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## **DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

ÚSTAV JAZYKŮ

# **A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF ENGLISH AS A LINGUA FRANCA IN INTERNATIONAL CORPORATIONS**

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF ENGLISH AS A LINGUA FRANCA IN INTERNATIONAL CORPORATIONS

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## **Abstract**

Nowadays, English has become a Lingua Franca of international communication. The thesis focuses on important linguistic problems that arise among the employees in international corporations. In the thesis specific language issues are analysed, such as pronunciation and idioms. The main aim of the thesis is to present useful ways how communication can be performed more efficiently. Valuable evidence was obtained in BMW UK.

## **Keywords**

International Corporation, idiom, company, channel for communication, BMW UK, pronunciation

## **Abstrakt**

Angličtina je dnes jednoznačně nejpoužívanějším jazykem v rámci mezinárodních styků. Tato práce se zabývá důležitými jazykovými problémy, které vznikají v mezinárodních společnostech, ve kterých je angličtina Lingua Franca. V práci jsou analyzována specifická jazyková témata jako výslovnost a idiomatické vazby. Cílem této práce je nabídnout možnosti, jak lze tuto komunikaci zefektivnit. Přináší bližší pohled na použití jazyka prostřednictvím poznatků získaných ve společnosti BMW UK.

## **Klíčová slova**

Mezinárodní společnost, idiom, společnost, způsob pro komunikaci, BMW VB, výslovnost

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V Brně dne .....

.....

(podpis autora)

Děkuji vedoucí mé práce Mgr. Petře Langerové za směřovací vedení práce a i za vedení jazykové stránky práce.

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# 1. Introduction

This thesis focuses on the topic of English as a *Lingua Franca* in international corporations. In these companies, issues arise when employees strive to fulfil their tasks in English. The aim of the thesis is to compare studies of ELF (English as a *Lingua Franca*) in international corporations, to name specific issues which arise in these companies, and also to suggest methods for how crucial communication can be performed more effectively. I will discuss English as a *Lingua Franca* and name specific aspects of language as accent, different cultural background, and idioms. I chose these aspects because of their vast impact on language which I was experiencing when I worked in an international company. I will also share some of my experiences from working in BMW UK, an international company, and name specific ways how employees strive to progress in English. In the practical part of my thesis, I will examine two Business English textbooks and their focus on pronunciation and idioms. Then, I will compare this knowledge with my findings in the international corporation. Thus, I will compare the theoretical knowledge contained in the textbooks with the practical knowledge obtained in real environment. Furthermore, I will point out some useful theory contained in these textbooks and discuss some of their imperfections.

Some of the information provided here are the works of linguist professionals such as Susanne Ehrenreich, Jenifer Jenkins, and others. A second source of data used in the thesis is taken from work experience which I earned in 2016 while working in BMW UK in Rotherham, England.

## 2. Development of language

It is known that languages continually develop and change. New words arise as new technology is formed.

Barbara Seidlhofer states: “Another, and related, basic insight into the evolution of semiotic systems is that languages are unstable, always in flux; all living languages vary and change over time in reaction to circumstances and conditions of use, and this varying and changing never stops, there is never an end-point except when a language dies out. And when a language spreads particularly wide, and fast, it will also change fast” (2010:46).

We can see how a language changes over a time, for example, by reading a book from the seventeenth century, we realize that many words do not sound familiar. Some words do not even make sense in the modern form of the language.

Similarly, the English language changes and develops. David Crystal talks about this change: “The situation is unprecedented, with more people using English in more places than at any time in the language’s history, and unpredictable, with the forces promoting linguistic identity and intelligibility competing with each other in unexpected ways. For those who have to work professionally with English, accordingly, it is a very difficult time. After all, there has never been such a period of rapid and fundamental change since the explosions of development that hit the language in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance” (2004: 40). Crystal thus mentions the challenging time for those who work with language professionally.

We can see that language constantly changes, develops and is always in flux, as Seidlhofer mentioned. This helps one to understand that language does not stay the same.

### **3. English as a Lingua Franca**

Roughly only one out of every four users of English in the world is a native speaker of the language (Crystal, 2003).

Today, the spread of ELF English as a *Lingua Franca* (ELF) is obvious and can be seen in the world around us. Many companies and corporations see the potential in working internationally and while performing this task, they need a workforce which is able to communicate effectively. Another reason for the rise of ELF is that corporations find an advantage in employing people not only from one country but from all over the world. For example, BMW UK employed workers from Sweden, the Czech Republic, Lithuania, and Romania in 2016. And there are other companies which employ people from all around the world. In these companies, people from a variety of backgrounds and cultures unite in order to achieve successful results. Communication between these workers thus becomes a crucial part of their everyday life.

In the subject Introduction to Linguistics at the BUT Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Communication Milena Krhutová stressed the influence of language and its appropriate use. She lectured that language is power when it is used appropriately and effectively, and international corporations desire their workers to communicate as appropriately and effectively as possible.

In order to achieve effective communication, workers are involved in mutual engagement where members need to get together and interact with each other (Ehrenreich, 2010). Employees interact every day and increasingly adapt to the way others speak.



While I was working at BMW UK, I observed some Non-Native Speakers (NNS) who communicate in English so well that it is sometimes difficult to tell them apart from a Native Speaker (NS). However, over time, the difference in cultural background and idioms can reveal those who are NNS. In the thesis, I will discuss the language characteristics of accent, different cultural background, and idioms. I chose these because I realized their vast importance as I worked in an international company in the United Kingdom.

## **4. International corporations**

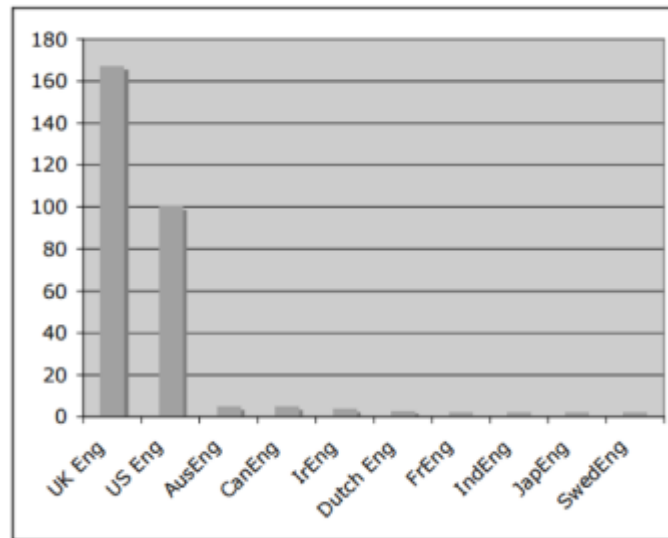
### **4.1. Pronunciation**

Today, students around the world are taught English either in RP (Received Pronunciation) or GA (General American). However, in the world today 70 percent of communication conducted in English is among the NNS (Ehrenreich, 2010). Jenifer Jenkins questions the method of learning where NNS are being taught English only in RP or GA. She speaks about the idea of teaching students an accent that is generally better understood by NNS instead of teaching an accent that is more understandable to NS, who are in a minority. She mentions the Scottish accent as one that is better understood in general. Additionally, Jenkins suggests that NNS should be free to choose the accent they are going to be taught in. She claims that it is not right that NNS are being forced to choose only between GA and RP in education, when there are other types of English that are more understandable and in which a larger number of people communicate around the world today. In other words, when a person from Poland starts to learn English, should they learn British English, which is in a minority, or should they learn American English? Or, if a person wants to work in Australia, can they choose to learn Australian English? Which of these will give them more opportunities in the future (Jenkins, 2007)?

In her research, Jennifer Jenkins concentrates on different accents. Responses were elicited from approximately 360 English teachers, mainly NNSs of English from 12 expanding Circle countries. In the task, respondents were asked to choose from all English accents, which included their own accent, the five they thought were the best and to rate these accents from the best, to the fifth best (Jenkins, 2007).

Respondents mainly chose the UK accents (almost 170 of them), by which they usually meant RP. 100 of them chose US accents, by which they usually meant GA. Accents as Australian accent and Canadian accent followed with tiny numbers in comparison to UK

and US accents. Irish accent appeared on the fifth place (Jenkins, 2007).



*Figure 3. English accents ranked 1<sup>st</sup>*  
(Figures and table taken from Jenkins 2007)

As obvious from Figure 1, the Dutch accent was the best rated among the non-native accents, followed by French, Indian, and Japanese accents. Surprisingly, Swedish accent was behind all the mentioned above even though, it is the one Jennifer Jenkins mentioned in her research as well-understood by NS. Low rating of the Swedish accent might be caused by the fact that this research was done mainly among NNS. Therefore, we can see that there are differences in favor of these accents.

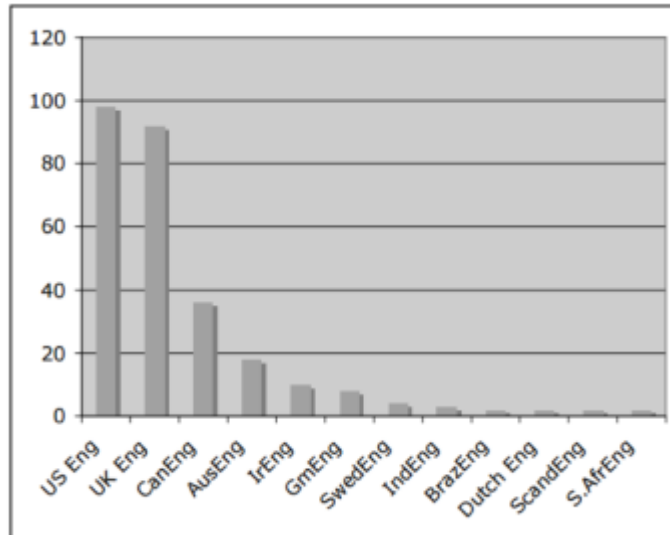


Figure 4. English accents ranked 2<sup>nd</sup>  
 (Figures and table taken from Jenkins 2007)

In the case of the second best position, the UK and US accents were reversed, where 98 respondents selected US accents and 92 selected UK accents. These accents were followed by other NS accents (Jenkins, 2007).

## 4.2. Idioms

According to František Čermák: “The idiom can be viewed as a unique and fixed combination of at least two elements some of which do not function in the same way in any other combination (of the kind) or occur only in a highly restricted number” (2007:142).

In other words, idioms can be seen as phrases or fixed expressions which have figurative and sometimes literal meaning. They are also used in both written and spoken discourse in all kinds of languages. In this part, the term ‘idiom’ will be described more fully. The word idiom has been used in English since the late 15<sup>th</sup> century and its translation from Greek language *ἴδιος* means own, private, peculiar. Idioms are understood more or less as dialects, and are characteristic of colloquial styles of the language rather than of cultivated and academically approved written styles (Kavka, 2003). Furthermore, these expressions often violate the expected rules of grammar and / or logic (Kavka, 2003).

According to Kavka: “We should note that what is considered grammatical need not be idiomatic, and what is idiomatic may sometimes be ungrammatical (2003:3). Thus can be seen that ‘idioms’ are sometimes ungrammatical and may lack logic. Let us look at a few quotations which describe the term ‘idiom’.

“the form of speech peculiar or proper to a people or country”

“the specific character, property or genius of any language”

(taken from Kavka 2003)

It can be understood that idiomatic expression is something that belongs only to certain people who have an understanding of the specific meaning of the idiom. Following definitions of the term ‘idiom’ can be helpful for further understanding:

“an expression which functions as a single unit and whose meaning cannot be worked out from its separate parts”

“a phrase which means something different from the meaning of the separate words from which it is formed”

(taken from Kavka 2003)

Thus, one can clearly see that meaning of idioms cannot be understood only from the meaning of the words in the expression but with an additional understanding of people or dialect. Consequently, a person who embrace only the literal meaning of the words of an idiomatic expression can often miss the essential meaning purposed by the speaker. Following idioms are included in the Oxford Dictionary of Current Idiomatic Language.

Let us consider this idiomatic sentence:

“The letters, **for** which she **hungered** grew fewer, then stopped altogether.”

As can be seen, the phrase **to hunger for** cannot be taken literally. Otherwise, one can think that ‘she’ desired to eat something inedible (as letters in this case). Understanding this phrase literally would completely change the meaning purposed by the speaker who wants to express that the woman had a strong desire for the letters send by somebody. One can connect the strong desire for food with strong desire for letters in their mind through connecting the words ‘to hunger for letters’, as it is common knowledge of people that if somebody hungers for food, they have certain strong uncomfortable feeling that is well known. Thus, the strong desire for food is compared to the strong desire for the letters and all is based on the similarity of the strengths of the desires. Also, one needs to know how it feels to be hungry in order to fully comprehend this idiom.

However, it is important to mention that this idiom is making clear sense in the English language to the native speakers, but if it were literally translated into the Czech

language, the phrase would not sound natural to the Czech native speakers. The sentence would be literally translated as: “Dopisů, po kterých lačněla bylo méně a méně, až přestaly přicházet úplně.” A person from the Czech Republic would more probably use a phrase such as: “Letters which she strongly desired.” (“Dopisy, po kterých silně toužila...”) or “The letters without which she felt not as herself.” (“Dopisy, bez kterých se cítila nesvá.”) Thus, we can see that certain idioms which make clear sense in one language does not have to be used in the other language, and a person who does not have knowledge about the idiom can misinterpret the meaning or in the worst case, understand a completely different meaning to what was purposed by the speaker.

Let us look at another idiomatic sentence:

“I think Mick **hit the nail on the head** when he said that what’s lacking in this company is a feeling of confidence.”

In this sentence, by saying: “**Mick hit the nail on the head**” the speaker desires to express their opinion that ‘Mick’ said something which was exactly a right thing to say in the given situation (in this case the feeling of confidence, probably among the employees within the company) and that ‘Mick’ spoke about the real cause.

The same idiom exists in the Czech language as: “Udeřil hřebíček na hlavičku” and it is commonly used. Thus in this case, the literal translation of the idiom would be possible and a Czech NS would understand the meaning purposed by the speaker.

Now, the role of idioms in the English language at international corporations will be discussed, and also certain misunderstanding they may cause.

Suzanne Ehrenreich says that in the international corporation where she did her research on ELF, she observed imperfections and difficulties in communication between ELF speakers. This was especially true in matters like accent or idiomatic formulations. German employees regularly needed to translate idioms in conversation and sometimes the Germans translated an idiom to English exactly as it was said in German, even when the idiom did not exist in English. This is one of the issues that can occur in international corporations. These challenging language situations also included one telephone conversation where a Chinese manager tried to explain a problem to a German manager while speaking with a heavy Chinese accent. It would be almost impossible for a NS to understand this Chinese manager.

The German manager handled the situation more than well and discussed all the necessary details with the Chinese manager. He adds: “I can tell you what he [i.e. Chinese

colleague] is talking about, what he wants from me, but I can't tell you the single words he uses to articulate this" (2010:144).

This also illustrates that after a certain period of time one may be able to understand someone even though they did not understand the same person previously, for example, due to their accent. People start to adapt to each other's way of speaking and can guess most of the meaning (Ehrenreich, 2010).

There are some employees who do not think much about the use of language. One employee stated during the research that the employees do not have time to think about language; they simply use it. However, according to Ehrenreich, efficiency in language is the key criterion governing communication (Ehrenreich, 2010).

After my work experience in England, I came to believe that much misunderstanding can be prevented if one thinks more about the language they use and therefore can communicate more efficiently. While working at BMW, I heard idiomatic formulations daily and some were truly important. Especially those used by our team leader in certain moments. Sometimes, I asked my colleague for an explanation of the idiomatic formulation or I found them in the dictionary, otherwise I would not be able to grasp the meaning only from the context and literal translation of the idioms into the Czech language.

## **5. Communication channels**

Channels for communication in international corporations are, apart from face-to-face communication, email, the internet and over the telephone. Sometimes, a manager fulfills several tasks simultaneously, for example, talking with someone on the telephone or another internet communication tool while checking their emails (Ehrenreich, 2010).

There are also situations within a corporation when two or more employees speak the same mother tongue. When compatriots in a company meet, they often choose to speak in their own language because of efficiency. An example of an absurd situation which Ehrenreich presents in her research was when 15 German engineers discussed technical details in their poor English because two of the people present who were an American and a Chinese (while serving in receptive roles only) (Ehrenreich, 2010).

Ehrenreich also describes having observed in this company that as soon as employees realize that there is no need to speak in English, they switch into German (Ehrenreich, 2010), as they could more fully describe technical details in their native language.

## **6. English in international corporations**

Another channel of everyday communication in international corporations is performed via email. David Crystal says in his book *Language and the Internet* that the internet was built on email communication (Crystal, 2004).

At BMW UK, emails among employees in the department were written very quickly, and in many cases without any spelling check. Therefore, emails were often written with mistakes and could seem humorous for the employee reading the messages.

