	1800	1900	2000
Start of British expansion.	US gains English dominance in trade and commerce in countries around the world.	Industrial Revolution. Dramatic changes in manufacturing processes. Mass production begins.	After World War 2, US emerges as a global technological power. Start of a new technological revolution.
1) .....	2) .....	3) ..... in	4) .....
5) .....	6) .....	7) .....	8) .....

**Questions 7–10**

Look at the following languages (**questions 7–10**) and the list of statements (**A–G**). Match each language with **ONE** correct statement according to the passage. You do not need to use all the statements.

- 7. Chinese
- 8. The Romance languages
- 9. English
- 10. Latin
- A. Many different regional variations
- B. Not spoken widely in the US
- C. Few second language learners
- D. Might become a global lingua franca in the future
- E. Related to a former lingua franca
- F. Never a truly global lingua franca
- G. Many bilingual speakers

**Questions 11–13**

Choose the appropriate letter, **A–D**, to answer the questions below.

- 11. According to the article, how many native speakers of English are there?
  - A. 750 million
  - B. 375 million
  - C. 150 million
  - D. 350 million
- 12. Which of the following is NOT given as an example of a technological revolution?
  - A. A shift from hand production to machine production
  - B. The development of computers
  - C. The development of wireless and television
  - D. The use of English on the internet
- 13. Which statement best summarises the author's attitude to the idea of English being replaced as the most widely used lingua franca?
  - A. He believes it is probable.
  - B. He believes it is impossible.
  - C. He is sceptical about the idea.
  - D. He is confused about the idea.

- 1. colonial
- 2. independence
- 3. change
- 4. production
- 5. superpower
- 6. widespread
- 7. D
- 8. E
- 9. A
- 10. F
- 11. B
- 12. D
- 13. C

**ANSWERS**

**Pre-reading task**

You are going to read an article about entrepreneurs. Before you read, think about the following questions: Have you ever thought about setting up a business? What are the advantages and disadvantages of working for yourself? What do you think are the essential qualities that you need to be a successful entrepreneur? Do you think you have these qualities?

# Entrepreneurs

By Cath McLellan

**A** Employment opportunities and traditional means of building wealth are dwindling for young people across the globe these days. In fact, studies suggest that those under 45 are actually economically worse off than their predecessors. However, it's not all doom and gloom for the young and ambitious – despite tales of economic woe across much of Europe, there are still plenty of young people who are willing to take risks, giving up a secure job and instead setting up their own business. For these young entrepreneurs, the idea of working for someone else in a traditional 9–5 setting is simply not an option.

**B** But what does it take to succeed as an entrepreneur? It certainly isn't something that everyone can do. According to Joe Robinson of *Entrepreneur* magazine, one of the most important characteristics that a successful entrepreneur needs is perseverance. When setting up a business it is inevitable that you will meet repeatedly with failure, but the important thing is to keep going and learn from your mistakes. Richard Branson, founder of the Virgin group and one of Britain's most successful businessmen, would agree. He recently tweeted 'For every success story, there's 100s of near misses. Every entrepreneur fails before succeeding'. Despite not attending any kind of business school, he has built a £50 billion multi-national company from a single music shop – which goes to show that self-belief is also an important characteristic for successful entrepreneurship. But most entrepreneurs would agree that perhaps the biggest key to success in running your own business is to love what you do and be passionate about it – after all, you are going to be working extremely hard, often in very challenging situations, and it is difficult to do that unless you are extremely enthusiastic about what you are doing.

**C** Many people who are stuck in dull 'nine to five' jobs dream of setting up and running their own business. Indeed, the idea seems to have captured the public's imagination with popular TV shows now dedicated to would-be entrepreneurs, old and young alike. The BBC's popular *Dragons' Den* is one such show. In it, entrepreneurs have three minutes to present their business idea to five multi-millionaire investors (the 'Dragons') who are willing to invest their own money in those that they feel are solid businesses. The show regularly attracts 3–4 million viewers and some of the contestants have gone on to become celebrities of the business world. One of the so-called Dragons, Peter Jones, invested £50,000 in Levi Roots's 'Reggae Reggae Sauce'. Roots gave a memorable 'pitch' on the show, and his spicy sauce and other food products have now turned into a £40 million business. Another well-loved BBC programme, *The Apprentice*, has a similar premise, where a group of business people compete each week to win a £250,000 investment from another of Britain's top entrepreneurs, Sir Alan Sugar. Each week contestants compete in a series of business tasks where their business skills are tested and assessed. In 2010 a version of the programme was launched where teenagers (aged 16 and 17) competed in similar tasks to win a £25,000 investment. Some people have been critical about a programme which encourages young people to be so focused on making money, but others have praised the show and the participants' initiative and maturity.

