Business English Reader

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Praha & EU: Investujeme do vaší budoucnosti
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Introduction

Business English Reader is a learning aid intended for students pursuing their education at the Private University College of Economic Studies in both Bachelor’s (undergraduate) and follow-up Master’s (postgraduate) degree programmes. It focuses on the English reading skill practice and vocabulary development of students at lower intermediate and above level of proficiency. It is designed to be used as a complementary classroom material or homework assignment resource within the blended learning environment in PUCES business English courses.

The authentic articles and extracts adopted from open sources and adapted for the Reader cover a range of general and business topics and useful lexis. They are supplemented with tasks and exercises of different types, developing learning strategies to help students identify the main ideas as well as specific language and build their vocabulary repertoire through both skim and scan reading.

The Reader was created at the PUCES department of languages and social sciences within the EU-funded grant project “Innovation of PUCES Economics and Management Study Programme”.
Swartz, the brilliant young software programmer and Internet activist who inspired awe and reverence from leading figures in the technology world, died in his Brooklyn apartment on Friday. New York City’s chief medical examiner ruled the death a suicide by hanging. Swartz was 26 years old.

A computer prodigy, Swartz co-authored an early version of the popular Internet tool RSS at age 14 and would later become an early leader of Reddit, the social website that has become a locus of Internet activism.

A passionate advocate for social justice, Swartz founded the group Demand Progress, which played a crucial role in persuading the U.S. Congress to back down from controversial antipiracy legislation last year.

Swartz believed deeply that information – particularly that which might benefit society – should be made available for free to the public. In 2011, Swartz was indicted on federal data-theft charges for breaking into the MIT computer system and allegedly downloading 4.8 million documents from the subscription-based academic research database JSTOR.

Swartz was facing up to 35 years in prison and a fine of up to $1 million. He pleaded not guilty. His trial was set to begin in April.

In 2008, Swartz wrote a program to download some 20 million pages of legal documents from PACER, the Public Access to Court Electronic Records system, which charges 10 cents per page for access. Working with other activists, Swartz sought to make the documents available to the public at no charge. The government cracked down on this effort but did not file charges.

He later founded the group Demand Progress, which would play a key role in the epic 2011–12 battle between Internet activists and the entertainment industry over controversial antipiracy legislation. (TIME Warner, parent company of TIME, supported the legislation, which was ultimately defeated.)

Swartz, who studied at Stanford University for one year before dropping out, would later become a fellow at Harvard University’s Edmond J. Safra Center for Ethics, where he worked with Lawrence Lessig, the renowned law professor and activist.

Swartz wrote candidly and movingly about his struggles with depression and other illnesses. In a 2007 blog post, he described lying in bed for weeks at a time. “Go outside and get some fresh air or cuddle with a loved one and you don’t feel any better, only more upset at being unable to feel the joy that everyone else seems to feel,” Swartz wrote. “Everything gets colored by the sadness.”

Tim Berners-Lee, who is considered the founder of the WWW, wrote on Twitter: “Aaron dead. World wanderers, we have lost a wise elder. Hackers for right, we are one down. Parents all, we have lost a child. Let us weep.”

Comprehensions questions
1. What made Swartz to be considered a child genius /prodigy?
2. What hacking activity made him famous without being accused /persecuted?
3. What successful pressure group did he co-fond? What legislation did they help to prevent in the US Congress?
4. What activity brought him court charges that could lead to long imprisonment?
5. What can be said about his academic career?
6. What disease did he suffer from? How did he describe it?
7. What did the founder of the WWW write about his untimely voluntary death?

Discussion
• Can you recall some other personalities connected with the world of computers and IT?
• What is your opinion on the issue of information freedom versus copyright and intellectual property rights?
• Do you use software which you have not paid for?
• How often do you watch movies or play games for free?
• Have you heard about the Pirate political parties? Do you support their views?
• Do you use “shareware” and “freeware”?
• Can you recall any famous hackers' attack or information leak or security threat?

**Computer collocations**

Match the verb on the left with the item on the right.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. surf</th>
<th>a) a program</th>
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<tr>
<td>2. enter</td>
<td>b) files off the Internet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. run</td>
<td>c) on an icon</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. download</td>
<td>d) data into your computer</td>
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<td>5. click</td>
<td>e) a computer</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. transmit</td>
<td>f) the Internet</td>
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<td>7. crash</td>
<td>g) a virus</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. install</td>
<td>h) the trash</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. burn</td>
<td>i) an attachment</td>
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<td>10. send</td>
<td>j) the Web</td>
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<td>11. empty</td>
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<td>12. browse</td>
<td>l) to a better model</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. upgrade</td>
<td>m) CDs</td>
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<tr>
<td>14. cut and paste</td>
<td>n) software</td>
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Accounting standards: Eternal convergence

1. HOW is an investor to compare financial statements from companies in two different countries? That was the question asked a decade ago when the International Accounting Standards Board (IASB) began drawing up a new set of international financial reporting standards. At the same time, the IASB set out to harmonise its standards with America’s Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB). It even seemed possible that if the two boards got close enough with harmonisation that America might adopt the international standards wholesale.

2. […] However, a wholesale adoption of the international standards now seems off the table. Instead, the talk is of “endorsement”. The FASB, rather than going out of business or becoming America’s local branch of the IASB, would remain America’s standard-setter, and America’s generally accepted accounting principles (known as US GAAP) would not be replaced by international rules. […] FASB would work with IASB on the drawing up of standards, only adding modifications when American conditions required it. And only in the rare cases, where the two boards could not agree, would it issue a different standard. […] This, however, raises several awkward questions. If it is predetermined that differences would be rare, does it really make sense to keep the FASB and US GAAP? If differences are not rare – and worse, if they are not trivial – is the benefit of a single set of standards not lost?

3. Already, many countries that have “adopted” the IASB’s standards have added local exceptions to the rules, threatening the project of a single, global set of standards. This headache has been on the mind of Hans Hoogervorst, who took over as chairman IASB last year. He has been reminding smaller countries to fully accept his organisation’s rules. Jawboning smaller countries will get much harder if the world’s biggest capital market, America, pointedly insists on its own tailored version of the standards.

4. American critics of IASB make several points, many to do with fair-value or “mark-to-market” accounting of financial instruments. FASB once wanted all such instruments booked at their market value, whereas IASB favoured an approach that would book most such assets at their historical cost. The difference has largely been narrowed, through the ongoing convergence process. […] But even as the boards have gotten closer on this point, residual American skepticism remains. Fair-value partisans think that FASB has already gone too far in IASB’s direction, and worry about political influence on the standard-setters. The critics think that European governments have tried to protect their banks by hiding market losses on the balance sheets.

5. The two boards are still working on convergence in three other areas: revenue recognition, insurance and leasing. […] Revenue recognition governs nothing less than when a company can say it has earned a certain chunk of money for a piece of contracted work. Insurance is less contentious, but leasing is giving companies the jitters. Both boards have agreed that they should move more leases (those longer than a year) on to the balance sheet (with the obligation to pay as a liability and the right to use the leased thing as an asset). The sums at stake are big, and could cause some companies to bust loan covenants with banks.

6. By and large, the boards have brought the goal of a single set of standards closer. But the endpoint – truly unified standards that make financial statements around the world comparable – remains distant. Dennis Nally, the boss of PricewaterhouseCoopers, one of the “Big Four” accounting firms, which all support the adoption of global standards, points to several more hurdles. […] (Americans in favour of international standards are not keen to look as though they are foisting rules, developed by unelected bureaucrats, on hardworking American business-owners.) The ongoing consequences of the financial crisis have also sharpened opinions all round. And smaller companies who do not do much dealing abroad see the switch to international standards as just another unwelcome cost.

7. So the politics of sovereignty and national pride sometimes seem to be as big a hurdle as technical accounting questions are. American opinions are, of course, due a good deal of deference. Its adoption of international standards would go a long way to getting companies like India, China and Japan on board as well. But if America is unlikely to ever accept IASB’s standards, some grumble, perhaps it should no longer have the biggest say on IASB’s board: four of 14 seats.

(Adapted from The Economist, on-line edition, 9 May 2012)
Discussion and tasks
1. What do abbreviations IASB, FASB and US GAAP stand for?
2. What is the ultimate objective of setting internationally unified accounting standards?
3. Who is in favour of (and against) these global standards?
4. What are the main obstacles to narrowing the differences between IASB and American FASB?
5. Do some Internet research and find out what “mark-to-market” accounting is.

Vocabulary
1. In each paragraph, find an -ing form of verbs meaning
   a) preparing something in writing
   b) increasing the number of something
   c) using public pressure to persuade countries to something
   d) putting something to a place where it cannot be found
   e) making somebody nervous (an idiom)
   f) forcing someone to experience something they do not want
   g) arranging for somebody to join a group (an idiom)
2. There are two -ing form adjectives in the 6th paragraph. Find them.
3. Look up four different noun collocations with “accounting” in the whole article.
A surprising map of the best and worst countries to be born into today

Max Fisher posted this map and commentary onto the Washington Post website in January 2013.

If you came into the world today and could pick your nationality, there are at least 15 better choices than to be born American, according to a study by the Economist Intelligence Unit. The firm looked at 80 countries, scoring them across 11 variables to determine “which country will provide the best opportunities for a healthy, safe and prosperous life in the years ahead.” The results, mapped out above, are both surprising and not.

The study incorporates hard data on facets such as economic opportunity, health standards and political freedoms; subjective “quality of life” surveys; and economic forecasts for 2030, when an infant born today would be entering adulthood. Even gender equality, job security (as measured by unemployment data), violent crime rates and climate are taken into account.

Here’s some of what I found interesting about the data. There’s surely more here — just as there are surely plenty of holes to be poked in any endeavor to understand life and opportunity in only 11 variables.

1) __________________________________

The correlation between wealth, as measured by gross domestic product (GDP) per capita, and happiness is clear, though not nearly as clear as you might expect. The report concludes from the results that “GDP per head alone explains some two thirds of the inter-country variation in life satisfaction, and the estimated relationship is linear.”

If you look at the map, you’ll see that the world’s richest countries score highly, but not in the top category. The United States and Germany, two of the world’s economic powerhouses, tied for 16th place; Japan ranks way down at 25th. Britain and France score even worse.

The Middle East offers some great lessons on money and well-being. The region scores poorly in general, with two exceptions. Democratic and developed Israel, which is about as rich per person as the European Union average, ranks 20th. But the top-ranking country in the region, at 18th, is the oil-rich United Arab Emirates. Even more telling, though, is the gulf between the U.A.E. and Saudi Arabia, which for all its oil money scores much lower, perhaps due in part to problems such as repressive laws or a lower human development index.

2) __________________________________

Yes, it’s yet another international ranking on individual well-being where the Nordic countries come out on top, alongside Ireland, Australia, New Zealand and Canada. The top 15 also include Austria and Switzerland, which seem to meet similar criteria. The three best places to be born are, in order: Switzerland, Australia and Norway.

Here’s a surprise: the top-ranked countries also include Asia’s two super-rich city-states, Hong Kong and Singapore, as well as Taiwan. I’ll admit to being surprised by the data’s suggestion that a newborn today is better off being Taiwanese than American or German, particularly because Taiwan’s aging population and declining birthrate could lead the economy to decline. But Taiwan does enjoy good political freedoms and improving health and living standards.
There is some interesting variation among the top-ranked countries. New Zealand ranks seventh overall even though its GDP per capita is low compared to many worse-ranking European countries. Singapore, though ranked sixth, is not a liberal democracy by any stretch, and life satisfaction in the hyper-competitive city seems relatively low. But it sure is rich.

3) _______________________________________________________________________

In spite of Asia’s miraculous growth and of Europe’s economic decline, factors such as political rights and health standards keep the Occident overwhelmingly desirable. Other than a small number of exceptions, most of which are mentioned above, the top third of the rankings is dominated by Europe, America and Australia.

Even Portugal and Spain, for all their very real troubles, score highly. A child born today is likely to have a better life, according to the data, in Poland or Greece — yes, Greece — than in rising economic giants such as Brazil, Turkey or China.

4) _______________________________________________________________________

Poor countries with a high incidence of crime, poverty or political oppression all rank badly, but the variance within the bottom fifth is fascinating. The last three countries on the ranking list, in order from the bottom up, are Nigeria, Kenya and Ukraine.

Some of the bottom-ranked countries are not actually so poor, such as Russia, which has bad records on political rights and public health. Ecuador, backsliding on political rights, is the sole low-scoring country in an otherwise optimistic-looking Latin America.

Though countries such as Indonesia and Vietnam are projected to show astounding economic growth over the next generation, they are poor today. This map is a reminder that being born into a poor society, even one that offers opportunities for new wealth, can still mean life-long challenges.

5) _______________________________________________________________________

Three telling cases here are Angola, Kazakhstan and Ukraine, all of which scored much lower than I’d have expected. Both Angola and Kazakhstan are enjoying rapid economic growth from energy and mineral exports, and Ukraine is a middle-income democracy. But all three have severe and worsening problems with economic imbalance, which in turn are fueling corruption and poor governance.

You’re worse off being born in any of these three countries, according to the data, than you are just about anywhere else, including Sri Lanka, a poor hotbed of ethnic violence, oppressive Vietnam, or even Syria. Pakistan places higher than Angola or Ukraine but just below Kazakhstan.

6) _______________________________________________________________________

The country ranks 49th out of 80, just below Latvia and Hungary. That’s an amazing finding, given that China now has the second-largest number of billionaires in the world after the United States and might some day have the most. You would think that, with so many Chinese families catapulting to higher status within a society that is itself seeing historic gains, China would be a great place to be born in 2013.

The statistics are a reminder that, for all of China’s astounding gains, those gains have not benefited all Chinese equally. About half of the country is still rural and 128 million are still below the poverty line. Even in the big coastal cities, the rising cost of living, stalled political freedoms and worsening income inequality mean that the next 20 or 30 years may not be prosperous for a lot of families.

So, if you’re a Westerner fretting about American decline or European collapse, then if nothing else, know that your children have still lucked into one of the best deals in history: being born in the right place at the right time.

(Adapted from www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/worldviews/wp/2013/01/07/)
Tasks and discussion

1. Skim the article and match the lettered subheadings with the six parts.
   a) It is still not a great place to be born
   b) Inequality plus poverty is much worse than just plain poverty
   c) Money can’t buy you happiness, though it will get you 2/3 of the way
   d) The best countries to be born in are small, peaceful, homogenous, liberal democracies
   e) It’s still best in the West
   f) Violence, poverty and/or lack of freedom define the worst countries to be born into

2. What surprises you the most / the least? Do you think you were “born in the right place at the right time”? If you could choose, where and when would you like to be born?

3. There are 39 countries mentioned in the article. Find them on the map above. Then make a ranking list from the top to the bottom. (Did you like geography and were you good at map reading when you attended secondary school?)

4. Find all the phrases employed to express the ranking.
Barclay twins’ Ritz hotel pays no corporation tax

London’s high-end Ritz hotel has not paid any corporation tax in the 17 years since it was taken over by the reclusive Barclay twins. The BBC’s Panorama programme analysed the accounts of the hotel bought by the brothers in 1995. The accounts show that the profitable hotel has used a series of tax reliefs to reduce its corporation tax to zero. “They’re incredibly wealthy men who don’t pay British tax” Nadine Dorries, MP The brothers said they have not run their UK companies since they retired to Monaco more than 20 years ago.

Test case

The Ritz’s efforts to reduce its tax bill are legal but have raised questions at a time when another firm bought by Sir David Barclay and Sir Frederick Barclay, Littlewoods, is embroiled in a legal battle with HMRC. The brothers also own the Daily and Sunday Telegraph newspaper titles.

The catalogue company Littlewoods, bought by the twins in 2002, has already won a VAT rebate plus interest worth £472m from HMRC over payments dating back to 1973. But the twins’ company has gone to court to demand a further £1bn from the government in compound interest.

It is an important test case for taxpayers because if Littlewoods wins, it could open the door to claims worth billions of pounds from other companies. MP Nadine Dorries said: “They’re incredibly wealthy men who don’t pay British tax. I think it is just utterly appalling.” The twins said they have had nothing to do with the running of the UK companies. “We have not attended office, management or board meetings in the UK since leaving the country,” Sir David Barclay said in a statement. “My brother and I have no editorial, political or economic power in the UK.”

Littlewoods, the Ritz and the Telegraph are controlled by offshore trusts. However, the trusts were set up by the twins and one of the brothers attends the trust meetings. Richard Murphy, from the Tax Justice Network, said: “These meetings are taking place in Monaco, but there is no doubt that sitting right in the middle of the meetings are the Barclay brothers who are therefore able to exercise control of these companies.”

‘Responsible way’

The UK businesses are managed by Sir David’s son, Aidan Barclay. He told the programme that Littlewoods lodged its VAT claim before the family took over the company. “This represents tax taken incorrectly by HMRC and held incorrectly for many years, facts which HMRC publicly recognise and accept,” he said.

“Directors of companies have legal responsibilities and duties to recover and secure their companies’ assets from the perspective of each company itself and its various stakeholders. It would be a dereliction of their duties not to pursue repayments which are properly due from HMRC.” Aidan Barclay also said that the Ritz had not paid any dividends, and profits from the hotel had been reinvested.

“The Barclay family members and their companies abide by the law and pay the taxes required by UK law and the laws of other relevant countries.” In a statement Sir David Barclay said: “We have always acted in a responsible way with regard to taxation and have never been involved in any tax avoidance scheme. We are not responsible for corporate taxes in the UK and are unaware what tax is paid on the Ritz.”

Tasks

1. Make definitions of these expressions related to taxes:
   a) corporate tax
   b) taxation
   c) VAT
   d) tax reliefs
   e) tax bill

2. Make nouns from these words:
   a) to reduce
   b) to retire
c) government
d) to recognise
e) to require
f) unaware
g) responsible
h) relevant
i) to regard

3. Answer these questions:
   a) When did the 2 brothers retire?
   b) What do the 2 brothers also own?
   c) Are they involved in any other legal case? If so, which? Can you describe the situation?
   d) What is their excuse for not having a responsibility of not paying taxes?

4. What do they mean? Translate these words or make definitions.
   a) appalling
   b) embroiled
   c) reclusive
   d) abide
   e) claim
   f) compound interest
Boycott

The call for a boycott of BP in the wake of its disastrous oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico is hardly surprising. The boycott, which in BP’s case was proposed by consumer group Public Citizen, is a tactic that has been used for centuries by consumers as a way to express outrage. While research shows many boycotts come up short in forcing their targets to give in to the demands of protest organizers, they can have real impact in terms of lost sales and a damaged reputation. In the case of BP, however, experts say a boycott is likely to be only a nuisance when compared to the outsized legal liability the company is facing from the Gulf spill.

The use of the boycott as a form of consumer protest is more popular than ever, however. “Boycotts are shockingly common,” says Maurice Schweitzer, a Wharton professor of operations and information management. “One group or another has boycotted almost every major company at some point, whether it’s Walmart for its development procedures or union policies, Procter & Gamble for the treatment of animals, Nike for employment practices or Kentucky Fried Chicken for the treatment of chickens.”

BP spokesman recently told ABC News that the company understands the public frustration driving the protests. “All we can ask is that people withhold judgment until they have seen our full effort to contain and clean the Gulf and stop the leak because it is all still ongoing and we are sparing no expense.”

‘The Equivalent of a Bloody Nose’

Calls for a boycott are one thing – convincing consumers or businesses to change their behavior is another. If a boycott is to succeed, the situation that incited it must be both visible and severe. At the same time, if a boycott is to gain traction, there must be a low financial and psychological cost for consumers to get on board. If there are easily substitutable products available – as is the case with a commodity like gas – the barrier to participating in a boycott is lower.

How successful are boycotts in general? It depends on how you define success. If the goal is to get the target company to give in to boycotters’ demands, the success rate is not high. Not surprisingly, the research found that the more organized and planned campaigns, including those that used picketing and other attention-grabbing techniques, had a greater degree of success.

In fact, boycotts may inflict less visible, but still long lasting, damage to a company's brand. “Most companies expend significant resources in the bid to establish relationships with their customers. A boycott severs that relationship in a dramatic way and encourages customers to seek out and try competing products instead.”

Certainly, companies with strong brands are likely to take a boycott seriously. Nike changed their sourcing policies after a boycott based on its use of overseas labor. Nike is an image conscious company. They work very hard with advertising to create a particular type of brand. “People buy Nike shoes for two reasons. First, they are good functional shoes. But the other is about image and the way you feel wearing that ‘swoosh’. You will pay more for a Nike-logoed item, so they need to protect the brand.”

Comprehension and discussion questions

1. Which boycott is mentioned in the first paragraph?
2. What other companies faced boycott of their products?
3. What factors decide about the success or failure of a boycott?
4. Which company is mentioned in relation to a successful boycott?
5. Have you ever participated in a boycott? Why? Why not?
6. Can you recall any boycott and the reasons behind it?
7. Do you believe that individual consumers’ actions can be effective? Support your opinion by an example.

Definitions

Read the definition of “boycott”

A boycott is an act of voluntarily abstaining from using, buying, or dealing with a person, organization, or country as an expression of protest, usually for political reasons. It can be a form of consumer activism.
The word boycott entered the English language during the Irish “Land War” and is derived from the name of Captain Charles Boycott, the land agent of an absentee landlord, Lord Erne, who lived Ireland. As harvests had been poor that year 1880, Lord Erne offered his tenants a ten percent reduction in their rents. Protesting tenants demanded a twenty five percent reduction, which was refused. Boycott then attempted to evict eleven tenants from the land. Boycott soon found himself isolated – his workers stopped work in the fields and stables, as well as in his house. Local businessmen stopped trading with him, and the local postman refused to deliver mail.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boycott

**What do they have in common?**

Find definitions of the following words on the Internet:
Cardigan, macintosh, molotow cocktail, hoover, wellington boots, hooligan, kalashnikov, biro, bakelite, jaccuzzi, rubik cube, papin pressure cooker, decibel, tarmac, voltage, sacher, diesel.
British tennis to new grass-roots generation

By Bill Wilson

Despite Andy Murray’s defeat in the Australian Open final, British elite tennis is in its best health for decades. Open champion Murray is the UK’s first grand-slam winner since before the war, while Laura Robson and Heather Watson are the first pair of British women to play in the world top 50 at the same time since Jo Durie and Sara Gomer 25 years ago. Murray and Robson also won medals at the London 2012 Olympics, and Jonny Murray was a surprise winner in the men’s doubles tournament at Wimbledon. But developing a British tennis elite is only one part of the brief for governing body, the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA). An equally important part is the LTA’s drive to increase grass-roots participation, a quest given extra focus by demands from funding body Sport England to see tangible results in this area.

Two sides

This is where Simon Long comes in. He is now six months into his job as the LTA’s commercial supremo, charged with driving the direction and development of both the LTA’s participation and commercial strategies.

Simon Long has a strong background in the business of sport. “The LTA more or less split in two – [an elite] performance side, and one of engagement with the consumer and playing side,” says Mr Long, who has much experience in the sports business world. “We are establishing tennis as a game for everyone. That means getting more people playing tennis, watching tennis, and playing and competing more often.” We are looking at how we can accelerate that growth.”

He was formerly boss of North One Sport, where he oversaw the global promotion of the FIA World Rally Championship. “We want to get people physically and emotionally involved with tennis, whether it is playing, or watching, or through the LTA’s website,” he says. He adds that part of his task is building a “scorecard” showing the different contexts in which people engage with the sport, from top talent and performance metrics at one end of the scale to social media interaction by fans at the other. Some of the new participation initiatives include cardio-tennis, for people who want to use the sport as a fitness workout, and installing omni-courts featuring artificial grass. For children, there are mini-tennis courts in place across the country, introducing them to a form of the game more suited to their physical development.

‘Competitive marketplace’

Meanwhile, Mr Long points out that there was an 18% growth in weekly tennis participation last year. And Sport England agrees that “frequency of participation has increased” over the past 12 months. British tennis success over the past year is being used to sell the sport. However for its funding purposes, it measures participation against a baseline of participation in 2007. And it has said that it may reduce the amount of cash for tennis that it allocates to the LTA, if there is not a further increase in participation. “We are stepping back from the coalface to look at what consumers want and to consider how people use their time in terms of sporting activity,” says Mr Long. “Sport England is an important source of funding for us. We are actively working with them.” We realise we haven’t got everything right. But it is a very competitive [leisure] marketplace. “He says the LTA’s goal is “to get a better return on resources, time and money.”

One of the ways to leverage interest in the sport is to use the examples of those British players who have brought the sport into the limelight in the past 12 months. “We are already working with the leading players. The success of Andy Murray, Laura, Heather... and others, is a fantastic beacon... driving media coverage,” says Mr Long. We are lucky to be on the cusp of golden era of British tennis, with not only success at the US Open but also at Olympics and Paralympics “But we are grass roots as much as an elite organisation and we are trying to combine the two in a cohesive way.”

‘Positive perceptions’

As part of the grass roots initiative, the LTA is looking to reach communities – for example in inner cities – that may not normally play tennis.
LTA TENNIS FACTS AND FIGURES

- About 445,000 adults play tennis every week in England
- More than two million children have access to tennis at school
- The Aegon Schools Programme provides teacher training, resources and free equipment
- There are more than 20,000 tennis courts on allplaytennis.com
- There are 10 British players in the world’s top 100 rankings for singles and doubles.
- That compares with just two players in 2006
- More than a million people came to a UK tennis event last year
- More than 100,000 children now play LTA mini tennis every year
- LTA commercial revenue has increased from £1.75m (2006) to £9m (2012)

Part of that programme involves hiring coaches from the local community, and providing courts and flood-lighting, with more than £30m spent on facilities over the past five years. “I am not going to pretend that we have totally cracked this – there are positive perceptions about British tennis and some more challenging ones,” he says, referring to the fact that some may incorrectly see tennis as a middle-class sport. He said a lot of work was being done through the country’s largest tennis charity, the Tennis Foundation, in terms of promoting the sport through community work, and with disabled people and in schools.” Mini-tennis is creating a pathway into the game,” says Mr Long, who is based at the LTA’s national tennis centre at Roehampton, south-west London. “And whether you want to play in tournaments, or just play with friends, we are providing a wholesome and safe environment.”

‘Road-map’

As part of his commercial brief, Mr Long, a former sales development director at Diageo, welcomed new sponsors to the LTA in 2012, including Moet & Chandon, Optimum Nutrition, and Ricoh. And LTA Group turnover increased from £57.7m to £60.2m in 2012. During the year the LTA and Tennis Foundation jointly invested £73.2m to grow and sustain British tennis, up from £69.5m in 2011.