Even the team leader wrote emails with these mistakes when writing to her colleagues about new business items. In some cases, the speed of communication was more important than the grammatical correctness of information. The employees' priority was to communicate as quickly as they could (Ehrenreich, 2010).

Some of the workers, for instance Jana (Jana was not her real name but I will call her Jana in my thesis), a young English woman, and a customer service advisor, corrected mistakes in her spelling via the computer spell check. This spell check highlighted mistakes for her immediately after she made any. She was warned of them on her screen and the spell check often suggested to her a correct version of a word. She shared with me during my training that she relies on the spell check a lot because she is aware of her low grammar ability. However, Jana uses her resource truly well. Other workers, including the team leader, who seemed better educated compared to Jana, were performing their communication amongst themselves via email with more grammatical mistakes than her because of her choice to use the computer spell check.

### **6.1. The importance of pronunciation**

There are many international corporations around the world today. In these companies, NS and NNS often work together. Accent can play an important part in communication between staff. Capita, an international corporation in England, values equality and equity and emphasizes these values to their employees within the company. This focus should provide equal conditions in the company between NS and NNS.

The company presents documents with information on these values to their new employees. I was among these employees in 2016. In the document, the company also presented a story of an elderly woman, I will call Anna in my thesis. This woman moved to

England from Poland and was 50 years old. She could work and was looking for a job. People may have viewed her as a foreigner and her accent indicated that she was not a UK citizen. The company tried to explain that a person in these conditions finds it very difficult to get a job. However, Capita emphasizes that they wish to give opportunities even to a person like Anna if she happens to have the potential to fulfill the company's requirements successfully.

Despite this effort by Capita, Iain Saunders, a graduate from the University in England, mentioned to me that during a work interview even details like an accent matters and he shared with me that those with an educated British accent receive more employment opportunities in England. Accent may therefore play a more important role in employment applications.

While employees communicate amongst themselves at BMW department via email with grammatical mistakes, they pay much more attention to grammar and spelling when they write to a customer or a different company. This can be seen in the following example.

## **6.2. BMW customer service department**

The employees at BMW department in Rotherham, where I worked in 2016, must work on deals which were completed by a dealer who has sold BMW, Rolls Royce or Mini Cooper (all of these car companies are owned by the industrial company BMW). After they receive the deal in an email, they check the important properties of the deal. Their assignment includes multiple tasks.

Firstly, they must find out if the price of the vehicle and date of the deal match other documents and original documents provided by the customer.

Secondly, they need to check if the customer's driving license is valid and if the address of the customer is correct.

Finally, once they finish checking all the documents, they are supposed to either accept the deal as correct or decline the deal and send a special note to the dealer that the deal was not accepted and give a specific reason for it.

The employees do not make the notes by themselves. The decline notes are carefully prepared by the BMW Company. The notes are prepared to ensure correctness and effectiveness in communication. Employees email the decline note to a dealer. Because the notes are ready prior to communication with a customer, employees can work more effectively and send the email much faster.

If a deal is being declined, the dealer may need to wait between three to five hours



until the department responds back more explanation for the decline. While the customer is waiting in the dealership every minute saved by effective communication is truly valuable. However, even with the notes prepared and approved by BMW, dealers sometimes still call when they do not understand the notes sent by the BMW department. Therefore, the department employees must go through the deal again and explain to the dealer what it was that they require them to correct. Nevertheless, due to the provided notes, the amount of extra time needed for communication between the customer service advisors and the dealers has significantly decreased and communication is more efficient.

In the company where Suzanne Ehrenreich conducted her research, employees devoted more time to the linguistic quality texts which they considered more important, such as emails or letters to a customer (Ehrenreich, 2010). This is like the attitude of BMW employees.

There are specific tools that can help employees to be more grammatically correct. However, dictionaries at workplaces in international companies are rarely present (Ehrenreich, 2010). More often an employee uses a computer spell check or simply believes (often falsely) that they do not make many mistakes at all and therefore do not need any dictionary or spell check for correction.

If an email is very important, one source of checking might also be a colleague whose English is considered “very good” or “better than mine” (Ehrenreich, 2010).

There are also ways in which employees can improve their English permanently, and not only in the time of need when performing daily tasks. Some of these ways will be discussed in the following chapter.

### **6.3. The methods employees use to improve their English**

In many international corporations are employees who strive to improve their English. One of the ways some of them accomplish this is by asking a colleague who is more skilled in English or is a native speaker for correction. A German teacher named Lukas Heumos ones stated in his lecture at the Preston Missionary training center: “Wise people learn from their own mistakes, but wiser people learn from the mistakes of others.” Employees can also learn from their own mistakes, either by asking a professional teacher to correct their writing or speaking skills, or by taking certain test and then checking their mistakes afterwards. And those wiser can proactively borrow an English textbook, for example *Common mistakes at CAE*. In this small practical book are the most common mistakes which non-native speakers

who took the Cambridge English Advanced Exam (CAE) made.

The book is a substract of the most common mistakes made by 6,000 NNS who took the CAE exam. By reviewing this booklet, employees can learn from the mistakes of others. Some employees choose different ways to perfect their English. For example, by reading a book in English or watching famous TV series and movies in English. These can help to improve one's English. However, when watching a TV series, one may learn to speak English in a very informal way and can make a mistake in choosing the appropriate register, such as when addressing someone with whom they should speak rather formally. Therefore, understanding different styles, genres and registers in English can help someone to address others in the company more appropriately.

There are other employees who learn English to a certain level with which they can receive a job and communicate with others, but afterwards they do not strive to perfect their English any more. Others may correct them from time to time, but their attitude towards further improvements is negative.

Lenka Juráňová, regional medical advisor for the Norwegian medical company Novo Nordisk, shared with me that Novo Nordisk desires its employees to speak English as best as they can. Novo Nordisk offers to some of its employees funds for English lessons up to ten thousand Czech Crowns per year. In that way, Novo Nordisk makes the language skills of some members of its staff a high priority.

Regarding English lessons themselves, sometimes it is preferable to have a NS as an English teacher. This can help students to acquire a certain accent from native-speaking countries. An NS teacher is of course able to explain to NNS all the necessary rules that apply. However, Jaromír Haupt shared in his lecture in Pragmatics at the BUT Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Communication that NNS have a better notion of how to explain a specific rule or a principle existing in English to those who speak the same mother tongue. In other words, a NNS English teacher can explain something more appropriately for understanding.

## **7. Practical part**

The previous chapters of my bachelor thesis contain the theoretical part. Now, I will continue with the practical part of the work. This consists of comparison between the Business English textbooks which are made by the companies Macmillan and Pearson Longman. The focus of this comparison will be based on the structure of the textbooks, pronunciation, idioms, and the differences between the two works. The outcome of this comparison will be afterwards compared to the practical knowledge which I obtained from my work experience in BMW UK.

### **7.1. Structure of the textbooks**

Now, the structure of the textbooks Macmillan and Pearson and Longman will be discussed and the differences between them will be pointed out. The level of the books is upper intermediate. I chose this level because when I had left for England, my English had been close to this this level.

The introduction in the Macmillan textbook is very brief and contains one short paragraph devoted to the student and helps them to get acquainted with the goal of the textbook. It says in the introduction: “The objective of The Business 2.0 is to help you learn two things: how to do business in English and the language you need to do it. The new language practice and extension (2013:2).” It says in the introduction that this book will help a student to learn how to do business in English and the language they need to do it. The information about learning the pronunciation or idiomatic formulations is not included, however it will be presented later that this textbook deals with these issues as well.

Afterwards, the modules are presented in this textbook. There are 8 chapters in the textbook and each chapter is called after an important topic in business sphere. The chapters are called: Building a career, Information, Quality, Feedback, Selling more, New business, Financial control, Fair trade. The interesting fact about the structure of this textbook is that each chapter is divided into 6 subchapters. Four of these subchapters can be seen in Figure 5 below. In each of the subchapters, the language is taught with different focus. Subchapters are called: About business, Vocabulary, Grammar, Speaking, Writing, Case study. In that way, the topic for example Information has subchapters: About business, Vocabulary, Grammar, Speaking, Writing, Case study, and in each subchapter is the language skill taught while keeping the topic Information.

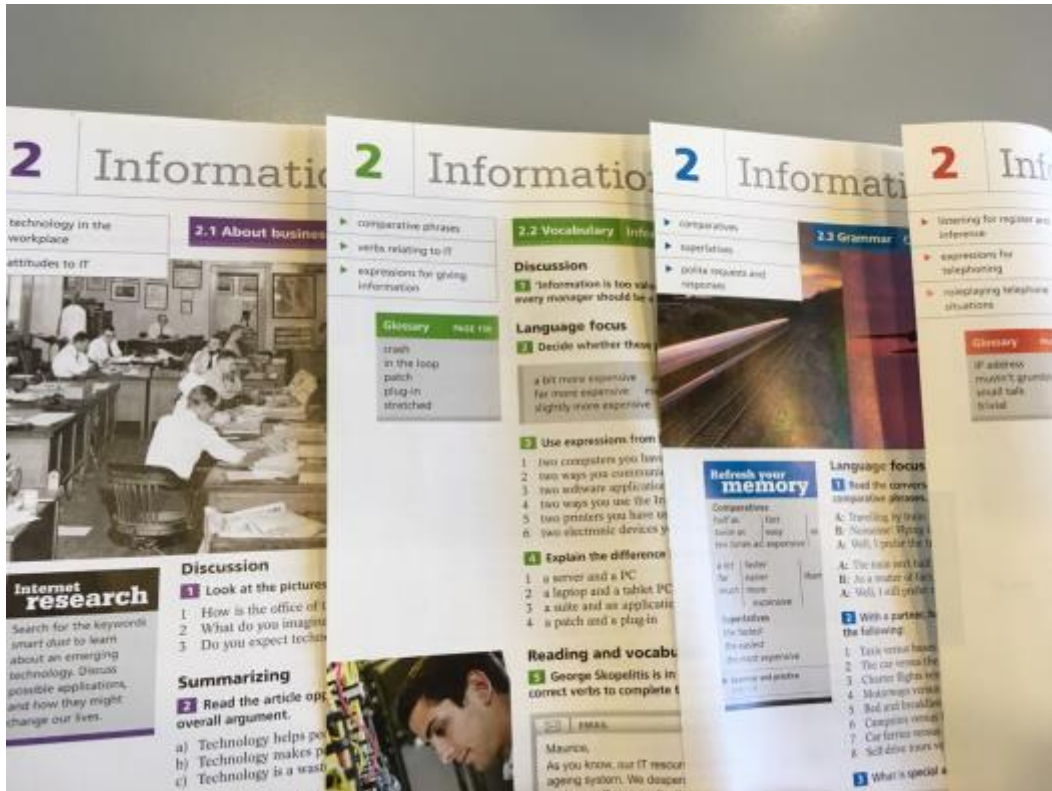


Figure 5. Subchapters in the Macmillan textbook  
(taken from Macmillan textbook pages 22, 24, 26, 28)

Thus, the authors help a student to improve completely and not only in one area. Also, a student can choose only one area which they want to improve in, and study only this area throughout the whole book. Due to this separation of the different sections in the textbook, a student who wants to improve for example only in writing can choose only the writing sections in the book, focus on these and purposely improve only in this area of the English language. Also, each of these subchapters is defined by a different colour which helps the student to orient themselves in the textbook well. Difference in the colour of the subchapters can be clearly seen in Figure 5.

The chapter called Business fundamentals is placed prior to all the other chapters in Macmillan. This chapter is purposed to introduce the student into business topics and give them certain foundation about the topics such as: Business organization, Economic cycles, Breakeven analysis, CVs and recruitment. A glossary containing four to eight vocabulary words which are important for the student and provide them with basic business knowledge are almost on each page of the Business fundamentals chapter. In the Pearson textbook, a certain part is devoted to the authors of the book. This includes a photo of the authors, their names, information about their careers, and their connections to business. In the Pearson

book, no section is devoted to the business basics and no part is similar to Business fundamentals in Macmillan. The authors of the Pearson textbook may expect students studying at this level to already have basic knowledge about business, and for this reason not include this section.

Another important information which is missing in both books is the information about the type of English the books are written in. A student might be interested if they study British or American English textbook and it can influence their choice of the book. Today, certain books are written in British English and certain in American English. Even the spelling differs between these types of English in some areas. In some cases, a different term is used in both types of English, some of these examples are shown below.

British English	American English
anticlockwise	counterclockwise
car park	parking lot
holiday	vacation
holidaymaker	vacationer
mobile phone	cell phone
motorway	expressway; highway
number plate	license plate
petrol	gas, gasoline
solicitor	lawyer

(taken from Oxford living dictionaries 2017)

Both, Macmillan and Pearson are using British English. However, as I mentioned earlier, this information is not included in the book and is omitted. Now, I will show several examples of use of British term which appears in the textbooks.

In the Macmillan, a different spelling of certain words which differs between British and American English can be found. This can be seen for example on page 20, in the article about Mangalia Business School. The term ‘**accommodation**’ is used in the sentence: “...all year study on a well-equipped seaside campus with comfortable **accommodation** for 300 students.” This term would be expressed in American English as ‘**accommodations**’.

Another example of use of the British term can be found on page 36 in the exercise 4 where is used the British term '**programme**' in the sentence: "For a quality programme to succeed, senior management do not need to understand the key concepts." In American English would be used the term '**program**'.

In the Pearson textbook, the usage of British term can be seen on page 94 in the article 'Keeping your client relationship' in the paragraph 40-45 where the term '**holidaymakers**' is used in this sentence: "Plumbers fail to fix leaking drains, restaurant meals are often undercooked or **holidaymakers** find their hotel room is directly above an all-night disco." The equivalent American term would be '**vacationer**'.

Another example is on page 21 in the Marketing section in the second paragraph, the term '**football**' is used in the sentence: "Additionally, sales are generated through contracts with professional leagues, such as **football**, golf and tennis associations." This term would be used in American English as '**soccer**'.

There are many terms which differ between British and American English and a student should be aware of both variants. Also, if a person writes a letter or another document, they should choose only one type of English and keep it throughout the whole paper (Oxford living dictionaries, 2017).

## **7.2.Pronunciation**

It was discussed in the theoretical part that there exist various types of accent such as RP, GA, Australian accent, Canadian accent, and other. Jenifer Jenkins suggested that a person who wants to learn the English language should be free to choose the accent they are going to be taught in (Jenkins, 2007). This can be for example due to the desire of a person to work in the business located in Australia. If this person studies the Australian English and adapts the Australian accent, they can have some greater opportunities in comparison to choosing for example GA. Thus, the choice of an accent can be really important. However, if someone looks at both Macmillan and Pearson textbooks, they would not find any information concerning the accent. It is not provided there. The authors may believe that the choice of an accent is not that important. Another possibility is that due to the fact that both books were published in England, students are expected to assume that the pronunciation taught in these books would be RP. However, the information concerning the chosen pronunciation should be included.

It is important to mention that the pronunciation is neglected throughout the main

parts of both textbooks. However, in the last part of the Macmillan, a whole chapter is devoted to pronunciation of the new vocabulary which was demonstrated in each of the chapters. About eleven pages show the most important words according to the author and how these words are pronounced. On the other hand, in the Pearson, such chapter is omitted and there is no explanation how a word should be pronounced correctly in the entire book. The authors of the Pearson might have expected that the correct pronunciation would be explained by Business English teachers. However, if a person decides to study on their own, explained pronunciation would be truly useful to them.

Nowadays, there are resources available which can help students to find the correct pronunciation on their own, for example through Online Cambridge Dictionary or Google translate. Cambridge Dictionary web pages even provide pronunciation in both UK and US accent. Thus, a student can use the internet resources to find the correct way of pronunciation, however, this is not the reason to not provide any information concerning the pronunciation in the textbooks.

In the Glossary section of Macmillan, correct pronunciation of new business words and even a part of speech of a given word is explained. If the word is a noun, there is information provided if the noun is countable or uncountable one, and afterward the correct explanation of the term.