**D** But entrepreneurs do not have to be money-driven. There are a growing number of young people who are starting businesses driven by social needs. Social entrepreneurship means creating businesses or products that aim to solve social or environmental problems. One such business is One Earth Designs. Scot Frank started the company in 2009 and his aim was to design and sell a solar-powered cooker that could produce heat and electricity and reduce indoor air pollution and provide clean energy for communities in rural China. The company works with both government and non-governmental agencies in the region to provide these cookers, but they also have a profit-making business department in order to be able to expand the impact of their work globally. Social entrepreneurs use their ambition, creativity and business skills not only to create wealth but to promote social change. Many companies these days are interested in promoting corporate social responsibility, and investing in social entrepreneurs is one way to do this.



© Mat Wright

**E** So if you have a burning ambition to be your own boss and you feel that you have the determination, passion and perseverance to innovate and create something new, why not consider giving up the day job and starting your own new enterprise?

You should spend about 20 minutes on questions 1–13 below, which are based on the reading passage.

**Questions 1–6**

The reading text has five sections, A–E. Which paragraph contains information about the following? Answer A, B, C, D or E. You can use any letter more than once.

- a rising popular interest in entrepreneurship
- a suggestion to ambitious workers
- someone receiving investment from an innovative presentation
- changes in the labour market for the young
- problems with the promotion of certain values
- the importance of not giving up when faced with challenges

**Questions 7–13**

Complete the summary of the first part of the text with a word (A–O). There are more words than you need.

These days job opportunities and traditional ways of becoming financially successful are ..... (7). For the first time, the younger generations are less ..... (8) than the previous generation, but there are still some young people who are ..... (9) to establish their own company. Some of the most important ..... (10) needed to be an entrepreneur include self-belief, passion and perseverance, as most entrepreneurs will meet ..... (11) before they succeed. The idea of being an entrepreneur is becoming increasingly popular, and there are many popular TV programmes in which contestants ..... (12) against each other to win an investment for their new business. Many of these contestants have gone on to become successful in business and have become well ..... (13) as a result.

- |                 |               |
|-----------------|---------------|
| A. difficulties | I. successful |
| B. decreasing   | J. desperate  |
| C. known        | K. failing    |
| D. challenge    | L. go up      |
| E. increasing   | M. investors  |
| F. keen         | N. attributes |
| G. skills       | O. wealthy    |
| H. seen         |               |

1. C; 2. E; 3. C; 4. A; 5. C; 6. B; 7. B; 8. O; 9. F; 10. N; 11. A; 12. L; 13. C

**ANSWERS**

**Pre-reading task**

You are going to read an article about two different theories of helping the workforce to become more productive. Before you read it, think about the following questions: What motivates people at work? Is it just money, or is a sense of being valued by your employer also important?

# Keeping Them Happy: Motivating workers to be more productive

By Andy Keedwell

In 1901 when Henry Ford opened his first car factory, cars were made in the same way as carriages and coaches. They were constructed in small workshops by teams of highly skilled workers. Each car took months to build, and only rich people could afford to buy them. Ford wanted each home in the United States to be able to own a car. His answer was the famous Model T which could be constructed in less than three minutes. To achieve this revolutionary change, Ford used the most modern technology available, especially the conveyor belt, but he was also indirectly influenced by 'Scientific Management'. This is a theory about worker productivity, developed by a nineteenth-century American, Frederick Taylor. Taylor was born into a wealthy family, but rather than study at university, he took a job as a factory labourer, eventually becoming consultant engineer. This experience of seeing things on the shop floor helped him to develop his ideas.

Taylor's theory focuses on how things are made. He rejected traditional craft-based manufacture and suggested instead that any job can be divided into a series of simple steps. Traditionally one craftsman had completed the whole job. Taylor suggested that a far less skilled worker could focus on just one step of the job, repeating the step time and again, as happens on an assembly line. He proposed that an expert with a stop watch could calculate how long each step should take. This meant each step in a procedure could be standardised. For example, working in an American steelworks, Taylor calculated that the ideal load that could be lifted by a worker with a spade was 9.7 kilos and so all spades used in the factory were designed to that specification.

In many ways Taylor's view of the workforce is a gloomy one. He had a low opinion of the intelligence of the workforce. He reasoned at one steel mill, for example, that anyone stupid enough to choose the job of labourer there could not possibly be clever enough to understand the science of making steel. He felt most workers did not work as hard as they could. They took long breaks and wasted time, so Taylor's view was that only managers could decide the right amount of work per person. He believed workers were motivated only by high pay and a shorter working day.