Now Mr Long is looking forward to implementing the final phase of the LTA’s 10-year plan for the game in the UK over the coming year. “It is a well-articulated road map about how we transform the sport and organisation,” he says. “The foundations are now in place... [including] an incredibly strong board and governance structure.” We are now in a position where we can proactively look to the next phase of really engaging with players and fans – from the ages of three to 83 – up and down the country. “We are in good shape but in no way complacent.”

http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/21040629

Tasks

1. Answer the questions:
   a) What does LTA abbreviation mean?
   b) How does LTA want to get people more involved with tennis?
   c) Name some examples of positive perceptions about British tennis.
   d) Who is Mr. Long? What is his present job? What was his previous job?

2. Decide whether the statements are true (T) or false (F).
   a) Andy Murray won the Australian Open final match in 2013.
   b) LTA is Law Tennis Association.
   c) Tennis funding is closely related to participation of Brits.
   d) LTA hires coaches mainly from big cities.
   e) Tennis is a middle class sport.
   f) LTA utilizes the success of some players.
   g) There are only 2 players in the world’s top 100 ranking.
   h) In 2011 LTA and Tennis Foundation invested 69.5 million pounds.
3. Translate these expressions:
   a) tangible
   b) to reduce
   c) to sustain
   d) turnover
   e) proactively
   f) allocate
   g) demand
   h) oversee
   i) phase
Cambridge English – anniversary year gets underway

This year marks the 100 year anniversary of Cambridge English exams. To coincide with this important milestone, we have also changed our name to Cambridge English Language Assessment to make it easier for people to understand what we actually do.

When you consider that the first Cambridge English: Proficiency exam was taken by three people and it was over 12 hours long, it’s fair to say that quite a lot has changed in English language assessment.

The Cambridge English story began in 1913 in a single exam centre in the UK. The exam included translation, dictation and phonetic transcription.

Today, Cambridge English exams are taken by over 4 million candidates around the world. They focus on the real-life communications skills candidates need for success at university, in the workplace and for immigration. This enormous growth reflects how English has evolved into a key skill needed to achieve a competitive advantage.

We are celebrating our centenary with a programme of events around the world. A new book, “Cambridge English exams - the first hundred years” will be published in early 2013.


Access to Cambridge English: Advanced (CAE) in China increases as 21 new exam centres open across the country.

Cambridge says the expansion is part of a wider plan to increase access to the highlevel test since it was recognised by Australia’s Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) and the UK Border Agency (UKBA) for student visas. The new exam centres – located across North, East, Central and South China – will offer the paperbased and computerbased version of the internationally recognised test developed by the University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations (Cambridge ESOL). The test is widely available up to 33 times a year in over 1,300 centres across 113 countries and the new test centres in China will boost this network further.


‘Is English enough?’ ask experts at the European Parliament

Latest research on language learning in Europe provides important lessons for building a multilingual society, according to expert speakers at a seminar in Brussels. Fifth annual event celebrating European Day of Languages highlight importance of multilingualism.

“Of course, when we asked this question we already knew that the answer would be ‘No, of course not’. What we’re trying to do is encourage discussion of the importance of teaching languages and using a wide range of languages at a time when English is becoming more and more widely used.”

The event’s seminar entitled ‘Putting language skills of healthcare professionals under the spotlight’ looked at the challenges and issues surrounding the assessment of the language skills of healthcare professionals and offered presentations by experts and stakeholder representatives from Europe. “Language skills for the healthcare sector is an important issue – in fact it is hard to think of any area where language skills matter more.”


Comprehension questions

1. When did the first candidates take a Cambridge English exam?
2. How would you describe the first English proficiency test?
3. What has changed since the first exam?
4. Why do people usually take the exam?
5. How many exam centres are going to be in China and what is the total number worldwide?
6. Is English enough? What do the experts say? What is your view?
7. In which sector is good knowledge of English really important? Why do you think it is mentioned?
Exercises

Test the Cambridge test: For the questions below, choose the best sentence to complete the conversation.

1. When can we meet again?
   a) When are you free?
   b) It was two days ago.
   c) Can you help me?
2. My aunt is going to stay with me.
   a) How do you do?
   b) How long for?
   c) How was it?
3. When do you study?
   a) at school
   b) in the evenings
   c) in the library
4. Would you prefer lemonade or orange juice?
   a) Have you got anything else?
   b) If you like.
   c) Are you sure about that?
5. Let’s have dinner now.
   a) You aren’t eating.
   b) There aren’t any.
   c) Tom isn’t here yet.
6. The snow was ...... heavily when I left the house.
   a) dropping
   b) landing
   c) falling
   d) descending
7. I can’t find my keys anywhere - I ...... have left them at work.
   a) can
   b) must
   c) ought
   d) would
8. When a car pulled out in front of her, Jane did well not to ...... control of her bicycle.
   a) miss
   b) lose
   c) fail
   d) drop
9. According to Richard’s ...... the train leaves at 7 o’clock.
   a) opinion
   b) advice
   c) knowledge
   d) information
10. When you stay in a country for some time you get used to the people’s ...... of life.
    a) habit
    b) custom
    c) way
    d) system
11. The builders are ...... good progress with the new house.
    a) getting
    b) doing
    c) making
d) taking
12. She is now taking a more positive ...... to her studies and should do well.
   a) attitude
   b) behaviour
   c) manner
   d) style
13. My father ...... his new car for two weeks now.
   a) has had
   b) has
   c) is having
   d) had
14. What differences are there ...... the English spoken in the UK and the English spoken in the US?
   a) among
   b) between
   c) beside
   d) with
15. At 6 p.m. I started to get angry with him because he was late ......
   a) as usual.
   b) in general.
   c) typically.
   d) usually.
16. ...... you get your father’s permission, I’ll take you skiing next weekend.
   a) Although
   b) Provided
   c) As
   d) Unless
17. A local company has agreed to ...... the school team with football shirts.
   a) contribute
   b) supply
   c) give
   d) produce
18. I really enjoy stories that are ...... in the distant future.
   a) found
   b) set
   c) put
   d) placed
19. That old saucepan will come in ...... when we go camping.
   a) convenient
   b) fitting
   c) handy
   d) suitable
20. Anyone ...... after the start of the play is not allowed in until the interval.
   a) arrives
   b) has arrived
   c) arriving
   d) arrived
21. I didn’t ...... driving home in the storm so I stayed overnight in a hotel.
   a) fancy
   b) desire
   c) prefer
   d) want
22. The judge said that those prepared to...... in crime must be ready to suffer the consequences.
   a) involve
   b) engage
   c) undertake
   d) enlist

23. Marianne seemed to take ...... at my comments on her work.
    a) annoyance
    b) insult
    c) offence
    d) indignation

24. You should not have a dog if you are not ...... to look after it.
    a) prepared
    b) adapted
    c) arranged
    d) decided

25. The farmhouse was so isolated that they had to generate their own electricity ......
    a) current.
    b) supply.
    c) grid.
    d) power.

(http://www.cambridgeesol.org/test-your-english/index.php?page=survey&surveyID=5&pageNum=1)
Can eurobonds help to save the euro?

Barbara Hiller heard two conflicting opinions on whether debts should be shared.

YES! “Instead of yet another short-term quick fix, we need a long-term solution,” says Jean-Marc Trouille.

How can we permanently solve the eurozone’s sovereign-debt crisis and save the threatened European project? Numerous options have been considered. These include creating a European monetary fund, stricter budget rules enforced by the European Court of Justice, transferring elements of budgetary sovereignty from national governments to Brussels, and establishing a European finance minister and automatic penalties for member states that break budget discipline.

Another proposal is to introduce jointly guaranteed eurobonds to mutualize sovereign debts and help to finance borrowing by the 17 eurozone members. This, combined with a close fiscal union, would potentially be the most forceful way of resolving the crisis.

But the eurozones countries ready to Europeanize sovereign debts and accept fiscal integration? Time is too short to hesitate on the principle. There is no alternative to moving quickly towards closer fiscal union. Eurozone countries must now fill the gaps left by those who created a common European currency without a fiscal union or serious economic convergence.

This requires a European economic government to manage economic and fiscal policies, and a system for a common issuance of eurobonds. A comprehensive governance structure is also needed to guarantee greater discipline and make sure that the extended solidarity is not taken for granted by those who need it most.

This is an ambitious plan and faces major challenges. Substantial treaty changes are necessary. Also, without strong leadership, national vetoes and unanimity rules will make the process difficult. Germany will have a key role to play as the biggest guarantor of the euro and eurozone rescue plans, the largest net contributor to the EU budget and the engine of the European economy. Germans need to be convinced that they are benefiting from the single market and the euro, and the Germany’s competitiveness and financial stability would suffer lasting damage if the eurozone collapsed.

Instead of yet another short-term quick fix, Europe needs a long-term solution. Only eurobonds and fiscal union can provide the sustainability that the eurozone desperately needs.

(YouTube Trouille is the professor at the Bradford University School of Management [www.brad.ac.uk], and the director of the master’s programme in European and International Business Management.)

NO! “Debt pooling via eurobonds would not save the euro. It would instead mean its end,” says Andrew Lillico.

Many suggestions have been made for saving the euro. These include raising the size of the European Financial Stability Facility, massive sovereign-bond purchases by the European Central Bank and the issuance of eurobonds. All of these ideas involve fundamentally the same concept: that Germany should accept responsibility for the debts of Greece, Italy, Portugal, etc.

Such debt pooling would not save the euro; it would instead mean its end. Without conditionality, the high-debt members of the eurozone would run up such large debts that Germany and France would be bankrupted. Yet, the alternative of Germany telling Italy how it can spend its money would mean an intolerable loss of national sovereignty.

If, through some deeply misplaced sense of historical responsibility, young Germans or Finns are subjected to the burden of trillions of euros in debts that have nothing to do with them, the very future of the European Union itself would come under question. And, over time, those who felt betrayed by having such debts forced upon them would seek to exit the whole arrangement.

Three steps are necessary to save the euro. First, the misguided efforts to keep Greece and Cyprus within the euro must stop. Second, countries such as Ireland and Spain – which do not have a fundamental problem of sovereign debts, but, rather, banking-sector problems – must force the bondholders of their banks to accept losses. At the same time, forced recapitalization of the banks is even more suicidal than debt pooling. It would cause dramatic contractions in bank balance sheets and lead the continent into an extended depression.
The third point, and the real challenge, is the low-growth countries: Italy and Portugal. The key aim here should be to raise their growth rates enough that they can take care of their own debts. That can be done with the assistance of new eurozone-only structural funds.

It is intolerable for Germans to send money to Italians to spend as they wish – and equally intolerable for Germans to tell Italians how much they can spend. But it is not intolerable – since it has been happening for decades – for Germans to send money to Brussels and for Brussels then to spend it in Italy. This extends what already exists in the EU.

Growth assisted by spending from eurozone structural funds, is the way forward. Not debt pooling.

(Andrew Lilico is a director and principal of Europ Economics, a consultancy specializing in economic regulation, competition policy and the application of economics to both public and business-policy issues. [www.europe-economics.com])

(Adapted from the article by Barbara Hiller. Business Spotlight 1/2012, pp. 20-21)

Vocabulary tasks

1. Highlight all words concerning finance and accounting in both parts of the article.
2. In the first part, there are nine nouns formed from the verb-roots with the use of eight different suffixes. Find the ones made from the verbs converge, issue, govern, lead, guarantee, contribute, compete, solve, sustain (in this order) and translate them into Czech.
3. In the second part, find the phrase for “nadělat dluhy”.

Discussion

1. What’s your view? Can eurobonds ward off the insolvency of the whole countries?
2. What does “debt pooling” (2nd part) mean? Would it work, do you think?
3. How has the situation in the eurozone developed since this article was published?
Can Twitter Promote Itself into Profitability?

It was a tweet like many others from Starbucks, promising free refills to customers who brought in reusable tumblers on Earth Day.

But the message came to users in a different way – it appeared at the top of Twitter search results pages, even for those who weren’t among the coffee giant’s followers. And there was a tiny tag in the corner of the update, outlined in yellow and reading “Promoted by Starbucks Coffee.”

The ubiquitous Seattle-based chain is one of the first guinea pigs in an effort by Twitter to generate revenue from the micro-blogging service. The new ad system was unveiled last month with five participating companies, including Best Buy electronics stores, the Red Bull soft drink company, Sony Pictures, Starbucks, airline Virgin America and the Bravo TV network. Twitter Chief Operating Officer Dick Costolo recently told Reuters that the San Francisco-based company hopes to add hundreds of new “Promoted Tweet” partners into the mix by the end of the year.

“We’re going to live in a world where we need to be generating hundreds of millions of dollars in revenue,” Costolo told Reuters. “We’re thinking about big, big numbers.”

Twitter’s user ranks include high profile names that run the gamut from Paula Abdul to Lance Armstrong. The company’s value was put at $1 billion last year. But Twitter has yet to generate a profit. The company’s set of business conundrums are intertwined. How can it help businesses create a level of engagement with consumers that turns the service – which allows users to communicate in bites of 140 characters or fewer – into a useful tool for marketing and customer service? And how can Twitter then parlay those efforts into a viable, income-producing strategy?

Twitter has had plenty of success at gaining public exposure. According to an Edison Research/Arbitron study conducted in February, 87 % of Americans 12 and older know what Twitter is – about the same number as those who were aware of Facebook. But while 41 % of that group actively used Facebook, only 7 % were actually sending updates to Twitter.

“Seventeen million people use Twitter, which is nothing to sneeze at,” says Tom Webster, Edison Research’s vice president of strategy and marketing, who oversaw the survey. “Businesses are certainly using it as part of an overall marketing strategy, at least for now. It is a question of whether Twitter will, in the long run, be something mainstream America deems necessary, which will determine its business value.”

Twitter began as part of a brainstorming session at the small San Francisco podcasting company Odeo, in March 2006. The company’s principals saw that the podcast business was being usurped by bigger companies like Apple and wanted to find a new product on which to concentrate. The idea that came to the fore was a way for someone to send short messages to tell small groups of friends or contacts what he or she was doing at a given time. Twitter limited itself to 140 Short Message Service (SMS) characters and initially was used for communication among Odeo employees and friends before launching to the public in July 2006. Twitter then began to grow more quickly, with the company reporting 500,000 tweets per quarter in 2007 and then 100 million per quarter the next year. For the first quarter of 2010, the company reported that more than four billion tweets were sent using the service.

Comprehension and discussion questions

1. Which was the first commercial use of the Twitter?
2. What is the meaning of the expression „guinea pig“? Can you demonstrate it on some examples?
3. Which other companies are using or considering the use of Twitter?
4. How many people use Twitter according to the article? Are you one of them?
5. What forms of electronic communication do you prefer and why?
6. What is the estimated value of the company and how much profit does it generate?

How much money do you spend monthly on communication?
Continuous feedback from the staff is crucial for the management appraisal process. The so called 360-degree feedback becomes a popular tool for self-improvement in big companies. Marley Obi, a British journalist and editor, asked some experts about this new way of assessment.

Not many bosses are as brave as Vineet Nayar, the CEO of the Indian company HCL Technologies. A firm believer in 360-degree feedback, Nayar invited staff to evaluate him and then put the results on the company intranet for the firm’s more than 50,000 international employees to see and discuss.

The idea of receiving or giving critical opinions on co-workers, subordinates or managers may be frightening enough, even without the results being made public. Yet feedback is an essential part of working life, and when it comes to 360-degree feedback, honesty and objectivity are the keys to making it work.

360-degree feedback is also known as “multi-rater feedback”, “multi-source feedback” or “multi-source assessment”. It offers a more complete evaluation as it comes from a wide range of people. Those asked to give comments (respondents) can be colleagues, bosses, subordinates and even clients. The tool used for evaluation is a 360-degree questionnaire (can be bought from companies that specialize in developing such a questionnaire) that has to be completed by both the respondents and the person who is evaluated (appraisee). Although the appraisee usually chooses who will receive the questionnaire, the responses are anonymized before a report is made based on their ratings.

1. How to give 360-degree feedback

This system of evaluation has potential dangers. It takes a strong person to resist making negative comments about unpopular colleagues or bosses when the results are anonymized. When done badly, 360-degree feedback can have a disastrous effect on the working atmosphere. When done well, however, “360” can be an extremely effective tool that gives a clear picture of an organization’s strengths and weaknesses. We asked four experts in Britain for their comments for the best ways for organizations to give and receive 360-degree feedback.

a) _________________. All the experts agree that clear communication is the key to ensuring that 360-degree feedback resolves the problems it is targeting. “People are … nervous … about why the organization might want to get this feedback, so you have to be really clear on what it’s for, how it’s going to be used, who’s going to see it, and what’s going to happen to the data,” says Jo Ayoubi, business development director for 360 specialists Track Surveys Ltd.

b) _________________. Senior officers should be the first people to do 360-degree feedback, because this shows that they agree with the process and that they are open to giving and receiving feedback. This encourages other people, who are lower in the hierarchy, to do it.

c) _________________. The idea of 360-degree feedback is to encourage openness and to help people reach their professional goals. “If people think the feedback they are giving is linked to performance appraisals, particularly if the appraisal is linked to bonuses, then you will get only mediocre or very positive feedback. Nobody wants to feel they’ve contributed to someone not getting a pay rise,” says Caroline Taylor, an executive coach at Talent for Growth.

d) _________________. Only questions about things that can actually be observed should be asked. A comment like “Sarah lacks self-confidence” is not going to help Sarah, because she can’t really change that. Respondents should avoid talking about personality and focus instead on giving specific examples of behaviour they’ve seen. There should be a box for comments, so if respondents give very high or very low ratings, they are encouraged to explain why that might be.

e) _________________. Respondents shouldn’t hasten the completion of a 360-degree questionnaire. Some of them put in the first thing that they can think of. They shouldn’t just think about recent events, but go back through emails and diaries and think about what the appraisee has done over the past half a year, reflecting on the whole period.

f) _________________. There should be plenty of constructive feedback. If someone performed badly several
months ago but has improved since then, there’s no point talking about that bad performance. If you’ve had bad experiences with people, you tend to think of them negatively, but that shouldn’t influence your ratings. Similarly, there is the “halo effect”: when we are rating people who are popular or whom we really like, we tend to think that everything they do is good. This may not be the case, however.

g) ________________.

“It would be very poor practice to just throw the results back at somebody without preparation,” says Frieda De Ley, an occupational psychologist. Appraisees should be made to feel comfortable and should be given time to reflect on the report. They should then have the opportunity to give their own opinions, saying what they liked and did not like about the report. If appraisees have overrated themselves and received lower ratings from others, they should be given coaching to discuss and deal with this.

h) ________________.

In many cases, once the reports are completed and the appraisees have discussed their 360-degree feedback with their managers and agreed on steps to improve performance, the whole process stops until the next round of 360-degree evaluation. “if the activity stops there – in other words, the team leader … puts the results in the drawer and forgets all about it – frankly, that is a waste of time and money. They might have learned something about themselves and how they could improve, but if they are not encouraged to do so, those habits are likely to continue,” warns De Ley. She advises linking the results with future actions. For example, the appraisee may agree to take steps in the next few months to improve their performance, perhaps also agreeing to make their manager aware of this initiative. A few months later, there should be a discussion about the progress being made.

2. How to receive 360-degree feedback

Receiving 360-degree feedback can be frightening. The ratings are anonymous, so there is no dialogue with respondents. The fact that the appraisee has chosen the people who should respond to the questionnaire can actually make the anxiety worse. There are, however, two important points to remember.

i) ________________.

A natural reaction might be to go on the defensive. That is the wrong way to do it, says Hannah Stratford, head of business psychology at HR consultants ETS, “you should consider other people’s opinions and think of specific examples of times when you may have behaved in line with the feedback. Question yourself, too, ask if this is in line with your own perception of yourself.” People have taken the time to complete the questionnaire to help you. So, be honest with yourself, since all of us can improve our behaviour.

j) ________________.

People tend to ignore all the good, standard feedback and focus instead on the one low rating or negative comment. But the key to a successful 360 is to look at the feedback that comes from a lot of people, because that is what you are going to benefit from. If a number of people are saying something, it’s probably relevant information worth taking seriously.

3. What if your company doesn’t have a 360-degree feedback process?

In a recent ETS research survey of 100 senior HR managers, 25 per cent said they used 360 as part of the appraisal process. An extensive 360 process costs time and money and involves a lot of people. Questionnaires have to be bought or created, and external HR consultants may be hired. The traditional evaluation with a manager is still the most common type of staff appraisal.

The principles of 360-degree feedback can still be used informally. “…A line manager can … email some people asking for comments about a couple of things the appraisee has done really well and a couple of things they could improve upon,” says Frieda De Ley. “Perhaps the appraisee could even suggest people for his line manager to approach, and the responses could still be anonymized,” she suggests.

For the non-manager, Jo Ayoubi recommends a very simple 360-degree model to help with personal development. “The simplest way of doing it is to ask for feedback from a number of different people using a really simple format that is easy for people around you to understand but which can get some really useful feedback,” she says. Ayoubi suggests asking colleagues:

• What do you think I should continue doing because I’m doing it well?
• What should I start doing?
• What areas do you think I should do better in?
• What should I stop doing?
Ayoubi adds: “If you approach people openly, and they understand why you are doing it, they’ll be very happy to give feedback.”

(Adapted from the article by Marley Obi. Business Spotlight 4/2011, pp. 48–52.)

Tasks and discussion
1. Skim the article and put the following subheadings in the lettered gaps (a–j):
   i. Have a well-targeted questionnaire
   ii. Keep an open mind
   iii. Be positive
   iv. Take your time
   v. Be sure you have the support of top management.
   vi. Transparency is fundamental
   vii. Always do a follow-up
   viii. Look for consistent messages, not one-off messages
   ix. Do not link 360-degree feedback directly to pay and promotion.
   x. Give feedback sensitively.
2. What are pros and cons of 360-degree feedback, according to the article? (What advantages and disadvantages do you see with the system?)
3. Suggest another question for Jo Ayoubi (3.). Ask a colleague of yours some of the above questions and write what you’ve found out about yourself. (Might this feedback influence the way you work?)
4. Would you like to be able to review your managers? Would you like to receive 360-degree feedback as part of your professional development?
Companies’ histories

The following excerpts – adopted from Wikipedia – describe selected parts of various firms’ histories.

a) In the late 1960s, …… entered into the electronics industry. Its first product was a black-and-white television set. In the 1980s, the company built a few television assembly plants overseas. The group acquired another Korean company and started to produce telecommunication devices, having invested heavily in R & D. They have produced over 800 million mobile phones to date. …… started to rise as an international corporation in the 1990s. In 1993, Lee Kun-hee sold off ten of ……’s subsidiaries, downsized the company, and merged other operations to concentrate on three industries: electronics, engineering, and chemicals.

b) …… was founded in 1894 by a man, whose family had been cloggers for generations. A large order from the army, military shoes and rising demand for them, during World War I started rapid growth and small manufacture turned into modern industrial concern, one of the first mass producers of shoes.

c) The history of …… began on April 4, 1975, when it was founded by two childhood friends. In the 1980s, …… formed a partnership with IBM and later launched several versions of their own operating system. In the 1990s, they captured over 90% market share of the world’s personal computers. In 2008, the company earned a global annual revenue of US$ 60.42 bn and had nearly 90,000 employees in 105 countries.

d) In the 1990s, …… concentrated solely on telecommunications. Its early investment in GSM technologies made the company the world’s largest mobile phone manufacturer. Between 1996 and 2001, ……’s turnover increased almost fivefold from 6.5 billion euros to 31 billion euros. One of its handsets, launched in 2003, with over 200 million units shipped, was the best-selling mobile phone of all time and the world’s top-selling consumer electronics product.

e) … Production grew rapidly in the 1950s and 1960s. …… began introducing new models based on the Beetle, all with the same basic air-cooled and rear-engine platform. In 1986, the company acquired a 51% controlling stake in SEAT making it the first overseas subsidiary. In the early 1990s, the group signed a joint venture agreement with a Czechoslovak car manufacturer.

f) … The company released Japan’s first commercially produced transistor radio in 1955 but its name did not change to …… until 1958. In 1979 the Walkman brand was launched, in the form of the world’s first portable music player. …… developed its own recording and storage technologies. In the early 1980s, the company introduced the Betamax system for video cassette recorders and the collaborative CD format. …… became one of the leading developers of the Blu-ray Disc optical disc format, which eventually emerged as the market leader.

Tasks

1. Try to guess each company’s name. (Which key expressions helped you decide?)
2. Find all the verbs in the past tense denoting the companies’ developments. (Which of them are irregular?)
Computers and language: Automated grammar-checking

Robert L. Greene, an American journalist (known for his book about the politics of language, “You Are What You Speak”) comments on perspectives of computer proofreading and language parsing.

[...] Ben Yagoda, a professor of journalism and English at the University of Delaware, recently tested Grammarly, an online service that, for $140 a year, provides “automated proofreading and personal grammar coaching”. (See Grammarly.com on Google Plus.) Then he posted his results:

Here’s one paragraph from my text, with the bracketed numbers keyed to Grammarly’s criticisms, listed below, and the bracketed comments inserted by Grammarly.

On that idea [1] of “accepted practice” changing, I recognize — as how could anyone not [2] [not, note, nota] — that [3] standards [4] [Standards] and “rules” change over time. There was a time when it was verboten to end a sentence with a preposition, start one with a conjunction, write “an e-mail” instead of “an e-mail message”, use “hopefully” to mean “I hope that”, and so on. Now all those things are okay. Going back even farther, it used to be that the first-person future tense of to go was “I shall go”. If you [5] said that today, you would get some seriously strange looks. “Awful” used to refer to the quality of filling one with, [6] you [5] got it, awe; now it means really bad. [7]

1 Comma-mark missing where expected.
2 Spelling
3 Missing final punctuation
4 Review this sentence for capital letters.
5 Personal pronoun may not be appropriate for formal or academic writing.
6 Comma splice separates two independent clauses instead of conjunction or semicolon.
7 Adjective (instead of adverb) modifying verb.

Mr Yagoda’s prose received a grade of “weak, needs revision”. I’d offer the same grade to Grammarly.

In fact, computers can be very good at parsing natural language, finding determiners and noun phrases and verb phrases and organising them into trees. But linguists learn in their first syntax class that some sentences can be parsed more than one way. Humans can bring their real-world knowledge to understand what *Time flies like an arrow* means. It doesn’t mean that some insects called *time flies* are fond of *an arrow*, with the same parsing as *Fruit flies like a banana*. In fact, that parsing might not have even occurred to you. Sometimes even humans struggle to work out the proper parsing.