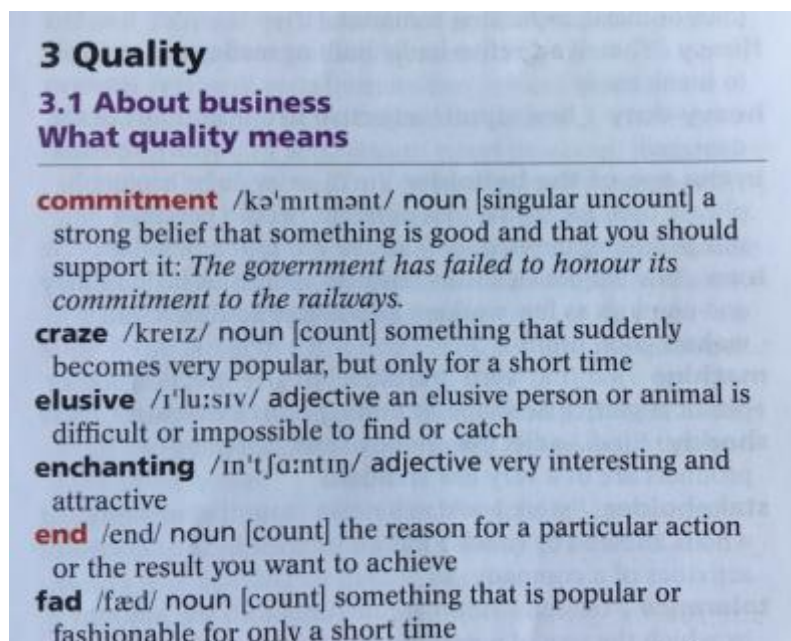


Figure 6. Glossary section in Macmillan textbook  
(taken from Macmillan textbook)

In Figure 6, this part in Macmillan can be clearly seen. I will discuss the word commitment which appears at the top of the page. The number of the chapter in which this word appears is seen above the word commitment, for this particular word it is the chapter 3 called Quality. The subchapter is in the purple colour which means that the chapter is describing the background knowledge about business. This can help a student to easily find the word because of a clear organisation of the textbook, and the different colour of each chapter. The first information about the word is the correct pronunciation /kə'mɪtmənt/. Afterword's, the information concerning the word class is shown and in this instance it is a noun. Then, the information whether the word is singular or plural follows. In this example, the word commitment is singular. In the explanation, the information that this word is uncountable is also included. Later, the meaning of this particular word in English is explained. Then, the word is used in the sentence in order to help the student understand the appropriate use of this word. Here the sentence is: "The government has failed to honour its **commitment** to the railways."

Also, it can be seen that the words in the glossary are distinguished by two different colours, black and red. According to Macmillan textbook: "The red words are high-frequency words that is to say they are among the 7,500 which native speakers use for 90% of what they speak or write (2013:148). This is another useful property of this textbook because students can be aware of the most frequent words and focus on these primarily.

To summarize the focus of both books on the pronunciation, it can be concluded that in both books the pronunciation is not stressed and the authors did not concentrate much on this area of language. However, the Macmillan textbook focuses on pronunciation more when compared with the Pearson textbook. This fact was described more fully in this chapter. I also discussed the possible reasons of the authors to not concentrate on this part of the language more. Notwithstanding that the authors did not emphasize this subject, pronunciation is a vital part of language and can play a more important role in employment applications. Furthermore, appropriate pronunciation can lighten the problems which arise among the employees in international corporations. These problems arise due to incorrect pronunciation, sometimes even combined with a heavy accent of a NNS which can cause the receiver to misunderstand the meaning or in the worst case to understand something different to what was purposed by the speaker. Therefore, these books should be designed with a stronger emphasis on this language feature and empower the students more in it.



### 7.3. Idioms

Idioms are an essential part of language. As was discussed in the theoretical part of the thesis, idioms are phrases which mean something different from the literal meaning of the separate words from which they are formed and a person needs an additional understanding in order to understand their real meaning (Kavka, 2003). A person who would not understand the meaning of any idiom in English would find it very difficult to communicate with colleagues and with the English speakers in general. Also, many idioms appear in the written texts and thus even those who do not need to communicate verbally too often in their profession would come across idioms in writings. In this chapter, I will discuss the focus of each textbook on idioms, compare the differences between the books, and show specific examples of idioms which appear in them.

There are many idioms which can be found throughout the both textbooks. However, if we look through the Macmillan textbook, there is not any part of the book devoted primarily to this subject. When we go through the Pearson textbook, we can find a large column devoted only to this topic, on page 130 in section Grammar reference.

#### 7.3.1. Idioms in Pearson

Grammar reference chapter in the Pearson includes 14 areas: Idioms, Noun compounds and noun phrases, Multi-word verbs, Present and past tenses, Passives, Adverbs of degree, Conditionals, Modal perfect, Dependent prepositions, Gerunds, Contrast and addition, Text reference, Headlines, and Prediction and probability. Idioms are presented as the first area in this chapter. It says in the introduction to idioms in Pearson that: “In the language of business, idioms and metaphors are often used with reference to the domains of sport, war and gambling” (2006:130). It is known that idioms are often used with reference to these domains described in Pearson, however, there are also other domains in which idioms are frequently used in the language of business, but the authors chose to present only these three.

Now, I will show two idioms with reference to each of these domains which are presented in this section in Pearson textbook.

#### **Sport**

“I don’t know the exact price but \$500 is a good **ballpark figure**.” (= estimate). (42)

“You don’t know where you stand, they keep **moving the goalposts.**” (= changing their aims or decisions). (42)

### War

“Manufacturers often feel they are **fighting a losing battle** against counterfeiting.” (= making no progress) (42)

“She may want to convince you otherwise but you should **stick to your guns.**” (= maintain your point of view). (42)

### Gambling

“It **makes no odds** whether we get permission or not, we’ll go ahead anyway.” (= makes no difference) (42)

“If you **play your cards right** you’ll get the promotion.” (= do the right thing) (42)

These idioms are presented in the Pearson textbook as the idioms frequently used in the language of business.

In this section of Pearson textbook, eighteen idioms are shown and explained. Also, if we study the Pearson textbook more deeply, we would find other idioms which appear throughout the book. Especially on pages 10, 77, and 87 several exercises are devoted entirely to idioms. Now, I will present some of these idiomatic formulations. Meaning of the idioms in my thesis is taken from Cambridge Dictionary which is available online, from the Oxford Dictionary of Current Idiomatic English or from the two textbooks.

Page 10, exercise A) (Ten idioms are shown in this exercise, I will present two of them).

g) “**Can’t make a head or tail of it.**” (45)

(= to not be able to understand something)

j) “**To beat about the bush.**” (45)

(= to avoid talking about what is important)

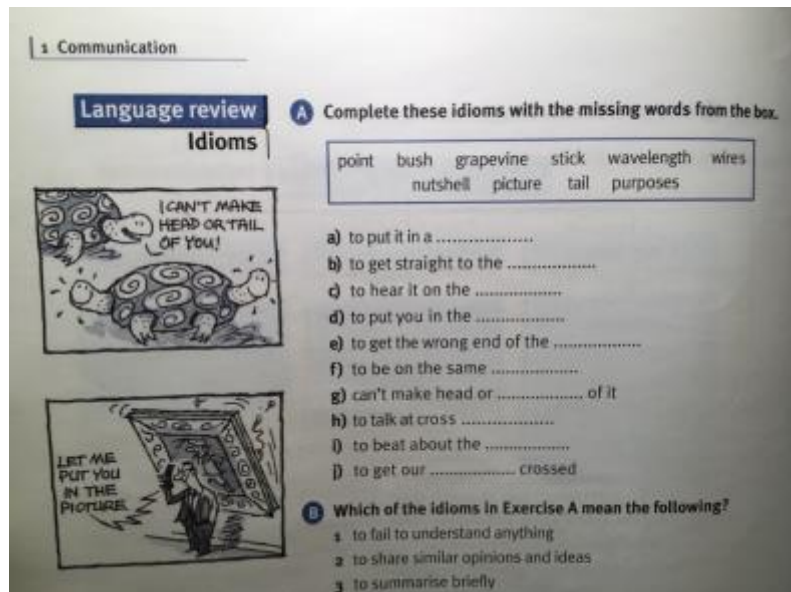


Figure 7. Illustrations of idioms in the Pearson textbook  
(taken from Pearson textbook)

As can be seen in Figure 7, some idioms are even illustrated via small humorous pictures on the left side of the page. Thus, the authors help students to visualize what the idiomatic phrase means and to naturally understand the figurative meaning of certain idioms. In two following exercises on this page is followed up on these idioms from the exercise A. In the exercise B, students can see meanings of these idioms in disorder and are supposed to match these meanings to the idioms in the exercise A. In the exercise C, the students are expected to use the idioms from exercise A again and to fill them correctly in the undone sentences. Thus, they are taught these idioms thoroughly. In the exercise D, the students are supposed to ask their partner a question including the idiom or to answer a question asked by their partner. This method helps them to immediately use new idioms in speaking. Two examples with the explanation will be presented below.

Page 10, exercise D)

1) What have you **heard on the grapevine** recently? (47)

(= to hear news from someone who heard the news from someone).

2) Can you give an example of when you were talking at **cross purposes**? (47)

(= If two or more people are at cross purposes, they do not understand each other because they are talking about different subjects without realizing this).

In the exercise D, the students were using the same idioms as in the exercise A. On page 77, idiomatic exercises are designed in the similar manner as these on page 10. Some idioms are again accompanied by illustration on the side of the page, similar to those in Figure 7. However, the difference between exercises on page 10 and 77 is that on page 77 exercise D, which included asking questions, is omitted. I will present two examples of idioms from these exercises.

Page 77 exercise A)

- 1) “You really can sell anything on these Internet auction sites. **It’s money for old rope.**” (50)

(= money you get for doing something very easy).

- 2) “We’re way over budget on this. We’ll have to make some cutbacks. Someone needs to tell the marketing department that **money doesn’t grow on trees.**” (50)

(= said to warn someone to be careful how much money they spend, because there is only a limited amount).

Idioms presented in this exercise can frequently appear in business communication, especially in spoken discourse.

Last exercises which are concerned with idioms are on page 86. These exercises are designed similarly to these on pages 10 and 77. When we look at the presented idioms, we can see that some of them already appeared on page 10 and are being repeated on this page. These idioms are: “**To get straight to the point.**” and “**Talking at cross purposes.**” This might be done by the authors to make a stronger emphasis on these particular idioms due to their frequent use in business domain.

Now, I will proceed with two examples of idioms which appear in the Pearson textbook in other exercises and explain their meaning.

On page 8, we can find an idiom in the first paragraph of the article called ‘Communication – it’s much easier said than done’ in this sentence:

“Getting staff to talk to each other ought to be the least of your problems, but internal communication can be one of the **hardest nuts to crack** in business.” (48)

According to Cambridge Dictionary “A hard nut to crack” means a problem that is very difficult to solve or a person who is very difficult to understand. It can be seen that this idiom cannot be understood literally, but one needs to understand the idiomatic meaning of

this phrase. The meaning of this idiom can be clear to the Czech students because the same idiom exists in the Czech language as: “Těžký oříšek k rozlousknutí.” However, it does not mean that the same idiom exists in other languages as well and that all NNS would understand its meaning.

This phrase is useful in the business domain and can appear in other topics as well. Another idiom appears in the sentence on 70<sup>th</sup> line of the article called ‘The Guardian profile: Steve Jobs’ on page 32.

“Since the emergence of high-speed Internet the music industry has complained that **it is being brought to its knees** by the pirates of downloading.” (46)

According to Cambridge Dictionary ‘bring sb/sth to their knees’ means to destroy or defeat someone or something. In this particular example, it can be seen that to know the context is often essential to understand the idiom or to realise that some phrases are idioms and are not supposed to be understood literally.

To summarize the focus on idioms in the Pearson Longman, this textbook is decently concerned with idiomatic formulations and includes nine exercises which concentrate only on this subject. Some of the idioms are accompanied by a small illustration for easier understanding of students. There are idioms which appear in the exercises repeatedly, this might be purposed by the authors to emphasize them more. Also, grammar reference in the end of the book includes a column with specific idioms which frequently appear in the language of business. Moreover, there are other idioms which appear in the articles throughout the book, their meaning is not described, and the students can understand them either from the context, with an explanation from their teacher, or by using a dictionary of idiomatic English.

### **7.3.2. Idioms in Macmillan**

It was described in the previous chapter that the authors of the Pearson textbook devoted a decent focus to idioms. As one looks through the Macmillan textbook, they will recognize that similar concentration on this topic cannot be found. In the Macmillan textbook, the approach to idioms is different to Pearson. There is no section or exercise specifically assigned to idioms or illustrations with idioms presented. However, if one looks more closely through this textbook, they will find idioms as well. They are not notably presented but appear

in the Glossary sections which are included almost in each chapter. Example of this can be seen in Figure 8 below. Thus, the authors teach this subject to their students, even though, in a less obvious form. The similarity to Pearson can be seen in idioms which appear in the reading sections of the textbook. Idioms appear in these articles more or less in the similar amount as in the Pearson textbook.

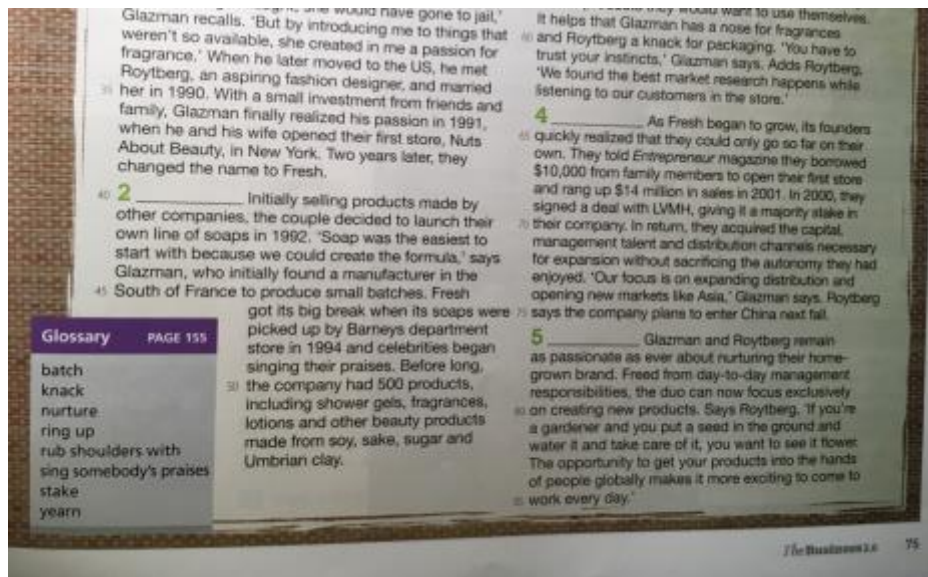


Figure 8. Glossary section in the Macmillan textbook  
(taken from Macmillan textbook)

Now, I will proceed with presentation of specific idioms which appear in Macmillan and explain their meaning. These idioms will be classified into four categories according to their reference to the specific domain; idioms which do not refer to any domain are placed in the Unspecified category. These categories are: Sport, Skill, Effort, and Unspecified.

### Sport

Now, I will present an example of idiom which appears in the Glossary section in Macmillan. This example appears on page 51 and is used in more context on page 50 in exercise 5.

“Dave isn’t **pulling his weight!** I know. He asked me to do his report for him!” (= to work as hard as other people in a group). (52)

### Skill

The second example appears on page 59 in glossary section and is used on page 58 in the email at the bottom of the page.

“Some of the dealers own their service stations, so we have to **handle them with kid gloves**, or they’ll just go over to the competition.” (= to be very polite or kind to someone because you do not want to make them angry or upset). (54)

### **Effort**

This example is located in the first paragraph of the article called ‘What price a degree?’ on page 11.

“Protests in the form of strikes, demonstrations and even riots prove that people are willing to **go to great lengths** to defend their right to higher education.” (= try very hard to achieve something). (53)

Similar idiom exists in Czech as: “Jsou ochotni **zajít velmi daleko**, aby dosáhli svého záměru.”

### **Unspecified**

Idioms in this category do not have obvious connection to certain domain as the previous idioms. The first example appears in the last paragraph of the reading ‘Email’ on page 84.

“**Drop me a line** and let me know what you think.” (= means to write sb a brief note, line or letter). (63)

This idiom appears in the email as an ending sentence. Also, this idiomatic phrase is considered to be informal.

Another example appears on page 37 in glossary section and is used in more context in the first example of exercise 8 on page 36.

“Do the products have **taken-for-granted** quality, or enchanting quality, or both?” (= to

never think about something because you believe it will always be available or stay exactly the same). (62)

The last idiom is being frequently used in other domains of communication as well and not only in the business domain.

As was described in the beginning of this chapter, Macmillan textbook does not concentrate on idioms much. No exercise is entirely devoted to this topic, and the word 'idiom' cannot be found in the entire book. Nevertheless, there are idioms which appear throughout the Macmillan, especially in the small glossary sections, and I have presented some of them in this chapter. Also, it is important to point out that meaning of these idioms is not included on the page where they appear, but it can be found at the end of the book in the large Glossary section.

In my experience, 'taken-for-granted' was the only idiom used in the environment of the international corporation. Therefore out of the above phrases, this idiom seems as the most practical one to learn when going to work in such environment.

### **7.3.3. A comparison of focus on idioms between Pearson and Macmillan**

There are many differences concerning idioms between Pearson and Macmillan textbooks. In this subchapter, I will point out these differences.