Taylor's opinions had an immediate effect on industrialists in America and Western Europe, and even influenced the government of the Soviet Union in the 1920s. However, not everybody agreed with him. One researcher who took a completely different view from Taylor was the Australian Elton Mayo, an eminent sociologist at Harvard University. In the 1920s, Mayo conducted a series of experiments at the Hawthorne telephone factory in Chicago. Over five years, Mayo studied two groups of women workers who were asked to work in isolated rooms. He made a series of changes to the working conditions in the rooms. For example, he changed the factory lighting, the temperature, the way the rooms were organised, the women's working hours and the number of rest breaks. The women were fully involved in the research.

Mayo had expected to see productivity levels decline as lighting or other conditions became worse. Surprisingly, he found that every change the researchers made (whether positive or negative) led to increased productivity. Mayo concluded that it was not the changes themselves that were making the difference. Rather, the women worked harder because they enjoyed the interest and respect the researchers were showing in them as this was something that they had not experienced before. The workers had developed a sense of participation in the project and so increased productivity. Mayo called this the 'Hawthorne Effect' after the factory where the experiments took place.

Consequently, Mayo developed a set of principles for motivating the workforce and ensuring productivity at the same time. These contrast strikingly with Taylor's ideas. While Taylor had seen self-interest and especially financial incentives as the only source of motivation, Mayo stressed other factors such as job satisfaction and the feeling that people have worked together to achieve something useful. Mayo disliked the way Taylor had seen workers as unthinking robots and the emphasis he placed on industrial efficiency rather than on people. He described how we get satisfaction from working in groups and highlighted the role of team working. He also had concerns about relationships between management and workers, emphasising the benefits of clear communication between them.



© Mat Wright

So whose views receive the most support today? In a number of ways, modern thinking reflects the principles of Elton Mayo rather than Frederick Taylor. Taylor had focused on management monopoly of control with workers forced to follow set instructions and perform boring, monotonous tasks without having to think. One result, however, was that the workers fought back. The history of Ford throughout the twentieth century is one of labour unrest and strikes which were possibly a major reason for the decline in the company. Mayo's suggestion that the more management shows an interest in the workers the more productive they will be has proved more attractive to management thinkers over the decades and has provided a foundation for many modern human resources policies.

You should spend about 20 minutes on questions 1–13 below, which are based on the reading passage.

**Questions 1–6**

Complete each sentence with the correct ending, A–H, below. You do not need to use all the endings.

1. Traditional ways of constructing vehicles was expensive and took time,
  2. Traditionally, one worker was in charge of the whole process,
  3. Scientific Management suggested workers were not interested in their work
  4. Elton Mayo concluded that workers respond to receiving respect
  5. Taylor's views were very influential, even in Communist Russia,
  6. Mayo's conclusions on the 'Hawthorne Effect' were not immediately popular,
- A. and managers at the time thought they were very convincing.
  - B. but had an influence on many writers on people management today.
  - C. and used materials only found locally.
  - D. and were only motivated by money, time off and other material benefits.
  - E. and were motivated by the interest shown in them by the researchers.
  - F. but Taylor proposed that work could be sub-divided into individual steps.
  - G. but were seen by managers as reducing labour unrest.
  - H. but these methods were revolutionised at the beginning of the twentieth century.

**Questions 7–13**

Look at the following statements (questions 7–13) and the list of people below. Match each statement with the correct person/people in the list, A, B, C or D.

7. Developed opinions through directly observing workers doing their jobs
8. Thought that workers work as slowly as possible unless prevented
9. Focused on cost and efficiency more than on people
10. Encouraged workers to comment on management performance
11. Established factories which used new types of industrial technology
12. Encouraged businesses to reorganise production so workers could work together
13. Considered people's attitude to work in their theories

**List of people**

- A. Mayo only
- B. both Mayo and Taylor
- C. Taylor only
- D. neither Mayo nor Taylor

- |       |      |
|-------|------|
| 10. A | 5. A |
| 9. C  | 4. E |
| 8. C  | 3. D |
| 7. B  | 2. F |
| 12. A | 1. H |
| 11. D |      |
| 13. B |      |

**Answers**

**Pre-reading task**

You are going to read an article about the use of social media in business. Before you read, think about the following questions: Does your company already use social media? Has it been successful? What do you think are the main dangers and challenges of using social media to promote your business?

# The Business of Social Media

By Ian Betteridge

**A**  
Over the last 15 years, the use of social networking media has grown from being little more than a toy for an online group of students and geeks to something that is essential to the way the developed world communicates. In 2013, the social media giant Facebook boasted over 1.23 billion registered users, having added 170 million users since the previous year. By the end of the year, 757 million people were checking their Facebook feeds every day, and its co-founder, chairman and chief executive, Mark Zuckerberg, was listed at being worth \$19 billion dollars at the tender age of only 29. Yet social media is not only for the young – the fastest growing demographic on Twitter is that of 55- to 64-year-olds. The fact is that, today, people of all ages and social classes are connecting with each other using online social networking tools, creating an unprecedented potential channel of communication from businesses to their markets. Given that a recent study by the Internet Advertising Bureau UK found that almost 80 per cent of people would be more likely to buy a product if they saw the brand on social media sites, is it any wonder that over nine out of ten businesses are now using social media to connect with their customers?