[...] Since computers can be tricked even by one of the most computational elements of language (syntax), we shouldn’t be surprised that they should struggle harder still to judge whether a text is interesting, relevant, concise, organised, stylish or truthful. Online grammar coaches and style checkers will be snake oil for some time, precisely due to some of the things that separate formal and natural languages.

(Adapted from The Economist, online edition, 1 Aug. 2012)

Discussion

1. Can poor grammar, spelling or punctuation be tolerated in business e-mails and reports? Can mistakes in writing spoil proper communication? Isn’t “getting the message across” enough?
2. Do you error-check your emails before sending them? Do you use a spell-checker?
3. Do you find any of the “Grammarly’s criticisms” listed in Ben Yagoda’s text relevant?
4. According to Greene, what are the major limits of computer-assisted methods of text analysis, even though they “can be very good at parsing natural language”?

Vocabulary

1. There is a German verb in Ben Yagoda’s text. Find it and replace with an English equivalent.
2. Explain Greene’s example on how “sentences can be parsed more than one way”.
3. What is “snake oil” (in the last paragraph) and why is this expression applied?
Corporate social responsibility

1 The idea that corporations bear a responsibility that stretches beyond their shareholders is not new. Many companies in the 19th century built special housing for their employees in the belief that a well-housed employee was more productive than one living in a dump. In the early years of the 20th century, Theodore Roosevelt, then president of the United States, said:

Corporations are indispensable instruments of our modern civilisation; but I believe that they should be so supervised and so regulated that they shall act for the interests of the community as a whole.

He introduced antitrust legislation and rules on health and safety, and on working hours.

2 In 1987, Adrian Cadbury, head of the eponymous chocolate firm, wrote in Harvard Business Review:

The possibility that ethical and commercial considerations will conflict has always faced those who run companies. It is not a new problem. The difference now is that a more widespread and critical interest is being taken in our decisions and in the ethical judgments which lie behind them.

3 The debate then focused on how much of Roosevelt’s supervision and regulation was needed to make sure that corporations act sufficiently in the interests of the wider community. Extreme free-marketers say all that is required to ensure the responsible behaviour of corporations is transparency about their affairs. Corporations will then behave responsibly towards the wider community without any coercion because it is in their own best interests. “Being good”, said Anita Roddick, founder of an “ethical” cosmetics firm, The Body Shop, “is good business.”

4 In the United States, the Better Business Bureau goes further and argues that unethical business is bad for business as a whole, not just for individual firms:

Unethical business practices create ill-will among customers and the community, not only toward a particular business firm, but toward business as a whole.

5 The recent debate about corporate social responsibility (CSR) has focused on three main areas:

- **The environment.** This has stretched way beyond the simple demand that companies stop belching smoke out of factory chimneys to a demand that they control their appetite for natural resources—for bits of Brazilian rain forest, for example, or for the skins of rare animals. The organised hostility to such behaviour has forced companies to change. For example, suppliers frightened by the venom of the anti-fur lobby felt compelled to boast: “Make no mistake; all our furs are fake.”

- **Exploitation.** The second strand is the exploitation of workers, especially of women in the developed world and of children in the developing world. There is a feeling that globalisation has increased the power of multinationals to exploit the poor and underpaid, at the same time as it has weakened the influence of trade unions and other organisations designed to protect them.

- **Bribery and corruption.** The third strand focuses on corruption, in particular on the question of what constitutes a bribe, and what protections should be given to whistleblowers (employees or other insiders who report corporate misdeeds). Here there is a strong cultural element to confuse the issue. What constitutes bribery in western countries, for example, may not be considered such in regions such as the Middle East.

(Adapted from The Economist, on-line edition, 9 Sept. 2009)

Vocabulary tasks

1. Read the definitions below and find the nouns (of Latin origin) in the text.
   a) watching over an activity to make certain that it is done properly [3rd par.]
   b) controlling something by making it work in a particular way [3rd par.]
c) people who are considered as a unit because of their common interests or background [3rd par.]
d) the act of forcing somebody to do something [3rd par.]
e) an organization (often formed by a government) or a business that collects and provides information
   [4th par.]
f) a desire or need for something [5th par.]
g) a strong dislike or unfriendliness [5th par.]
h) a poisonous liquid which some snakes or insects produce when biting or stinging [5th par.]
i) a group of people who try to persuade (a politician, an official or an official group) that a particular thing should (not) happen [5th par.]
j) the use of something (often unfairly) for advantage [5th par.]
k) dishonest use of a position or power to one’s own advantage (esp. for money) [5th par.]
l) friendliness and comforts that an organization provides in order to keep guests happy [5th par.]

2. There are three compound nouns whose second part is formed from verbs (by adding a suffix referring to people, like e.g. theatregoer, firefighter, goalkeeper, troublemaker). Find them in the text.

**Discussion and writing assignment**

1. Give some examples of practical measures taken to improve the situation of employees.
2. How does globalisation impact upon the environment and “exploitation of workers”? 
3. When does generous corporate hospitality step over the line (become a bribe)? Give another example of unethical business.
4. In what way and to what extent should corporations be “supervised and regulated”, in your view?
5. Choose one of the three areas of the CSR debate and write a paragraph on it, giving some examples.
Corporate travel survey

Ascend, a company providing information to the aviation industry, conducted a survey on business travel among North American and European managers. First, skim the executive summary of the results below.

1. Ascend ran a corporate travel survey in 2009, 2010 and 2011. Geographically, the sample in 2012 was largely comparable to 2011, with 41% of respondents based in Europe and 34% based in North America this wave compared to 43% and 30% previously. 71% are of management level or above.

2. 92% have made at least one short-haul trip for business. 87% have made at least one long-haul trip for business. In 2011, these figures were 95% and 71% respectively. The average number of short haul flights taken in the last year is 12, compared to 7 for long haul.

3. There has been a small shift away from premium economy to economy class for long-haul flights – with 25% travelling in economy and 14% in premium economy vs. 20% and 19% last time this research was conducted. Of those travelling on long haul flights, 61% travel by either business or first class.

4. 33% expect the number of flights taken by employees of their company to rise over the next year, compared to last year. 16% expect this rise to exceed 10%. Correspondingly, 37% are expecting to see a rise in their company’s corporate travel budget over the coming year.

5. The three most important aspects of managing corporate travel costs were identified in 2011 as using the internet to find cheaper fares, considering a choice of hotels and using agencies to achieve deals. In 2012, they are using the internet to find cheaper fares, reducing the number of staff travelling and reducing conference/exhibition travel, indicating that companies are now more inclined to reconsider employee travel requirements as a means of reducing costs.

6. The aspects of air travel that many respondents feel has improved over the past 2 years include the check-in experience (with the ability to check-in online being mentioned positively by many), convenience, passenger contact/information processes and choice of flights/airlines.

7. By far the biggest complaint about corporate air travel was security processes causing queues and delays, which was also the biggest issue raised in the 2011 survey. Respondents felt that this problem had worsened over the past two years. Another negative aspect raised was poor customer service, particularly on-board the plane although business/first class passengers rated the service more positively than economy class passengers.

8. Rising fare prices were also reported. These are generally felt not to have been met with a corresponding improvement in service. The problem of high prices is expected to get worse by many, as 79% of the sample agreed that global consolidation in the industry will result in less choice and higher prices.

(Adapted from http://www.ascendworldwide.com/download/Corporate_TravelSurvey_2012.pdf.)

Now read the comments on the survey published in The Economist.

Travel Surveys: airport security unpopular

THE experience of dealing with security at airports is getting worse faster than any other aspect of business travel. In a recent survey compiled by Ascend, a company providing information to the aviation industry, 18% of business-traveller respondents reckoned security queues were “much worse” than two years previously, and another 27% reckoned they were plain-old worse. The change in fare prices was similarly unpopular. Without wanting to read too much into a survey with just 624 responses, it was interesting to see that the area where most improvements had been seen over the same period was check-in. 44% of respondents reckoned this had improved to some extent. In fact, you could just about generalise the survey’s results to say that the areas of the travelling experience that rely on technology are getting better, while those that rely more on human behaviour (security, service) are not.

The survey might also lead you to believe that companies are considering reducing business travel altogether as a way to manage costs. Last year, respondents identified the three most important ways of mana-
ging costs as “__________  __________  __________”; so they were travelling more cheaply, but not less.
In 2012, though, the three money-saving ways were “__________  __________  __________”; so now
companies are putting fewer bums on aeroplane seats. And yet the business-travel industry does not appear
to be entering the doldrums, because the survey also suggests that, over the year ahead, more respondents
are expecting to travel more (33 %) than are expecting to travel less (24 %).

(Adapted from The Economist, online edition, 28 Sept. 2012)

Reading comprehension

1. Fill in the two large gaps in the article using information from the above summary.
2. Are these statements true or false?
   a) The number of North American managers who responded to the recent survey has declined.
   b) A lot more business people spent more time aboard a plane in 2012.
   c) Most of long-haul passengers travel in economy class.
   d) A future increase in business travel expenses is anticipated by more than 30 percent of respondents.
3. Which parts (numbered paragraphs) of the executive summary does the article refer to?
Detained Irish student innocent

Suspect held over Astronomical Clock damage released

By Tom Clifford, © The Prague Post 2010

1 An Irish student wrongfully suspected of damaging Prague’s famous Astronomical Clock last month was released by police after being held in a jail cell for 10 hours. Initial police statements and subsequent media reports, including a story in last week’s Prague Post, claimed that the student, originally described as an Irish tourist, had vandalized the clock. This was wrong.

2 Police have confirmed the detained man is innocent and are currently looking for the person responsible. Charles University law student John O’Brien, 20, from Cork City, was walking home through Old Town Square in the early hours of April 21 when police arrested him in the mistaken belief that he had just vandalized the iconic landmark.

3 “I was in Old Town Square about 6 a.m. when the police came up to me and took me to the Astronomical Clock, and they told me to wait with them for about an hour,” he said. “They handcuffed me and then, after an hour or so, took me to the station about five minutes’ drive away. Then they put me in a jail cell on my own.”

4 The police breathalyzed O’Brien twice. Although he was over the limit for driving, the police admitted he was not drunk, O’Brien said. “I was not allowed make a phone call, but they did give me a glass of water,” he said. “It was not too comfortable. At no time was I threatened or punched, but they were quite smug. They said they had the video of me damaging the clock. But it wasn’t me.” O’Brien added he was presented with a charge sheet, which was already stamped, and was told to sign it.

5 “I asked to see the video, and, even when they were watching the video, they believed it was me,” he said. “They were trying to put it on anyone; that was the impression I had. But the man who damaged the clock was wearing different clothes and shoes. Then they realized it was not me.”

6 The police declined to talk about the case in detail when contacted by The Prague Post but are confident the person who damaged the clock will be identified after the security footage was aired on TV.

7 O’Brien was eventually released after it became obvious he was not the man on the video.

8 “After 10 hours, they told me I could go. There was no apology. Since then, I have been in contact with the Irish Embassy, who have been very good, very helpful,” he said.

9 The Astronomical Clock has been the target of vandals on a number of occasions over the past few years. A year ago, a man climbed into the clock’s safety nets and broke one of the hands off the Stargazer statue, which resulted in more than two months of repairs costing more than 40,000 Kč. A Stargazer’s hand was also broken off in December 2007, when a 26-year-old drunk climbed the clock and swung on the arm of the statue.

Comprehension questions

1. Who and for how long was held by the police?
2. Why was he/she arrested?
3. When and under what circumstances did the arrest take place?
4. What damage was caused to the Astronomical clock?
5. Was it the first time such incident happened?
6. Was the arrested person treated badly by the police?
7. Did the policemen apologize for their mistake?
Exercises

Find the words which are defined in the following table, in the text

to say that something is true or is a fact
a person at whom something is directed
the opposite of “guilty”
prison
someone who was caught by the police
being certain of something
to cause harm to something)
a person thought to have committed a crime
to put someone in the prison
formal statement saying that someone is accused of a crime
to let someone go
to hit someone with fist/hand
to find out
to tell someone that you will hurt him or kill him
to put iron binding on someone

Crime Vocabulary

Match the names and the definitions of various crimes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Bribery and corruption</th>
<th>a) To steal articles or an article from a store that is open for business</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Trespassing</td>
<td>b) To import or export without paying lawful customs charges or duties.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Shoplifting</td>
<td>c) The crime of maliciously, voluntarily, and willfully setting fire to a building or other property</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Smuggling</td>
<td>d) Extortion of money from a person by the threat of exposing a criminal act or discreditable information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Arson</td>
<td>e) A deception, a trick, deliberately practiced in order to secure unfair or unlawful gain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Blackmail</td>
<td>f) Something, such as money or a favor, offered or given to a person in a position of trust to influence that person’s views or conduct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Fraud</td>
<td>g) To commit an unlawful injury to rights of another, especially to enter onto another’s land wrongfully</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Write the opposites of the words in the appropriate sentence and translate into the sentences into Czech:

1. happy: We were really ______________ with the way the party was going
2. legal: There is no doubt that cannabis will remain an ______________ drug for the foreseeable future.
3. possible: It was quite ______________ for us to drive all the way from Paris to Madrid in one day.
4. successful: He made an ______________ attempt to climb the highest mountain in the range.
5. responsible: To take the boat out with four children under the age of ten and with no life jackets on board was quite ______________ of him.
6. appropriate: The dress she was wearing was quite ______________ for the occasion.
7. polite: It was very ______________ of him to insult his mother in front of his aunt.

Finish these sentences with a suitable phrasal verb /verbs with prepositions.

1. The problem is becoming serious. We have to __________ something __________ it. (provést)
2. That was it!!! I am completely __________ __________ __________ __________ him. (mit po krk)
3. She works quite hard. You cannot __________ __________ her __________ being lazy. (obviňovat)
4. Who is going to __________ __________ __________ your children when you are away. (starat)
5. What will you do if she .......... ...... ...... it? (zjistit)
6. I think you should .......... ...... the job they offer. (přihlásit)
7. I am going to ............ ...... the noise. (stěžovat si)
Do we think with our brain?

Lord Byron: *How little do we know that which we are!*

Sorting out our thoughts, and moving logically towards our objectives may not be as easy as it seems. Our judgement often strays into illogical traps. (1) ________________. Sometimes we tend to “read” the ideas of another person hastily, and then interpret them incorrectly.

Psychologists have long since uncovered and decoded these standard errors, which are quite common in both our business and personal lives. Frequently, we find ourselves strayed by ill-founded theories, false beliefs and inaccurate assumptions. There is nothing wrong with these theories themselves – on the contrary! They allow us to operate effectively in the dynamic world that surrounds us. If, however, we rush to accept these theories, a situation occurs that was once described by Francis Bacon as: “The human understanding, when it has adopted an opinion ... draws on all other things to support it.”

Judgment then often slips into prejudice. Everything that does not support our numerous pre-conceptions is then pushed to the sidelines, meaning: we tend to bend or destroy information that does not correspond to our preconceptions.

(2) ________________. Rather than searching for information that confirms our opinion, let us look for those that contradict it. If we find such facts, let us change our opinion rather than adjusting and adapting the facts. Let us be objective, rather than blindly trusting the information that is most readily available. Let us not try to stubbornly defend our original opinion, but give us a chance to absorb new information.

Quite often we base our opinion on a first impression. (3) ________________. As a solution, let us suggest leaving yourself with some time to think more about the issue at hand; be it work-related, stress, personal, etc. – let’s forget about responding with one that is instinctual or emotional, and try to consider responding to questions from a more distant perspective. It is important that we verify our opinion with the people and sources we trust.

It seems that there are far too many situations where we are deceived by a general opinion. We trust that people who benefit from the “general opinion” tend to create something of a “halo effect”. Sometimes, we tend to get uncritically impressed by someone’s rhetorical or presentation skills. (4) ________________.

It should be further noted that people likely behave less-favourably when they are outside of an “Interview” context. What we see should be checked against reality and not necessarily mixed up with our expectations.

“Statistical analysis” is yet another tool that can fool us. This is captured by Disrtaeli’s famous quote: “Lies, damned lies, and statistics.”

Or, we can remind ourselves of Churchill’s famous quote: (5) ________________.

What our politicians do with statistics will not be commented on here. The rules of big numbers, comparisons of the incomparable, predictions based on historical data or correlation – they do not always apply. It seems that using one’s wits is not as easy as it might look. The important thing is to learn from our mistakes in judgment as quickly as they occur.

Tasks

1. **Put the sentences in the right place to make the article complete.**
   a) “I only believe in statistics that I doctored myself.”
   b) While this may be correct in some cases, it also has the potential to mislead us.
   c) More often than not, we tend to draw hasty conclusions from incomplete information.
   d) Our opinion of such presenters is often affected by pseudo-scientific knowledge that we cannot sufficiently verify.
   e) How can we prevent this?
2. What are the synonyms to these expressions?
   a) objectives (n)
   b) contradict (v)
   c) support (v)
   d) verify (v)
   e) mislead (v)
   f) note (v)
   g) hasty (adj)
   h) adjust (v)
   i) strayed (adj)
   j) sufficiently (adv)
Don’t expect an immigrant tsunami in 2014

Ahead of the end of immigration controls on Romania and Bulgaria in January 2014, some UK ministers are thinking of running a campaign to deter a repeat of the 2004 “wave” of immigration when eight former communist countries gained EU working rights. But the eurozone crisis makes this prospect less likely.

Seven years after Romania and Bulgaria became citizens of the European Union, the the final transitional immigration controls on the two countries are set to expire. In the United Kingdom, parallels are already being drawn with the 2004 “wave” of immigration, when Poland and the other so-called A8 countries (Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia, who joined the EU in 2004) gained the rights to travel and work throughout the EU. The UK introduced measures between 2004-2011 limiting the number of workers from new accession countries who could work in Britain.

However, the main “pull” factors of immigration, which include employment opportunities, relative gross national income per capita and comparative opportunities across the EU, all suggest that the immigration flow from Romania and Bulgaria will not only be significantly smaller than 2004 levels, but will also be more diffuse throughout EU member states.

A recently released study by Oxford University’s Migration Observatory has drawn out the long-term impact of A8 immigration on the UK, placing the “tsunami” effect into a broader context.

Estimations in 2004 predicted 15,000 people per year would move from the new EU member states to the UK, whereas the average annual Long-Term International Migration inflow of EU citizens increased to around 170,000 in the period 2004-2010, in comparison to the 67,000 over the previous six years.

A deep mark in the political landscape

As a percentage of EU citizens, the A8 immigrants accounted for around 50 per cent of that movement, meaning that Eastern Europeans made up only one-third of the total migrant inflow into the UK. Nevertheless, the failure to anticipate the impact of lifting these restrictions left a deep mark in the political landscape of the UK.

A key driver for economic immigration is the high difference between unemployment levels. In 2004, unemployment in Poland lay at 18.9 per cent, compared to Britain’s 4.6 per cent. While Bulgaria remains poor, its current unemployment rate has dropped to 12.4 per cent compared to the UK’s 7.8 per cent. Given the trend of rising unemployment in the UK, the country’s attractiveness as a destination of economic migration is in question.

The GNIs of Romania and Bulgaria lie at about a half and one-third respectively of the UK’s GNI, significantly more than the level of Poland (1/5th) during the 2004 surge of immigration.

Comprehension questions

1. What will happen on 1st January 2014?
2. When did the two countries join the EU?
3. What does the word tsunami mean? Why is it used in the title?
4. What does the A8 mean?
5. Were the estimates from 2004 right?
6. What are the main reasons for emigration within the EU? What makes people emigrate in the world?
7. Why are especially citizens/politicians in the UK concerned? Are their worries founded on facts?

Exercises

Antonyms. Antonyms are words that have opposite meanings.
Fill in the missing antonym in the table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>emigration</th>
<th>true</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>import</td>
<td>front</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to deter</td>
<td>open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pull</td>
<td>last</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inflow</td>
<td>wide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to drop</td>
<td>abundant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>question</td>
<td>early</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>deep mark</td>
<td>smart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dangerous</td>
<td>former</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>empty</td>
<td>occupied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>risky</td>
<td>to leave</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mistakes correction.
Look at the following sentences and try to find and correct the mistake. Then look up and see the original sentence in the article.

1. Seven years after Romania and Bulgaria become citizens of the European Union, the the final transitional immigration controls on the two countries are set to expire.
2. A recently released study by Oxford University’s Migration Observatory had drawn out the long-term impact of A8 immigration on the UK.
3. Estimations in 2004 predicted 15,000 people per year will move from the new EU member states to the UK.
4. Nevertheless, the failure anticipating the impact of lifting these restrictions left a deep mark in the political landscape of the UK.
5. A key driver for economic immigration is the high difference among unemployment levels.
European workers lack basic English language skills: Survey [fr]

Although the English language plays a central role in today’s international business environment, workers in many countries are still struggling with basic communication skills, according to a new report.

The English Proficiency Index for Companies 2012, published on 13 November by Education First, a privately owned education company, shows employees around the globe broadly struggling with English. The survey was conducted among 115,000 employees and 1.7 million adults in 24 countries and spanned a broad range of companies with an annual turnover ranging from under $1 million to over $100 billion. It showed a significant English skill deficit in almost every group evaluated, including retail groups, food, beverage and tobacco, logistics, energy and mining, public sector, education and manufacturing industries.

Unsurprisingly, workers in the travel and tourism industry came out on top of ranking, followed by consulting. But even there, English ability only reached “intermediate” level in most cases. In the vast majority of countries, the average workforce has English proficiency skills that only allow for basic interaction, meaning they can take part in discussions on familiar topics.

The only groups with an average skill level adequate for complex, in-depth interaction on technical subjects within their specialty are the national workforces in Belgium, Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden. In the Czech Republic, Japan and Russia, the employees scored worse than the national average. This was broadly true for two-thirds of the countries surveyed, where the average level of English proficiency in the workforce is even lower than in the population as a whole.

Complacency?

Analysing the results, Education First said one possible reason is that adults in full-time employment are often too busy to organise training outside work hours. Another explanation is that individuals are becoming complacent in their current positions and do not feel the need to build up their skills, it said.

“The findings of the EF EPIC will undoubtedly be of significant concern to business leaders around the world because employee proficiency in English, which after all is the lingua franca of cross-border business, is essential to achieving international commercial success,” said Andy Bailey of EF Corporate Language Learning Solutions.

“With a challenging business environment in almost every corner of the world now, and tougher and tougher competition for overseas market share, it’s absolutely essential for business leaders to ensure their workforce has the language and communication skills to stay ahead.”

Frequent exposure needed

In higher-proficiency countries, English communication is taught seriously in school at all levels, and applicants for office jobs are expected to speak English regardless of their position. Any unqualified graduate will therefore have to undertake the necessary training to raise his or her English skills in order to find employment.

Moreover, television and movies are not often dubbed, ensuring frequent exposure to a variety of English accents in everyday contexts from childhood and onwards.

Northern Europe and parts of Central Europe have higher proficiency workforces, while the lower proficiency workforces can be found in parts of Europe, the Americas, the Middle East and Asia. Among the countries found in the middle, Spain has implemented extensive education reform to promote English learning, but these reforms are too recent to have touched most of the adult population. Germany requires English of all students, but most media are dubbed, limiting their everyday exposure. The Czech Republic only introduced the teaching of English in school after the end of the Cold War, and subtitled American sitcoms and movies arrived around the same time. In China, professionals try to make up for the outdated teaching methods used in school by enrolling in English-training courses in their spare time.

In lower-proficiency countries, English is taught as a secondary academic subject in school, often using outdated methods because English is not considered an essential skill for employability and even well-educated
adults will readily admit that they do not speak the language. Television and films are usually dubbed, restricting exposure to English to school classrooms and corporate meeting rooms. As the companies cannot use English as a key criterion in selecting new employees, only a few applicants qualify, the survey shows.

EurActiv.com

Tasks

1. What do these numbers refer to?
   a) 115,000
   b) 2/3
   c) 24
   d) 100 000 000 000 000
   e) 13

2. Which groups did the survey show the English skill deficit in?
   a) Which countries are the workforces with an average skill level adequate for complex interaction?
   b) Describe the situation in higher proficiency countries.
   c) What do the Chinese people do to improve their English?
   d) Why is the level of English skills so low in lower-proficiency countries?
   e) Where can we find lower proficiency workers?
   f) Are there any phrasal verbs in the text?
Fat tax

Denmark introduces world’s first food fat tax – October 2011

Denmark has introduced what is believed to be the world’s first fat tax – a surcharge on foods that are high in saturated fat. Butter, milk, cheese, pizza, meat, oil and processed food are now subject to the tax if they contain more than 2.3% saturated fat. Some consumers began hoarding to beat the price rise, while some producers call the tax a bureaucratic nightmare. Others suggest that many Danes will simply start shopping abroad. Danish officials say they hope the new tax will help limit the population’s intake of fatty foods. However, some scientists think saturated fat may be the wrong target. They say salt, sugar and refined carbohydrates are more detrimental to health and should be tackled instead.

Denmark to abolish tax on high-fat foods – November 2012

The Danish government has said it intends to abolish a tax on foods which are high in saturated fats. The measure, introduced a little over a year ago, was believed to be the world’s first so-called “fat tax”. Foods containing more than 2.3% saturated fat – including dairy produce, meat and processed foods – were subject to the surcharge. But authorities said the tax had inflated food prices and put Danish jobs at risk. The Danish tax ministry said it was also cancelling its plans to introduce a tax on sugar, the AFP news agency reports. The ministry said one of the effects of the fat tax was that some Danes had begun crossing the border into Germany to stock up on food there. According to the Danish National Health and Medicines Authority, 47% of Danes are overweight and 13% are obese. The tax was introduced in October 2011, in an attempt to limit the population’s intake of fatty foods. The decision to get rid of the tax was agreed as part of the centre-left minority government’s budget negotiations. Several supermarkets have reportedly said they will reduce their prices once the tax is abolished.

Medics call for ban on trans-fats in UK food

Calls to ban trans-fats from all foods in the UK have been backed by US public health experts. Trans-fats – solid fats found in margarines, cakes and fast food - are banned in some countries. An editorial in the British Medical Journal said 7,000 deaths a year could be prevented by a 1% reduction in consumption. But the Food Standards Agency said the UK’s low average consumption made a complete ban unnecessary. The UK Faculty of Public Health called for the consumption of trans-fats to be virtually eliminated. It says that although trans-fats make up 1% of the average UK adult food energy intake – below the 2% advised as a dangerous level – there are sections of the population where intake is far higher and these groups are being put at risk. In the BMJ article, doctors from Harvard Medical School backed this view and said bans in Denmark and New York City had effectively eliminated trans-fats, without reducing food availability, taste, or affordability. Many studies have shown harmful effects of trans-fats on heart health. They are used to extend shelf-life but have no nutritional value and, like saturated fats, they raise blood cholesterol levels which increase the risk of coronary heart disease.