The obvious difference between these textbooks is that each of the authors chose a completely different approach to present idioms to the student. In the Pearson textbook, the idioms are clearly seen in the idiomatic exercises. Contrary to this in the Macmillan textbook, idioms are usually spread among other vocabulary and phrases in the glossary sections, and the book does not separate them from normal words or phrases. Thus in Macmillan, student cannot often recognise if they came across an idiom or not, while in Pearson textbook, they can distinguish idioms more easily.

Another difference is that idioms used in Macmillan textbook are more general such as: 'drop me a line' or 'take something for granted'. Contrary to this, the authors of Pearson textbook selected more idioms appearing mainly in the business domain. These were idioms such as 'it's money for old rope' and 'money doesn't grow on trees'.

Following difference is that illustrations are frequently used in Pearson textbook, as shown in Figure 7, while Macmillan textbook does not include any illustration of idioms.



Furthermore, in the Pearson the meaning of idioms is often shown on the same page where the new idioms appear, while in the Macmillan, a student needs to look at the end of the book to the glossary section or look into another dictionary in order to find the meaning of these phrases. Therefore, this approach applied in Pearson textbook is more practical and can be viewed as an advantage for students.

Nevertheless, the Glossary section of Macmillan can be seen as a positive attribute because the explanation of new idioms includes also pronunciation, while in the Pearson the pronunciation of idioms is missing.

As well in Pearson textbook, certain idioms are being repeated, while in the Macmillan textbook such repetition cannot be found.

To conclude the information concerning the differences, the Pearson textbook is focused on subject of idioms more, idioms are presented more clearly, and this book includes more business oriented idioms than Macmillan textbook.

Therefore, when a student chooses between these books, they can read through this summary and be aware of the differences which enables them to do a more appropriate choice.

#### **7.3.4. Idioms which appeared in international corporation BMW UK**

As I discussed in the theoretical part of my thesis, I worked in the international corporation BMW UK during the summer 2016. In this company, English was a *lingua franca* and employees from various countries such as Sweden, the Czech Republic, Lithuania, and Romania worked at the same department.

During this time, I earned a solid work experience, while recording new knowledge for my bachelor thesis. My duties and employment description are included in more detail in the theoretical part of my work.

In this chapter, five idioms and one phrase will be described which I recorded in international corporation BMW UK. Many phrases which appeared in the company were challenging for me to understand, and these issues were caused by the difference between the figurative meaning of Czech and English phrases and idioms.

When these issues arose during the communication with co-workers or customers, the situation was less difficult for me because I had usually enough time to ask my colleague or a customer to repeat the phrase or idiomatic formulation again. Also, the co-workers were often polite and explained me the meaning.

More difficult situations arose when our team leader was instructing us for a certain

important task or when he was evaluating our performance after certain training and used specific idiom or a phrasal word to rate our work. In these situations, it was not appropriate to ask him for the meaning of his evaluation and this made me feel uncertain of what the outcome is.

In this chapter, I will present several phrases which I have recorded in this international corporation and explain their meaning. Furthermore, I will classify these idioms into three categories according to their reference to the specific domain. These categories are: Sport, Parts of the body, and Unclassified.

### **Sport**

Context: Team leader is giving an advice to the new employee.

“Rather **play on the safe side.**” (= being especially careful in order to avoid something unpleasant).

Context: Team leader is evaluating the fact that BMW bought English companies, Rolls Royce and Mini Cooper.

“BMW are **kicking off.**” (= BMW are starting something or expanding in general).

### **Parts of the body**

Context: Team leader is complaining about the computers in the training room.

“The computers in this room are **a pain in the neck.**” (= someone or something that is very annoying).

If the idiom ‘a pain in the neck’ were said with no emotion, the meaning of the sentence would not be obvious and context would be important in order to understand this idiom.

Context: Team leader is talking to the employee who believes that he is being treated unfairly.

“Do not have a **chip on your shoulder.**” (= an angry attitude from someone who feels unfairly treated).

Context: Team leader is evaluating a good performance of our team in the end of an intensive training for the customer service advisors.

“Each of you deserves a **tap on a shoulder.**” (= commending or showing one a respect for their work).

### **Unspecified**

Context: Team leader is commending my work.

“**There you go Will.**” (= it is used when giving something to someone, usually after a request for the thing, such as giving someone goods that they have bought or commending someone).

In this chapter, these phrases were divided into three categories according to their reference to a specific domain. Also, these sentences were recorded mainly during the training period of my employment. Each of these phrases might be useful for a person going to work in the similar environment. Thus, I want to recommend these phrases as a practical knowledge to learn. Also, neither of them was presented in the idiomatic sections in the Pearson textbook or in the glossaries in the Macmillan textbook and thus studying only these materials would not prepare an individual to understand this team leader in the given situations.

### **7.3.5. A comparison between my findings and knowledge in the textbooks**

In this chapter, I would like to evaluate the knowledge contained in the textbooks to my findings in the international corporation. I will discuss whether or not these books prepare a student sufficiently for such experience in terms of idioms or if an additional preparatory knowledge is necessary.

I spent six weeks working in this international corporation and came across idiomatic phrases. During my experience, I carefully recorded notes of words, phrases, and phrases containing idiomatic meaning which appeared at the workplace. Some of these phrases are presented in the previous chapter. I have also demonstrated the focus of the Pearson and

Macmillan business textbooks on idioms. When I compare my findings with the knowledge contained in the textbooks, I can conclude that there are about three idioms in the textbooks which would be useful to me in the company. These phrases were:

from Pearson:           **“to get straight to the point”**  
                                  **“it slipped of my mind”**

from Macmillan:       **“to take something for granted”**

These three idioms were used in the international corporation, therefore I can recommend them as a useful knowledge to learn for those going to work in the similar environment. However, the other idiomatic phrases contained in the textbooks were not used during my time there.

Therefore, I can recommend the phrases shown in the chapter 7.3.5. as a practical knowledge which can more probably appear in such environment. Idioms such as ‘there you go’ and ‘a pain in a neck’ appeared multiple times and they can be beneficial. I can also conclude that many of the idioms which appeared in the textbooks were not used at all in the company. Thus, these business books should not be the only source of preparation. I further recommend to a person going to work in the similar company to investigate idiomatic phrases from multiple sources such as Oxford Dictionaries of Current Idiomatic English and Cambridge Dictionary.

After all, my findings in the international corporation were taken during the six weeks period. Thus, there could have been other idioms which would have appeared in a longer term or under different circumstances. Also, my findings were influenced by the vocabulary of my team leader, manager, and the employees in my team group who used the presented phrases. There are other people who have a different vocabulary and might have used different idiomatic phrases. Nevertheless, I presented what I had found out to the best of my knowledge.

## 8. Conclusions

The thesis focused on English as a *Lingua Franca* in international corporations. Several important topics were discussed in the thesis.

The first part was concerned with the constant change of language and I shared two opinions of linguist professionals about the development of language.

The second part focused on the issues which arise in international corporations, such as pronunciation and idioms. I chose these aspects of language because they are valuable for a NNS in everyday use in an international corporation. As well it can be seen that pronunciation is an important issue in these corporations and that one can adapt to the accent of other person from different country.

The third part of the thesis focused on the situation in the international corporation BMW UK and the methods of effective communication, such as having carefully prepared notes to ensure effective communication with the BMW dealers.

The practical part of my thesis was concerned with the comparison between Business English textbooks made by companies Macmillan and Pearson Longman. In this part, I discussed the focus of the textbooks on pronunciation and idioms and afterwards compared the results with my personal experience in the international company. I can conclude that the authors of these textbooks did not concentrate on the pronunciation sufficiently and these books should be designed with a stronger emphasis on this language feature in order to prepare a person sufficiently for such environment.

The final part of my thesis was concerned with idioms, and I found out that Pearson textbook is focused on this topic more than Macmillan textbook. Furthermore, when I compared these idioms with the knowledge obtained in the international corporation, I discovered that many of the idioms included in the textbooks had not appeared in the company. Only three idioms which appeared in the company are included in the textbooks. Thus, these textbooks should not be the only source of preparation.

I hope that the thesis can help someone to better understand the topic English as a *Lingua Franca* and present a new view on everyday problems which arise in international corporations.

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## **10. Appendix**



## CASE STUDY



### Key features of Zumo

- Contains caffeine, vitamins and glucose.
- Has a secret ingredient, 'herbora', made from roots of rare African plants.
- Scientific studies show that the body absorbs Zumo faster than water or other soft drinks.
- The unique formula contributes to Zumo's taste and thirst-quenching properties.

### Background

The best-selling sports drink, Zumo, is produced by Zumospa, a food and drinks company based in Valencia, Spain. In the last financial year, Zumo contributed €30 million to Zumospa's annual sales revenue, accounting for 20% of the company's total turnover. It is, in fact, Zumospa's cash cow, generating more revenue than any other of its products.

At present, Zumo is sold only in Europe. However, the sports drink market is the most rapidly growing segment of the world beverage market. Zumospa is now looking outside Spain for markets and would like to make Zumo a global brand.



### Background

Camden Football Club is one of the great success stories in English football. Today, it is third in the Premier Division (the top division) and has reached the quarter finals of the European Champions League competition. The club gets huge crowds at its ground and its Polish manager, Cristos Sroda, is idolised by fans. Camden is also a great commercial success and is very profitable.

What has brought about its success? Firstly, the manager Cristos had a clear strategy for the team from the start. He developed young players who had come through the club's youth training scheme. The team was also strengthened by one or two carefully chosen foreign players.

🔊 4.4 Listen to an interview on *Sportsline*, a weekly television programme focussing on football. The presenter of the programme talks to a football manager about Camden Football Club. Take notes of the key points.



2.5 Listen to this excerpt from a radio programme, Business Today. Ricardo Gonzales, Zumospa's President, discusses Zumospa's plans to globalise.

Make notes on the company results, future plans and competitive advantage.

## Marketing

- Launched in the mid-1980s. Positioned as an energy product for fitness-conscious people, especially sportsmen and women, between the ages of 20 and 45.
- Distributed mainly through grocery stores, convenience stores and supermarkets. Also through sports clubs. Additionally, sales are generated through contracts with professional leagues, such as football, golf and tennis associations.
- Press, TV and radio advertising is backed up by endorsement contracts with famous European footballers and tennis stars.
- Zumo is offered in four flavours and its price is in the medium range.

## Developing a global brand

Zumospa needs to reposition it for the global market. Initial research suggests that Zumo is perceived as a Spanish drink, and its close identification with Spain may not be suitable when developing a global brand.

Zumospa would like to launch a global campaign focussing first on South America, Mexico, the Southern states of the US and Japan, where they have regional offices. A decision has been taken to use a standardised advertising theme in these markets, although the copy of the advertisements and language of the TV and radio commercials will be adapted to local needs.

Before setting up focus groups in these areas and commissioning market surveys, the Marketing Department of Zumospa have organised an informal departmental meeting to brainstorm ideas for their global marketing strategy.

## Task


You are members of the Marketing Department of Zumospa. Work in groups and brainstorm the points listed in the rough notes. One person in the group should take notes. Then meet as one group and select some of the best suggestions for further study.

## Brainstorming Session

- 1 Does Zumo need a new name? If so, what?
- 2 Introduce new Zumo varieties for different market segments e.g. Diet Zumo? Other versions?
- 3 Redesign Zumo bottle/can? If so, how?
- 4 Create a new slogan? Suggestions?
- 5 Ideas for TV or radio advertisement? Also, newspapers and magazines?
- 6 Price - medium range?
- 7 How to compete against similar products from Coke, Pepsi, Heinz, etc?
- 8 New market opportunities for Zumo?
- 9 Create a special division to market Zumo worldwide?
- 10 Apply to be official sponsor at next Olympic Games?

## Writing

As Marketing Manager for Zumospa, write an e-mail to the directors of the company informing them of the key ideas which came out of the brainstorming session you attended. You should indicate which ideas you favour and why.

 Writing file page 139

# Grammar reference

## 1 Idioms

In the language of business, idioms and metaphors are often used with reference to the domains of sport, war and gambling.

### Sport

*I don't know the exact price but \$500 is a good **ballpark figure**.* (= estimate).

*She's smart and really **on the ball**.* (= quick to understand).

*Follow his advice and it'll be **plain sailing**.* (= easy to do or achieve).

*You don't know where you stand, they keep **moving the goalposts**.* (= changing their aims or decisions).

*There must be no unfair competition in the EU and we shall continue to stress the need for a **level playing field**.* (= a situation that gives no one an advantage)

### War

*Bill's **on the warpath** again* (= very angry) – *there are mistakes in the publicity material we sent out.*

*You may have to **do battle with*** (= fight it out) *the insurers because they won't want to pay up.*

*Manufacturers often feel they are **fighting a losing battle*** (= making no progress) *against counterfeiting.*

*If you can convince the commercial attaché here, that's **half the battle*** (= the rest is easy).

*I've been **fighting a running battle*** (= having a series of arguments) *with the financial department but they won't give us the money.*

*She may want to convince you otherwise but you should **stick to your guns*** (= maintain your point of view).

*She's **up in arms*** (= very angry and ready to fight) *about the lack of safety procedures.*

### Gambling

*We are trying to **hedge our bets*** (= reduce our chances of failure) *and not put all our eggs in one basket.*

*The **odds are stacked against us*** (= there are many difficulties) *but we're determined to succeed.*

*It **makes no odds*** (= makes no difference) *whether we get permission or not, we'll go ahead anyway.*

*They're paying **over the odds*** (= more than it's worth) *for the site but it's a prime location.*

*We had our doubts about Susan but she has really **come up trumps*** (= produced good, unexpected results).

*If you **play your cards right*** (= do the right thing) *you'll get the promotion.*

## 2 Noun compounds and noun phrases

- 1 When two nouns occur together, the first noun is used as an adjective and describes the second noun. The first noun answers the question 'what kind of?'

*a manufacturing subsidiary*

*a draft agenda*

*a phone conversation*

*a network operator*

- 2 Noun + noun compounds can often be transformed into structures where the second noun becomes the subject:

*an oil refinery* (= a refinery that produces oil)

*company executives* (= executives that work for the company)

*a travel agency* (= an agency that sells travel)

- 3 They may also be reformulated using a preposition:

*market research* (= research **into** markets)

*rail transport* (= transport **by** rail)

*leisure activities* (= activities **for** leisure)

*a web page* (= a page **on** the web)

*their Paris store* (= their store **in** Paris)

*income distribution* (= distribution **of** income)

- 4 The first noun is usually singular:

*five-star hotel* (not five stars)

*consumer-purchasing behaviour* (not consumers)

*risk assessment* (not risks)

*brand names* (not brands)

However, some words retain the plural form:

*sales policy*

*newsletter*

*needs analysis*

- 5 Sometimes three or more nouns occur together:

*line management system*

*production research centre*

*travel insurance claim form*

*Motorola's software development establishments*

- 6 Noun compounds can be modified by adjectives and adverbs:

*inspiring team leadership*

*international business development directors*

*extremely boring conference presentation*

*increasingly volatile mobile phone market*

## Reading

### Keeping your client relationship afloat

**A** Imagine you are going for a holiday on a ship around the world. What problems could arise?

**B** Read the article and answer these questions.

- 1 What went wrong with the ship?
- 2 How did the passengers feel and why?
- 3 What can happen if you do not deal effectively with a service failure?
- 4 What interesting statistic highlights the consequences of poor service?

## Keeping your client relationship afloat

by Morgan Witzel

The passengers of the Aurora had every right to be angry. The round-the-world cruise for which they had paid thousands of pounds was cancelled after persistent engine problems.

Yet there was little anger among the passengers. While the ship was held off the south coast of England, the passengers remained calm and even cheerful. Though many expressed regret as they finally disembarked, they were not hostile towards the ship's operators, P&O. This may have been due to the company's management of the crisis.

Dealing with a service failure is a formidable task for any marketing manager. If poorly handled, the consequences can be bad public relations, desertion by customers and even lawsuits. The Aurora story shows how managers, if they move quickly, can avoid some of the worst effects of service failures.

While high-profile cases are still relatively rare, companies everywhere may regularly suffer small service failures. Plumbers fail to fix leaking drains, restaurant meals are often undercooked or holidaymakers find their hotel room is directly above an all-night disco. Every failure is bound to create a dissatisfied customer, which in turn creates other problems for the company.

Unhappy customers tend to tell others of their experience. Studies in the

US have shown that dissatisfied customers tend to tell around ten other people of their bad experience; even worse, they can take their stories to the press.

Dissatisfied customers also defect to rival businesses. Although every service failure will be different, some basic principles can assist in recovery. The first is early recognition of the problem. In P&O's case this was easy; everyone involved knew that the large ship was not going anywhere. Other failures are harder to detect, especially when management is asleep at the wheel.