**B**  
The advantages of using social media for your business are obvious. With such an enormous number of registered users, sites like Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn offer unparalleled access to vast markets. Because there is such a huge range of channels and publications, marketing money spent on traditional broadcast or print media – TV, radio and newspapers – is likely to reach a very small number of people compared to social media. Facebook, for example, offers businesses the capacity to target advertising based on its users' preferences, and to allow potential customers the opportunity to access detailed catalogues of goods and services in a way that would never be possible in the limited space of a half-page magazine or 30-second radio advert. A company page on LinkedIn, the professional social media site, can help companies find vendors, suppliers, manufacturers and independent contractors easily. Using the site's system, by which users recommend the pages of other users or companies, it is easier to provide credentials when entering into commercial relationships with new partners. Organisations with pages on Google+ enjoy increasingly favourable rankings in their search engine, a very important factor in online success.

**C**  
Yet social media is no commercial panacea. All too often companies, wanting the kind of success they see their competitors getting, leap in without a coherent strategy with disastrous consequences. In January 2012, McDonalds launched a campaign on Twitter with the hashtag #McDonaldStories, hoping that they would get stories about happy customers eating happy meals. Instead, after two hours they pulled the campaign off the Twitter homepage after the flood of negative tweets helped coin the term 'bashtag'. But an aspect of social media campaigns is that they take place in online public spaces and, despite McDonalds dropping the promotion, the bashtagging continued independently for months afterwards. A poorly conceived strategy based on a misunderstanding of their brand image, and of widespread antipathy towards it, led to a PR disaster.

**D**  
A lack of coherent strategy can impact business in other ways too. If your company's social media strategy involves tweeting or blogging then think carefully about how much time it will take to do this properly. If an organisation isn't updating its blog or tweeting often enough, then it may, without meaning to, be sending the message that its customer service is also apathetic. Even if your company is maintaining its blog, think about who is responsible for doing the work and make sure that your company's reputation is placed in the hands of somebody you can trust, and not someone ill-equipped for the task.

**E**  
It's not only through its use as a marketing tool that social media impacts business. Employee use of sites like Facebook can have a significant impact. Studies have shown that businesses that allow its use at work face an average drop of 1.5 per cent in overall productivity. There's also the danger that individuals with inside knowledge of a company might accidentally post confidential or inaccurate information, or that disgruntled employees may make defamatory statements. These can quickly go viral, resulting in a huge negative impact. This is such a threat that many institutions have a policy forbidding their personnel from making any comments about them on social networks at all, and there is a growing suite of software products that enable companies to enforce these policies by monitoring what is being posted about them. However, doing this may not be very ethical and there have been successful legal challenges to organisations by employees who have been fired for breaking these policies, adding the threat of being taken to court to the list of the dangers that social media can hold for the business community.



© John Cooper/Ikon Partnership

You should spend about 20 minutes on questions 1–13 below, which are based on the reading passage.

**Questions 1–6**

The passage has five sections, A–E.

Which paragraph contains the following information? Choose A, B, C, D or E.

1. advice for using social media in business
2. statistics about the growth and use of social networking sites
3. a concern about breaking the law
4. an example of a company failing to use social media well
5. a discussion of the age of social media users
6. the commercial advantages of different networking sites

**Questions 7–10**

Complete the sentences below. Use **ONE WORD ONLY** from the text for each answer.

7. The benefits of social media use for companies are .....
8. LinkedIn is useful for developing a network of business .....
9. Letting workers use Facebook in the office causes a drop in .....
10. There are many new applications for ..... what workers post on social media sites.

**Questions 11 and 12**

The list below contains things that have a negative impact on business. Which **TWO** are mentioned by the writer of the article?

- A. unhappy employees writing lies about a company
- B. fraud committed by people pretending to represent a company
- C. companies spending too little on technical support for their IT systems
- D. loss of sensitive customer data due to poor security
- E. a company appearing careless by not tweeting often enough

**Question 13**

Choose the correct letter A, B, C or D.

What is the writer's overall purpose in writing this article?

- A. To give examples of businesses using social media poorly.
- B. To discuss some of the benefits and pitfalls of using social media in business.
- C. To describe the growth of social media since the year 1999.
- D. To offer advice about the legal challenges of using social media.