Comprehension questions

1. When and where was the first “fat tax” introduced?
2. Why was this legislation supported? What were the arguments for its introduction?
3. What were the arguments against the new tax?
4. What was the result of the tax introduction?
5. Why did the Danish government decide to abolish the new tax after one year?
6. What substances harmful to human health are mentioned in the three texts?
7. Why are the trans-fats considered unhealthy by many doctors in the UK and USA?

**Discussion**

1. Do you believe that your/our lifestyle and eating habits are healthy?
2. Do you think that the number of people with overweight in this country is similar to Denmark, the UK or the USA?
3. What should be done to improve the situation?
4. Which country/countries could serve as examples of healthy population? Why?
5. What different eating habits characterize them?
6. Do you plan to change your diet/eating habits? Have you tried that before?
7. What is your opinion on vegetarians or vegans?

**Political debate:**

Form two groups in the class. One group would like to introduce a new tax with the aim to persuade the consumers to select healthier options. Make a list of arguments to support the introduction of the new tax. The other group: prepare arguments that you would use to prevent any increase of taxes. Prepare some examples of such taxes which were introduced and did not bring the expected result.

**What food?**

**Put the following words in the proper box in the table.**

Cabbage, cherry oxtail, turkey, partridge, trout, black pepper, salmon, ginger, hare, duck, beefsteak, carrot, apricot, parsley, cod, chicken, lamb-chops, strawberry, leek, pear, veal-cutlet, mint, mackerel, goose, lime, spinach, pork, sole, plum, venison, ostrich, cucumber

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<th>Fruit</th>
<th>Vegetables</th>
<th>Meat</th>
<th>Fish</th>
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Five ways companies are using Google+ to reach customers

Google+ isn’t just a Facebook clone aimed at techies. Scott Matteson gives some advice to companies on how to actively use it for various marketing and collaborative strategies.

Google+ was launched on June 28, 2011 as a new effort to get Google into the social networking scene. It started out as invite-only – which I personally feel is a horrible way to promote a product – but then became publicly accessible to all. Google+ has been slow to catch on and occasionally derided as a ghost town, but it has been reported as scoring higher in customer satisfaction than Facebook. Google offers many different unique products and is linking them together via Google+.

Not Facebook

I believe many potential users have been reluctant to try Google+ since they considered it a duplicate of Facebook. This may be a thing of the past, however: Google+ currently has 100 million active users and 400 million registered users, according to Venturebeat.com (which, to be fair, has reported that the “active user” count for Google+ has fluctuated; in July 2012 it was clocked at 150 million users). Granted, Facebook now hosts over a billion users, but Google+ isn’t trying to be Facebook, but instead rather its own entity. My fellow IT guys who saw Facebook as pointless suddenly flock to Google+ for the same idea-and-update sharing that social networking has popularized. I think it’s because Google+ has a more professional atmosphere free of suspicious apps and annoying ads.

I’ve also been fascinated with the ways companies have started to leverage Google+ to their advantage. Many of these companies have a presence on Facebook, where clicking “Like” on their page will populate your news feed with their updates and announcements. However, some more innovative developments have been brewed up over on Google+, where instead of using “likes” people can follow individuals and companies to connect them to Circles.

So what can Google+ do for me?

First and foremost, your organization can create a Google+ business page, which promotes your products or services, providing a tagline, introduction, and numerous links for your site. However, simply creating the page isn’t enough; just the same way planting a seed won’t achieve anything unless you also provide water and sunlight. The key is to put something in to get something out; this will reach throughout the Google+ community. Here are five ways to nurture your business through Google+.

1. Use a Google+ badge on your site

A Google+ badge is a widget for your website which will let viewers follow your Google+ page and recommend or share your material, letting your visitors see who else has connected with you. This means people don’t need to search for and follow your organization on Google+ - you can encourage them to do so directly. According to Google, “Top publishers have seen an average follower increase of 38% after adding the Google+ badge to their sites.”

2. Engage in Search Engine Optimization

When people search for your company, if you have a Google+ page, you have the advantage because your company is moved to the top of the results pile. [...] Not only does the search engine then allow you to click “Follow” to add the company to one of your circles, but you can see who else is following this business and get a preview of their most recent post.

3. Start using Hangouts

Now that you’ve got people following your Google+ page, you can let them know what your company is doing (or plans to do) by using posts. This is helpful to spread the word, but sometimes some face-to-face time is even more meaningful. Google+ Hangouts were made for this purpose. [...] In an effort to integrate Hangouts among their other services, Google lets people join Hangouts from Gmail, to work with Google Docs in Hangouts, and schedule them as calendar events.
Up to 10 people or locations can participate in a Hangout, which may not sound like much (this can be great for internal company or client video conferences), but you can also use “Hangouts on Air” to post the video to the web from your Google+ page or Youtube channel. This is perfect for presenting content to a large mass of customers, subscribers or affiliates. Of course, the material can also be archived for on-demand perusal. (Geekazine.com offers some tips titled “10 Ways to Make Google Hangout a Better Experience for All.”)

President Obama participated in a Google+ Hangout in the early 2012. While it might be hard to argue that this effort won him re-election, it certainly helped establish him as being part of the tech-savvy community as well as provided an opportunity to interface with fellow citizens.

4. Leverage product reviews in Google Shopping

It was recently announced by Google that they are combining features of Google+ with Google Shopping, which lets users search for products to buy on the web as well as in brick and mortar locations. This means that if people search for products which have been reviewed by those in their Google+ Circles, these reviews will be available for them to read (this is similar to Google+ Local which I’ll discuss next). People can even post the reviews to their Google+ page. /…/ Encouraging honest feedback via these product reviews is a good way to start using this feature to your advantage. [...]

5. Get Local

Google+ Local is a feature which allows customers to find and read reviews about businesses (as opposed to products in the last paragraph). It’s possible to search by business name or just put in your location and see what’s recommended nearby.

A company’s Google+ Local page generally displays the business page (office hours, directions, and other relevant details). [...] It isn’t the same as the standard Google+ page, but you can set it up easily enough. Moreover, you can benefit from social extensions. If your business uses Google AdWords, you can deploy social extensions to allow you to link your Google+ page to your ads. Google states: “Google can show more endorsements for your business from your customers and supporters. This can raise the social awareness of your business and increase its relevance.” [...]

This also creates a larger social web presence for both your ads and your Google+ page, making it more likely that someone who sees them will see an annotation. Since annotations make your ads more relevant, they may also increase your overall ad performance. According to Google, “Search ads using Google+ average 5 to 10 percent more clicks.”

Sounds great, but how can I see how I’m doing?

Google provides some methods to measure how Google+ is working out for you. Google+ Ripples is a service which offers handy visuals to let you see which of your public posts/links has been shared. You can also check what’s being said about it.

Google Analytics provides reports to let you see how you’re doing in the social media arena (even outside of Google+). It can show you how people are getting from social networks to your site, or how your content is being shared or interacted with outside your site. This can help you decide your next step or prepare goals for the future.

Conclusion

It isn’t just companies selling goods that can use Google+; individuals or groups offering services can benefit from it as well. I recently came across a great article for writers outlining How to Use Google+ as an Author Platform. The article presents some amazing strategies which could easily apply to other disciplines and careers.

Google offers a page for businesses outlining how they can profit from Google+. This provides a great amount of content including concrete examples and case studies.

Thinking about trying Google+ out for the first time? CIO insight has a good article for beginners called “Ten
Ways to get the Most out of Google+.” And Wikihow also offers some good tips.
(Adapted from http://www.techrepublic.com/blog/google-in-the-enterprise/ 16 Nov. 2012)

Discussion and tasks
1. Why isn’t Google Plus just a “duplicate” Facebook? In what way is it different?
2. What are the five features of Google+, allowing companies to increase their “visibility”?
3. Scan Scott Matteson’s article again and choose the right Google+ app (see the bracketted list below) that allows users to...
   a) ...sign up for an online advertising account
   b) ...video chat with more people at a time
   c) ...buy the product they are looking for
   d) ...share the right things with the right groups of people
   e) ...discover and share information about businesses in a given region
   f) ...share web pages from their site to Google+
   g) ...see how a public post or URL is spreading and being shared by the Google+ community
   h) ...measure their return on advertising investments and track their social networking sites and applications
   (The respective apps are: Google+ Circles, Google+ Analytics, Google+ Hangouts, Google+ Ripples, Google+ badge, Google+ AdWords, Google+ Shopping, Google+ Local.)
4. Scott Matteson writes in a journalistic style. Find its examples and guess the meaning of slang expressions techies, IT guys and widget.
Global economy: When China sneezes

Eight Financial Times reporters write about the changing role of Chinese economy. This is the introductory part of the article.

To this day, Chinese people of a certain age can recite a slogan from Mao Zedong’s Great Leap Forward campaign that exhorted the masses to “overtake Britain and match America” in steel production. That disastrous attempt to industrialise in the late 1950s led to the worst man-made famine in history – one that few outside the country knew about because China was so isolated from the rest of the world. More than 50 years later, China is so integrated into the global economy that even relatively minor shifts in its domestic production or spending can have a big impact on the other side of the world. “China can transmit real shocks widely,” the International Monetary Fund said in a report, “whether these originate domestically or elsewhere.”

The economy that was growing at nearly 12 percent has been slowing down significantly for several quarters, while still fast by the standards of most developed countries. China’s deceleration has affected a diverse range of industries and trading partners – and its economic prospects have become almost as big a concern for global investors as the fate of crisis-hit Europe and the trudging US economy. Given how rapidly China has come to dominate many global commodities markets, particularly in the past decade, these have been the most obvious victims. To cite a statistic that would have warmed Mao’s heart, China now produces seven times more steel than the UK and the US combined, and accounts for nearly half of global output of the metal. The country’s share of global imports of iron ore has increased markedly from less than 10 per cent in the early 1990s to about 65 per cent now. But in response to slowing demand from China, prices of iron ore, copper and coal have fallen dramatically this year. This is already having an impact on the economies of Australia, Brazil, Indonesia and parts of Africa.

China is increasingly important to a broad range of industries and exporters. The IMF says it is now the first- or second-largest trading partner of 78 countries, which account for 55 per cent of global gross domestic product. In 2000, it was the first- or second-largest trading partner of just 13 countries, accounting for 15 per cent of global GDP.

The Chinese slowdown has so far been gradual, but the fall in investment and infrastructure spending has affected demand for the types of machinery and capital goods in which producers such as Japan and Germany are particularly strong. Consumer-oriented sectors, such as electronic components, have proved more resilient, although here too some weaker brands are suffering.

The rapid integration that has made China a driver of the global economy also means that a fall in the breakneck pace of growth will have a profound effect on the rest of us. Just half a century ago, 36 million people died in the country and few outsiders heard about it. Today, when China’s nouveaux riches buy fewer cars and handbags, the rest of the world pays attention. (Jamil Anderlini)

Discussion

1. How has China developed since the 1950s? (Do some Internet research and find out who Mao Zedong was.)
2. How has the global role of China changed over the past decades?
3. Why does Chinese economic slowdown impact on the world economy?

Now skim the rest of the article and match the headlines (1–4) with the four parts (a–d).

(a) ___________

From Australia to Brazil, from Jakarta to Cape Town, economies that have boomed thanks to China’s hunger for resources have been hit hard by its slowdown. Never in the history of the modern global economy have prices risen so much and stayed as high for so long. In the past decade, Chinese demand for steel has grown by 15 or 20 per cent most years. This year, however, demand is expected to expand at between 2 and 4 per cent. The prices of steelmaking ingredients have plummeted accordingly. Iron ore, which accounts for
the bulk of profits of miners fell 40 per cent from its April high to its September low, although it has since rebounded.

Economies such as Australia, which sends a quarter of its exports to China, most of which are iron ore, have felt the slowdown acutely. Last week the central bank lowered interest rates after concluding the peak in resource investment would occur sooner, and at a lower level, than expected. Falling prices have also caused leading miners to axe large projects in Australia.

China’s imports have slowed sharply from the double-digit growth once taken for granted. In August, coal imports were up 5 per cent from the previous year compared with 27 per cent year-on-year growth in August 2011. (Leslie Hook and Neil Hume)

(b) __________

Amid a bitter territorial dispute between Tokyo and Beijing, Japan’s carmakers received a painful reminder of the risks of growing dependence on China. Patriotic Chinese drivers turned against Japanese brands. Sales of Toyotas, Nissans and Hondas in the country plunged by between a third and a half. It will come as cold comfort to Japanese car company executives but, in terms of falling Chinese sales, they are merely catching up with some other industries as the pace of China’s economic growth falters.

Demand for excavators used in mining and construction is weakening. Sales have fallen since mid-2011 and were down by a quarter in July compared with a year earlier. Caterpillar, the world’s largest maker of construction and mining equipment, has 18 plants in China but, due to a shortage in orders, has begun exporting to the Middle East and Africa. Data show sharp drops in Chinese demand for many goods, from chemicals to turbines.

European and South Korean car producers have benefited from Japanese groups’ woes but here too there are signs of a broader slowdown. Goldman expects growth in passenger car sales to decelerate from an estimated 13.9 per cent this year to 7.8 per cent next year. (Jonathan Soble)

(c) __________

The race by Foxconn and Asian suppliers to meet record demand for the iPhone 5 and a new version of Windows suggests that the technology sector is not suffering unduly from slowing Chinese consumer demand. High-profile launches have kept technology companies busy. However, Taiwan’s Synnex, a distributor of IT goods in mainland China, says its sales fell 9 per cent last month. Nomura analysts say macroeconomic uncertainty is pushing Japanese electronic companies to rein in production.

But a more important problem for the sector is the falling global demand for new PCs – an area where Chinese consumption has remained stronger than that of US and Europe. China’s PC market grew sluggishly last quarter but sales in the US and the rest of Asia fell more than expected.

Like Foxconn, Korean companies have done well in China recently, notably Samsung with its Galaxy smartphones. Exports to China from Taiwan, home to key semiconductor manufacturers, rebounded last month to increase 11.9 per cent year-on-year after falling 7.5 per cent in August. A growth in exports played a particularly important role. Many of them are meant for assembly in China and are then re-exported to Europe and the US. (Sarah Mishkin)

(d) __________

Burberry grabbed headlines last month having raised fears that the Chinese economic slowdown had begun to depress exclusive product sales. But it seems that Burberry was affected more than most – and its problems on the mainland could herald a larger shift in Chinese spending patterns away from logo-driven brands towards more niche ones. “At the top end, consumers are still spending on expensive items in China. The super wealthy prefer Bottega Veneta and Hermès and they tend to avoid Burberry and Louis Vuitton, which are considered not as exclusive,” says Shaun Rein, managing director of China Market Research in Shanghai.

Burberry says sales in China over the past three months have slowed but “remain positive”. Spending in
China has also been hit by a downturn in gift-giving ahead of the upcoming change in the Chinese leadership. “Gifting is part of the Chinese culture of giving to people in authority,” says Stacey Cartwright, Burberry’s finance director. “Until you know how things settle down, who are you [giving gifts] to?” (Patti Waldmeir, Andrea Felsted and Vanessa Friedman)

(Adapted from The Financial Times 17. 10. 2012; www.ft.com.)

Vocabulary and grammar tasks
Go through the whole article again and highlight (preferably in three colours)
1. the expressions (both verbs and nouns) indicating upward and downward trends (incl. accompanying adverbs and adjectives);
2. the examples of particular “items” (or brands) of electronics, industries, luxury goods and commodities;
3. the uses of present perfect tense.
Giving feedback to your boss

Critically appraising the person who manages you is never easy. But thoughtful, honest feedback is something many bosses value.

1) If the feedback is unsolicited, you should ask yourself what your motives are, says career coach Rebecca Alexander: “Are you getting back at them for something? You also need to ask if the feedback is useful and how receptive they will be.” Jo Ellen Grzyb, of professional personal development advisers The Impact Factory, says: “It tends to be difficult if there is too much of a status gap between you. If you see your boss as powerful, you tend to project the role of parent on to them, meaning you act like a child. Remind yourself that what you have to say is valid.” She adds: “It’s easier if you communicate with your boss regularly and feedback, including positive feedback, when you see it.” Jon Lavelle, author of Water off a Duck’s Back: How to deal with frustrating situations, awkward, embarrassing and manipulative people – and keep smiling!, advocates preparation, so the feedback doesn’t come out of the blue. “Say ‘There is something we need to talk about. Do you have some time when we can sit down?’” He recommends writing your feedback down first, in order to formulate your thoughts.

2) It has to be in person: email can lead to horrible misunderstandings. Mr Lavelle suggests you use a simple structure to compose what to say, such as: “This is the situation; this is what is happening; this is how it makes me feel; this is what we should do; and this is how it will help us both.” Ms Alexander adds: “Build on things they’re already doing well. Rather than saying ‘Morale has been terrible for the past six months’, say, ‘I noticed how well the team responded when you spoke to them six months ago. Morale has fallen recently, doing that again could help.’” She adds that you should be positioning yourself as an ally of your boss, who genuinely wants to help.

3) “Avoid sweeping generalisations,” says Ms Alexander. “Specific comments in your field of knowledge are much more useful.” Ms Grzyb says you should resist the urge to rant or moan: “Offer solutions and say what you want. You want to be seen as someone who gives good feedback rather than having your boss groan inwardly when you ask to talk to them.”

4) “They have the right to disagree,” says Ms Grzyb. “You should try to find a compromise. If it’s a bad disagreement, stand your ground and say ‘I can see we really disagree. What are we going to do about it?’“ If your feedback has been forgotten, there is nothing wrong with reminding the boss but it’s probably best done in a light-hearted way.

The writer is the author of ‘The Careerist: Over 100 ways to get ahead at work’.

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Tasks

Match the headings with the paragraphs:

a) How do I deliver it?

b) What doesn’t work?

c) What should I consider?

d) What if they disagree or ignore the feedback?
Choose the right meaning of these words:

1. valid
   a) able to be accepted
   b) not able to be accepted

2. embarrassing
   a) feeling amused
   b) causing to feel uncomfortable

3. receptive
   a) willing to listen
   b) friendly

4. responded
   a) reacted
   b) cooperated

5. status gap
   a) the difference between education
   b) the difference between the positions

6. field
   a) area
   b) question

7. resist
   a) avoid
   b) try

8. compromise
   a) solution
   b) agreement

9. reminding
   a) to make somebody do something they have forgotten
   b) to make somebody aware of something they have forgotten

10. misunderstandings
    a) feeling you miss somebody to understand you
    b) to think you have understood when you have not
Hiring trend gives employers more options in finding skills

By Devon Portney

A. As the 1) ________________ (COMPETE) for talent continues unabated, employers need to ensure they are using the right 2) ________________ (RECRUIT) channels to land the right person for each role.

B. For some jobs this might be via a human resources department or direct 3) ________________ (RECRUIT) by a manager or department head – or in some cases by a specialist internal recruiter. For other jobs, it might involve a third party 4) ________________ (RECRUIT), working with various internal 5) ________________ (RESOURCE). In response to this mix, many US recruitment firms have adapted their 6) ________________ (TRADITION) methods to include 7) ________________ (CO-OPERATE) with the rising number of internal corporate recruiters.

C. Some companies prefer taking on a 8) ________________ (DEDICATE) in-house professional to devote themselves 9) ________________ (COMPLETE) to seeking quality candidates, while others see no need to pay for a full-time post when they might only be needing candidates once or twice a year. Those companies with specific 10) ________________ (HIRE) and firing patterns that allow them to focus on recruitment at pre-planned times of the year, and those chasing large numbers of candidates, especially for 11) ________________ (LOW) level positions, tend to be sticking with recruitment firms.

D. Josh Tofteland, 12) ________________ (MANAGE) director at KForce staffing agency, says: “There are three primary channels of acquiring human capital. First is HR or internal. Second is direct recruitment from a manager or department head. Third is a 13) ________________ (COMBINE) of internal and/or department heads, and third party vendor recruitment.”

E. For internal recruiters, the 14) ________________ (PRESS) is always on them to be looking out for talent. Large recruitment firms have plenty of candidates coming to them, but an internal recruiter must find the ideal candidates themselves – and posting positions on job websites can be very untargeted. “Internal recruiters must vigilantly screen resumés and identify many levels of development and 15) ________________ (TRAIN),” says Elaina Genser, senior vice-president of executive search firm Witt/Kieffer.

F. “The first step is to generate interest in the position from the candidate, then encourage them to apply. This is much more powerful than posting a position and waiting for people to contact you. Internal recruiters have to be pro-active about recruiting.” Often, internal recruiters will work with search firms, 16) ________________ (COMBINE) a more focused and 17) ________________ (TIGHT) controlled search with the benefit of a 18) ________________ (LARGE) pool of candidates known to the recruitment firms.

G. Internal recruiters can also face the challenge of 19) ________________ (SPARK) interest in someone who might not need a job – they might be calling candidates out of the blue – and they must exercise discretion, especially when trying to poach someone from a competing company. For very senior appointments, companies might use internal recruiters to assist with strategic placements in, for example, departments specialising in tax law, 20) ________________ (FINANCE) reporting, auditing and 21) ________________ (REGULATE) compliance.

H. But many would not entrust the most vital positions solely to their internal recruiter, preferring instead to let departmental heads lead the search. For candidates with tangible skills, an easily identifiable career trajectory, and an exemplary educational background, a department head might more readily identify the best candidates.

I. For broader positions demanding a wider range of skills, agencies are more likely to be retained to provide access to a larger pool of candidates. The candidate’s experience is 22) ________________ (BROAD) similar, whichever model is used, although internal recruiters can provide a deeper insight into their organisation and what it is seeking, and have a greater stake in creating a good 23) ________________ (IMPRESS).

J. Trends such as internal recruiting mean the art of hiring remains fluid and reacts to changes and shifts in the economy and jobs market. Dori Rosner, director of HR and recruiting for Rubenstein Public Relations, has also worked as an external recruiter: “I think internal recruiting has evolved as companies place an even greater value on their HR professionals recruiting in more 24) ________________ (CREATE) ways.
“The recruitment process has slowed down, in that companies are more cautious, and not as hasty in their hiring as they were before the recession.” While large recruitment firms have access to large candidate pools and charge clients only for services provided, internal recruiters are able to focus on 25) ________________ (SERVE) only one client: their employer. With a wealth of choices available to employers and an increasingly complex set of hiring needs across a range of industries, no single model is likely to emerge.

(http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/08a26db4-58ba-11e2-99e6-00144feab49a.html#axzz2KfTPSICk)

Tasks

1. Put the numbered words into their right forms.

2. Read the definitions and find the words in the paragraphs.
   a) The process of hiring people in companies. (B)
   b) To give your time or your effort or your love wholly to something you believe in or a person. (C)
   c) Any regularly repeated arrangement. (C)
   d) To do something very carefully to notice things. (E)
   e) Curriculum Vitae. (E)
   f) To strongly advise someone to do something or make someone to believe they are able to do something. (F)
   g) A helpful or good effect, or something intended to help. (F)
   h) To take and use for yourself unfairly or dishonestly. (G)
   i) An action according to an order, set of rules or request. (G)
   j) Real or not imaginary, able to be shown or touched. (H)
   k) To search for, to look for . (I)
   l) A path, a track. (H)
   m) To develop gradually. (J)
   n) Coming from the outside. (J)
   o) When taking care to avoid risks. (K)
   p) Done in a hurry, sometimes without the necessary care or consideration. (K)
   q) To appear by coming out of something. (K)
How we became addicted to sugar

By Anne Gibson BBC History

We are swamped by sugar. It has crept into all areas of our daily diet, from the sweet treats we award ourselves to family essentials such as pre-packaged loaves of bread. We know that too much sugar is bad for us, but we are hooked – and sugar is now so ubiquitous it is hard to believe there was a time when it was not readily available. First discovered growing as a wild grass in the South Pacific around 8,000 BC, travellers and traders helped spread sugar across the globe.

For centuries it was regarded as a status symbol, too expensive to be consumed in great quantities. Britain’s love affair with the sweet stuff began in the 1600s. Settlers on the British colony of Barbados discovered sugar cane thrived in the island’s stony soil where crops of cotton and tobacco had failed. Providing three harvests a year, farming sugar cane became a lucrative business. The discovery prompted a “sugar rush” with settlers descending on Barbados – keen to cash in on the wealth it created. Mass production of sugar saw Britain grow rich, helping to build the Empire.

It was physical work. Indentured Scots and Irishmen did much of the hard graft but they were soon replaced by a cheaper option – slaves from West Africa. It was a dark period in British history, says David Richardson, Professor of Economic History at the University of Hull. “I don’t think you can underestimate the importance of sugar to the development of transatlantic slavery”. “Six million enslaved Africans were deposited in the West Indies, and yet when you look at the numbers liberated they’re far fewer than six million. And the reason is... sugar kills slaves in the process of cultivating it and refining it,” he adds. The slaves were at the mercy of the plantation owners and overseers who had little regard for their welfare. Even pregnant women were made to work in the fields, and slaves were not given adequate nutrition. “These are guys who are there to make money and get out. The objective of the system is to produce the sugar, not to provide an easy way of life for the slaves – as long as you have access to more slaves,” adds Prof Richardson.

1) For the poor in the 19th century a lot of their calorific intake came from sugar – they could have been taking in calories from elsewhere that came with nutrients” – Dr Annie Gray Food historian

Britain had the monopoly on the sugar cane trade for over a century. During the Napoleonic wars of the early 1800s the British blockaded France’s trade routes with the Caribbean, leaving the country with low supplies of sugar. Keen to find a solution, Napoleon invested heavily in the production of sugar beet, a relatively new discovery. With 40 sugar beet factories operating across the country, France once again had its sugar fix.

It was not long before sugar beet flooded the British market. The price dropped and by 1850 sugar was finally affordable for all. The public could not get enough of this cheap and tasty pick-me-up. From sweetened tea in the workplace, to meals on the family table, to the new working class tradition of high tea – sugar soon became indispensable. Far from being an unhealthy choice, this new foodstuff played an important role in family eating habits, says food historian Dr Annie Gray. “It’s a question of, are your children going to eat that dry bread? No. If you spread it with a bit of jam can you get them to eat it? Yes.”

2) “If you look at the diet of the working class at the beginning of the 19th century, you’re pretty much looking at bread, potatoes, cheese, butter if you’re lucky, maybe a bit of bacon fat,” says Dr Gray. “By the end you’re looking at bread, butter or margarine, jam and cake.”

So addicted were we to this new taste, that at the beginning of the 19th century we consumed 12 pounds of sugar per head. By the end of the century that amount had rocketed to 47 pounds per head.