The second principle is accepting responsibility. Many companies prefer to argue with customers over where responsibility lies, without realising that damage is being done regardless of who is at fault. Although there are limits to the responsibilities companies should accept – such as accidents and injuries that were not the company's fault – there is usually little profit in scoring moral victories over customers. Hence clothing retailers often have a no-questions-asked policy on returned goods, believing that the harm done by the occasional dishonest customer is more than outweighed by the satisfaction created among the rest.

Once responsibility is accepted, the two most urgent needs for the



company to address are communication and compensation. Transparency is vital. Academic studies have shown that when faced with product or service failure, companies that communicate truthfully and promptly with their customers receive a favourable response. These customers feel that their concerns are actually being addressed and taken seriously. In the Aurora case, senior P&O managers were often on hand to provide information to passengers, who regarded this as a positive feature.

Compensation must be carefully matched to the customer's dissatisfaction. Too small an amount trivialises the customer's experience and can give offence, but it is also possible to go too far the other way. Researchers in the US found an example of a hotel chain that had a policy of instantly refunding the full room rate to any guest with a genuine complaint, no matter how trivial. Yet many customers – against expectations – found it embarrassing to be given hundreds of dollars in compensation when they had merely complained about a faulty light fixture or a dripping tap.

Service industries often have their compensation benchmarks. In the holiday sector, the standard was set by the 19th-century inventor of the package holiday, Thomas Cook, who made it his policy to refund in full the money paid by any customer whose holiday was curtailed or cancelled, and offer a discount on their next booking. P&O's policy would have pleased Cook – the company reportedly offered the same level of compensation to the passengers of the Aurora. Not every package holiday company follows this example.

Following these simple principles should please most customers most of the time. Research across a wide variety of service industries over the past 20 years confirms that a successful service recovery operation reduces or even eliminates any consumer dissatisfaction.

The aborted cruise of the Aurora was disappointing for P&O passengers. But the consequences could have been far worse. Many of the passengers said they planned to travel on a P&O cruise in the future.

From the *Financial Times*

**FINANCIAL TIMES**

## Reading

### Steve Jobs

**A** Before you read the article say what you know about the following:

- 1 Bill Gates
- 2 Steve Jobs
- 3 Tim Berners-Lee

# The Guardian profile: Steve Jobs

By Duncan Campbell

Jobs is a co-founder of Apple, the man behind the astonishing success of the computer animation firm Pixar - of *Toy Story* and *Finding Nemo* fame - a billionaire regarded as a visionary in the industry.

Born to an Egyptian Arab father and an American mother in Green Bay, Wisconsin, 49 years ago, Steven Paul was adopted soon after his birth by Paul and Clara Jobs, who lived in Mountain View in Santa Clara, California.

After completing high school in California, Jobs went north to Reed College in Portland, Oregon, but dropped out after one term. Back in California, he became a regular at the Homebrew Computer Club, along with another young man, five years his senior, with his own visions of the future: Steve Wozniak.

In 1976, when Jobs was 21, he and Wozniak started their own business, the Apple Computer Company, in Jobs' family garage. With a mission to produce affordable personal computers the pair went to market with the Apple I shortly afterwards. A local company ordered 25 of the prototype and the pair were on their way. The almost instant success of Apple I and its sister Apple II launched them. By the age of 25 Jobs was worth \$165m.

Apple was the first landmark in Jobs' career but by 1985 he was on his way out after John Sculley, who had joined the company from Pepsi-Cola, decided it was time to



drop the pilot. Four years later Jobs returned with another computer company, NextStep, which never achieved the success of Apple but reminded people that he was far from finished.

What was later hailed as Jobs' second coming started with his involvement in Pixar, the animation company he bought from the Star Wars director, George Lucas, and renamed. The hit movie *Toy Story* instantly established it as one of the key players in Hollywood, a success only added to with the release of *Finding Nemo*.

Pixar made Jobs a billionaire. His triumph there also reminded people of his ability to predict the technological future. Apple asked him to return. He came back in 1997 and within a year the ailing company was once more making handsome profits.

His latest venture may turn out to be the most influential. Since the emergence of high-speed Internet

the music industry has complained that it is being brought to its knees by the pirates of downloading. The dream of hundreds of companies has been a way to harness the desire for music on the Internet and turn it into profit. Jobs believes that iTunes is the answer.

But then Jobs does not believe in underselling his companies. 'This will go down in history as the turning point for the music industry,' he told *Fortune* magazine at the launch of iTunes in the US.

Journalists who have followed Jobs' career have also seen another side of his personality when he has walked out of interviews, irritated at the line of questioning and refusing intrusions into his personal life. He is not known for his patience.

'We can't have a heroic figure without a fatal flaw,' was the assessment of David Plotnikoff, writing a profile earlier this year in local paper. 'Jobs ... exudes arrogance of a certain blastfurnace intensity that people find hard to overlook ... With Jobs, it was never enough to say "We're right on this and they're wrong". No, it was always "We're right on this and they're idiots".'

But Plotnikoff added: 'There is simply no way the Mac could have been born without that supreme confidence.' If there has been a theme to Jobs' success it has been his genius, as it were, for finding other geniuses and promoting their brilliance.

From the *Guardian*

**B** Answer the following questions.

- 1 Why were the following dates important?
  - a) 1976 b) 1985 c) 1997
- 2 What was Steve Jobs' first success?
- 3 What made him:
  - a) a millionaire? b) a billionaire?
- 4 Why did he leave Apple?
- 5 Why did he come back?
- 6 How long did it take to turn Apple round?
- 7 Why does Jobs think his latest venture will be a turning point for the music industry?
- 8 Why do you think Steve Jobs is successful?

**Language review**

**Idioms**



**A Complete these idioms with the missing words from the box.**

point bush grapevine stick wavelength wires  
nutshell picture tail purposes

- a) to put it in a .....
- b) to get straight to the .....
- c) to hear it on the .....
- d) to put you in the .....
- e) to get the wrong end of the .....
- f) to be on the same .....
- g) can't make head or ..... of it
- h) to talk at cross .....
- i) to beat about the .....
- j) to get our ..... crossed

**B Which of the idioms in Exercise A mean the following?**

- 1 to fail to understand anything
- 2 to share similar opinions and ideas
- 3 to summarise briefly
- 4 to misunderstand
- 5 to delay talking about something
- 6 to give the latest information
- 7 to talk about the most important thing
- 8 to hear about something passed from one person to another

**C Complete the sentences with the idioms from Exercise A.**

- 1 OK, I'll ..... I'm afraid we're going to have to let you go.
- 2 'You and your boss seem to agree on most things.' 'Yes, we are .....
- 3 Some important decisions were taken at yesterday's meeting. Let me .....
- 4 I think we are ..... I mean next month, not this month.
- 5 He never gives you a straight answer. He's always .....
- 6 I ..... that he's been fired. Is it true?
- 7 It's a very complicated system, but to ..... it works exactly like a big kettle.
- 8 If you think our biggest problem is market share then you have .....
- 9 This report makes no sense at all. I .....
- 10 Everyone arrived for the meeting at different times. We must have .....

**D Ask your partner the following questions.**

- 1 What have you heard on the grapevine recently?
- 2 When was the last time you got the wrong end of the stick?
- 3 When is it necessary to put someone in the picture?
- 4 In what situations is it good to beat about the bush?
- 5 In what situations is it good to get straight to the point?
- 6 Can you give an example of when you were talking at cross purposes?
- 7 Is there anything you can't make head or tail of?

## Reading

## Internal communication

- A** What are the advantages and disadvantages for companies of using e-mail?
- B** Select three of the items below which, in your opinion, best contribute to improving communication.

trust	flexi-time
open plan offices	small teams
voice mail	strong corporate identity
e-mail	frequent meetings
mobile phones	staff parties

## Communication – it's much easier said than done

By Clare Gascoigne

### Trust is key in an open organisation

Getting staff to talk to each other ought to be the least of your problems, but internal communication can be one of the hardest nuts to crack in business.

'Communication comes up in every department. The repercussions of not communicating are vast,' says Theo Theobald, co-author of *Shut up and Listen! The Truth About How to Communicate at Work*.

Poor communication can be a purely practical problem. Gearbulk, a global shipping business with branches around the world, faced language and geographical difficulties, as well as a huge amount of paperwork. With up to 60 documents per cargo, it was a logistical nightmare to track and monitor jobs, while tighter security regulations after 9/11 meant customs documents had to be ready before a ship was allowed to sail.

Installing an automated system means data is now entered only once but can be accessed by anyone in the company, wherever they are.

'Reporting is faster by a matter of months,' says Ramon Ferrer, Vice President of Global IT at Gearbulk. 'An operational team carrying a voyage all the way across the world doesn't always have to be talking to each other – and we don't waste time duplicating the same information.'

Given today's variety of communication tools, it seems strange that we still have a problem communicating. But the



brave new world of high-tech can create barriers – senior managers hide behind their computers, staff use voice mail to screen calls, and employees sitting next to each other will send e-mails rather than speak.

'Managers should get up, walk round the office and talk to people,' says Matt Rogan, Head of Marketing at Lane4, a leadership and communications consultancy. 'Face-to-face communication can't be beaten.'

Theobald recommends checking e-mail only three times a day, allocating a set period of time to deal with it. 'If you leave the sound on, the temptation is as great as a ringing phone. People will interrupt meetings to check their e-mails.'

Another problem is simply hitting the 'reply all' button, bombarding people with information. 'We had unstructured data coming at staff from left, right and centre, leaving it up to individuals to sort out,' says Gearbulk's Ferrer. 'Our new system has reduced e-mails and changed

the way people work. It will remind you about work flow.'

Information overload also means people stop listening. But there may be a deeper reason why a message fails to get through, according to Alex Haslam, Professor of Psychology at Exeter University.

'Everyone thinks a failure to communicate is just an individual's error of judgment, but it's not about the person: it's about the group and the group dynamics,' he says. 'Just training people to be good communicators isn't the issue.'

The problem is that employees develop common loyalties that are far stronger than the need to share information. This can even extend to questions of safety.

In the mid-1990s there were a lot of light air crashes in Australia because the two government departments responsible for air safety weren't communicating,' says Haslam. 'The government was trying to save money and both groups felt threatened. The individuals were highly identified with their own organisation and unwilling to communicate with the other department.'

A company is particularly at risk when cost-cutting is in the air. Individuals withdraw into departmental loyalties out of fear. Sending such people on yet another 'how to communicate' course will be pointless. Instead, Haslam believes that identifying the sub-groups within an organisation and making sure each group feels valued and respected can do far more to encourage the sharing of information. The key to communication, he says, is trust.

From the *Financial Times*

FINANCIAL TIMES



**Vocabulary****Handling complaints**

**A** Complete the beginnings of sentences 1–5 with words from the box. Then finish each sentence with a sentence ending a)–e).

standards products rapport complaints reassure

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 When you handle ..... it is important ...               | a) ... when they are worried.              |
| 2 You can establish a ..... with a customer if ...        | b) ... will lose customers.                |
| 3 A key element in customer care is to ..... people ...   | c) ... they are faulty.                    |
| 4 Companies which do not meet their ..... of service ...  | d) ... you know about their buying habits. |
| 5 Many companies will replace ..... free of charge if ... | e) ... to be diplomatic.                   |

**B** Match the idiomatic expressions 1–7 to their meanings a)–g).

- |                                    |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| 1 pass the buck                    | a) forgot to do something                             |
| 2 get to the bottom of the problem | b) paid far too much for something                    |
| 3 it was the last straw            | c) avoid responsibility                               |
| 4 got straight to the point        | d) find the real cause of something                   |
| 5 slipped my mind                  | e) talked about the subject directly                  |
| 6 ripped off                       | f) the last in a series of irritating events          |
| 7 talking at cross purposes        | g) misunderstanding what someone else is referring to |

**C** Use the idiomatic expressions to complete the sentences appropriately.

- She was very helpful. She promised to ..... and find a solution.
- He's the person responsible. He shouldn't try to ..... and blame others for his mistakes.
- Several customers have complained about our service contract. They say they're paying far too much and feel they have been .....
- I meant to send him a brochure but we were very busy and it .....
- They wanted to place a larger order. I thought they wanted a bigger discount. We were .....
- They ignored my complaints, but ..... when they refused to refund my money.
- I saw no point in arguing with him. I ..... and said I wanted my money back.

**Reading****Customers first**

**A** Read the article and answer these questions.

- What customer service problems did the author have?
- What examples are given of poor customer service by British utilities?
- What answer does the author give to the question: 'Why is customer service important?'
- Why is customer service difficult to implement? Give three reasons.

**Listening**

**Getting a bank loan**



▲ Patrick Grant

- A** What do you think you would need to offer a bank to get a loan?
- B** 9.1 Listen to the first part of the interview with Patrick Grant, a specialist in finance. He is talking about how to get a loan from a financial organisation.
- 1 What four things does Patrick say about the question in Exercise A?
  - 2 What different types of security for a loan does Patrick mention?
  - 3 Fill in the chart below.

TYPE OF LOAN	PURPOSE OF LOAN	LENGTH OF LOAN
.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....

- C** 9.2 Listen to the second part of the interview and answer these questions.
- 1 What action does Patrick recommend if a request for a loan is turned down?
  - 2 After getting the loan what kinds of things could you negotiate?
  - 3 What is Patrick's final piece of advice?

**Vocabulary**  
**Idioms**



- A** Complete the idioms below with the following words.
- |       |      |      |      |        |         |
|-------|------|------|------|--------|---------|
| trees | fool | muck | rope | object | licence |
|-------|------|------|------|--------|---------|
- 1 You really can sell anything on these Internet auction sites. *It's money for old .....*
  - 2 We're way over budget on this. We'll have to make some cutbacks. Someone needs to tell the marketing department that *money doesn't grow on .....*
  - 3 Every great industrialist will tell you that where *there's .....*, *there's money.*
  - 4 Charging people to park their cars at airports is a *..... to print money.*
  - 5 He's always investing in businesses which have no hope of being successful. I don't know much about business angels but it seems to me that a *..... and his money are soon parted.*
  - 6 Their new headquarters cost millions and millions. They are making so much profit that *money is no .....*
- B** Match the idioms in Exercise A with these definitions.
- a) Be careful with money as there is only a limited amount.
  - b) Money earned easily by doing something which is not difficult. (two idioms)
  - c) Where you find dirt you also find money.
  - d) Stupid people spend money quickly without thinking about it.
  - e) You can spend as much as you like on something.
- C** Comment on each statement using one of the idioms in Exercise A.
- Example: They pay me a fortune and the work is really easy.  
*It's money for old rope, then.*
- 1 He inherited two million dollars and spent it all in less than a year.
  - 2 Gloria can afford to spend huge sums of money each week.
  - 3 Mario set up a garbage collecting company. It was so successful that he was able to retire at 40.
  - 4 My son expects me to buy him anything he wants.

# 4 Feedback

- ▶ business methods in other countries
- ▶ discussing problems and solutions
- ▶ roleplaying meetings to set objectives

## 4.6 Case study Trident Overseas

### Discussion

**1** Imagine you are working on a different continent from your own in which the business culture is different. Answer the questions.

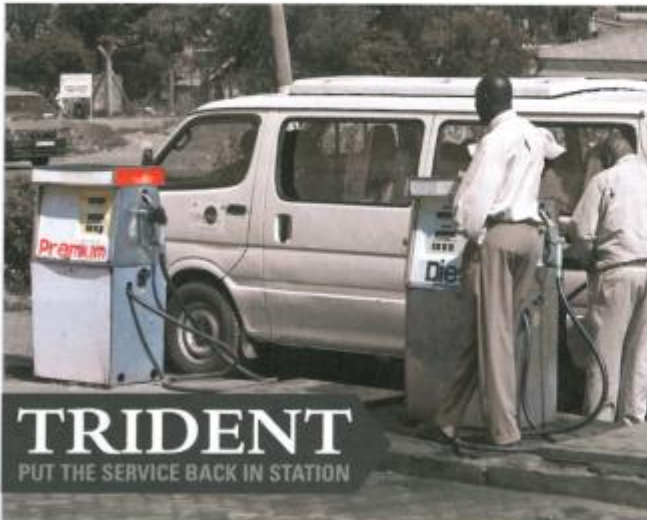
- 1 In your opinion, can the same business methods and ethical standards be applied all over the world? Should they be adapted to local culture?
- 2 What cultural differences might you find? Consider these categories.

management style   personal development  
productivity   recruitment   time management

### Reading for detail

**2** Trident is a British-based oil company which operates in Africa. Read the magazine article and the email from a sales manager. Answer the questions.

- 1 What determines petrol prices?
- 2 Why is customer service important?
- 3 How do local managers often behave?
- 4 Who owns the stations?
- 5 Why has John Thorpe been out of the office?
- 6 What did he find out?



**D**ivers in Europe and America have become accustomed to buying petrol in deserted, fully automated petrol stations. In Africa, however, customers are greeted with a friendly smile and a polite welcome as they are directed to the appropriate pump. They can then sit back and watch uniformed forecourt staff fill the tank, top up the oil and wash the windscreen.