- Questions 11 and 12 can be answered in any order.
- |       |                           |      |
|-------|---------------------------|------|
| 13. B | 10. monitoring            | 5. A |
| 12. E | 9. productivity           | 4. C |
| 11. A | 8. relationships/partners | 3. E |
|       | 7. obvious                | 2. A |
|       | 6. B                      | 1. D |

**Answers**

**Pre-reading task**

You are going to read an article about effective recruitment. Before you read it, think about these questions: What ways of recruiting new staff are you familiar with? What do you think is effective about these ways? Are there any ways these ways of recruitment can be improved?

# Effective Recruitment: How to get the right person for the right job

By Andy Keedwell

**1** It's the first day at work for a new member of staff – who is probably feeling rather nervous but keen to start work. You are also delighted – you've got just the right person for the job. If yours is an effective organisation, an induction programme will have been organised, with a busy first week aiming to familiarise the new recruit with what they have to do, introduce them to important people and update them on organisational policies and procedures. It's important to make sure that they feel at home, are presented with accurate information and any possible misunderstandings are avoided.

**2** It's been quite a journey for the candidate who has passed through a complex recruitment procedure. When most people think of recruitment they focus on interviews, but the key to effective selection lies long before the interview takes place. The applicant has probably answered a newspaper or online advertisement and people often forget how tricky it is to write these. Obviously, we need to include details of the role and how to apply, but an effective job posting needs to stand out from other advertisements and it can be useful to highlight the benefits offered by the position. The language we use, the typography and layout – and how professional these appear – are important too.

**3** However effectively designed, a job announcement will not really attract the right candidate unless we really know who we need. One solution is to prepare a comprehensive role profile for the job before beginning work on advert design. Many experts suggest basing this role profile on job competencies – the skills and knowledge required. Too often, recruiters ask for qualities that are vague and difficult to verify. An example is 'being dedicated'. What does this really mean, and how can someone really prove it? An alternative is to list the types of behaviour needed to do the job, making sure these are objective and can be easily assessed: resourcefulness, customer focus or effective team working, for example. They are likely to prove to be more useful than details of education or past experience. If we decide which of these competencies are essential and which are desirable but not absolutely necessary, it gives us more room for flexibility when it comes to the interview.

**4** And so we hope the applications from the best-qualified people will come rolling in. We need a large enough pool of applicants to select from, but it would be a huge task to interview everyone who has applied. A shortlisting process in which unsuitable candidates are 'weeded out' is required at the pre-interview stage. CVs quickly start to resemble each other and so basing selection on current and past positions is not enough. Now the competencies we have developed come into their own as they measure an applicant's suitability in a relatively straightforward way. It might be impossible to find one candidate who meets all the competencies, so be flexible – but also base your judgements on real evidence.

**5** Now it's time for what everyone has been waiting for – the interview. It's surprising how ineffective many interviews are. They can become unstructured conversations without any specific aims or outcomes. An effective interview will include specific questions for each competency, often requiring the candidate to give real examples from past experience to demonstrate particular skills or abilities which can be marked against pre-agreed criteria. Competency-based interviews are unfamiliar in many parts of the world, so not all candidates will respond immediately to this type of questioning. Probing questions can help a candidate describe a situation they have experienced, suggest a target or solution and describe their action to achieve the target with (we hope) a positive result. Two or three people conducting the interview, with the panel all following the same guidelines, is usually preferable to a single interviewer and enables discussion after each interview and comparison of scores.

**6** But the interview is not the end of the process. You may now feel you have the right person for the job, but it's unwise to contact unsuccessful applicants yet. Is your perfect candidate willing and available to take up a new position? Often, this is when problems arise! It's essential to check on references: are you sure that the candidate's glowing description of their performance in their last job is accurate? Now is the time to find out and contact referees to verify work performance, strengths and reliability. Lastly, the formal job offer needs to set the role out clearly, expected starting dates and any benefits included in the offer, with all appropriate paperwork completed.

**7** Try to handle unsuccessful candidates gently: it's not only kinder but may also be in the recruiting organisation's interests. Perhaps an applicant who did not quite make the grade in terms of applying for this position has strengths that could be used to fill another vacancy. It's basically a matter of good public relations. Someone informed promptly and diplomatically that they have been rejected will have a more positive impression of the organisation and may apply at a later date, once they have developed skills and experience. It can be helpful to provide feedback on interview performance if requested. Unselected applicants should never be ignored – they may well be the right person for the job in the future!



© Mat Wright

You should spend about 20 minutes on questions 1–13 below, which are based on the reading passage.

**Questions 1–6**

Complete each statement 1–6 with **ONE** word from the text.

**Write a role profile**  
Recruitment specialists say that the profile should be a specific list of 1) ..... needed in this position.

**Design your job announcement**  
Remember to tell applicants details about the job, be immediately visible and mention some 2) ..... of the role.