3) But this new-found pleasure came at a price. “For the poor in the 19th century a lot of their calorific intake came from sugar, and the problem with that is they could have been taking in calories from elsewhere that came with nutrients”, says Dr Gray. “Malnutrition among the poorer classes at the end of the 19th century was
awful.” Malnutrition is not the only health problem for which sugar has some responsibility. It is known to cause tooth decay, while obesity and high blood pressure are closely linked to the over-consumption of calories. In turn they can lead to heart disease and Type 2 diabetes.

4)

- 2.9 million people have diabetes
- The number has doubled since 1996
- It’s estimated that five million people will have diabetes by 2025
- Most will have Type 2 diabetes, partly due to an increase in obesity

Sugar is now so ingrained in our diet it may seem too impossible a habit to break. But Professor Naveed Sattar of the University of Glasgow’s School of Medicine thinks there is some hope in our battle with the sweet stuff. “People can take some of the sugar out of their diet and get to a point where they’re eating less sugar in their food or drinks but still enjoy their diet to the same extent, if not more, by reprogramming their palate.” Challenging centuries of in-built programming favouring sugar might take a lot of willpower, but Professor Sattar is confident it can be achieved. “Sometimes to re-programme your palate can take a couple of months…but [people] can achieve that change.”

http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/0/20311399

Tasks

1. Put the headings into the right place:
   a) Over consumption
   b) Affordable for all
   c) Diabetes in the UK
   d) It did not take long for sugar to become a household favourite.

2. Make nouns from these verbs or phrases: (all of them are in the article)
   a) to develop
   b) to discover
   c) to produce
   d) to consume
   e) to please
   f) to settle
   g) to be responsible
   h) to harvest
   i) to plant

3. What do these numbers refer to?
   a) 40
   b) 6 000 000
   c) 8 000
   d) 1800
   e) 19
   f) 1850
   g) 2025
   h) 12
   i) 2,9
   j) 47
   k) 2
   l) 1600

4. Decide if these statements are true (T) or false (F):
   a) Sugar cane was discovered on Barbados
   b) Children and women were not allowed to work in the fields.
   c) Britain had the monopoly on the sugar cane trade for more than 2 centuries.
   d) Scots and Irishmen first Works in the fields.
e) Re-programming our diet takes short time.
f) Consumption of sugar can cause problems with high pressure.
How We Raised $40 Million for Haiti via Text Messages

On Jan. 13 at 4:30 a.m., James Eberhard was awakened by a phone call from the U.S. State Department. A huge earthquake had hit Haiti and the government wanted Eberhard to put together a donation program as fast as possible.

Two hours later, his 25-person mobile software company, mGive, launched a national campaign that let people donate $10 to a number of charities via cell phone. All contributors had to do was text the word HAITI to the number 90999; the pledge would show up on their cell phone bill. Four months later, the campaign has raised more than $40 million, and the money is still coming in.

To date, mGive has powered the majority of the mobile giving campaigns in the U.S. Just a few years ago, that wouldn’t have been possible. mGive was still an unknown startup in Denver with no nonprofit clients to speak of and zero leverage with the mobile carriers. The company wanted the carriers to work with it for free. Not surprisingly, they said “no” – until they saw the potential of a campaign in action. Below Eberhard explains in his own words how the company succeeded after a rough start.

mGive Founder James Eberhard:

I first saw text donations in action when I attended a Live Aid event in London in 2005. The campaign raised 2.2 million pounds in six days. It was incredible. I founded mGive later that year because I was convinced that if nonprofits could tap the country’s 290 million cell phones for donations, it would revolutionize their organizations. I knew they’d jump on the opportunity.

The only problem was, they didn’t jump. No one did. A lot of nonprofits thought the idea was “interesting” but they weren’t convinced it would work. Others doubted whether people would really ever want to give money through their cell phones.

Q: Randy Punley, the United Way’s director of corporate and media partnerships, explains that at that time mobile giving simply wasn’t proven. Nonprofits didn’t really know how to use the technology effectively in a donation campaign. To make it pay off, they would have had to broadcast the text number repeatedly to as many people as possible – a huge and expensive advertising proposition, Punley says. Plus, big nonprofits like the United Way are inundated with new tech ideas all the time. “I get hundreds of pitches from companies each month,” he says.

A: Without a big nonprofit behind us, mobile carriers didn’t take our pitch seriously. It didn’t help that we wanted them to pass on 100 percent of the charitable donations to nonprofits. (Usually cell phone companies take a percentage of each transaction conducted on their networks.) And until we got a big nonprofit on board, the networks weren’t about to change their practices.

We did everything we could to lobby the nonprofit world. We spoke at their conferences. We wrote articles in nonprofit magazines. We booked every meeting we could with nonprofit executives to tout the benefits of mobile giving. For the next two and a half years, I invested upwards of $4 million of my own money to help us survive.

Finally, in late 2007, we sold the United Way on the idea. The NFL agreed to donate a spot during the 2008 Super Bowl to plug the campaign. With those two organizations on board, we finally convinced the wireless carriers to waive their fees.

Comprehension questions

1. Who is Mr. Eberhart?
2. Who and under what circumstances asked him to organize the action?
3. What was the cause of the emergency?
4. How much money was collected in the end?
5. How much do wireless operators charge for the service now?
6. What made the companies change their policy?
7. Give examples of successful charitable actions mentioned in the text.
Discussion

1. Have you ever donated money to a charity via the mobile phone (DMS)?
2. Can you recall the circumstances – to what charitable cause, how much did you donate, what made you do it?
3. Can you recall recent natural catastrophies comparable to the earthquake in Haiti?
4. Do you know some successful charities? What do they collect money for?
5. Can you give an example of a company like mGive which used a clever idea and modern technology to grow rapidly and be successful?
6. Do you know a company or businessman famous for their charity?
7. Have you ever supported a company (by buying their product or services) because you believed that some of their profit will go to charity?

Exercises

1. Abbreviations

   Read and explain the meaning of the following abbreviations that are commonly used. If you know the exact words of the abbreviation write it down.

   USA, GB, UN, EU, NATO, UNESCO, IMF, FBI, UNICEF, CIA,
   SMS, DMS, MMS, WWW, WIFI, UFO, PC, GPS, html,
   HiFi, FAQ, cc, PS, PF, B.A., a.m./p.m., BC/AD, £/$US, RIP

2. Natural disasters and catastrophies.

   Match the words and their definitions.

   | 1. earthquake | a) a rapid flow of snow down a slope. In mountains, it could be the most serious objective natural hazards to life and property |
   | 2. flood      | b) an outbreak of a disease that spreads through a human population |
   | 3. volcanic eruptions | c) a series of water waves caused by the displacement of a large volume of a body of water, typically in an ocean |
   | 4. cyclone, hurricane, typhoon | d) severe winter storm characterized by heavy snow and strong winds. |
   | 5. blizzard  | e) different names for the same phenomenon a cyclonic storm system that forms over the oceans |
   | 6. avalanche  | f) a result of a sudden release of energy in the Earth’s crust that creates seismic waves, causing vibration, shaking and displacement of the ground |
   | 7. tsunami   | g) unusual dryness of soil, resulting in crop failure and shortage of water, caused by lower rainfall than average over a long period |
   | 8. epidemic  | h) an overflow of a river or lake that submerges land or breaks levees |
   | 9. drought   | i) an explosion or the fall of rocks, lava may be produced and destroy many buildings and plants, ash may form a cloud, and settle thickly in nearby locations |
   | 10. wildfire | j) fire caused by lightning and drought but may also be started by human negligence or arson. |
How we stopped buying Made in China...

In February, our family decided to stop buying things made in China. Completely. We weren’t sure if it would be possible, if people would think we were crazy. But in February, our Made-in-China (Gary Fisher) bicycle was the last pre-NMIC (“Not made in China”) purchase we made.

OK, we’re not an entirely typical family in every respect, but pretty close. 1 house, 2 parents, 3 kids, 4 pet fish, a minivan, a schedule full of soccer, gymnastics, piano lessons, and church. Weekdays spent waiting for Saturday (and work to end), and weekends spent waiting for Monday (and school to start).

We think there a lot of good reasons to read the label when spending your hard-earned dollars. We started thinking about taking country of origin of the things you buy into account. It’s been over 2 years, and we’re still going strong!

Buying Not Made in China has been great for our family, and has allowed us to exercise a measure of ethical judgment in our spending choices.

Do you really think it makes a difference? Well, I don’t think the Communist Party Central Committee has a task force working overtime to address our family’s spending choices, but I do think we make a difference, in 2 ways:

1. It makes a difference to us – that is, we know that we’re doing what we believe to be right with the resources we have been entrusted with. Maybe it’s a “sleep soundly at night” sort of answer, but each of us ultimately is accountable for our individual choices. I believe that great evils (like the World Wars) and times of great good (like the abolition of slavery) are more the result of the sum of many small choices made by many people than of the great leaders and big events.

   Michael Jackson’s The Man in the Mirror says, “if you want to change the world, take a look at yourself and make the change.” Not that I consider Michael a source of spiritual guidance, but for once, he’s right on – the only real power to change we have is in ourselves.

2. We’re proof that it is (about 99.5%) possible to live NMiC, and even if the people we meet don’t engage in them as completely as we have, next time they have a choice between two items, maybe they’ll buy the one made in USA, or in a democratic country like El Salvador.

(adopted from http://www.notmadeinchinalife.com/)

Comprehension questions
1. In what sense can the family be considered “normal”, average?
2. What makes them exceptional?
3. What political idea motivates them?
4. What two consequences has had their decision?
5. Which famous singer is quoted? What does the quotation say?

Exercises
1. True or False?
   Decide which statements are according to the text true and which are false? Do not look at the article until you have completed this activity.
   a) Quite a lot of people believe that it is difficult if not impossible to avoid buying goods imported from China and other South East Asian countries.
   b) You can find out about the origin of the goods if you look at the label.
   c) China is ruled by the task force of the Communist Party
   d) The last product the family ever bought was a bicycle from their friend Gary Fisher.
   e) According to the text important historic decisions /events are made by great leaders.

2. Language
   Find and correct the grammatical mistakes in these sentences.
   a) Our family decided to stop to buy things made in China.
   b) We started thinking about taking country of origin of the things into accounting.
c) If you want to change the world, take a look at yourself and do the change.
d) The only really power to change we have is in ourselves.
e) The Committee has a task force working over the time.

3. Vocabulary

Find in the text synonyms to the words in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. completely</th>
<th>6. think, believe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. mad, mentally ill</td>
<td>7. money, finance, sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. a thing bought</td>
<td>8. leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. military group</td>
<td>9. thing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. cancellation</td>
<td>10. In the end</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Discussion

1. Do you believe it is right to take into consideration the country of origin of the products that you want to buy? Why yes or why not?
2. Do you usually study the label and other information available about the product before you buy it?
3. Have you encountered a situation when the producer or seller tried to hide the true origin of the product?
4. The authors speak about a “sleep soundly at night”. Is the conscience in important issue for you? Can you mention an example of a situation when you acted because of keeping a good conscience?
5. Which products and countries do you associate with top quality (example: Swiss watches)?
Matrix management

Matrix management is a structure for running those companies that have both a diversity of products and a diversity of markets. In a matrix structure, responsibility for the products goes up and down one dimension and responsibility for the markets goes up and down another. This leaves most managers with a dual reporting line: to the head of their product division on the one hand, and to the head of their geographical market on the other.

Despite the potential confusion that this duality creates, matrix management was enormously popular in the 1970s and 1980s.Leading the fashion was Philips, a Dutch multinational electronics company, which first set up a matrix structure after the second world war. It had national organisations (NOs) and product divisions (PDs), and for a while they operated successfully as a network. The network was held together by a number of coordinating committees, which resolved any conflict between the two.

The crux came with the profit and loss account. Who was to be held accountable for it? At first, the answer was both the NOs and the PDs. But this was unsatisfactory, and the NOs eventually got the upper hand. Philips’s PDs did not like that, and they fought back. In the 1990s, when the company was not doing so well, its organisational structure was completely overhauled. A few powerful PDs were given worldwide responsibility for the profit and loss account, and the NOs became subservient to them.

In an article in Harvard Business Review in 1990, Christopher Bartlett and Sumantra Ghoshal suggested that the problem (especially for multinationals) was that:

Dual reporting led to conflict and confusion; the proliferation of channels created informational log-jams as a proliferation of committees and reports bogged down the organisation; and overlapping responsibilities produced turf battles and a loss of accountability. Separated by barriers of distance, language, time and culture, managers found it virtually impossible to clarify the confusion and resolve the conflicts.

The authors maintained that matrix management had been part of an attempt by companies to create complicated structures that matched their increasingly complicated strategies. But it focused only on the anatomy of the organisation. It ignored the physiology (the systems that allow information to flow in and around the organisation) and the psychology (the “shared norms, values and beliefs” of the organisation’s managers).

Organisations could implement matrix management successfully, Bartlett and Ghoshal claimed, if they started at the other end. Their first objective should be “to alter the organisational psychology … only later do they consolidate and confirm their progress by realigning organisational anatomy through changes in the formal structure”.

Nigel Nicholson of London Business School says that the matrix structure is “one of the most difficult and least successful organisational forms”. Evolutionists like him allege that matrix forms are inherently unstable because they have conflicting forces pulling towards too many different centres of gravity.

Matrix management still has its admirers, although most of them think that it works best in situations where there is a finite task involved and where everyone shares a similar sense of purpose. This includes situations like launching a new product, or starting a new business, or putting on a Broadway show, or getting a man to the moon.

(Adapted from The Economist, on-line edition, 23 Oct. 2009)

Discussion

1. Explain why managers’ responsibility within a matrix structure splits into two directions. What did this “dual reporting” cause in the past?
2. Which financial statement is mentioned in connection with the matrix structure? Why?
3. Why does matrix structure attract criticism?
4. In what situations is matrix management the most convenient? What do the last two examples of MM represent?
Vocabulary tasks

Find four

1. *phrasal verbs* (in the past tense) meaning
   a) to establish st. [2nd par.]
   b) to have more power (and control) than anyone else [an idiom; 3rd par.]
   c) to defend o.s. [3rd par.]
   d) to cause not to be able to advance [4th par.]

2. *nouns* meaning
   a) the state of being varied or different [1st par.]
   b) the most important or serious part of a matter or problem [3rd par.]
   c) difficult situations caused by wrongly recorded information [4th par.]
   d) the force attracting an object towards another one [7th par.]

3. *adjectives* meaning
   a) with two similar parts or combining two things [1st and 4th pars.]
   b) examined in a detailed way and improved [3rd par.]
   c) less important than something else [3rd par.]
   d) having a limit or end [8th par.]
McDonald’s launches long-term campaign to inspire millions of Happy Readers

McDonald’s UK today launches a long-term campaign to put millions of popular books into the hands of families and help make reading fun. By the end of 2014, McDonald’s will have handed out at least 15 million fiction and non-fiction books to families across the UK. It will partner with publishers, retailers and other literacy organisations including the National Literacy Trust and WH Smith to achieve this goal.

Created in response to a successful pilot in 2012, following which nine out of 10 parents said they would like to see more book promotions from McDonald’s, the Happy Readers campaign will launch with a five-week nationwide promotion. During those five weeks, Happy Meal customers will be able to enjoy a series of non-fiction books from award-winning publisher DK’s ‘Amazing World’ series. The books, one of which will be included with every Happy Meal, will come with puzzles and stickers that bring to life topics including Stars and Planets, Big Cats and Oceans.

A key aim of the long-term Happy Readers campaign is also to encourage families to have fun reading together.

Alistair Macrow, Vice President of Marketing, McDonald’s UK, said: “With 1,200 UK restaurants and eight out of ten families visiting us each year, we’re excited to leverage our scale, our partnerships and our presence in communities across the country to help millions of mums, dads and children find the fun in reading. Our restaurants are designed to be colourful, exciting places that children and their parents come to for a treat and we’re looking forward to books becoming a part of that family experience.”

John Duhigg, DK CEO, commented: “By offering families the chance to enjoy the Amazing World books as part of the McDonald’s Happy Readers campaign, we hope that more and more kids will realise the exciting world of knowledge and discovery waiting for them in books like these. Non-fiction books are just as fun and inspiring as novels, and children can immediately dip into them, learning lots of fascinating things in a really accessible way.”

Jonathan Douglas, Director, National Literacy Trust, added: “We are delighted that McDonald’s is extending its commitment to giving families access to quality, affordable books. Our research tells us that there is a very clear link between book ownership and children’s future success in life so it is very concerning that one in three children in the UK don’t own a book and half of kids don’t really enjoy reading. Initiatives like McDonald’s Happy Readers campaign play an important role in getting more books into the hands of children and inspiring families to read together as a fun and interactive pastime.”

Adopted from http://www.mcdonalds.co.uk/ukhome/Aboutus/Newsroom/news_pages/happyreaders.html on 20/01/2013

Comprehension questions

1. What new promotion campaign does the company start?
2. How long will it last?
3. How many copies will be given away?
4. Which companies and organizations cooperate?
5. What is the main aim of the campaign?
6. Who are the three people who comment on the campaign?
7. Do you think that the campaign succeeds in its aims? Why/why not?

Exercises

Complete the text with the following words:
research, role, giveaway, offer, link, fast, distributor, kids, and campaign.

McDonald’s to become UK’s largest book ____________ with Happy Meal deal as it commits to handing out 15m books with its Happy Meals by 2015.

The book ____________ will start today with a five-week promotion offering a series of non-fiction books from DK Books’s Amazing World series, including Stars and Planets, Big Cats and Oceans. By the end of
2014, the _______________ food retailer will have handed out at least 15m fiction and non-fiction books to Happy Meal eaters.

The _______________ aims to encourage families to enjoy reading together. The latest _______________ from the National Literacy Trust (NLT), based on a survey of 21,000 young people in the UK, revealed that only 50pc of children enjoy reading “very much” or “quite a lot”.

As well as books given out alongside Happy Meals, customers can redeem books at WH Smith, the high-street retailer, under the _______________, McDonald’s said yesterday.

Jonathan Douglas, director of the NLT, said: “Our research tells us that there is a very clear _______________ between book ownership and children’s future success in life, so it is very concerning that one in three children in the UK doesn’t own a book, and half of _______________ don’t really enjoy reading.

“Initiatives like McDonald’s Happy Readers campaign play an important _______________ in getting more books into the hands of children, and inspiring families to read together as a fun and interactive pastime.”


Top-selling 10 books of all times (well, since Nielsen records began in 1998) Nielsen Bookscan is the world’s largest book tracking service - they collect total transaction data directly from the tills and dispatch systems of all major book retailers. The data covers over 90% of all retail book purchases in the UK – 6,500 retailers in the UK each week. It monitors more than 220,000 different titles selling in a week and the consumer value is on average £30m each week.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Book title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Copies</th>
<th>Sales in GBP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Da Vinci Code</td>
<td>Brown, Dan</td>
<td>4,522,025</td>
<td>22,857,837</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone</td>
<td>Rowling, J. K.</td>
<td>3,844,316</td>
<td>19,853,187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets</td>
<td>Rowling, J. K.</td>
<td>3,184,492</td>
<td>16,224,021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angels and Demons</td>
<td>Brown, Dan</td>
<td>3,096,850</td>
<td>15,537,324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix</td>
<td>Rowling, J. K.</td>
<td>3,043,226</td>
<td>33,925,431</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows</td>
<td>Rowling, J. K.</td>
<td>2,842,059</td>
<td>25,028,396</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban</td>
<td>Rowling, J. K.</td>
<td>2,776,314</td>
<td>14,140,490</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twilight</td>
<td>Meyer, Stephenie</td>
<td>2,105,862</td>
<td>10,148,762</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire</td>
<td>Rowling, J. K.</td>
<td>2,057,397</td>
<td>10,745,711</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Evidently, this is a rather monotonous list based on one (the UK) market and also limited by the time horizon of the last 15 years.

The following list is perhaps more representative and takes into account longer period of time and also the fact that there are also some other countries/languages. The titles mentioned are estimated to sell between 50 and 100 million copies worldwide.

Before doing the task think of seven best selling books in our country. You can take into account the last 15 years or a longer perspective.

Try to match the author to the title of the book

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Book</th>
<th>Author(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. A Tale of Two Cities</td>
<td>a. Johanna Spyri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The Lord of the Rings</td>
<td>b. Vladimir Nabokov</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The Little Prince (Le Petit Prince)</td>
<td>c. Napoleon Hill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The Hobbit</td>
<td>d. C. S. Lewis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book</td>
<td>Author(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. And Then There Were None</td>
<td>e. Agatha Christie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe</td>
<td>f. Antoine de Saint-Exupéry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Think and Grow Rich</td>
<td>g. J. R. R. Tolkien</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. The Catcher in the Rye</td>
<td>h. Charles Dickens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. O Alquimista (The Alchemist)</td>
<td>i. J. R. R. Tolkien</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Steps to Christ</td>
<td>j. Ellen G. White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Lolita</td>
<td>k. J. D. Salinger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Heidis Lehr- und Wanderjahre</td>
<td>l. Paulo Coelho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Heidi’s Years of Wandering and Learning)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Haircut

Banks and other bondholders that volunteer for a 50 per cent cut in the value of Greek sovereign debt could set a precedent for other sovereign haircuts.

(The Financial Times)

a) Fill in the gaps in the commentary below with the following nouns: debts, reduction, investment, value, crisis, bondholders, bonds.
The term “haircut” has been used frequently in relation to the eurozone 1)….. and, in particular, to the government 2)….. issued by countries with high 3)….., such as Greece or Italy. A haircut is a 4)….. in the value of bonds that 5)….. accept, more or less voluntarily, because they realize that they are never going to receive the full 6)….. of their 7)….. back.

b) Find the synonym to “sovereign”.

c) How can the term “haircut” be translated into Czech?

2. Big Society

…Coalition ministers are at one in wanting to hand more power to local ________ in England. … Indeed, they want to go further and empower local ________ directly, giving substance to the still-fuzzy idea of the ‘Big Society’ beloved by David Cameron.

(The Economist)

a) There are four collocations with “local” in the texts - local community, local service, local authority, local resident. Fill in the gaps in both paragraphs with appropriate nouns in plural (more solutions are acceptable). What do these two-word expressions mean?

b) Which political party (……?……) is the concept of “Big Society” associated with?
The Big Society is a policy idea of Britain’s …..?….. Party. It aims to give local ________ the power to solve their own social problems, mostly through voluntary and local social ________. The name is a play on “big government”, which refers to a government with involvement in all aspects of people’s lives. David Cameron described the idea behind the Big Society as follows: “We know instinctively that the state is often too inhuman, monolithic and clumsy to tackle our deepest social problems.”

(c) Which parties form the current coalition in Britain? Who is David Cameron?

3. Flatlining

a) First, match the adjectives and nouns and then complete the text below using the four collocations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>preliminary</th>
<th>track</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>modest</td>
<td>increase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>right</td>
<td>recovery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>slight</td>
<td>figures</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

… The economy showed signs of (1) ______ according to (2) ______ released by the Office of National Statistics. But despite claims … that … (3) ______ in growth showed the economy is on the (4) ______, Labour Shadow Chancellor [of the Exchequer] Ed Balls said the weak figure (0.5 per cent) meant that the economy has been flatlining for the past six months. …

(Tribune Magazine)

b) When do we speak about the person “flatlining”? What else can “go flat”?
Who is a Chancellor?

Shadow Chancellor?

Labour Shadow Chancellor?

4. ___?___

...When Katie needed to raise money for raw materials, she decided that tapping her social network for €75,000 in start-up capital via a crowdfunding website was the only choice. Why? ‘I don’t have the first clue how to raise money from big-time investors, but I know hundreds of people who believe in us.’ ...She added, ‘I know how to stay up all night and use Facebook and Twitter to energize people.’

(The Huffington Post)

a) Find the key expression in the extract from The Huffington Post and complete the headline (above) and the explanatory text (below).

___?___ refers to the use of online networks to raise money for a project. President Barack Obama used ___?___ for his election campaign, raising money through small contributions from millions of online supporters. ___?___ is now being used to fund blogging and journalism, creative work in music and film and start-up companies. It is also used to raise funds for charity, as in the case mentioned above, where Katie Meyler used ___?___ for a charity project in Liberia.

b) How can the term be translated into Czech?

5. Urban mining

First of all, fill in the gaps in the newspaper extract with the following nouns in plural: facilities, sources, minerals, materials, deposits (sometimes two expressions are acceptable). Then read the explanation underneath.

First, and most obviously, the world needs to develop non-Chinese 1)............ of (rare-earth) 2)............ . However, developing these 3)............ and the 4)............ to process the raw 5)............ will take both time and financial support. So will a prominent alternative: ‘urban mining’.


“Rare-earth metals”, also called “rare-earths” (RE), are essential to the high-tech industry, where they are used in products ranging from televisions to electric cars. About two thirds of the world’s RE deposits are in China, which supplies 97 per cent of the world’s rare earths needs. A new industry has evolved to “mine”, or extract, RE minerals from used high-tech equipment. This is called “urban mining”, a new term meaning the removal of valuable materials (such as RE, plastics and glass) from urban waste.

6. Bridge-blogging

...For examples of ‘bridge-blogging’, here is a post I did summarizing Chinese blogger reaction to internet censorship. ... If you’re interested in doing this kind of bridge-blogging between your country’s or region’s blogosphere and the rest of the world, please let us know.

(Rebecca MacKinnon, Global Voices Online)

a) There are some forms of the word “blog” missing in the explanatory text below. Insert the following in the gaps - blog, blogs, blogging, blogger, bridge-bloggers, blogosphere – in the correct order.

Many 1)............ communities cannot communicate with each other. Europeans may not be able to read Arabic 2)............ , for example. And a 3)............ analysing a region not in the media’s focus may struggle to be heard. 4)............ aim to increase to dialogue across these communities. For example, they may write English summaries of what the Chinese 5)............ is focusing on. Or they might translate a Spanish 6)............ into Italian.

b) Now find in both paragraphs the words for zpráva na blogu, cenzura, shrnutí.
7. Robosigning

... documents were being signed off with just a cursory check. ... Bank of America is not the only financial company to be accused of ‘robossigning’ foreclosures.

(a) The expression “robossigning” consists of two words: (the form of) “robot” and “signing”. Use the derivations of the former – robotically and robot-like – to fill in the two gaps in the following text. Then find out about the origin of the word “robot”.

“Robosigning” (also spelled “robo-signing”) is the automatic (“.............”) generation of signed documents. Here, it refers to the way US mortgage lenders were “.............” signing documents to repossess homes, without first reviewing the paperwork. Some lenders failed to check if their banks owned the houses being repossessed (in some cases, they didn’t have the documentation to prove they did).

b) Find the English equivalents for zběžná kontrola, zrušení hypotéky (kvůli nesplácení), poskytovatelé hypotéky, převzít zpět do vlastnictví (in this order in both paragraphs) and two other expressions for “documents”.