With extreme driving conditions, few new cars and little available income for engine repairs, oil sales are strategic and highly profitable. In many African countries, petrol prices are government-regulated, so quality of service is the crucial factor in attracting customers who will buy oil as well as petrol. At Trident, staff training is a priority; management aim to ensure that customers keep coming back for friendly service and expert advice.

EMAIL

**From:** John Thorpe

Thanks for your email. Sorry I've taken so long to answer. Remember I told you I wanted to get out of the office more? Well, here I am in Kenya! I've just started a new job as sales manager for the southern region – from Nairobi to the Indian Ocean, down to Mombasa near the border with Tanzania.

Business in Africa can be very hierarchical; there are some really good managers, but for a lot of them, their idea of getting things done is to keep shouting until they get what they want. That's going to change! I have three district managers, who each have a team of sales reps who travel around the district meeting dealers. Some of the dealers own their service stations, so we have to handle them with kid gloves, or they'll just go over to the competition. More and more, we have what we call Young Dealers – employees who we train up to run the company-owned stations. So directly or indirectly, there are three layers of management between me and the forecourt staff and mechanics – sometimes all shouting as loud as they can!

In fact, there's been a lot of shouting in the Lamu district, and I've just come back to Nairobi from a three-day fact-finding trip. Their development project is way behind schedule, so I went down to have a word with the people in the field. It turns out it's quite a mess, and I could do with some help to sort it out, actually.

### Internet research

Search for the keywords *project management tips* and decide whether you would make a good or bad project manager. Prepare a one-minute talk to the class to explain your decision.

### Defining words

6 Match the people involved in a project in 1–5 with the definitions a–e.

- 1 Sponsor
  - 2 Project manager
  - 3 Project team members
  - 4 End users
  - 5 Key stakeholders
- a) The people who will benefit from the end results of the project on a day-to-day basis.
  - b) The person or group of people who decided the project was needed in the first place.
  - c) Anybody who might be affected by the project, whether positively or negatively.
  - d) The person responsible for running the project and delivering on time and within budget.
  - e) Staff chosen for the skills they can bring to the project, often from different departments.

7 Read the list of people or groups involved in or affected by a motorway construction project. Match them with the key players 1–5 in Exercise 6.

- a) truck and car drivers
- b) the Ministry of Transport
- c) a senior engineer in a major civil engineering company
- d) a plant hire company, an environmental protection group and villagers living near the proposed route
- e) a civil engineer, a surveyor, an environmental engineer and a transport consultant

### Collocations

8 Complete the sentences with the correct form of the verbs in the box. In some sentences, more than one verb is possible.

achieve establish fix meet miss reach set stick to

- 1 Unless the team really pulls together, we'll never \_\_\_\_\_ **the deadline** on the Malaysian order.
- 2 The project has been difficult so far. However, once we \_\_\_\_\_ **the next milestone**, everything should get easier.
- 3 To make sense of our tasks, we need to \_\_\_\_\_ **a timeframe** within which we can all work.
- 4 Frank is such an unreasonable boss: he always \_\_\_\_\_ **our targets** for overseas sales too high.
- 5 Congratulations! We've \_\_\_\_\_ **our targets** for quality this year due to all your hard work.
- 6 We've been vague about the schedule for too long. It's time we \_\_\_\_\_ **a date** for definite and moved on.
- 7 In the end, I \_\_\_\_\_ **my deadline** for my accountancy project, but it didn't matter: everybody else was late too.
- 8 Sam's excellent at getting things done on time, but she finds it impossible to \_\_\_\_\_ **her budget**.

### Discussion

9 In small groups, take turns to describe your personality, your strengths and weaknesses, and what you would be good or bad at doing in a project.

### Glossary PAGE 153

appraisal interview  
bully  
hectic  
loner  
maverick  
milestone  
pass the buck  
pull your weight



# What price a degree?

Take a random sample of views on higher education in almost any country in the world and you'll find that almost everyone believes that sending as many young people to university as possible is a good thing. What's more difficult to agree on is who should pay. The debate is a controversial one: cuts in higher education funding have sparked unrest in many countries across the world, including Austria, Germany, Chile, Colombia and the UK. Protests in the form of strikes, demonstrations and even riots prove that people are willing to go to great lengths to defend their right to higher education.

Widening access to a university education is an admirable political goal, but the uncomfortable truth is that governments simply do not have the resources to match their ambitions. Faced with this reality, many believe that universities should be paid for by those who get the most benefit from them: graduates. Certainly, a rough cost-benefit analysis suggests that students get good value for their money. A recent UK report estimates that the real cost of a degree is in the region of £100,000. Under the latest system, the average graduate will pay back no more than half of that, and only start to pay if and when their annual earnings are more than double the minimum wage.

However, others feel that this system favours students from well-off families, who can put the prospect of paying off such a sum into perspective. For bright but poorer teenagers from working-class families, taking on such enormous debt is a mountain to climb. Even the scholarships that are intended to offer equal opportunities are mostly awarded to students who have benefited from special coaching at expensive private schools.

If graduates themselves don't pay, then responsibility falls to the taxpayer. Thus, a majority of taxpayers, mostly earning significantly less than graduates, end up paying for a minority of students, many of whom will go on to become comfortably wealthy. Now, robbing the poor to pay the rich might be justified, as long as it can be proved that the overall benefits of education to society are greater than its cost. However, the trend towards cuts in education budgets across the world points unmistakably to the fact that the ordinary taxpayer does not see the benefits to society, and would rather see public money spent elsewhere.

Unfortunately, the question of who should pay has

been exacerbated by a dramatic rise in the cost of providing higher education. Despite a growing cross-border market for education, competition and new delivery models like e-learning have failed to cap universities' spiralling costs. Whether governments continue to provide subsidies or not, and in spite of massive hikes in student fees, university revenues remain significantly lower than their costs. This presents universities with new dilemmas. Should they try to cut costs by having larger classes and less experienced faculty? Should they increase fees further? And should they offer more places to higher-paying foreign students, at the risk of excluding deserving locals?

Intriguingly, private business schools do not meet the same resistance to price increases, and numbers of for-profit institutions have grown rapidly to meet the increasing demand for higher education. How is it that these businesses continue to be profitable when universities are unable to cope? The essential difference is that private business schools have been willing and able to invest money in improving quality and providing new and better facilities and services. These schools understand that they can only increase their perceived value to the customer by offering top-class conditions for learning and by serving their graduates well beyond their degree ceremonies. When private business schools offer a complete program of study, extracurricular activities, counselling, networking, placement and ongoing professional development services, their fees suddenly seem less excessive. Put simply, people will happily pay more if they can see they're getting better value for their money. Public universities, no longer sheltered by benevolent governments and taxpayers, now find themselves exposed to a potential extinction event. Adopting the business school model may prove the only alternative to going the way of the dinosaurs.



INSEAD

## Glossary PAGE 149

cap  
exacerbate  
extracurricular  
faculty  
fee  
hike  
spark  
subsidy

**3** Complete the organizational chart for Trident in East Africa.



**Glossary** PAGE 154

- could do with something
- dealer
- handle someone with kid gloves
- mess
- put up with
- sort out
- top up
- work your fingers to the bone

**Listening**

**4** John Thorpe spoke to three Trident employees on his fact-finding trip. Before you listen, read the notes and add the four names mentioned to the organizational chart.

**5** 1:62-1:64 Listen to extracts from the interviews and complete the notes.

**Abeba, Mechanic**

Says they are losing (1) \_\_\_\_\_ as a result of bad morale.  
 Mr Mbugua sacked some staff in order to hire his (2) \_\_\_\_\_.  
 Mr Mbugua is Mr Wambugu's (3) \_\_\_\_\_.



**Mr Mbugua, Young Dealer**

Would like Abeba to (4) \_\_\_\_\_.  
 Has not checked whether Mrs Mohamed agrees with his (5) \_\_\_\_\_ policy.  
 Says that the company gives him no (6) \_\_\_\_\_.



**Mrs Mohamed, Sales Rep**

Mr Wambugu gives her impossible (7) \_\_\_\_\_ so she has no time to visit dealers.  
 Mr Mbugua treats (8) \_\_\_\_\_ employees very badly.  
 She tried to (9) \_\_\_\_\_ Mr Mbugua's appointment.  
 Believes that Mr Wambugu wants her to (10) \_\_\_\_\_.



**Internet research**

Search for the keywords *managing your manager* to find tips on how to develop a better working relationship with your boss. What advice would you give the Kenyan Trident employees on managing their respective bosses?

**Discussion and roleplay**

**6** John Thorpe has asked for your advice on handling the situation in the Lamu District. In small groups, discuss the problems and brainstorm possible solutions.

**7** 1:65 Listen to a voicemail message from Mr Wambugu. How does this affect your strategy?

**8** With a partner from another group, roleplay meetings with Abeba, Mr Mbugua and Mr Wambugu to explain what action you have decided to take and, where appropriate, set new objectives.

**Internet research**

Search for the keywords *project management tips* and decide whether you would make a good or bad project manager. Prepare a one-minute talk to the class to explain your decision.

**Defining words**

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**Collocations**

**8** Complete the sentences with the correct form of the verbs in the box. In some sentences, more than one verb is possible.

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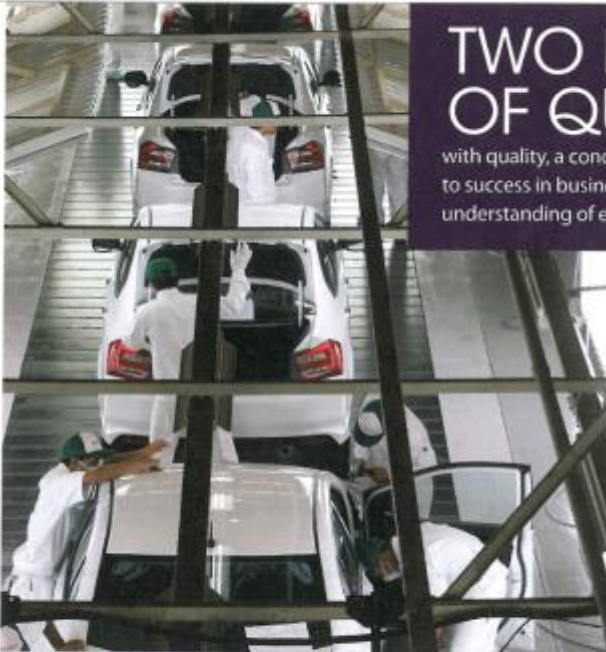
**Discussion**

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**Glossary** PAGE 153

appraisal interview  
bully  
hectic  
loner  
maverick  
milestone  
pass the buck  
pull your weight





## TWO KINDS OF QUALITY

As I write this, I'm travelling on a plane. The executive sitting next to me has carefully unpacked his Bose® headphones and iPod nano. Both these products have associations with quality, a concept which can be misunderstood but which is of great importance to success in business. The Japanese actually have two words for quality, and an understanding of each is necessary to compete today.

everyone in a company to learn how to think and work differently. Too many senior executives adopt the latest fads as they come and go, without taking the time to learn what these processes are and how they work. They leave the detail of quality to the folks below them: a sure way to have a quality programme fail.

5

At the other extreme, some companies become so quality-process obsessed that quality management techniques cease to be a tool to improve the company's performance and instead become an end in themselves. Statistical analysis should be used for questions for which a company doesn't readily have an answer. Instead, organizations sometimes go through long analytical processes for problems that a little common sense could have solved. And nothing sours an organization on quality faster than meaningless work.

6

That brings us to the second of the two Japanese expressions for quality: *miyokuteki hinshitsu*, which means 'enchanted quality'. This kind of quality appeals not to customer expectations about reliability – that things should do what they're supposed to – but rather to a person's aesthetic sense of beauty and elegance. That's what I think Apple® got right with the iPod and its many offspring. The nano belonging to the man sitting next to me is a marvel, not just of miniaturization, but of rounded edges in a world of sharp corners.

7

And as I put on my own Bose headphones, I realize how much I appreciate being able to retreat to my Zen space amid the rumble of the aircraft engines, rattling serving carts and chattering passengers. If these products didn't work properly when you turned them on, nobody would buy them. They would lack *atarimae hinshitsu*. But with the hungry competitors in most markets today, taken-for-granted quality by itself may not get the job done.

### Glossary PAGE 151

commitment  
craze  
end  
fake  
planned/built-in  
obsolescence  
roughly  
struggle  
take for granted

1

Quality remains an elusive target for many Western companies, even though the craze for quality has been around for some twenty years. Yes, progress has been made. In 1980, the average car produced by Ford™ had twice as many product flaws as the average Japanese car. By 1986, the Japanese auto industry lead over Ford had shrunk from 100% to about 20%, as Ford made quality its number one priority. But since that impressive burst of progress, many companies have struggled to keep up on quality, even as the Japanese began building more of their products in the West with local workers.

2

The truth is, the Japanese have an unfair advantage. Japanese culture intrinsically values quality and appreciates the small details. In fact, the Japanese expression for quality is *atarimae hinshitsu*, which can be roughly translated as 'taken-for-granted quality'. What do the Japanese take for granted when it comes to quality? They take for granted that things should work as they are supposed to, and they even see an elegance to things working properly, whether it's cars, subway schedules, traditional flower arranging or the famous tea ceremony.

3

Japanese manufacturers became so obsessed with taken-for-granted quality that they created a stream of innovations that built on the concepts of Ed Deming, the renowned quality management consultant. Their innovations included lean manufacturing, just-in-time industry and design for quality. In today's competitive markets, manufacturers need to make quick progress towards this kind of quality. If they don't, you can take for granted that they will go out of business. This is true even for small, entrepreneurial companies. The ability to create products and services that work is no longer a source of long-term competitive advantage. It has become just the price of admission to most markets. If the stuff your competitors make works better, your customers aren't going to be customers for long.

4

Though much improved, our quality record still isn't what it might be. Here are two traps I've seen a lot of companies fall into on the road to quality. One is faking a commitment. There's no way around it. Whether you're adopting total quality management (TQM), or other quality schemes, these techniques require





# 6 New business

- ▶ starting a new business
- ▶ presenting a one-minute pitch for a new business

## 6.6 Case study Angels or demons?

### Discussion

- 1 Answer the quiz below about starting a business.

### ARE YOU CAPABLE OF MINDING YOUR OWN BUSINESS?

Could you start your own enterprise? Sure, you may have spotted a gap in the market and even devised a cunning business plan for filling it. But do you personally have what it takes to turn a commercial idea into a profitable reality? Take our test to find out. Answer Yes or No.

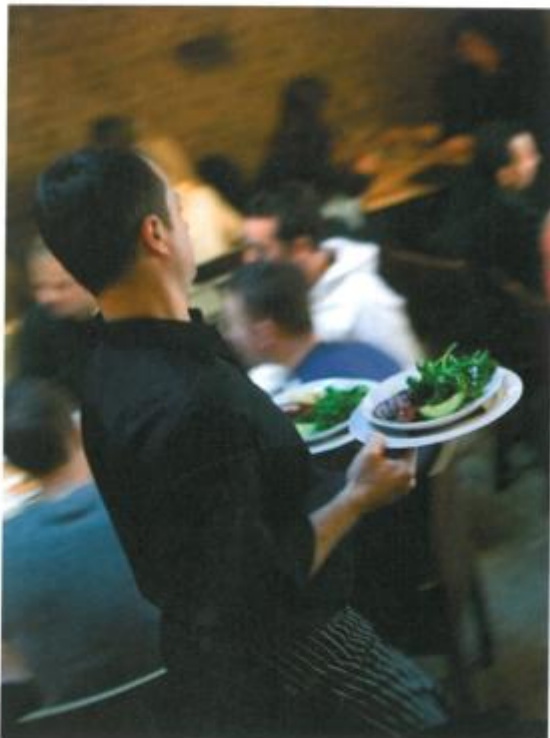
- 1 Are you ready for a complete change?
- 2 Are you up for learning hard and fast?
- 3 Are you willing to take advice from others?
- 4 Can you stay self-motivated, even when faced with disappointment and difficulty?
- 5 Can you be emotionally resilient?
- 6 Are you able to think laterally?
- 7 Are you able to build up good working relationships?
- 8 Can you manage your time?
- 9 Can you work under stress?
- 10 Are you good at financial management?

- 2 Compare your answers with a partner. Say what would be your strongest and weakest points.

### Reading

- 3 Kate Shapiro and Luis Hernández are friends and former co-workers living in Montreal, Canada. Read Kate's email to Luis and answer the questions.

- 1 Why was Luis depressed?
- 2 What does the winner of the fast pitch competition receive?
- 3 Why does Kate want to meet in a restaurant?



EMAIL

**From:** Kate  
**To:** Luis  
**Re:** Let's go for it!  
**Attachment:** Executive summary template

5 Hi Luis,

Hope you got home all right last night. After our meeting with the bank yesterday, you looked really down. We'll just have to accept it as part of the learning curve and look for the 50K  
10 elsewhere.