**Shortlist candidates**  
Don't simply rely on 3) ..... as they will not provide sufficient information.

**Interview the candidate**  
Effective questioning will enable the interviewee to provide real 4) ..... of what they have done.

**Formal job offer**  
To ensure that the candidate has been truthful, ask for 5) ..... from current or past employers.

**Inform unsuccessful candidates**  
If asked, give unsuccessful candidates 6) ..... on their performance: this leads to future opportunities for learning.

**Questions 7–12**

Complete each sentence with the correct ending, **A–I**, below. You do not need to use all the endings.

- 7. It's important to organise a few days of induction for the new candidate
  - 8. Careful design of the job posting and attention to font and wording
  - 9. Deciding on the exact behaviours which are required for the job role
  - 10. Including both essential and desirable criteria in job competencies
  - 11. It is possible that at the shortlisting stage nobody matches all criteria,
  - 12. If the interview involves more than one person asking questions to the candidate
- A. which means the interview panel should be open-minded but also justify choices.
  - B. helps us to be less rigid in our decisions while interviewing the candidate.
  - C. may not give a comprehensive picture of the candidate's work record.
  - D. makes decisions on how to employ staff less subjective and more straightforward.
  - E. will mean it will attract the reader's attention more than other announcements.
  - F. to provide the opportunity to meet staff and learn more about the job.
  - G. although it may not be possible to reach a decision.
  - H. there is scope for sharing opinions and making joint decisions after the interview.
  - I. as it will require us to begin the recruitment procedure again.

**Question 13**

Which statement, **A–D**, below best reflects the writer's opinion on recruitment?

- A. Effective recruitment should be a simple process based on a personal chat.
- B. Effective recruitment involves specifying the exact requirements needed in the job.
- C. Communication with candidates who have failed is not necessary after the interview.
- D. The position should only be given to a candidate who meets all shortlisting criteria.

1. competencies; 2. benefits; 3. CVs; 4. evidence/examples; 5. references; 6. feedback; 7. F; 8. E; 9. D; 10. B; 11. A; 12. H; 13. B

**Pre-reading task**

You are going to read an article about stress in the workplace. Before you read, think about the following questions: Do you ever feel stress at work? What are the main sources of stress at work? What could be done to avoid stress at work?

# Stress in the Workplace and How it can be Avoided

By Freddie Gay

**A**  
Work hard, play hard goes the motto, but in the world of work today there often seems to be little time for any of the latter. Working long hours and weeks is part of the deal for the majority of jobs in business sectors and beyond. With work often piling up and negotiations dragging on into the night, in addition to long commutes, family demands and pressure to adapt to new systems and technology, it is no wonder many people suffer from work-related stress. Unfortunately, this can have negative health consequences. So, what are the solutions for dealing with stress in the workplace?

**B**  
In many respects, the responsibility is with companies to ensure that their employees do not feel the effects of overwork. Many believe that the productivity of workers is much higher if you have a happy workforce. It may seem that an obvious way to do this is by paying high salaries and offering perks such as company cars, private medical insurance or gym memberships, as a number of companies do. However, such incentives do not actually reduce employees' workloads and may not be the most effective approach to reducing stress at work.

**C**  
Increasingly, many companies are encouraging employees to work from home. Technology has made this possible in many jobs. Working from the comfort of home reduces the time spent travelling to work and this can reduce any stress caused by commuting. While not everyone can work from home, there are a number of jobs which allow flexible working hours. Although it may not actually reduce the amount of work needing to be done each week, 'flexi-time' allows the worker to have a degree of control over their working week. Workers can schedule appointments and days off more conveniently and avoid travelling to work during peak hours. This can have a big positive impact.

**D**  
Environment is another key factor contributing towards stress at work. Those lucky enough to work in spacious and comfortable places are usually happier in their jobs than those who suffer cramped and noisy conditions. Indeed, one fruit juice and smoothie company based in London provides its workers with huge communal areas, large open kitchens and picnic tables in visually attractive buildings. This has several positive effects on the workforce. Employees at this company report high levels of job satisfaction year after year, and very few members of staff want to change jobs.

**E**  
Unfortunately, employers that offer such packages and conditions are relatively rare. A radical solution to addressing the issue of overwork has, however, been suggested by the Mexican tycoon Carlos Slim. His idea would involve transforming the working week by replacing the traditional five-day week with a three-day one where employees work eleven- or twelve-hour days. Companies would offset the time lost each week by having a later retirement age, so people have longer careers. This is made possible because people are increasingly living longer and willing to work until later ages. Such a schedule could have a positive effect on workforces according to Slim. 'With three work days a week, we would have more time to relax; for quality of life,' he says.