8. Gardening leave

... Goodchild had accepted an offer to move from UBS to Coutts, and because the two banks are in direct competition he was, as he expected to be, put straight on to gardening leave.

In the UK, “gardening leave” is an enforced period of fully paid leave given to staff who may threaten a firm by distributing sensitive information. During this period, a confidentiality agreement applies, and the employee is forbidden access to the firm or its clients. Gardening leave is often given to managers during a notice period, or to those who’ve had bad publicity.

How would you translate the following into Czech – gardening leave, sensitive information, confidentiality agreement, notice period, bad publicity?

9. Slow steaming

... Today more than 220 vessels are practicing slow steaming – cruising at 20 knots on open water instead of the standard 24 or 25 – or, like Maersk’s vessels, ‘super-slow steaming’ (12 knots).

A ship that goes “full steam ahead” sails at top speed. The term “steam” comes from the time of steamships. “Slow steaming” – that is, sailing at speeds much slower than normal to save fuel, but also because of reduced demand – has become standard practice for container liners. On some long-haul routes, ships practise “extra-slow steaming” at 17-19 knots, or “super-slow steaming” at 12-16 knots.

(a) Find the different types of boats in the text. What other kinds of vessels do you know?

b) How would you translate the phrase “full steam ahead”? And what about “let / blow off steam” and “pick up steam”? Use them in sentences.

c) Which of these does not collocate with “steam” .......: iron, age, engine, boiler, power, bath, pen, shutoff, train, pipe, kettle, line, turbine, roller? Consult the dictionary.

d) What else may “steaming” mean?

10. Buycott

Consumers and advocates have embraced a new-found power – show up, be vocal,, cast a vote, boycott a company. But there is a growing interest in a new type of activism, buycotting, that merits a closer look. A clear example is Carrotmob. ...

A “boycott” is an organized effort to get as many people as possible to stop buying a firm’s products. A “buycott” is the opposite.

(a) What does a “buycott” encourage consumers to do?

b) What kind of companies do you think these consumers support?

c) What is “Carrotmob” and what do “carrotmobbers” do?
11. Frugal fatigue

… It started creeping into the lexicon last spring, and now frugal fatigue – the idea that we’re getting worn down and stressed out by constantly watching our budgets – may as well be an officially diagnosed psychiatric disorder.

(The Boston Globe)

In the recession caused by the financial crisis, it has been trendy to be “frugal”. Now the trend has changed. It’s been expressed as “frugal fatigue”.

a) Explain the meaning of “frugal”.

b) Which two phrasal verbs – expressing similar ideas – are used in the extract?

12. Paywall

Another reason for the interest in paywalls is that a handful of publishers have made a success of them. The two most prominent are the Financial Times, which lets web users view just a few articles each month before it asks them for money, News Crop’s Wall Street Journal.

(The Economist)

a) What Internet term is “paywall” derived from? (What does that initial word mean?)

b) What does a “paywall” (also spelled “pay wall”) block? First, try to guess, then, consult an online dictionary.

c) Now complete the following paragraph using these nouns (one of them twice): page, articles, network, access, security, viewer, firewall.

A paywall blocks free 1)………… to a web 2)………… that a 3)………… must pay for to read. The term is taken from 4)………… , a 5)………… system that blocks unauthorized 6)………… to a computer or 7)………… . Newspapers are increasingly using paywalls for some of their online 8)………… .

d) Which prominent newspapers are mentioned in the text?

13. Jailbreaking

When it comes to the iPhone, Apple has been overprotective. That is the conclusion of the United States Copyright Office, which has granted an exemption to the Digital Millenium Copyright Act that will legalize jailbreaking.


a) You can guess what “break out of jail” means, can’t you?

b) In the world of personal technology, “jailbreaking” is a synonym for “hacking”. The word became popular after the launch of the iPhone in 2007, when users discovered how to unlock it and use it with an SIM card from a different carrier. Do some Internet research and find out what “jailbreaking” means today.

14. Wilding

… Back in the years when New Yorkers thought their city was unsafe, gangs of teenagers would run through Central Park and nearby streets engaged in what they call ‘wilding’. … With WikiLeaks, the Internet … appears to have entered its wilding phase.

(The Wall Street Journal)

The slang term wilding refers to random acts of violence or disruption carried out by gangs of people, often because they have nothing better to do. (Rioting that erupted across London and other British cities in August 2011 is not the case.) Wilding ranges from relatively harmless acts, such as throwing eggs at shop windows, to serious crimes such as gang rape. In the extract above, it refers to the activities of a group calling itself “Anonymous”, which organized attacks on the web servers of firms, governments or individuals that stopped services to WikiLeaks, claiming to be acting in its defense, thus promoting the “free flow of information”. Do some Internet research and find out more about activities of “Anonymous”. While doing this, note down what zombie (or bot) and zombie army (botnet) mean.

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15. Rainmaker
… The top five rainmakers in the sector … work for top investment banks. … They are the men Rupert Murdoch and Sir Martin Sorrell turn to in battle, and they can earn more than the company bosses they advise. Nicholas Shott at Lazard, Simon Warshaw at UBS, Philip Yates at Perella Weinberg Partners, Sebastian Grigg at Credit Suisse and Jonathan Goodwin at Jefferies can all lay claim to having helped to design today’s British media landscape.

(The Guardian)

a) Who is a rainmaker in folk mythology? Whom does the term describe in business?
b) Who was the term widely used for first of all? (Search for a book The Rainmaker. What’s the name of the author?)

16. Beyond the pocketbook
Israelis also have a strong stake in supporting electric cars beyond the pocketbook and the environment... a shift away from oil would dry up financial support that helps support terrorist groups...

(The Wall Street Journal Europe)

In American English, a “pocketbook” can either mean a purse or handbag or, metaphorically, somebody’s financial resources. Therefore, the expression “beyond the pocketbook” may refer to something that is too expensive. However, in the article from the WSJE, the meaning is pushed even further to “for reasons other than financial ones”.

a) What two other reasons (except for financial ones) does Israel have for supporting electric cars?
b) Replace the phrase “have a strong stake in” with a different one meaning the same.

17. Enviropreneurs
Entrepreneurs are my heroes. ... Instead of seeing problems, they see opportunities. And “enviropreneurs” can give us cause to celebrate the future of our planet by finding ways to ameliorate or solve environmental problems. ...

(The Wall Street Journal)

a) Which two words does the term “enviropreneur” combine?
b) What does the verb “ameliorate” mean? First, try to guess from the context, then consult a dictionary.
c) What kind of businesses does an enviropreneur create?
Meet the Meeting Killers

In the Office, they strangle ideas and poison progress. How to fight back? asks the Wall Street Journal columnist Sue Shellenbarger.

When it comes time for a meeting, co-workers can be deadly. Discussions get hijacked. Bad ideas fall like blunt objects. Long-winded colleagues consume all available oxygen, killing good ideas by asphyxiation. Co-workers wander off topic, send texts, disrupt decision-making or behave in other dysfunctional ways. Even the best leaders can resort to desperate measures to keep the discussion on track: chocolate rewards, Elmo dolls and ice-cold rooms.

Multitasking at meetings is such a given that unless a leader sets a “no devices” rule or schedules tech breaks, nearly everyone texts or sneaks a peek at email during meetings. And yet, that is nothing compared with real sabotage.

Naysayers are the ones who “whatever you bring up, it will never work,” says Dana Brownlee, founder of Professionalism Matters, a corporate-training company in Atlanta. One of her strategies is to take serial naysayers to lunch before meetings to let them vent and try to reach agreement. Once the meeting begins, she sets ground rules, requiring anyone who complains also to offer a solution.

Another problem personality is the silent plotter, Ms. Brownlee says. “They may be the quiet person sitting in back, but as soon as the meeting is over, they’re over there by the Coke machine, planning your demise,” she says. She makes a point of calling on plotters during meetings to try to draw out their feedback.

And for the toughest offenders, ramblers, Ms. Brownlee sometimes puts an Elmo doll in the center of the meeting table and tells participants, “Anytime anybody in the session thinks we’re getting off track, pick up the Elmo doll.” This allows co-workers to express frustration without interrupting, she says.

Brenna Smith, founder and chief executive of SheNow.org, a website for women, still talks about her big meeting victory. She was making a slide presentation to her new boss and 10 colleagues several years ago when, mid-sentence, a co-worker stood up and walked toward the front of the room, arguing that her ideas wouldn’t work. To show that she could hold her ground, Ms. Smith says, she returned fire. “I think you’re making a really good point,” she told the interrupter, “but I want to finish what I’m saying first so we can talk about my ideas, and then we can talk about yours if we have time.” The room fell silent. The co-worker retreated to his seat. He never got time to make his case and her proposal was adopted, says Ms. Smith.

People who ramble can be equally disruptive. Samir Penkar, a Minneapolis project-management consultant, was running daily meetings among 20 employees at an insurance company last year when two participants kept taking the conversation off-track. So, he started bringing in chocolates. Whenever either “started their rambling, I handed them a chocolate,” he says. He repeated the tactic six times over two weeks until the employees learned to stick to the agenda.

To keep a meeting moving, leaders sometimes set aside time early in the discussion for naysayers to voice objections and challenges, and then direct the group to shift gears and focus on making a decision, says Patti Johnson, chief executive of PeopleResults, a Dallas-based career and workplace consulting firm. In a meeting she attended several years ago, co-workers were close to reaching consensus on a new project, Ms. Johnson says. Then, a senior manager blew it all up. “She asked a question that was almost impossible to answer,” Ms. Johnson says. „It threw the speaker off balance.” Several of the manager’s 15 frustrated co-workers asked, “Why are you bringing this up at this point? Shouldn’t you have raised this earlier?” she says. But the naysayer’s objection was enough to stall the project – an outcome that seemed to please her.

With advances in technology and an emphasis on efficiency, the office should be running more smoothly than ever. Meetings are supposed to be a time of creative problem-solving, where the best ideas emerge. Yet even some of the best managers can’t seem to run them.

Office workers spend four hours a week in meetings on average – and they regard more than half of that time as wasted, according to a British study of 1,000 employees released by Opinion Matters, a London market-research company [...]. „Too many meetings“ was the No. 1 time-waster at the office, cited by 47 % of 3,164 workers in a separate study by career site Salary.com in 2012 on workplace time drains. That is up from 42 %
in 2008, when meetings tied for third place with “waiting for a co-worker to finish something you need”. (No. 1 was “fixing someone else’s work” and No. 2 was “dealing with office politics”.)

Ad-agency executive Bill Shelton acknowledges that he and others in his profession “have a way of drawing out meetings, grandstanding and trying to command attention. Part of your job is to sell your work, which you do in a meeting,” he says. To keep meetings from dragging on, his boss at a former employer positioned the conference table in his office right under the air-conditioning vents. “About an hour before the meeting, he would crank down the thermostat to about 50 degrees” then tell employees as they arrived to “leave your sweater at the door,” says Mr. Shelton, now president of Left Field Creative, a St. Louis ad agency. “We had the most efficient, productive meetings in history, because everyone got down to business. We simply wanted to get out of the ‘walk-in freezer’.” […]

(Adapted from The Wall Street Journal online edition, 12 May 2012.)

Tasks and discussion

1. Find (and highlight) the main types of meeting participants mentioned in the article. (Have you ever met them in your company [or any other] meeting?)

2. How did Ms. Brownlee, Ms. Smith, Mr. Penkar and Ms. Johnson cope with particular categories of “meeting killers”?

3. What do the statistics quoted in the text indicate? Are most of the meetings you attend a waste of time?

4. What does the author mean by „multitasking” at a meeting?

5. Which particular advances in technology enable managers to run their offices smoothly?

6. Having read the article, complete the advice (from executives, meeting planners and trainers) on productive meetings below, using the imperative forms of the following verbs: Draw, Limit, Set, Interrupt, Schedule, Stick, Redirect, Ask

   a) _____ a clear agenda.
   b) _____ periodic tech breaks for email, texts and phone calls.
   c) _____ people back to the agenda when they ramble or digress.
   d) _____ out quiet people by asking them in advance for a specific contribution.
   e) _____ early for objections to keep them from derailing discussions later.
   f) _____ the length of slide presentations.
   g) _____ people who talk too long or talk to each other.
   h) _____ to a pre-set ending time for the meeting.

Now give your own suggestions on how to make a business meeting more productive.
Net Users are Sociable and Successful

Internet users do not deserve their reputation for being socially inadequate loners, a study has found. Despite jibes that computer users meet their friends online, researchers say they are actually more likely to be sociable and community minded. Professor Andrew Oswald and Dr. Jonathan Gardner, from the University of Warwick, found that people who regularly used the internet were also more likely to be better educated and to earn more. Mr. Oswald said: “This research should be very useful in overturning some common stereotypes. We discovered internet users are better citizens and more likely to be members of community groups and voluntary organisations. It appears the web is helping to strengthen the quality of British society. Internet users are the best citizens not the worst.” The professors concluded that internet users were sociable after discovering that 30% belonged to a community group, compared to less than a quarter of non-users. People who went online regularly were also 50% more likely to be regular church-goers and were more trusting than average.

Graduates

The amount of time spent on the internet was also a good indicator of earnings. Almost two thirds of people taking home more than £32,000 a year use the internet, compared with just 9% of those earning between £6,000 and £12,000. More than seven out of 10 graduates use the web, but only one in 10 people with no qualifications do so. The study also discovered that 40% of men use the internet, compared with 28% of women. Men spent an average of 3.5 hours a week online, compared with 2.5 hours for women. The findings were published last week in the 18th British Social Attitudes report.

(BBC news on 01/03/2011)

Vocabulary
net user [net ˝ju:ze] uživatel internetu
sociable [˝seušebl] společenský, družný
deserve [di˝ze:v] zasloužit si
inadequate [in˝Edikwet] nepřizpůsobivý
loner [´leune] samotář
jibe [džaib] posměšek, sarkastická poznámka
researcher [ri´se:č] vědec, badatel, výzkumník
community minded [ke˝mju:niti ˝maındid] zajímající se o společnost
regularly [´regjuleli] pravidelně
earn [e:n] vydělat si
useful [´ju:sful] užitečný, prospěšný
overturn [euve˝te:n] vyvrátil, převrátit
common [˝komen] častý, běžný, obvyklý
voluntary [´volenteri] dobrovolný
appear [e˝pie] zdát se, jevit se
web [web] síť, internet
strengthen [˝strenŻen] posílit, zlepšit
conclude [ken´klu:d] shrnout, uzavřít
church-goer [´če:čgeue] člověk chodící pravidelně do kostela
trusting [´trastin] věřící
graduate [˝grEdjuet] absolvent školy (VŠ nebo SŠ)
an average [en ˝Everidž] v průměru
attitude [´Etıtıju:d] stanovisko, přístup, postoj

Exercises
1. True or False?
   Decide which statements are true and which are false:
   a) Most people believe that internet users are not sociable and communicate mainly only with other computer users.
   b) The research confirmed the stereotype.
c) People using the Internet are usually worse citizens.
d) Rich people use the Internet less than people who earn less.
e) Men use the Internet more than women.

2. Language
Find and correct the grammatical mistakes in these sentences. Do not look at the article until you have completed this activity.
a) Researchers from the University of Warwick, founded that people who regularly used the internet were also more likely to be better educated and to earn more.
b) Internet users are the better citizens not the worse.
c) People who went online regular were also 50% more likely to be regularly church-goers.
d) The findings have been published last week.
e) More then seven out of 10 graduates use the web.

3. These words are all found in the article.
Complete these sentences using the words below. Each word is only used once. (loners, earnings, average, common, church-goers)
a) It is a ………. ……. stereotype that men are better drivers than women.
b) Internet users are quite often regular ……………… and were more trusting than average.
c) Quite a number of homeless people have a reputation of being socially inadequate …………….
d) The car you drive is a good indicator of your …………….
e) Men spent an ……………… of 3.5 hours a week online.

Discussion
1. Do you believe the research findings are correct and would apply to the situation in this country today?
2. How much time a week do you spend online? Can you compare it with other members of your family/friends?
3. What other activities do you do in your free time? Are you a member of community groups and voluntary organisations?
4. Do you believe that modern communication technology replaces old ways of communication (meeting friends and family members face to face, writing letters and postcards, going to church, theatre, dancing)?
5. How much do you feel you personally depend on modern communication technologies? Illustrate your (in-)dependence by examples.
Out of sight, out of mind

TELECOMMUTERS fall into two camps. Some slouch on the sofa watching daytime soaps, pausing occasionally to check their BlackBerrys. Most, however, do real work, undistracted by meetings and gasbag colleagues.

In the future more people will work from home. With office space in London and New York so costly, many firms save money by encouraging staff to work in their pyjamas. Instead of having to bury their noses in strangers’ armpits on crowded trains, they can work via e-mail, Skype and virtual private networks.

Yet Daniel Cable of the London Business School finds that companies still reward presenteeism. In research published in *MIT Sloan Management Review* he shows that telecommuters are less likely to be promoted. In one experiment subjects were asked to judge scenarios in which the only difference was whether the employee was at his office desk or at home. Managers rated those at the office to be more dependable and industrious, regardless of the quality of their work.

Visibility creates the illusion of value. Being the last to leave the office impresses bosses, even if you are actually larking around on Facebook. Oddly, this holds true at firms that explicitly encourage staff to work from home. Mr Cable studied attitudes at Californian tech firms. Many asked employees not to come to the office too often; yet bosses unconsciously penalised those who obeyed.

Remote workers understand this. Many barrage their bosses with progress reports to prove they are on the job. A fifth of the workers in the study admitted to leaving a canny e-mail or voicemail early or late in the day. Still, many are not as smart as they think. Some choose a Monday or Friday to work at home. That, says Mr Cable, makes others think they are keen to extend the weekend.

A culture of presenteeism hurts working mothers most. Many women (and some men) work from home to allow themselves the flexibility to pick up kids from school. That need not mean they produce less; only that they do it at a time and a place of their own choosing. Some firms, such as Best Buy, an electronics retailer, recognise this and try hard to evaluate staff solely on performance. But this is not easy. Intangibles such as teamworking skills matter, too. Mr Cable thinks homeworking will lose its stigma only when most people do it. Or perhaps when the boss – like the editor of this article – is telecommuting, too.

(Adapted from The Economist, print edition, 13 Oct. 2012)

Discussion

1. What is the gist (the general message) of the article? (Explain the headline.) What paradox does it contain?
2. What is “presenteeism” and why is it still rewarded? How do teleworkers try to persuade their superiors that they are working hard?
3. What “intangible skills” are employers looking for in an employee? Find an example in the text and add some more.
4. What can distract your (other people’s) attention from work? What do you do against getting sidetracked?

Vocabulary

Find the words (and phrases) indicating

1. homely atmosphere (1st and 2nd paragraphs)
2. required qualities of an employee (3rd par.)
3. what bosses do (did) to “mobilize” their staff (4th par.)
4. what employees do to “please” their bosses (4th and 5th pars.)
5. negative feelings (6th par.)

There are – at least – two expressions (phrases) in each case.
Plagiarism

German Education Minister Annette Schavan has long been dogged by accusations that she had plagiarized parts of her Ph.D. thesis. Now, the University of Düsseldorf has revoked her degree. She may be forced to resign from Chancellor Angela Merkel’s cabinet.

It was shortly after 8:15 p.m. on Tuesday evening when Bruno Bleckmann, a professor of ancient history at the University of Düsseldorf, stepped in front of the waiting journalists. He quickly strode up to the microphone to deliver his statement. A faculty board, Bleckmann said, had arrived at the decision to declare German Education Minister Annette Schavan’s Ph.D. thesis “invalid and to revoke her doctor title.”

Based on an internal university analysis of Schavan’s doctoral thesis, which she submitted in 1980, and on her own statement regarding her work, the committee voted 12 to 2 to invalidate her academic title, Bleckmann said. There was one abstention. “As a doctoral candidate, she systematically and deliberately presented intellectual efforts throughout her entire dissertation that were not her own,” Bleckmann said. Large sections of the work, he continued, had been taken from elsewhere without adequate attribution. As such, she was guilty of “intentional deception through plagiarism.”

Definition

Plagiarism is the “wrongful appropriation” of another author’s “language, thoughts, ideas, or expressions,” and the representation of them as one’s own original work. Plagiarism is considered academic dishonesty and a breach of journalistic ethics. Plagiarism is not a crime per se but in academia and industry it is a serious moral offence, and cases of plagiarism can constitute copyright infringement Latin word plagiarius (literally kidnapper), meant someone stealing someone else’s work. Roman poet Martial complained that another poet had “kidnapped his verses”. Within academia, plagiarism by students, professors, or researchers is considered academic dishonesty or academic fraud, and offenders are subject to academic censure and including expulsion.

Some famous cases:

Senator Joseph Biden, currently Vice President of the United States, jointly elected with President Barack Obama. He was forced to withdraw from the 1988 Democratic US Presidential nominations when it was alleged that he had failed a 1965 introductory law school course on legal methodology due to plagiarism.

Russian President Vladimir Putin has been accused of plagiarism by fellows at the Brookings Institution who allege that „large chunks of Putin’s economics dissertation on planning in the natural resources sector were lifted from a management text published by two University of Pittsburgh academics nearly 20 years earlier.

German Minister of Defence Karl-Theodor zu Guttenberg .German daily newspaper Süddeutsche Zeitung published allegations of plagiarism in the dissertation of Guttenberg. He at first denied the accusations, but the evidence was mounting. The University of Bayreuth swiftly rescinded the doctorate and zu Guttenberg stepped down from all political offices

Hungarian President Pál Schmitt’s 1992 doctoral thesis, 180 of the 215 pages, was almost a word-for-word translation of parts of Nikolay Georgiev’s 465 pages long 1987 French-language manuscript “Analyse du programme olympique”. He was stripped the Senate of the Semmelweis University of his Dr. Univ. degree Two days later Schmitt announced to the Hungarian Parliament his resignation as President.

Comprehension questions

1. What position does/did Mrs. Schavan hold?
2. What was the decision of the faculty board?
3. Was the decision unanimous?
4. How do they justify their decision?
5. How old is plagiarism?
6. What is the usual consequence of a proven plagiarism?
7. Is it always the case? Illustrate the differences between countries and cases?

**Exercises**

**Find mistakes in the following sentences**
1. She maybe forced to resign from cabinet.
2. He quick strode up to the microphone to deliver his statement.
3. Large sections of the work had been taken from somewhere without adequate attribution.
4. She was guilty of „unintentional deception through plagiarism.
5. Plagiarism is not a crime per se but in academia and industry it is a serious moral offensive.
6. Large chunks his economics dissertation on planning in the natural resources sector were elevated from a management text.
7. He was stripped of his Dr. Univ. title.
Seven business activities every business should conduct online

The internet is a place where every business should be doing something on a daily basis. People are not turning towards newspapers or radio ads to find what they need. They are pulling up a 1)............ to get the job done. Here are seven things businesses should be doing every day online to keep their efforts moving in the right direction:

Checking analytics
You need to understand what is going on with your 2)............ before you can properly start marketing it. Install Google analytics and start tracking visitors and data. Analytics will let you know what is working and what isn’t.

Blogging
If you are tight on resources and cannot get someone to do this for you wake up 45 minutes earlier and try writing a 3)............ for your business. If you are in a very saturated market it is in your best interest to do this every single day in order to poke your head through the crowd.

Get on Twitter
Write an industry tip, make a connection or re-tweet something every single day and overtime your account will gain some valuable 4)............ .

Post on Facebook
Every organization should have a Facebook 5)............ of some sort. It will help increase overall branding and instill credibility in your audience. Post something similar to Twitter in your Facebook page account every single day.

Education
If you are low on resources try reading some sort of 6)............ marketing article or blog every day to keep your skills sharp. There are plenty of resources out there to help you increase your online education level. Many businesses need to find a way to do these efforts themselves in the early stages especially if there is a lack of resources to hire someone full time.

Notification
You should have some 7)............ set up for your company name, personal name and some important industry key words so you can clearly see what types of chatter are occurring online surrounding your business.

Brainstorming
You should be brainstorming ideas on a consistent basis on things you can do to propel yourself even further online with your reach. Whether it is coming up with Twitter promotion ideas or a new article you want to write there should be some thought in the back of your mind every single day. The internet is a viable location to generate valuable branding, traffic and visibility. Take the time to make a daily schedule for yourself to follow every single day so you can gain some 8)............ in the search space.

(Adapted from http://www.brandignity.com/2011/03/)

Vocabulary
First, match the words from the left column with those on the right making six “Internet” collocations (use each word only once). Then use them to fill in the blanks in the respective paragraphs (two of them more than once).
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**Discussion**

Which of the points above can you agree with? Which of them do you consider useless? Can you add some more?
Skoda shifts up a gear into the fast lane

John Reed wrote this article in Mlada Boleslav, the Czech Republic.

1. Skodas do not make the average car buyer’s heart race – nor are they meant to. Volkswagen’s Czech value brand has built a business model around solid, functional vehicles seen as offering excellent value for money, such as its Octavia saloon, Fabia small car and Yeti sport utility vehicle.

2. But Skoda is building a global franchise. It is capitalising on a thrifty zeitgeist in western Europe, while capturing new buyers in Russia, India and China, where its customers – many of whom have chauffeurs and sit in the back – like their roomy interiors.

3. Now Skoda’s chief executive says he wants to make it Europe’s fastest-expanding car marque, at a time when most of its competitors are struggling to sell cars and stay profitable. “We are a volume player and we want to be a major volume player,” Winfried brand in Europe.” Mr Vahland says that despite an uncertain economic climate, Skoda might achieve its goal to sell 1.5m vehicles globally by 2018 ahead of schedule – part of VW’s plan to overtake Japan’s Toyota as the industry’s biggest seller. Skoda aims to do this by appealing to more young and first-time buyers with new cars such as the Citigo, the brand’s lower-priced variant of VW’s Up! city car, which premiered at Geneva car show. Following on the success of the Yeti, Mr Vahland says, Skoda is also considering developing a larger SUV.

4. The Czech carmaker is rejuvenating its dealerships with fresher, cleaner designs. While other European producers are offering deep discounts to sell their vehicles, Skoda has waiting lists for the Octavia and the Yeti. The brand’s worldwide sales surged 15 per cent to 879,200 in 2011.

5. That bargain-priced cars are selling well in volatile economic times is not surprising. South Korea’s Hyundai Motor/Kia and General Motors’ Chevrolet value brand are reporting record sales too. Further down market, Renault’s Romanian Dacia entry-level brand, which sells its cars in many developing countries under its French owner’s marque, is expanding globally. In Geneva Dacia will unveil the Lodgy, a low-priced people-carrier with which it hopes to undercut rival offerings from brands such as Ford Motor and Citroën.