Anyway, I'm still really excited about our Kaluma restaurant idea. And I'm still upbeat about the fast pitch competition next week. Just the fact we've been accepted for it means we're in with  
15 a chance. I know they don't offer direct funding even if you win, but there are always angels or venture capitalists in the audience who may be interested in the idea if the pitch is a good one. So, let's go for it!

20 I've been doing a tonne of research on the net and I'm attaching an executive summary template which could help us get our pitch ready. Can we meet up Thursday to go over it? I thought we could eat at that new ethnic place  
25 in Cherry Street, you know, sort of get our minds focused in a real restaurant environment.

Drop me a line and let me know what you think.

Kate

- ▶ the business cycle
- ▶ the investment cycle

## Economic cycles

### Reading

- 1 Read the article and choose the best alternative in bold.

#### The Business Cycle

Economic growth usually follows a pattern of contraction and expansion punctuated by troughs and peaks.

- When an economy is in recession, central banks lower interest rates to encourage spending. After reaching market bottom, stock markets start to invest in the technology and industrial sectors. The bull market begins well before recovery is visible in the economy.

The stock market reaches market top before full recovery in the economy, and investors move into staples and services. But as growth increases, so does inflation and central banks raise interest rates in order to control it.

- The markets then expect a period of contraction and become bearish: investors prefer to invest in utilities and bonds. Economic growth starts to slow, the economy moves into recession and the cycle continues.



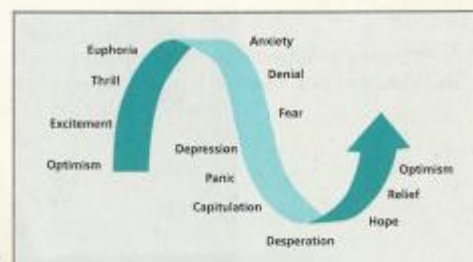
- 1 Interest rates usually **rise** / fall in a period of recession.
- 2 When inflation increases, central banks **lower** / raise interest rates.
- 3 A bull market is **optimistic** / pessimistic about the economy.
- 4 A bear market begins **before** / after recession.
- 5 Bonds are a more popular investment than stocks in a **bull market** / bear market.

- 2 Read the article and mark statements 1–5 T (true) or F (false).

#### The Investment Cycle

The first phase is accumulation. After the market has bottomed, innovators and early adopters begin to buy at attractive prices in a market which is still bearish.

- In the mark-up phase, the fear of the majority of investors of losing money becomes weaker than the desire to make a profit and investors become first bullish, then excited and finally even euphoric.
- In the distribution phase, value investors begin to sell. Prices can remain high for some time and greater fool investors continue to buy, hoping for further rises. Eventually, prices drop and sellers settle for a breakeven or a small loss.
- Mark-down is the most painful phase. It is only when the market has plunged 50% or more that many investors first panic, then give in.



Adapted from <http://www.investopedia.com>

- 1 Early adopters are unwilling to take risks.
- 2 Innovators buy when the market is bullish and sell when it is bearish.
- 3 Most investors buy when prices are rising and sell when they are falling.
- 4 During the distribution phase, value investors wait until prices begin to drop before selling.
- 5 Greater fool investors prefer to make a small loss rather than accept a breakeven.

### Discussion

- 3 In groups, discuss the questions.

- 1 What stage of the business cycle is the economy in now? How long will it last?
- 2 What are the advantages and disadvantages for individuals, companies and countries when central banks a) raise or b) lower interest rates?

## 2.3 Grammar

### Comparing solutions and getting help

**bulky** /'bʌlki/ adjective too big to be carried or stored easily

**carbon footprint** /,kɑ:(r)bən 'fʊtprɪnt/ noun [count] the amount of carbon dioxide released into the atmosphere as a result of the activities of an individual, organization or community

## 2.4 Speaking

### Telephoning

**acquaintance** /ə'kweɪntəns/ noun [count] someone you know a little, who is not a close friend

**IP address** /,aɪ 'pi: ə,dres/ noun [count] COMPUTING

**Internet Protocol address:** a code that represents a particular computer and is used to send messages to it on a network or the Internet

**mustn't grumble** /'mʌs(ə)nt ,grʌmb(ə)l/ phrase SPOKEN used as a reply to someone who asks you whether you are well, for saying that you feel all right

**small talk** /'smɔ:l tɔ:k/ noun [uncount] INFORMAL conversation about things that are not important

**trivial** /'trɪviəl/ adjective not very interesting, serious or valuable

## 2.5 Writing

### Memos

**alleviate** /ə'li:vɪeɪt/ verb [transitive] to make something less painful, severe or serious

**fine** /faɪn/ noun [count] an amount of money that you have to pay because you have broken the law: *Firms could face fines of up to £5,000.*

**forethought** /'fɔ:(r),θɔ:t/ noun [uncount] careful thought and planning that prepares you well for a future event

**forthwith** /'fɔ:(r)'wɪθ/ adverb FORMAL LEGAL immediately

**imperative** /ɪm'pɛrətɪv/ adjective FORMAL extremely important and urgent

**officialese** /ə'fɪʃə'li:z/ noun [uncount] the way of speaking or writing used by people who work in government offices, especially when ordinary people cannot understand it

**solicit** /sə'lɪsɪt/ verb [transitive] FORMAL to ask someone for something such as money or support

**time frame** /'taɪm ,freɪm/ noun [count] the period of time during which something happens or must happen

**unambiguous** /,ʌnæm'bigjuəs/ adjective clear and with only one possible meaning

## 2.6 Case study

### Meteor Bank

**down time** /'daʊn taɪm/ noun [uncount] time when a computer or other machine is not working

**drag someone kicking and screaming** /'dræg sʌmwʌn ,kɪkɪŋ ænd 'skri:mɪŋ/ phrase to make someone do something that they do not want to do

**malicious** /mə'liʃəs/ adjective deliberately wanting to hurt someone or cause damage

**morale** /mə'reɪl/ noun [count] the amount of enthusiasm that a person or group of people feel about their situation at a particular time

**outsource** /,aʊtsɔ:(r)s/ verb [intransitive/transitive] to arrange for work to be done by people from outside your company, usually by a company that is expert in that type of work

**recruit** /rɪ'kru:t/ verb [intransitive/transitive] to get someone to work in a company or join an organization

**subsidiary** /səb'sɪdɪəri/ noun [count] a company that is owned by a larger company

**turnover** /'tɜ:(r)n,əʊvə(r)/ noun [count/uncount] the value of the goods and services that a company sells in a particular period of time

## 3 Quality

### 3.1 About business

#### What quality means

**commitment** /kə'mɪtmənt/ noun [singular uncount] a strong belief that something is good and that you should support it: *The government has failed to honour its commitment to the railways.*

**craze** /kreɪz/ noun [count] something that suddenly becomes very popular, but only for a short time

**elusive** /ɪ'lu:sv/ adjective an elusive person or animal is difficult or impossible to find or catch

**enchancing** /ɪn'tʃɑ:ntɪŋ/ adjective very interesting and attractive

**end** /end/ noun [count] the reason for a particular action or the result you want to achieve

**fad** /fæd/ noun [count] something that is popular or fashionable for only a short time

**fake** /feɪk/ verb [transitive] to pretend to have a feeling that you do not have

**intrinsically** /ɪn'trɪnsɪkli/ adverb relating to the essential qualities or features of something or someone

**planned/built-in obsolescence** /'plænd/'bɪlt ɪn ,ɒbsə'les(ə)ns/ noun [uncount] the practice of making products that will quickly become old-fashioned, or will not last long, so that people will need to replace them

**rattle** /'ræt(ə)l/ verb [intransitive] if something rattles, it makes short sharp knocking sounds as it moves or shakes

**roughly** /'rʌfli/ adverb approximately: *The meeting lasted roughly 50 minutes.*

**rumble** /'rʌmb(ə)l/ verb [intransitive] to make a continuous deep sound

**sake** /seɪk/ noun [count usually singular] the purpose of doing, getting or achieving something: *For clarity's sake, let me explain that again.*

**sour** /'sauə(r)/ verb [intransitive/transitive] if a situation sours, it stops being successful or satisfactory

**stream** /stri:m/ noun [count] a continuous flow of people or things

**struggle** /'strʌg(ə)l/ verb [intransitive] to try hard to do something that you find very difficult: *He struggled to open the bottle with a knife.*

**take for granted** /,teɪk fə(r) 'grɑ:ntɪd/ phrase to expect something always to exist or happen in a particular way: *People take it for granted that the weather in Spain will be sunny.*

**trap** /træp/ noun [count] a mistake or problem that you should try to avoid

**white goods** /'waɪt gudz/ noun [count] large pieces of electrical equipment used in people's homes

- ▶ dynamic collocations for CVs
- ▶ writing your CV
- ▶ roleplaying a job interview

## CVs and recruitment

### Collocations

**1** Using 'power verbs' to make dynamic collocations helps your CV have maximum impact. Connect the verbs in the boxes to as many nouns as possible.

I	+	achieved acquired coordinated conducted dealt with demonstrated designed developed	+	results problems the ability to skills a study systems a project experience
I	+	improved liaised with managed met organized ran reduced set up	+	performance a programme colleagues objectives errors procedures an event a budget

**2** With a partner, brainstorm more nouns that collocate with these 'power verbs'.

arrange   check   ensure   establish   follow   handle  
 increase   introduce   monitor   plan   research   update

### Writing and roleplay

**3** Imagine yourself ten years from now. Using the framework below, complete your CV with collocations from Exercises 1 and 2. Then exchange CVs with a partner and roleplay job interviews for positions you would like to obtain in ten years' time.

**Glossary** PAGE 148

- achieve
- budget
- deal with
- handle
- liaise
- objective
- reference
- set up

Name .....

Date of birth .....

Nationality .....

Contact details .....

Career objective(s) .....

Major achievements .....

Professional experience .....

Education & training .....

Skills & abilities .....

Other .....

References .....



# Business fundamentals

▶ industry groups and sectors

▶ types of business, business models and management structure

## Business organization

### Discussion

**1** With a partner, decide which industry group and sector these companies belong to.

BASF Boeing Carrefour China Life GlaxoSmithKline Google Nestlé Total

Industry group	Sector
Oil & Gas	Oil & Gas Producers, Oil Equipment & Distribution, Alternative Energy
Basic Materials	Chemicals, Forestry & Paper, Industrial Metals & Mining
Industrials	Construction, Aerospace & Defence, Packaging, Electronic & Electrical Equipment, Engineering, Transportation, Business Support Services
Consumer Goods	Automobiles, Food & Beverages, Personal & Household Goods, Tobacco
Health Care	Health Care Equipment and Services, Pharmaceuticals & Biotechnology
Consumer Services	Retail, Media, Travel & Leisure
Telecommunications	Fixed and Mobile Telecommunications
Utilities	Electricity, Gas, Water
Financials	Banks, Insurance, Real Estate, Equities
Technology	Software, Hardware, Computer Services

**2** List five large companies in your country. Identify their industry group and sector.

### Reading

**3** Read the summaries and name companies or people you know for each category.

#### Type of business

**Sole trader/Sole proprietorship** The business is owned by one person who is responsible for any debts.

**Partnership** Two or more people run the business together. All partners share profits and losses.

**Limited company/Limited liability company (Ltd/LLC)** The company is responsible for any losses, not the owners. The company is private, i.e. shares cannot be sold to the public.

**Public limited company/Corporation (plc/Corp/Inc)** The company is owned by shareholders who receive dividends and who may gain or lose money if the share price goes up or down.

#### Business model

**B2B** (business to business) Companies sell to companies.

**B2C** (business to consumer) Companies sell to individuals.

**C2C** (consumer to consumer) Individuals sell to individuals.

**B2B2C** (business to business to consumer) Third-party vendors or consultants sell a company's products to consumers.

#### Management structure

**The Board** Chairman, CEO, CFO, Non-Executive Directors

**The Management Committee/top management** CEO, CFO, Directors of Marketing, HR, IT, etc.

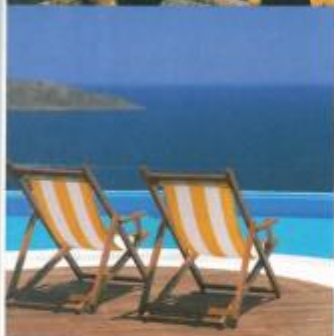
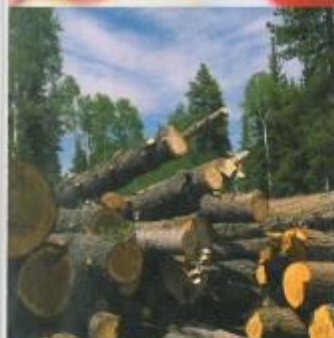
**Middle management** Managers of divisions, departments, branches, etc.

**Supervisory/first line management** Supervisors, team leaders, etc.

### Discussion

**4** In groups, discuss the questions.

- 1 Which sectors and types of business would/wouldn't you like to work in? Why?
- 2 What level of management do you hope to reach in the short term and in the long term?



Glossary PAGE 148

beverage  
dividend  
equities  
utility

# 3 Quality

- ▶ the Japanese approach to quality
- ▶ product quality



## 3.1 About business What quality means

### Discussion

**1** The box below contains factors that influence decisions to buy. Number the factors 1–7, depending on how important they are to you. (1 = most important; 7 = least important).

design durability environmental friendliness  
modernity price quality value for money

**2** Discuss how the order would change if you were buying:

- a car
- a washing machine
- an mp3 player
- a packet of breakfast cereal
- a leather bag
- a laptop

### Scan reading

**3** Read the article opposite. Match the headings a–h with paragraphs 1–7. There is one extra heading.

- a) No survival without quality
- b) Reliability is not enough
- c) Quality and cost
- d) Quality culture
- e) Superficial quality
- f) Quality in design
- g) Closing the gap?
- h) Quality for quality's sake

### Reading for detail

**4** Read the article again and mark these statements *T* (true) or *F* (false).

- 1 Western companies have caught up with the Japanese in terms of quality.
- 2 The Japanese expect things to work properly.
- 3 Producing reliable products guarantees a strong market position.
- 4 For a quality programme to succeed, senior management do not need to understand the key concepts.
- 5 Quality analysis is a sensible way to solve any performance problems.
- 6 The iPod is not the only Apple® product which has enchanting quality.

**5** Find words or expressions in the text with the following meanings.

- 1 something which suddenly becomes very popular (paragraph 1)
- 2 try hard to do something difficult (paragraph 1)
- 3 expect something to be there as normal (paragraph 2)
- 4 a variety of objects or things (paragraph 3)
- 5 mistakes you should avoid (paragraph 4)
- 6 things which are fashionable for a short time (paragraph 4)
- 7 to make something unsuccessful or unpleasant (paragraph 5)
- 8 something surprising or impressive (paragraph 6)

### Listening

**6** 1:46 Industry analyst, Warwick Fender, is speaking about quality in the household electrical goods sector. What products do you think he will talk about? Listen and check.

**7** 1:46 Listen again and complete the sentences.

- 1 The white goods industry has been accused of designing products to last \_\_\_\_\_.
- 2 Consumers today expect to \_\_\_\_\_ electrical goods more often.
- 3 Repairing products is expensive due to the cost of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4 Ethical consumers are reassured that it is increasingly possible to \_\_\_\_\_ products.

### Discussion

**8** In groups look at the products in Exercise 2 and discuss the questions. Then present a summary of your group's ideas to the class.

- 1 Do the products have taken-for-granted quality, or enchanting quality, or both?
- 2 Are any of the products designed with planned obsolescence in mind?

### Internet research

Search for the keywords *planned obsolescence* or *built-in obsolescence* to find examples of this practice and find out why manufacturers need to take it into account when designing new products. List the arguments for and against and report back to the class.

# 6 New business

- ▶ starting a new business
- ▶ presenting a one-minute pitch for a new business

## 6.6 Case study Angels or demons?

### Discussion

- 1 Answer the quiz below about starting a business.

### ARE YOU CAPABLE OF MINDING YOUR OWN BUSINESS?

Could you start your own enterprise? Sure, you may have spotted a gap in the market and even devised a cunning business plan for filling it. But do you personally have what it takes to turn a commercial idea into a profitable reality? Take our test to find out. Answer Yes or No.

- 1 Are you ready for a complete change?
- 2 Are you up for learning hard and fast?
- 3 Are you willing to take advice from others?
- 4 Can you stay self-motivated, even when faced with disappointment and difficulty?
- 5 Can you be emotionally resilient?
- 6 Are you able to think laterally?
- 7 Are you able to build up good working relationships?
- 8 Can you manage your time?
- 9 Can you work under stress?
- 10 Are you good at financial management?