**F**  
Whether or not such drastic changes to the working week are realistic is debatable. Slim is chairman of Telmex, a huge Latin American telecommunications company which employs more than 50,000 personnel! Whilst it might be possible to implement his vision for a three-day working week in such large-scale organisations, doing so in smaller businesses with a limited number of staff seems more problematic. David Kern, chief economist at the BBC, comments in the *Guardian* newspaper, 'It is worth exploring how people's working time might be reorganised, but small businesses would find it very difficult to organise themselves in such a way.' Kern goes on to warn against sudden changes in working patterns. 'It's too extreme to jump from the current situation to a three-day working week,' he adds.

**G**  
Whether we like it or not, it seems that long working weeks are here to stay for the majority of us. On the plus side, employers are beginning to recognise the importance of having mechanisms for alleviating work-related stress. Furthermore, both flexible working hours and working from home are becoming possible for more and more workers in a number of different professions. And who knows, perhaps a gradual shift towards a shorter working week will mean that eventually we are all enjoying extended weekends every week.



© Mat Wright

You should spend 20 minutes answering questions 1–14 below, which are based on the reading passage.

**Questions 1–6**

This article has seven paragraphs, labelled A–G. Choose the correct heading for each paragraph from the list of headings (i–ix) below. You do not need to use all the headings.

- i. New approaches to reducing stress
- ii. How stress affects workers in Latin America
- iii. A proposal for reducing stress by altering the working week
- iv. What companies have traditionally done to reduce stress
- v. Hopes for a less stressful future
- vi. How surroundings can impact on stress levels
- vii. Workers attitudes towards a three-day working week
- viii. Doubts about a proposal to alter the working week
- ix. Some causes of work-related stress

Example: Paragraph A Answer: ix

- |                      |                      |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Paragraph B ..... | 4. Paragraph E ..... |
| 2. Paragraph C ..... | 5. Paragraph F ..... |
| 3. Paragraph D ..... | 6. Paragraph G ..... |

**Questions 7–11**

Complete the summary of the reading passage using **NO MORE THAN ONE WORD** from the text.

Stress at work is a major problem which affects many employees. Some employers try to help their employees to avoid stress at work by offering 7) ..... Some of these, however, may not help much to reduce stress if they do not impact upon 8) ..... or hours. Whilst more workers have the chance to work 9) ..... hours, a more radical 10) ..... to addressing this problem involves fundamentally changing the working week as we know it. The solution entails working longer hours for three days a week and retiring at a later age. Although there are doubts about whether working a three-day week is 11) ..... for small companies, such arrangements could be feasible for bigger organisations.

**Questions 12–14**

Choose the appropriate letter, A–D, to answer the questions below.

12. According to the passage, which of the following does not necessarily reduce stress at work?
- A. Working fewer hours
  - B. Not having to commute
  - C. Working in a comfortable and spacious office
  - D. Being well paid
13. Which of the following best describes David Kern's attitude to the idea of a three-day week?
- A. He does not think it will ever happen.
  - B. He believes that it is possible for some companies but problematic for others.
  - C. He does not want it to happen.
  - D. He believes that managers of small businesses will find the idea too extreme.
14. According to the passage:
- A. Employers do not really care about employees feeling stress.
  - B. Employers are aware of the causes of stress and the importance of trying to avoid it.
  - C. Employers do not understand the causes of stress.
  - D. Employers are very concerned about stress in the workplace.

**ANSWERS**

1. iv; 2. ii; 3. vi; 4. iii; 5. v; 6. vii; 7. rewards/incentives; 8. workload; 9. flexible; 10. approach; 11. realistic; 12. D; 13. B; 14. B

**Pre-reading task**

You are going to read an article about the history of men's formal suits in England. Before you read, think about these questions: Do men in your company wear suits, or is your dress code more informal? Do people in your country wear Western-style business clothes or do you have a different tradition? What kinds of clothes did your grandfather wear to work? Have styles changed very much since then?

# Suits You, Sir

By Ian Betteridge

What we know today as the formal business suit is something that has evolved over several centuries. At the beginning of the 17th century, the kinds of formal clothes that important and wealthy men wore around town was nothing like what we wear today. Elegant men wore wide hats. Their collars were made of white lace, in a style called reticella, which stretched across their shoulders. They wore a tight jacket, called a doublet. It was very fashionable for these to have long cuts down the arms, showing the shirt underneath. Trousers that came down to the knee, called breeches, were very big and padded, and men wore long socks called stockings up to their knees. Stockings and breeches were a very new fashion in the 17th century. Before then, in the time of Queen Elizabeth I, men had worn hose, similar to the tights that women wear today.