6. Yet bargain car brands are, alongside premium marques such as BMW and Audi, the global car industry’s most profitable segment. In a sector that subsists on thin margins, Skoda earned a 5 per cent operating profit in 2010 and did “considerably better” in 2011, says Mr Vahland, when it reports results. Alongside Audi and the truckmaker Scania, it is one of the chief contributors to VW’s profits.

7. For Renault, Dacia last year earned a margin well above the company’s target of 6 per cent. “The entry range is certainly the most profitable in the industry today,” Carlos Ghosn, Renault’s chief executive, said. Skoda dislikes the word “cheap” and rejects direct comparisons with Dacia’s stripped-down, lower-priced vehicles. Christoph Stürmer, analyst with IHS Global Insight, says: “Skoda is good value and Dacia is dead cheap.” Still, VW and Renault’s profitable eastern European value brands deserve side-by-side scrutiny at a time when the continent’s car industry is heading into a serious crisis.

8. Why are cheap cars such good business? For one, both marques are staying above the fray in Europe’s ruinous price war. Skoda sells most of its cars to private buyers, not fleets and rental companies, where competitive discounting is most intense. Dacia flatly refuses to offer discounts – a rarity in the car industry. “The dealer doesn’t spend time trying to negotiate, so you save money on the customer and the dealer – you save twice,” explains Arnaud Deboeuf, who heads Renault’s entry-level vehicle programme.

9. Both brands have short supply chains and low labour costs. Skoda sells most of its cars to private buyers, not fleets and rental companies, where competitive discounting is most intense. Dacia flatly refuses to offer discounts – a rarity in the car industry. “The dealer doesn’t spend time trying to negotiate, so you save money on the customer and the dealer – you save twice,” explains Arnaud Deboeuf, who heads Renault’s entry-level vehicle programme.

10. Skoda and Dacia plan their products conservatively, shunning risky niche vehicles such as convertibles that might lose money. Renault demands that suppliers design parts to cost and eliminates non-essential features in its entry-level cars. Instead of offering an air conditioning system engineered to attain a specific temperature, Dacia’s has a simple on/off switch. Skoda, too, is never first to offer the latest technology, but
picks them when the costs come down. Some versions of its top-of-range Superb have LED light features commonly seen on premium models.

However, as the Czech brand aims for an edgier image and better-equipped cars, Skoda vows it will stay true to its roots. “If we speak about our customers,” says Mr Vahland, “they like practicality, functionality, roominess – (so) a cabrio doesn’t come to mind.”

(Adapted from The Financial Times, 4 March 2012)

Vocabulary

1. Which European and non-European brands are mentioned in the article?

2. Find the following collocations and guess what they mean: “global franchise” (2nd par.), “volume player” (3rd par.), “waiting list” (4th par.), “bargain-priced cars”, “down market”, “rival offerings” (5th par.), “thin margins” (6th par.), “entry range” (7th par.), “ruinous price war” (8th par.), “niche vehicles” (10th par.), “edgier image” (11th par.)

3. Guess the meaning of the following nouns and replace them with synonyms if possible: “zeitgeist”, “chauffeur” (2nd par.), “marque” (3rd, 5th, 6th, 8th pars.), “scrutiny” (7th par.), “rarity” (8th par.), “convertibles” (10th par.), “cabrio” (11th par.)

4. Find all expressions (both adjectives and nouns) concerning price and features of particular vehicles.

Discussion

1. Have you ever bought (Would you like to buy) a car? What “features and benefits” did (would) you take into consideration?

2. Have you ever driven (Would you like to drive) any of the cars mentioned in the article? Did you (Would you like to) buy any of them?
Small Business: How the ‘Maker’ Movement Plans to Transform the U.S. Economy

By Sam Gustin

1 Chris Anderson was trying to fire up his kids about science and technology when he flew the family’s radio-controlled airplane into a tree on Hopkins St. near their Berkeley, California home. After a lot of rock-throwing and branch-flinging, Anderson finally retrieved the wreckage. “My kids were mortified,” Anderson told me last week. “I had to bribe them with ice-cream.”

2 It was Anderson’s second attempt in as many days to do a science project with his children, and the experiments weren’t going well. The previous day, he had brought home a Lego robot review-model from the office. Anderson and his family spent all morning assembling the device, only to finish with a “three-wheeled rover that bounced off the walls.” His kids were unimpressed. They’d seen Transformers. “No lasers? No rockets? It doesn’t turn into a truck?” No, Anderson replied, robots are harder-to-make in real life than in the movies.

3 After the tree mishap, Anderson realized that he could combine features from robotics and aeronautics in order to engage his kids in technology more effectively. “I thought, you know, that Lego robot could have flown the plane better than me.” And that’s how the Anderson family got involved with do-it-yourself drones, which they now build on weekends at home.

4 Anderson started writing online blog posts about his quest to build a “bottom-up amateur version of what is currently military-industrial high-technology,” in the hopes that “if I share my ignorance, other people will teach me.” The result is a flourishing non-profit community called DIY Drones, which is a forum for the fast-growing sub-culture of people building drones at home.

5 “It was basically just me being stupid in public, and then everyone started teaching me, and then they started teaching each other,” Anderson told me.

6 Five years later, Anderson estimates that the DIY Drone community has more than 15,000 drones flying, compared to some 7,000 drones in use worldwide by military forces. U.S. regulators aim to codify rules governing civilian drone use by 2015. (Civilian drones are much smaller than most military drones, and typically aren’t armed with Hellfire missiles.)

7 Eventually, people started asking Anderson where they could buy small drones, so he set up a home workshop and began hand-making drone models on weekends, even enlisting his children to help build the kits on the dining room table. Then through DIY Drones, Anderson met a 19-year-old from Tijuana, Mexico named Jordi Munoz, and despite never having met Munoz in person, Anderson tapped him to help lead his commercial DIY Drones spin-off, a company called 3D Robotics, which now has two factories with more than 30 workers producing consumer drones, one in San Diego, the other in Tijuana.

8 Anderson predicts that over the next few years, numerous commercial applications for civilian drones will emerge including film-making, journalism, private security, sports and agriculture. “There will come a day when you will drive by a farm and see a robot crop-duster and a robot tractor,” he says. “People want great video of whatever cool thing they’re doing. Our drones will do that. You can tell it to follow you and you’ve got a robo-camera, a personal Droid that keeps the camera focused on you while you go windsurfing.”

9 Chris Anderson is the editor-in-chief of WIRED, the 20-year-old monthly magazine that has become the lodestar for technology journalism as the Internet revolution has transformed American business and society. Anderson has earned several of the highest journalism awards in the business. He’s also written popular books including the best-seller “The Long Tail.” All this while raising five children.

10 I met Chris for an interview at a midtown New York City hotel last week, and the biggest impression I got was of a man with his priorities in order: He’s trying to be a better father. Anderson’s new book, “Makers,” begins with a poignant reminiscence of how he built engines with his grandfather, and it’s clear that Anderson will stop at almost nothing to get his kids motivated in science and math. In this respect he is a role-model for other American parents who are desperate to see their children engage with math, science and technology. —
Collaboration and transparency are at the heart of Anderson’s new book, Makers: The New Industrial Revolution. Here’s its argument: After the personal computer revolution and the Internet revolution, the latest tech upheaval is the “Maker” movement.

Even New York City Mayor got into the spirit, officially proclaiming last week to be “Maker Week” in the Big Apple. “Learning and trying new things are key to everyone’s personal development,” he declared. “The successes our city has enjoyed had to start somewhere, and many of us have dreamed big dreams in garages, laboratories, or in the classroom of an inspiring teacher.

The next step in this process is what Anderson and others have called the industrialization of the Maker movement, enabling individual makers to generate revenue from their designs and products. E-Commerce was just a new way of selling existing products. What if we have a new way of making new products?


Comprehension questions
1. What accident is described in the first paragraph?
2. Why were the kids disappointed by the Lego robot?
3. What is the name of the community and web site Mr. Anderson established?
4. Why has it been such a successful project?
5. What are drones and where have they been mainly used until now?
6. What does the abbreviation DIY mean? With what activity is it mainly associated?
7. What is Mr. Anderson’s job and what is his mission?
8. How would you describe the Industrial and the Internet revolutions?
9. Why do some American parents feel desperate about the education of their children?
10. What is the „Makers movement“?

Exercises
1. Grammar: Active and passive. Change the following sentences from the text into active or passive
   a) Anderson finally retrieved the wreckage.
   b) His kids were unimpressed.
   c) He could combine features from robotics and aeronautics.
   d) They now build drones on weekends at home.
   e) Drones are used worldwide by military forces.
   f) The Internet revolution has transformed American business and society.
   g) Two factories with more than 30 workers are producing consumer drones.

2. Important Inventions. Match the invention with the inventor and the year it appeared.

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<td>2. Airplane</td>
<td>b) Alessandro Volta, 1800</td>
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<td>3. Car</td>
<td>c) Alexander Prokhorov, 1957</td>
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<td>4. Radio</td>
<td>d) Thomas Alva Edison, 1879</td>
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<td>5. Television</td>
<td>e) Konstantin Tsiolkovsky (Sputnik 1961)</td>
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<td>6. Satellite</td>
<td>f) Guglielmo Marconi, 1894</td>
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<td>7. Printing</td>
<td>g) James Watt, 1781</td>
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<td>8. Lightbulb</td>
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<td>9. Electricity</td>
<td>i) Wright brothers, 1903</td>
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<td>10. Laser</td>
<td>j) John Logie Baird, 1923</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. Computer</td>
<td>k) Alexander Graham Bell, 1876</td>
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<td>12. Telephone</td>
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Starting a company or organisation and Corporation Tax

When you set up a new company or organisation you must tell HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) if it’s liable for Corporation Tax, pay any Corporation Tax due and file a Company Tax Return on time. HMRC Corporation Tax requirements are separate to what your company needs to do for Companies House. This guide explains what you need to do and when.

When you set up a new company or organisation that’s liable for Corporation Tax you must:
• tell HMRC your company or organisation is ‘active’ within three months of starting business activity
• pay any Corporation Tax that’s due on time and electronically
• file a Company Tax Return online for each Corporation Tax accounting period

Registering your new company at Companies House

A limited company comes into existence when it is incorporated or ‘registered’ at Companies House. Limited companies must file certain documents with Companies House when they are first set up and on an on-going (normally annual) basis. These Companies House requirements are separate to what your company needs to do for HMRC for Corporation Tax purposes.

Companies House tells HMRC when any limited company is formed and registered with them. But if you use the Companies House Web Incorporation Service and your company is ‘active’ at the time you incorporate it, for example it has started trading or receiving income, you can choose to supply the statutory information you need to give HMRC when you become active at the same time.

HMRC uses the information they receive from Companies House to set up a computer record for your company and allocates it a reference number known as a Unique Taxpayer Reference (UTR). They then send form CT41G (Corporation Tax – Information for New Companies) to your company’s registered office. This form includes your company’s UTR so please keep it safe as you will need it to contact HMRC. It also tells you what you need to do if your company has become ‘active’ and suggests other tax implications your company may need to consider.

It’s important that you read form CT41G carefully and take any action that’s needed promptly. The following sections cover the main things you need to do and when.

Telling HMRC your new limited company is active

You must tell HMRC that your company is active for Corporation Tax purposes within three months of starting business activity. The easiest way to tell HMRC that your limited company is active and has started its first accounting period is online using either of the following:
• the joint registration facility contained within the Companies House Web Incorporation Service
• HMRC’s online registration service

You can also use the HMRC online service to:
• supply the statutory information you need to give HMRC when your company became active, if you were unable to or chose not to supply it using the Companies House service
• register your company for PAYE (Pay As You Earn) or VAT at the same time (see the following section)
• change your company’s abbreviated name – HMRC computer records can’t store names longer than 56 characters (letters and spaces) and you may prefer a different one to what HMRC has chosen

What happens next?

HMRC will update their computer records to reflect the additional information you have provided. They will then write to you to confirm your company’s deadline dates for paying Corporation Tax electronically and submitting Company Tax Returns online.

If you used HMRC’s online service, your company will be automatically enrolled for Corporation Tax Online. You will receive an Activation Code (or PIN) by post - within seven days of your registration being verified. Please keep this code secure so that no one else can access your online services. When you receive this code you must activate the online service immediately.
If you used the Companies House registration service, or chose to provide information about your company to HMRC in writing, you need to enrol for and activate Corporation Tax Online separately. You won’t be able to submit your Company Tax Return online, or use any other features of the online service, until you do this.

If you used the Companies House registration service, you still need to set up and activate Corporation Tax Online. You won’t be able to submit your Company Tax Return online, or use any other features of the online service until you do this.

(http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/ct/getting-started/new-company/start-up.htm)

Tasks

1. What do these abbreviations mean?
   a) HMRC
   b) VAT
   c) CT
   d) UTR
   e) PAYE

2. Say what you have to do to start a company in the UK.

3. Decide if the statements are true (T) or false (F):
   a) When you set up a new company, you must tell the authorities that your company is active after 3 months.
   b) A limited company starts to exist after it is registered at Companies House.
   c) You can register a company online.
   d) You have a special code for communication with British authorities.
   e) HMRC can store names of companies of any length.
   f) If you have registered a company in writing, you don’t have to enrol for and activate Corporation Tax online separately.
Start-ups (Entrepreneurs wanted)

First, there is an initial idea for a new business. But what has to be done by a prospective entrepreneur before it is launched? You’ll find out in Tom Smith’s article.

Is there ever an ideal time to start up a business? Surprisingly, a recession can provide excellent opportunities to launch a new company. It’s a time when many existing firms are going out of business, money lenders are seeking entrepreneurs with ambitions and strong qualifications, and governments may be offering generous financial support in an effort to get the economy moving again. One key tip for a successful start-up is to get in while the going is good.

Of course, starting a business requires a certain way of thinking. Only those with energy and confidence, a desire to try something new and the ability to stick with it are likely to succeed. A large number of new businesses do fail, but the statistics are not as discouraging as they may seem. According to the US government’s Small Business Administration (SBA), seven out of ten new companies exist at least two years and 51 per cent at least five years.

Having a good idea for a product or service is the essential first step, but it is important to learn as much as possible about your potential market. Will there be enough demand for the product, and who might also be selling something similar? Has someone else had the same idea already? Talking with potential customers and gathering facts and statistics online will provide the needed information and help in developing a marketing strategy.

This information will be included in the business plan, a detailed description of business goals that also includes financial details, such as cash-flow analysis and an estimated break-even point. A good business plan is essential in the process of getting money to finance the idea, whether you are trying to borrow money from the bank, are hoping to attract venture capital or are pitching the idea to a so-called business angel. Once financing has been acquired, the chances of a start-up succeeding can be improved by using the services of a business incubator – a support programme that can shorten the time it takes to get the company’s products or services to market.

However, entrepreneurs should always know what their alternatives are and have an exit strategy ready. It’s not enough to create a business worth a fortune – there should also be a means of getting the money back out again if the situation changes. The commonest way of doing this is to sell the business to someone else. One key tip here is: get out while you’re ahead.

(Adapted from Business Spotlight, 2/2012, p. 76.)

Discussion

1. Why can a crisis be a good time for setting up a new business?
2. What should an entrepreneur know before setting up a business?
3. What does a business plan include and how can a start-up be funded?

Vocabulary

1. Do some Internet research and find out what a “business angel” and a “business incubator” mean.
2. Find two idioms meaning vstoupit do hry, dokud jsou okolnosti příznivé and odejít, dokud máte náskok.
Strategic planning

In ancient Greek, the word *strathgia* 1)……… the art of generalship, of devising and carrying out a military campaign. The English word derived from it, strategy, was transferred from its military origins to the business world in the years before the ubiquitous MBA, at a time when a military career was considered a good qualification for a manager. As with the military, strategy was 2)……… by businessmen as a high-level function fit only for the minds of leaders and a small cohort of the brightest and best. The planning of corporate strategy was usually a secretive operation that 3)……… place at irregular intervals.

The problems of strategic planning have attracted some of the best minds in both business and academia, but these minds have not agreed on a practice that works in all circumstances. Most can agree with the general guidelines 4)……… down by Alfred Chandler — that strategic planning involves the articulation of long-term goals and the allocation of the resources necessary to achieve those goals. But beyond that there are few common themes.

Igor Ansoff pointed out a crucial distinction between strategic planning and what he called strategic management. Strategic management, he maintained, has three parts:

- strategic planning;
- the skill of a firm in converting its plans into reality; and
- the skill of a firm in managing its own internal resistance to change.

Ansoff’s analysis was based on his observation that “as firms 5)……… increasingly skilful strategy formulators, the translation of strategy into results in the marketplace lagged behind. This created paralysis by analysis in strategic planning”.

The popularity of strategic planning in the 1960s and thereafter 6)……… a big boost to the fledgling business of management consulting. *Business Week* 7)……… that it “spawned a mini-industry of brainy consulting boutiques … you could plot a strategy that would safely steer your company to uninterrupted triumph if only you 8)……… hard enough”.

By the late 1980s, however, strategic planning had 9)……… out of fashion. General Electric 10)……… the way when it axed its respected planning department in 1983. Its chief executive, Jack Welch, 11)……… that the department’s 200 or more senior executives were too involved with financial minutiae and not enough with new businesses and visionary markets. GE’s strategic planning was passed to the bosses of its 12 main business units, who thereafter 12)……… every summer for full-day sessions on strategy.

It was not until the mid-1990s that strategic planning 13)……… to stage a revival. *Business Week* 14)……… the event on its cover in August 1996. “After a decade of gritty downsizing,” it 15)………, “Big Thinkers are back in corporate vogue.” The arrival of the internet and the possibilities of e-commerce were compelling companies to think carefully about the new electronic business world. Disney, for instance, appointed senior executives specifically in charge of strategic planning for its online businesses.

On its reappearance, however, strategic planning 16)……… a different form. It evolved into a continuous process, not (as it had been) a discrete half-yearly or annual coven attended by a select few. Nokia, a mobile phone company, 17)……… it was aiming to make strategy “a daily part of a manager’s activity”. EDS involved over 2,000 of its employees in a late 1990s strategic planning process. But Gary Hamel still 18)……… it “amazing that young people who live closest to the future are the most disenfranchised in strategy-creating exercises”.

*(Adapted from The Economist, on-line edition, 16 March 2009)*

**Grammar and vocabulary tasks**

1. While reading the article, fill in the gaps with the correct forms of these irregular verbs: take (2×), meet, become, write (2×), go, mean, see, give, lead, think, feel, begin, put, say, lay, find
2. *Strategy* came from Greek. Try to guess the origin (and meaning) of the following trios of words.
   a) *boutiques* (5th par.), *fashion* (6th), *vogue* (7th)
   b) *ubiquitous* (1st), *academia* (2nd), *minutiae* (6th)
   c) *analysis* (4th), *paralysis* (4th), *phone* (8th)

Find some more words of Latin origin in the text.

**Discussion**

1. What is the difference between strategic planning and strategic management?
2. How did strategic planning contribute to the rise of management consulting?
3. Describe how strategic planning has developed over the last three decades.
The 10 questions you need to be ready to answer

Here are 10 of the most common questions you are likely to encounter in a job interview. They have been chosen because they are the ones that job candidates may provide weak answers for because they seem so common and routine.

Match them with the answers that are given in a (chrono)logical order below.

   a) “What would your former coworkers say about you?”
   b) “What are your strengths?”
   c) “Why should we hire you?”
   d) “Why do you want to work here?”
   e) “Do you have any questions?”
   f) “What do you know about our firm?”
   g) “What experience do you have that’s directly relevant to this position?”
   h) “Can you tell me about yourself?”
   i) “What are your salary expectations?”
   j) “What are your goals?”

1. _______________
   The common mistake in answering this question is thinking that the interviewer is asking for your life story. As fascinating as it may be, the interviewer is less interested in where you went to kindergarten and how you won the second grade spelling bee as he or she is in how your experience in your last job directly relates to this position. Limit your answer to work-related aspects of your background. Assuming that you’ve studied the job posting thoroughly and researched the company, tie your background and experience to the prospective employer’s needs.

2. _______________
   Again, if you’ve done your research, you should have some sense of what the company does, what the corporate culture is, and how your skill set fits into the picture. Your answer should be something along the lines of “Your mission statement and corporate vision are consistent with my professional goals, and I believe my skills in the areas of (give examples) will allow me to contribute to the success of (give name of a specific program or a challenge the company faces). The potential is very exciting to me.”

3. _______________
   Once again, research, research, research! If you can’t tell the interviewer much about what the company makes and sells, or what its biggest challenges are, the interviewer may assume you have little genuine interest in the company or the position you’re applying for. Be sure to explore the company website in more depth to find out about the firm’s products, plant locations, financial performance, and any other information that might be useful. If you’re applying in the nonprofit world, search through agencies’ websites that can provide information about the organization’s mission, active programs, and funding.

4. _______________
   When posed with this question, it’s not a good time to share that your long-range plan is to own a sheep ranch in West Virginia. Your answer should relate to the job in question and perhaps how you see yourself within the organization three to five years down the road. Give some thought as to what the logical career path is for someone in your field, and tailor your answer to reflect that. Maybe that means aspiring to be a supervisor or manager within the department that hires you, or taking advantage of educational opportunities to enhance your value to the employer. Once again, if you’ve done your research, you should have some idea what’s expected for an employee entering the company at your level.

5. _______________
   Again, the real underlying question is, “How will you fulfill our needs?” Choose one or more of your strong points and relate them to the opening you’re being interviewed for. Your response could be something such as,
I’ve always been good with numbers, and I know that budgeting is a key component of this position. At my last job, I developed and administered a $580,000 operating budget and achieved all of our key objectives for the year while staying under budget.” That might lead to a follow-up question such as, “Really! How much under budget were you?” To which you can reply, “We saved a total of $29,000, which was 5 percent.” Notice how this second answer reinforces your assertion that you’re good with numbers by demonstrating your ability to come up with the amount instantly and calculate the percentage on the spot.

6. ________________
This question is a variation of the previous one, so you can answer it pretty much the same way. Pick one of your core skills and explain to the interviewer how it will help you in performing the duties of the new job. For example: “I have extensive experience prospecting and cold calling while establishing long-term relationships. Because your firm sells capital equipment, I recognize that it involves a long sales cycle. I believe that I’m able to identify strong prospects and maintain a rapport with them over several months as we move them toward a buying decision.”

7. ________________
Your answer to this question can hurt you in two ways. First, a casual or flippant answer about how you get along with everybody will do little to advance your case with the interviewer. On the other hand, coming on too strong about how you have the professional respect of everyone you work with may sound a bit disingenuous. An even-handed approach might sound something like this: “I believe that they would tell you that I’m well-organized, consistently meet deadlines, and know how to engender cooperation among colleagues when necessary to meet objectives. They probably also would say that I have a great sense of humor and know how to defuse a tense situation with a small bit of humor, when appropriate.”

8. ________________
This is a routine question that often comes up, but it’s also one of the toughest challenges a job seeker faces. You may encounter this question because the interviewer is incompetent and truly doesn’t know any better; or, the interviewer may be trying to gain a negotiating advantage for later by getting you to name your price first. If this question is broached in the early stages of an interview, the best approach is to say, “I think I’d like to know more about the responsibilities of the position and reach a point where we can agree that I’m the right person for the job before getting too deeply into money discussions. As a well-regarded company in your industry, I’m certain that your compensation package will be in line with the current market and that we can reach a mutually beneficial agreement.” If the interviewer continues to press for an answer, you might ask what range they have in mind; whatever the answer, you should always be near the top of that range.

9. ________________
Here’s another great opportunity to talk about your key strengths as they relate to the job opening. An appropriate answer might be, “I have the skills and experience necessary to do the job, I believe in the company’s mission and think its products are great, and I’m willing to commit to whatever additional training or education might be necessary to meet the department’s future needs.”

10. ________________
This question may be the most important one you’re asked in an interview. In fact, if the interviewer doesn’t ask it, you should pipe up and say, “I have a few questions I’d like to ask.” Either way, this is your golden opportunity to learn more about the company, the job, your role within the company, and more. In addition to this, you can also demonstrate your interest in the position.

(Adapted from http://careers.stateuniversity.com/pages/100000346/)
**Vocabulary tasks**

1. Which of the adjectives in the bracket (appropriate, casual, underlying, previous, flippant, common, follow-up, weak, routine) forms a collocation with
   - …………. question
   - …………. answer
   or both? Check your answers in the text.

2. Fill in the gaps with prepositions. Then check your answers – one in each paragraph.
   a) Tie your background …… the employer’s needs.
   b) Ensure that your skill set fits …… the company’s “picture”.
   c) Explore the firm’s website to find out …… its products and performance.
   d) When you are posed …… this question, you shouldn’t speak about your personal goals.
   e) Relate your strengths …… the job you’re being interviewed for.
   f) Concentrate on your experience that is relevant …… this position.
   g) Don’t say that you get on well …… everybody.
   h) Don’t get too deeply …… salary discussions.
   i) Try to persuade the interviewer that you believe …… the company’s mission.
   j) Use every opportunity to learn even more …… the company.
The creative route to an MBA

By Della Bradshaw

While many managers think of August as the month for lying on a beach and soaking up the sun, for those considering an MBA, it is the month to dust down the CV, write application essays and sit the GMAT, the entry exam for business school. This year, however, it’s all change as many of the world’s top schools have radically altered their application processes. Innovation is the buzzword, says Chioma Isiadinso, chief executive of Expartus, the business school admissions consultancy. “In the 15 years I’ve been in this industry I have never seen this level of change,” she says.

At the front of the pack is Harvard Business School and where Harvard leads, others inevitably follow. MBAs who hope to be awarded one of its 920 coveted places for entry in 2013 will now only have to submit two essays instead of the previous four, says Dee Leopold, managing director for MBA admissions. Essay-writing it seems is now considered an anachronistic and often irrelevant skill for the 25 or 27-year-olds applying to business school. “It [the revised process] is really meant to be something more germane to what is happening today,” says Ms Leopold. “I think and I’ve said this before, this isn’t an essay-writing contest.”

Other top schools are also reducing the essay count. MIT Sloan students of the class of 2015, who will be submitting applications in the next few months, will only have to submit two essays, down from three last year and at the Wharton school at the University of Pennsylvania the essay count is also down from three to two. Derrick Bolton, MBA admissions director at Stanford, believes that this is just the tip of the iceberg. “Schools are finally beginning to catch up with the world around them. I think you’ll see a lot more changes in the next four or five years.”