- 2 Compare your answers with a partner. Say what would be your strongest and weakest points.

### Reading

- 3 Kate Shapiro and Luis Hernández are friends and former co-workers living in Montreal, Canada. Read Kate's email to Luis and answer the questions.

- 1 Why was Luis depressed?
- 2 What does the winner of the fast pitch competition receive?
- 3 Why does Kate want to meet in a restaurant?



EMAIL

From: Kate  
To: Luis  
Re: Let's go for it!  
Attachment: Executive summary template

5 Hi Luis,

Hope you got home all right last night. After our meeting with the bank yesterday, you looked really down. We'll just have to accept it as part of the learning curve and look for the 50K

10 elsewhere.

Anyway, I'm still really excited about our Kaluma restaurant idea. And I'm still upbeat about the fast pitch competition next week. Just the fact we've been accepted for it means we're in with

15 a chance. I know they don't offer direct funding even if you win, but there are always angels or venture capitalists in the audience who may be interested in the idea if the pitch is a good one. So, let's go for it!

20 I've been doing a tonne of research on the net and I'm attaching an executive summary template which could help us get our pitch ready. Can we meet up Thursday to go over it? I thought we could eat at that new ethnic place

25 in Cherry Street, you know, sort of get our minds focused in a real restaurant environment.

Drop me a line and let me know what you think.

Kate

# Business fundamentals

Completing income statements

Producing a breakeven analysis chart

## Breakeven analysis

### Reading

1 Read the article and complete figures a–d in income statements A and B.

Glossary PAGE 148

cost of goods sold  
fixed cost  
operating profit  
plot  
royalty  
sales revenue  
variable cost  
wholesaler



Zak and Zeb Duchovny started their own independent record label five years ago. ZaZeD

Records receives around half of a CD's €15 recommended retail price (RRP) from wholesalers, who then sell on to record stores at around 60% of RRP. Choosing the right music is critical: income statements A and B illustrate the difference between selling (A) 10,000 and (B) 100,000 records. Clearly, identifying breakeven point is essential. What's more, the music business is going through a major revolution with the rise of digital downloads (DD). For ZaZeD Records, DD sales are bad news: RRP's are significantly lower, so although manufacturing costs are close to zero and royalties one third lower, revenues are 33% less than for CDs.

ZaZeD Records Income statement (figures in €K)	A	B
Sales revenue	75	750
<i>Less variable costs</i>		
Cost of goods sold	6	60
Promotion	7.5	75
Artists' royalties	10	100
Mechanical royalties	6	60
<b>Total variable costs</b>	<b>a) ___</b>	<b>c) ___</b>
<i>Less fixed costs</i>		
Salaries, rent, utilities, etc.	150	150
<b>Operating profit (loss)</b>	<b>b) ___ ( )</b>	<b>d) ___</b>



2 Draw a breakeven analysis chart with € on the vertical axis from 0 to 750, and sales on the horizontal axis from 10K to 100K. (See the example on page 119.) Enter the following information:

- 1 Draw a horizontal line representing ZaZeD Records' fixed costs.
- 2 Plot the sales revenues for turnover of a) 10,000 and b) 100,000 albums and draw a straight line connecting these two points.
- 3 Plot the total for fixed plus variable costs for turnover of a) 10,000 and b) 100,000 albums and draw a straight line connecting these two points.
- 4 With a partner, calculate the same revenues and costs for digital downloads rather than CDs. Using another colour, draw lines for DD revenues and total costs on the chart.
- 5 Draw vertical lines from the horizontal axis to the points where the revenue and total costs lines cross to identify the respective breakeven points.

### Discussion

3 In small groups, discuss the questions.

- 1 What sort of questions does a breakeven analysis provide answers to?
- 2 What are the implications of the trend towards digital downloads for record labels, artists, composers and consumers?

▶ dynamic for CVs

▶ writing

▶ roleplay interview

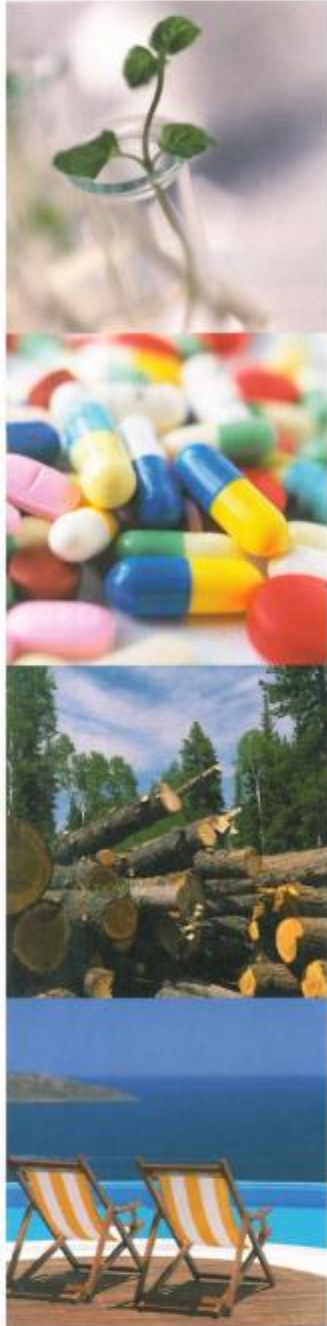
Glossary

achieve  
budget  
deal with  
handle  
liaise  
objectively  
refer to  
set up



# Business fundamentals

- ▶ industry groups and sectors
- ▶ types of business, business models and management structure



## Business organization

### Discussion

1 With a partner, decide which industry group and sector these companies belong to.

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Consumer Goods	Automobiles, Food & Beverages, Personal & Household Goods, Tobacco
Health Care	Health Care Equipment and Services, Pharmaceuticals & Biotechnology
Consumer Services	Retail, Media, Travel & Leisure
Telecommunications	Fixed and Mobile Telecommunications
Utilities	Electricity, Gas, Water
Financials	Banks, Insurance, Real Estate, Equities
Technology	Software, Hardware, Computer Services

2 List five large companies in your country. Identify their industry group and sector.

### Reading

3 Read the summaries and name companies or people you know for each category.

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Glossary PAGE 148

beverage  
dividend  
equities  
utility

### Discussion

4 In groups, discuss the questions.

- 1 Which sectors and types of business would/wouldn't you like to work in? Why?
- 2 What level of management do you hope to reach in the short term and in the long term?

# 1

# Building a career

- ▶ identifying strengths and weaknesses
- ▶ making a five-year plan
- ▶ presenting proposals

## Glossary PAGE 150

campus  
draw up  
heritage  
metropolis  
procurement  
sit back  
tailor

## 1.6 Case study Mangalia Business School

### Discussion

**1** Decide which of the following features are more advantageous for an international business school.

history: more than 100 years old *or* modern new school  
funding: public *or* private  
students: 80% local and 20% foreign *or* 20% local and 80% foreign  
faculty: business leaders *or* researchers  
location: international metropolis *or* small seaside town  
site: campus *or* city centre

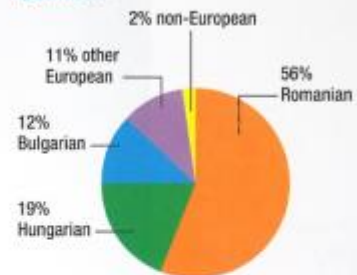
### Reading

**2** Read the information about Mangalia Business School and list its strengths and weaknesses in terms of its ability to compete in a global market.

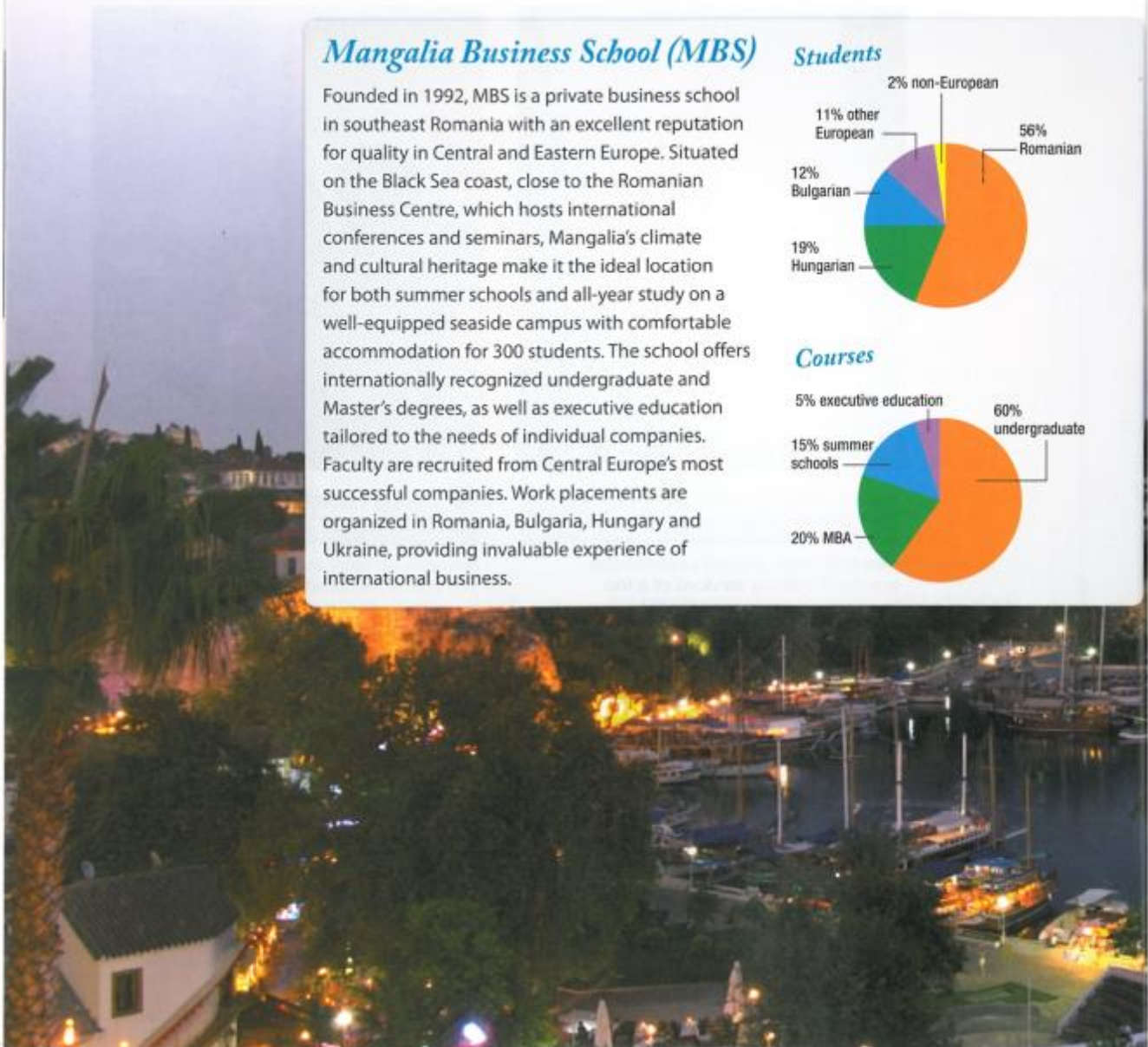
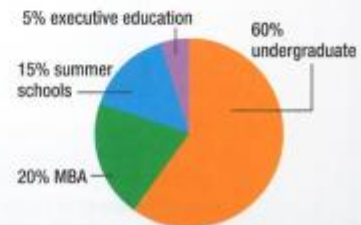
### Mangalia Business School (MBS)

Founded in 1992, MBS is a private business school in southeast Romania with an excellent reputation for quality in Central and Eastern Europe. Situated on the Black Sea coast, close to the Romanian Business Centre, which hosts international conferences and seminars, Mangalia's climate and cultural heritage make it the ideal location for both summer schools and all-year study on a well-equipped seaside campus with comfortable accommodation for 300 students. The school offers internationally recognized undergraduate and Master's degrees, as well as executive education tailored to the needs of individual companies. Faculty are recruited from Central Europe's most successful companies. Work placements are organized in Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary and Ukraine, providing invaluable experience of international business.

#### Students



#### Courses



- ▶ character descriptions
- ▶ adjectives to describe character
- ▶ collocations relating to project management

#### 4.2 Vocabulary Managing people and projects



#### Discussion

**1** With a partner, match the character types in the box with the descriptions a–e. Which type would be the most difficult to manage, and why? Which type are you?


the bully   the leader   the maverick   the team player   the workaholic

- a) This character does things their own way. They may be effective, but they're difficult to control.
- b) This person has a natural ability to encourage others and take a project through to success.
- c) This person doesn't know when to stop, and they often believe the office would collapse without them.
- d) This person imposes their personality on others, making other people feel bad in the workplace.
- e) This person has a natural ability to fit in. They make positive contributions and build good relationships.


**2** Which character types in Exercise 1 do you associate with the adjectives in the box?

aggressive   anxious   charismatic   confident   cooperative   decisive   easy-going  
friendly   helpful   impatient   independent   individual   motivating   obsessive  
over-critical   single-minded   stressed   unpredictable

#### Listening

**3**  1:59 Listen to an HR manager and a line manager talking about three members of their team. Decide which of the character types in Exercise 1 describes each person.

Anna \_\_\_\_\_   Bjorn \_\_\_\_\_   Katia \_\_\_\_\_

**4**  1:59 Listen again. Which adjectives do you hear that confirm your answers in Exercise 3?

#### Expressions

**5** The expressions in bold were all in the recording. Match expressions 1–8 with the replies a–h. Use a dictionary to help you if necessary.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 Marion is in danger of <b>burning out</b> .           | a) Except Rob, but he doesn't like anyone!             |
| 2 How are you <b>settling in</b> ?                      | b) I wish I could, but things are just too hectic.     |
| 3 If we want to succeed, we must <b>pull together</b> . | c) I know. He asked me to do his report for him!       |
| 4 He's always <b>passing the buck</b> !                 | d) No, you can rely on me.                             |
| 5 She <b>gets on well with</b> everyone.                | e) Perhaps we should run a team-building course?       |
| 6 Don't <b>let me down</b> , will you?                  | f) Yes. She's a workaholic. It's affecting her health. |
| 7 Dave isn't <b>pulling his weight</b> !                | g) You're right, and that means more work for us!      |
| 8 You should learn to <b>take it easy</b> .             | h) Fine, thanks, though I still don't know everyone.   |

# 4 Feedback

- ▶ business methods in other countries
- ▶ discussing problems and solutions
- ▶ roleplaying meetings to set objectives

## 4.6 Case study Trident Overseas

### Discussion

**1** Imagine you are working on a different continent from your own in which the business culture is different. Answer the questions.

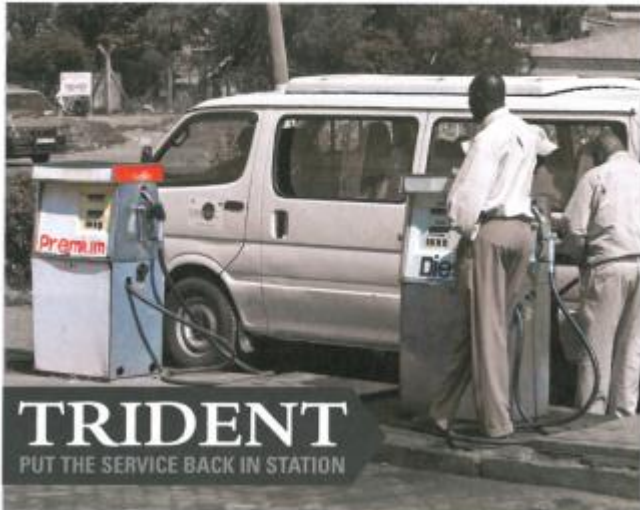
- 1 In your opinion, can the same business methods and ethical standards be applied all over the world? Should they be adapted to local culture?
- 2 What cultural differences might you find? Consider these categories.

management style   personal development  
productivity   recruitment   time management

### Reading for detail

**2** Trident is a British-based oil company which operates in Africa. Read the magazine article and the email from a sales manager. Answer the questions.

- 1 What determines petrol prices?
- 2 Why is customer service important?
- 3 How do local managers often behave?
- 4 Who owns the stations?
- 5 Why has John Thorpe been out of the office?
- 6 What did he find out?



**D**rivers in Europe and America have become accustomed to buying petrol in deserted, fully automated petrol stations. In Africa, however, customers are greeted with a friendly smile and a polite welcome as they are directed to the appropriate pump. They can then sit back and watch uniformed forecourt staff fill the tank, top up the oil and wash the windscreen.

With extreme driving conditions, few new cars and little available income for engine repairs, oil sales are strategic and highly profitable. In many African countries, petrol prices are government-regulated, so quality of service is the crucial factor in attracting customers who will buy oil as well as petrol. At Trident, staff training is a priority; management aim to ensure that customers keep coming back for friendly service and expert advice.