After the English Civil War and the Thirty Years War, fashions changed quickly in the second half of the century. Fashionable men still wore stockings and breeches, but the waist-length doublet was gradually replaced by a long coat. Over the shirt it was stylish to wear a waistcoat, often made with expensive, luxurious material. Men wore big heavy wigs on their heads. King Charles II introduced wearing a piece of colourful material, called a cravat, tied around the neck. During his reign, clothes were very colourful and extravagant.

When George III became too sick to be king in the last years of his life, his son ruled England as Prince Regent. It was during this period, at the beginning of the 19th century, that men started wearing clothes that were more like the modern business suit. Bright colours went out of fashion and were replaced by darker, more serious tones. At the same time, stockings and breeches went out of style and were replaced by full-length, pale-coloured trousers. Men stopped wearing wigs. A clean white shirt was worn with a necktie. Over the top, men wore a tailcoat, which is a kind of overcoat that comes down to the waist at the front and sides and has two long tails at the back.

Suit fashion became even darker and more serious during the time of Queen Victoria. Men wore tall hats, called top hats, and they wore dark, calf-length coats called frock coats over their shirt and waistcoat. These were long at the front. To start with people thought they were very informal, but later on they became acceptable in formal situations. Towards the end of the 19th century, frock coats got shorter and businessmen started to wear them. Neckties became wider and more like the modern version.

Towards the end of the Victorian era and during the reign of Edward VII at the start of the 20th century, frock coats became unfashionable and were replaced by morning coats. These were designed to make it easier to ride a horse. Just like frock coats, people thought morning coats were too informal to start with, but they quickly became the standard thing to wear. For the first time, in very informal settings, people started to wear lounge coats. Lounge coats are the kind of jacket that is part of the modern business suit.

In the 1920s, when George V was king of England, businessmen wore the kind of suits we would recognise today. People stopped wearing waistcoats in informal settings, and morning coats were only worn in very formal situations. Businessmen would wear trousers and a lounge coat, made from the same dark fabric, a button-up shirt and a necktie. A decade later, double-breasted jackets became fashionable. These overlap at the front, where there are two rows of buttons. By the 1950s, and the start of Elizabeth II's term as queen, they were out of vogue again. Perhaps people found them too formal as it is difficult to wear them unbuttoned and open.

Since the Second World War, business suit fashions have remained relatively unchanged. The 1960s and 1970s saw suits that were more tightly fitted, and the 1980s saw a rise in the popularity of looser suits with padding on the shoulders. Neckties got narrower, then wider, then narrower again. Apart from the gradual disappearance of waistcoats, changes in the business suit have been comparatively minor. More recent changes have not been in the composition of the business suit but in whether it is worn at all.

For the recent historical trend towards informality seems to be continuing. In many industries, it is not normal for men to wear jackets or neckties except at formal occasions. Dress-down Friday has become commonplace in many offices, where employees wear the kind of casual clothes more usually worn at weekends. In some sectors, particularly those with little face-to-face customer interaction like IT, jeans and T-shirt have become standard. What does this trend towards informality mean for the future? Only time will tell, but after 350 years it's unlikely the business suit will disappear anytime soon.



© Mat Wright

You should spend about 20 minutes on questions 1–13 below, which are based on the reading passage.

**Questions 1–6**

With the reign of which English monarch are these items of clothing associated? Choose from the list of kings and queens below.

- i. Elizabeth I
- ii. Charles II
- iii. George I
- iv. George, the Prince Regent
- v. Victoria
- vi. Edward VII
- vii. George V
- viii. Elizabeth II

Example: colourful cravats – ii

- |                            |                |
|----------------------------|----------------|
| 1. morning coats           | 4. top hats    |
| 2. hose                    | 5. wigs        |
| 3. double-breasted jackets | 6. frock coats |

**Questions 7–12**

Complete the sentences below. Use **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS** from the text for each answer.

- 7. In the early 1600s, men's collars were broad and made of .....
- 8. During the period that Charles II was king, the fashion was to wear clothes that were both ..... and highly coloured.
- 9. When frock coats were first introduced, people considered them to be .....
- 10. A ..... is a type of formal coat that has two layers of overlapping material and two rows of buttons.
- 11. In the second half of the 20th century, most people stopped wearing .....
- 12. An informal dress code is more common in organisations where employees don't have very much .....

**Question 13**

What was the author's main reason for writing this article? Choose **A, B, C** or **D** from the options below.

- A. To show how fashion has become more informal over the last few centuries.
- B. To argue that styles change because kings and queens do.
- C. To give a historical overview of the way formal male fashions have changed.
- D. To argue that people will continue to wear business suits in the future.

1. vi  
2. i  
3. viii  
4. v  
5. ii  
6. v  
7. white lace  
8. extravagant  
9. (too) informal  
10. double-breasted jacket  
11. waistcoats  
12. face-to-face customer interaction  
13. C

**Answers**