The moves reflect a shift by top schools from written submissions to interviews, believes Graham Richmond of Clear Admit, the MBA admissions consultancy. This is particularly true at Harvard and Wharton. The 1,800 Harvard applicants who are invited to interview will be required to submit a memo reflecting on the interview within 24 hours. “This is meant to give them the last word,” says Ms Leopold. She admits, though, that the move has unnerved many potential applicants.

Wharton will become the first top US school to introduce a group interview process this year – IMD in Switzerland already does this. The team-based discussions, which will be conducted in Philadelphia and in hub cities around the world, will enable potential students to demonstrate qualities, such as working in a team, that are otherwise difficult to assess. Ankur Kumar, director of MBA admissions, says pilots conducted by Wharton suggest the process will be positive. “We think they [applicants] will enjoy doing this with us.”

While schools insist that the changes are intended to reflect better the behaviour of Generation Y applicants, there are nagging concerns that there is a lowering of the entry barriers to encourage more applications. The past few years have been sluggish, with even top schools reporting static or falling applications. Ms Isiadinso believes that schools will not want to report declining applications for a further year. “I can’t imagine any director of admissions going into the dean and saying the numbers are down two years in a row and say it’s OK because the quality is up.”

Many schools are also opening the applications process earlier to encourage more applicants. London Business School opens applications this week – two months earlier than in previous years. Oliver Ashby, senior recruitment and admissions manager, says that the move brings LBS into line with top US schools. “It’s really because our US competitors open so much earlier. People want to apply all in one go. I’m here to increase applications numbers,” he says. “I’d hate that people didn’t apply because it is inconvenient.”

What is clear is that if would-be MBAs apply to a number of schools, the process is likely to be very different – and involve a lot of work. Some schools allow applicants to submit a PowerPoint presentation rather than an essay, others encourage applicants to add links to personal blogs, while other applicants can submit video essays.

“Communications skills and presentation skills are going to be a lot more important than written communications in the future,” says Martin Boehm, MBA director at IE Business School in Madrid. At NYU Stern applicants are encouraged to show their artistic side by submitting a creative project instead of one of the essays,
says Isser Gallogly, assistant dean for MBA and EMBA admissions. This could be a video, a sculpture or some
other art project. And even the traditional essay question has been replaced by the quirky. Out are questions
on leadership and management style to be replaced by ones on what you would do if your work was cancelled
for three hours or even what song best expresses your personality.

http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/2/0470a922-d4da-11e1-9444-00144feabdc0.html#axzz2KrTPSICk

Tasks

1. Translate the highlighted sentences.
2. Answer the questions:
   a) What is special about August for future MBA students?
   b) Why do Harvard Business School students submit fewer essays for entry? How many?
   c) Do also other schools reduce the number of essays?
   d) What does MBA admissions director at Stanford think about the current changes?
   e) What will Harward applicants have to write after the interview and why?
   f) Why are team-based discussions considered to be so positive?
   g) Why do many schools open the application process earlier? Give an example.
   h) Do any schools accept any other forms of students' work than the essays? If yes, why? If no, why?
3. Match the words to make compound nouns:
   1. admissions a) project
   2. potential b) consultancy
   3. application c) skill
   4. creative d) applicants
   5. management e) essays
   6. irrelevant f) style
The eurozone endgame will begin in Greece

Greece won’t be able to make its austerity policies stick and, as the global depression worsens, will have to leave the eurozone - Costas Lapavitsas ponders in the Guardian.

1 The June summit of the eurozone was initially trumpeted as a decisive step towards resolving the crisis. Italy and Spain won agreement to allow European institutions to recapitalise banks and purchase sovereign debt directly.

2 But once financial markets had a closer look, it became clear that little of substance had been achieved, and the borrowing costs of Italy and Spain again approached forbidding heights. Meanwhile the Spanish government has imposed fresh austerity, breaking its promises to the electorate. And unemployment in the eurozone continues to rise, exceeding 11% on average.

3 It is now a fair guess that the European Monetary Union (or the eurozone) has crossed the Rubicon and is heading towards breakup or collapse. In the periphery of Greece, Portugal, Ireland and Spain, there is despair at the ever-deepening recession. In France and Italy there is burgeoning opposition to long-term austerity. In Germany there is frustration at feckless southerners.

4 Disintegration is likely to take a turn for the worse in 2013, as a global slump is in the offing. The large economies of Europe, including the UK, are entering recession largely due to austerity policies. The US economy is veering towards negative territory, as Barack Obama’s expansionary policies were never vigorous enough. China is facing a hard landing that will force a re-examination of its growth strategy. The international financial system, meanwhile, remains weak and unreformed.

5 After three years of festering, truly drastic action is now required. Peripheral countries must abandon austerity as part of a Europe-wide programme to raise productivity, financial institutions must be taken into public ownership, and debt written off. But it is unthinkable that Europe’s current political leaders would embark on such changes. Hidebound by neoliberal economics, they will continue with austerity, privatisation and liberalisation. The financial markets have sensed it and are preparing for disaster.

6 The disaster is likely to start in Greece. The country is in the midst of an unprecedented depression, made largely in Brussels. In 2012 output is likely to contract by 7% to 9%, on top of about 14% in 2008–11. Not surprisingly, the bailout programme is again missing its targets as recession has reduced tax revenues.

7 Yet the EU is insisting that the country should stick with the failed programme by imposing huge cuts in public expenditure in 2012–14. The aim is to achieve a primary surplus at the earliest date. If the cuts do take place and a global slump does indeed materialise, the Greek economy will contract ruthlessly in 2013, even by 10%. It would be an economic and social catastrophe, especially as unemployment is already at 23%, including 52% for the youth.

8 The present Greek government, formed out of the establishment parties of New Democracy and Pasok with the addition of the ardent Europeanist Dimar, is incapable of dealing with the crisis. They won the June election by playing on middle-class fears about returning to the drachma and losing savings.

9 They also cynically promised to renegotiate bailout terms knowing full well that renegotiation was impossible as long as the framework of the bailout was accepted. In practice, they are about to impose the spending cuts demanded by the EU, while liberalising closed professions and selling public assets in the ludicrous hope of boosting growth.

10 The government is unlikely to survive for long. As depression worsens in the next six months to a year, Greece will again confront the impossibility of sticking with bailout policies.

11 This time the decision is likely to be final, with profound implications for the ruling elite that took the country into the EMU on a wing and a prayer. The elite is now watching in horror as its strategy is falling apart, and seems incapable of devising an alternative path.

12 But Greece is unlikely to attempt suicide: at some point it will default on its debts and exit the EMU. There will then be a genuinely new government, perhaps formed by the left, which will navigate the chaos and
guide the rebuilding of economy and society. Once Greece has made its move, the unravelling of the EMU will probably start in full earnest.

(Adapted from the Guardian, 16 July 2012.)

Tasks and discussion

1. The text is full of words with negative connotations. Identify at least ten of them. [Words like “danger, debt, cynical, shock”, etc. may suggest such a negative feeling.]
   Find all collocations with the adjective “financial”. There are four of them. (What other two-word expressions can be made?)
   We can talk about “sovereign debts” (1st par.), “sovereign bonds” or “sovereign loans”. What does the word “sovereign” mean in these collocations?
2. Find an expression meaning
4. “the money to be paid to the government in order to help it” (6th, 9th and 10th par.)
5. How has the situation in the eurozone developed since this article was published?
The In-Flight Internet Boom Is Here – Only 10 Years Off Schedule

by Kevin Gray

Go ahead and grumble that the legroom would squeeze Toulouse-Lautrec, and the security lines move slower than a Mumbai traffic jam. Because now, frequent flyer, you finally have something to be grateful for: the emergence of Wi-Fi in the sky. More than 750 commercial U.S. planes – roughly 30 percent of the domestic fleet – are now outfitted with either 3G cellular service or satellite delivery systems, providing a lot of bandwidth for downloading movies or sending emails.

This being the airline industry, of course, you can’t expect a new service to roll out perfectly smoothly. For now, the industry makes it all but impossible to know you’re booking a plane with Wi-Fi. In some cases, you won’t even know until you see the sign onboard the plane.

Even so, things are moving in the right direction. The first airlines to add Wi-Fi were American, Delta, and Virgin America, all of which began rolling it out in 2008. With two industry heavyweights and one smaller but flashy upstart carrier beaming broadband from the skies, the rest of the industry began to follow suit. Today, Virgin and AirTran offer Wi-Fi on all domestic flights, and every competing U.S. airline has launched Wi-Fi in some of its planes or plans to soon, and most are working towards total coverage. (For the state of Wi-Fi penetration in domestic carriers, see this chart.) By the end of the year, in-flight Internet should become as commonplace as in-flight magazines.

So at this point, there’s no turning back. People want it. In late 2009, Virgin surveyed its frequent flyers and found that for the majority of them, Wi-Fi availability would influence their choice of airline.

“Travelers want to do in the air what they’ve become accustomed to do at any Starbucks,” says Niels Steenstrup, vice president of marketing for Aircell, the largest Internet service provider to the airline industry. “We get two reactions. ‘Wow, there’s Internet,’ and ‘Of course, why wouldn’t there be?’

Failed Takeoff

The in-flight Internet boom was supposed to have occurred a decade ago. In 2000, Boeing launched a business called Connexion by Boeing to bring high-speed Internet access to the nation’s jetliners. Boeing eventually partnered with a number of airlines, but the timing – spring of 2001 – couldn’t have been worse. The terrorists’ attacks of 9/11 caused every airline to pull out of the venture except for Germany’s Lufthansa. At the same time, there were major technical hurdles in deploying the service; each plane had to be outfitted with antennas that cost about a half a million dollars, took several days to install and created an estimated 800 pounds of drag. In 2006, Connexion called it quits.

But something else happened that year that was critical in ushering in the high-altitude Wi-Fi movement. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) auctioned off blocks of a spectrum previously reserved for analog radiotelephony so that it could be repurposed for digital air-to-ground bandwidth.


Comprehension questions

1. What percentage of planes provided internet connection in the US at the time of the publishing of the article?
2. What were/are the main problems that caused the delay in the introduction of Wi-Fi on planes?
3. Which important events in 2001 were critical in the development?
4. What did the customer satisfaction survey show in 2009?
5. Why is the Starbucks company mentioned in the text?
6. Which change in federal legislation contributed positively to wifi on planes?
7. Which airline did not freeze the development of wifi on board after the terrorist attacks?

Discussion 1

Answer the following questions:

1. How often do you use the Internet?
2. How is your PC /notebook connected?
3. Do you understand the abbreviation Wi-Fi?
4. How many times have you travelled by air?
5. Describe your latest experience with it.

Exercises

1. Write 7–10 words which come to your mind when you think about flying.
2. Explain the following words connected with flying:
   schedule, take-off, airline, in-flight magazine, onboard, flight booking, legroom, frequent flyer, jetleg, rolling, check in, baggage reclaim, reschedule, fasten your seat belt, departures, arrivals

3. Read the text again and underline the words you do not understand.
4. Try to explain the following expressions:
   a) grumble about the legroom
   b) slower than a Mumbai traffic jam
   c) to roll out perfectly smoothly
   d) industry heavyweights
   e) flashy upstart carrier
   f) to follow suit
   g) to pull out of the venture
   h) technical hurdles in deploying the service
   i) to put on the block

Discussion 2

1. Would the availability of Wi-Fi influence your choice of airline? Does it influence your choice of a cafe or restaurant?
2. Do you pay attention to the time you spent using the Internet and the content you most often see?
3. Do you agree with people who say that the Internet will replace reading books, magazines, newspapers or even TV, radio and cinema?
4. Have you got a smart phone or internet on your mobile phone? Why yes/not?
5. Can you imagine your life without the Internet?
The Worst New-Manager Mistakes

By Elaine Pofeldt

If the mistakes you’ve made as a rookie manager make you cringe, you’re not alone. Many people struggle with the transition to overseeing their colleagues — and they usually don’t get much help from their employers. The Institute for Corporate Productivity surveyed hundreds of employees to determine how well their companies helped people make the switch to management. The results were dismal: More than 60 percent rated their firm’s performance as “fair;” 16 percent said it was “poor.” So that leaves managers to learn from their mistakes, which is, of course, often the best way to improve. Here, two seasoned managers tell us in their own words some of their most painful lessons as newbies.

My mistake: I let an employee intimidate me.
When I first started managing in 1994, I oversaw a salesperson who was old enough to be my mom. She knew her job, but sometimes she chose not to do it. Some months she would make her sales goals, some months, she wouldn’t. As a new manager, I was hesitant to give her direction and intimidated by her age. When other people started mentioning that she was coming in late and taking personal phone calls at work, I made a serious mistake. I told her that other people were complaining about her, instead of reporting my own observations. She said, ‘Well, I do my job.’ Worried about her feelings, I said, ‘Yeah, OK.’ I should have said, ‘You may think you’re doing your job, but the business results show that you’re not.’ I lived with her uneven performance, even though it was stressful, and she stayed on after I left.

Now if I have a problem like that, I take immediate corrective action, instead of losing sleep over it. When I managed an administrative worker who consistently called in sick about three times a week, saying her stomach hurt, I was sympathetic for a short time. But I quickly realized what she was up to and insisted she seek medical attention. When she didn’t do that, I gave her 10 days to straighten up. After three weeks of perfect attendance, she called in sick again. I told her not to bother coming in. She showed up that afternoon and we never had a problem with her attendance again.

(Anne Brush Zimos, 43, manager of a design services team at IBM in Armonk, N.Y.)

My mistake: I made a promise I couldn’t keep.
I was a national sales manager at a plastics printing company when a representative from our customer service department accepted a job with one of our vendors. Her exit interview was the first I had ever conducted at that time in 1986. Thinking I was being nice, I told her we were going to miss her and she always had a job there. After two or three months, her new job didn’t work out. She came back to me and asked for her old one back. By then we had hired and trained a very good person to fill her spot, so I told her there were no openings. I didn’t think much about it, until later, when her daughter who worked as our secretary and receptionist — came in and reminded me of my promise. That’s when I realized I had messed up. It was like getting punched in the gut. I knew I didn’t necessarily owe the woman a job but I never should have promised something I couldn’t deliver. Now I handle the exit interview more carefully: I stick to asking employees for their input on what the company can do better.

(Alan Christopher, 52, owner of DAC Marketing, which represents manufacturers of promotional products in Austin, Texas)

**Exercise**

Match the words (1–12) from the text with the definitions (a–l).

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<td>1.</td>
<td>rookie manager</td>
<td>a) showing support and understanding</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>dismal</td>
<td>b) to spoil, make badly, fail to solve</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>to intimidate</td>
<td>c) to keep, follow, not leave</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>sympathetic</td>
<td>d) someone who has just started, without experience</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>vendor</td>
<td>e) to frighten or threaten someone</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>to mess up</td>
<td>f) care about something, showing that it is important</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>to stick to</td>
<td>g) without change, all the time</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>seasoned</td>
<td>h) very poor, disappointing</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>consistently</td>
<td>i) to supervise</td>
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<td>10.</td>
<td>newbie</td>
<td>j) experienced</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>to bother</td>
<td>k) completely inexperienced manager</td>
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<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>to oversee</td>
<td>l) seller, agent, dealer</td>
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**Discussion**

1. Prepare a short talk about a mistake you personally have made or someone you know has made.
2. What were the consequences of the mistake? How was it rectified / solved?
3. What did you learn from the mistake? Do you now listen more carefully to more experienced people’s advice (parents, senior staff, and coaches)?
Wall Street: Leaner and meaner
Banks confront a post-crisis world of tougher regulations and lower profits. Tom Braithwaite from the Financial Times looks at the banking industry’s attempts to adapt to a post-crisis world.

When Jamie Forese started out at Salomon Brothers in 1985, being an investment banker was not a guaranteed ticket to riches. “A career on Wall Street was considered a stable income, the same as a lawyer, a doctor, an accountant,” he recalls. What changed, he says, was banks’ addiction to leverage – the cheap debt that fattened profits and bonuses, financed mega-mergers and ultimately fuelled the global financial crisis. In the boom years, leverage convinced people that “banking was the gravy train”, he says.

Today, amid a regulatory clampdown and a turbulent global economy, the industry is contemplating a future that looks more like the lower-key profession, Mr Forese remembers. Securities firms are cutting jobs. Bonuses are down sharply. The prestige of being a Wall Street banker has plummeted. And the profits that underpinned the heady years of the past are harder to come by. For Wall Street’s critics, these are not all bad developments. […]

Mr Forese, the head of Citigroup’s investment bank, is one of the executives trying to determine the future of Wall Street. But many of the events shaping the industry are well outside his reach. Four thousand miles from Mr Forese’s Manhattan office, regulators in Basel, Switzerland, have banned all banks from carrying as much debt as they did in the past. That changes the economics of the business, particularly in the fixed-income trading divisions that have been prized profit centres for the past two decades.

The big five US banks on Wall Street made more than $50bn a year in combined revenues between 2005 and 2010 from fixed income trading, with the exception of 2008. This was far more than in equities trading, underwriting or advisory work. Last year, according to Credit Suisse, their combined revenue fell 22 per cent. As the new Basel III rules are gradually introduced, the business is set to come under further pressure. […]

When Goldman Sachs went public in 1999, it was able to boast an ROE of more than 40 per cent, although it was never again to reach such levels. Last year it racked up its worst ever ratio: 3.6 per cent. Understandably, this affects shareholders’ appetite for the stock. In 2006 both Goldman and Morgan Stanley traded at more than twice their book value. Now Goldman trades at 0.9 times book; Morgan Stanley at about half. This means investors no longer believe the companies are worth more than the stated value of their assets.

Apart from Basel III rules, US banks must contend with the Volcker rule, also aimed at limiting risk-taking in fixed income divisions. Banks contend that this will damage their traditional ability to act as market makers, bringing together investors wanting to buy with those who want to sell.

The banks are struggling to identify a new cash cow that grazes between the new rules. The equivalent of the junk bonds of the 1980s or the credit derivatives of the 1990s has not been discovered. […] Given some of the results of the last round of experimentation, there may be good reasons for the financial scientists to be held at bay. “Innovation? God, look where that got us,” says one hedge fund executive. With no wizardry to rely on, banks are behaving like other mature companies in a straitened economy – they are cutting costs. But they also face a structural dilemma: is it possible to fine-tune the fixed-income divisions in the new environment or will it require a more radical overhaul? Making savings will require cutting the headcount and reducing pay – which accounts for more than 40 per cent of revenues at investment banks. […]

Where there is innovation, it is in technology. While stocks, and much foreign exchange, are now electronically traded, most bonds and other fixed-income instruments remain opaque and reliant on human beings. Shifting from telephone to electronic trading offers a significant cost-cutting opportunity and a plausible route to increased revenue growth – but also, as greater transparency and efficiency leads to lower fees, to thinner margins. And then there is the risk someone will ask: why do we need the banks as a go-between?

BlackRock is pioneering its electronic Aladdin Trading Network to match buyers and sellers of bonds without an investment bank standing in the middle. BlackRock stresses that the “dealer” banks are its “partners”, and it does not wish to sideline them. The banks are not sure it will be successful but are convinced BlackRock – despite its denials – is taking them on.
Banks and asset managers, though, have a mutual interest in electronic trading expanding to take over more business. According to the Federal Reserve, the volume of bonds held by the traditional dealer banks has fallen sharply, from $200bn in 2007 to $90bn in 2011 and $45bn today. Institutional investors complain that this is reducing liquidity in the market, and is part of the reason for them to expand their own trading platforms, allowing them to trade among themselves. […]

The shift from trading, combined with a push into advising retail clients, should help produce more stable revenues. It will also ease the bank’s funding costs: investors and credit rating agencies such as Moody’s prefer less volatile businesses. The trading that remains will be all about institutions servicing clients rather than making money on their own account. This produces lower margins, but it is also safer. […]

So Wall Street today is divided on how drastic the job of reinvention will prove, and how much risk it is wise to take. […] If the institutions adjust to the new financial landscape, the employees who remain are going to have to adjust, too. Their bosses insist that bonuses will have to fall if banks are to deliver a decent return for investors. Some bankers are finding it hard to adapt to the new Wall Street. “I’m bemused when I hear about people getting upset with their $600,000 pay cheque because it’s down from $800,000,” says Mr Forese. “For banks, the greatest lever is compensation.”

(Adapted from The Financial Times 30. 9. 2012; www.ft.com)

Discussion

1. What “fuelled” the financial crisis according to Mr. Forese?
2. How has the reputation of a banker changed since the crisis started?
3. How are the banks reacting to the economic crisis?
4. Which new rules must the banks obey?
5. What does “innovation” mean for banks? How has electronic trading changed the way banks operate?
6. Which Wall Street and other banks are mentioned in the text?

Vocabulary tasks

1. Find the following expressions in the text and explain (having googled them or consulted proper dictionaries) what they mean: leverages, combined revenue, underwriting, ROE, cash cow, junk bonds, credit derivatives, rating agency.
2. Highlight all the other words and expressions concerning finance.
1. An outdoor ad by *Southwest Airlines*

IT’S HARD
TO MOVE ON
IF YOU’RE
STANDING STILL

GRAB YOUR BAG

IT’S ON.

a) The ad plays on words to do with movement. Find two phrasal verbs that can be understood literally, but here are meant metaphorically: “you cannot get ahead in life if you don’t take any action”.
b) The ad continues with two idioms used informally as a kind of “invitation”. How can we read (i.e. understand) them? (What should a potential customer do and what might be “on”?)

(Adapted from Business Spotlight 3/2011, p. 19.)

2. An ad for the software firm *SAP*

IN A CLEAR NEW WORLD
YOU CAN SEE FAR INTO THE PRESENT

The ad is a play on the song title “On a Clear Day You Can See Forever” from the musical of the same name.

a) What does a “clear new world” represent here?
b) We usually talk about seeing far into the future. But what does seeing “far into the present” mean?

(Adapted from Business Spotlight 4/2010, p. 25.)

3. An outdoor display ad by *Doom & Dickson*

“GOD CREATED MAN.
FOR ANYTHING ELSE CALL US.”

This (1953) quotation from Jack Doom, one of the founders of the Doom & Dickson advertising agency in Amsterdam, was used for a (billboard-like) advertisement, covering the entire front facade of the agency’s offices. The agency turned a difficult situation – its offices were being renovated – into an advertising opportunity, thus having created an unusual example of display advertising.

How does the quotation – together with its creative placing – express the agency’s reputation? What kind of message does it send?

(Adapted from Business Spotlight 1/2011, p. 27.)

4. An advertisement from *British Airways*

CLUB RULES
HELPING
YOURSELF TO
FOOD IS STRICTLY
FORGIVEN

This ad from BA is for its Club World Business Class.

a) What kind of service does it advertise? In what way is it different from standard onboard food services?
b) What does it mean when someone tells you to “help yourself”? When and where might you hear that phrase?
c) The slogan plays on our tendency to misread words, because they remind us of commonly occurring collocations. What does “strictly forgiven” mean and what phrase does it remind us of? (Which verb does “strictly” usually occur with?)
d) Why has the term been turned around here?

(Adapted from Business Spotlight 1/2010, p. 25.)
5. A pavement advertisement by Sustrans

Leaves on the line?
Who cares.

This advert is an example of a popular new form of ambient advertising trying to get the public’s attention by appearing in unexpected places.

Sustrans is a British organization for healthy transport; its ad is on a bicycle path.

a) Internet (re)search: Find the meaning of “ambient advertising”
b) What is the message of the advert? (When and where is the phrase “Leaves on the line” used? Why is it on a bicycle path?)

(Adapted from Business Spotlight 2/2011, p. 19.)

6. A series of ads by Oxfam

There’s a toilet
in your jewellery box.

There’s a nurse
in your attic.

There’s a classroom
in your garage.

a) What is Oxfam’s field of activity? What does a “toilet / nurse / classroom” in the above ads represent?
b) What do these ads have in common? (Why did they at first appear absurd?) What do they remind people of?

(Adapted from Business Spotlight 6/2010, p. 25.)

7. An ad for Dow Jones Commodity Indexes

We run with the bulls.
And with the oil, soybeans and gold.

a) How does this ad play on the words “run” and “bull”? (What qualities does “running with the bulls” require?)
b) If we talk about “bull market”, is the stock market on an upward or downward trend? (What financial term denotes the opposite trend?)
c) How does Dow Jones group provide financial indexes? (How do you take up an idea when you “run with” it?)
d) What are “oil, soybeans and gold”? Why are they used in the ad?
e) Dow Jones & Company, Inc. provides a lot of indexes. What do they show? Who needs to know them?

(Adapted from Business Spotlight 2/2010, p. 29.)

8. An ad for The Economist business magazine

Pressure peers.

a) Who are “peers”. (Consult your dictionary if necessary.)
b) This minimalist ad uses two short words to get a strong message across. It plays on the term “peer pressure”. How do you act if you give in to peer pressure?
c) “Pressure peers” is meant as an imperative. What message does it convey? (What does it tell The Economist readers?)

(Adapted from Business Spotlight 4/2011, p. 25.)
The only thing we use for thinking, or at least I hope so, is the brain. Everybody has a different brain, and yet it can lead astray all of us.

This essay is inspired by a book from Nassim Nicholas Taleb titled “The Black Swan”, which was recently translated to Czech. Nassim Taleb is not just an American academic, but also a former investment advisor. His past experience taught him a lot- not to trust expert opinions, scientific reports and forecasts were one of it. Daniel Kahneman, psychologist and Nobel Prize laureate for economics, defined two Systems in our internal self. He calls them the “System 1“- a system that works quickly and more or less intuitively, and “System 2“ – a slower and an analytical system which inspects data. Unfortunately, in certain type of situations, both can lead us to incorrect conclusions.

Let’s start with Nassim Taleb’s definition of two spaces. Let the first space be called “The Average” and the other one “The Extreme”. An example of “The Average” space could be a set of hundred men. We look for their average height and weight. Of course, men of a height of a beanpole or, on the contrary, of a dwarf might be among them, as well as there can be some “fatties” and “thinnies”. Nevertheless, if we calculate the group’s average height and weight, such dramatic differences will disappear. Let’s try to average their property as well. Imagine if Bill Gates or Warren Buffet get to the sample (for those who do not follow statistics, one of the most wealthy people on the planet)! Include one person, and the average changes to something which does not make sense. As a result, System 1 would make a meaningless conclusion from such an average. Let’s demonstrate the System 1 reaction on one more Taleb’s example. We are in the United States. Turkeys are having a good time at a butcher. They are regularly fed, they gain weight, all in all, they are fairly treated. Thanksgiving Day comes- for those who do not know it, an American holiday, where tables bend underneath the weight of roasted turkeys. The only one to which this comes as a surprise is the turkey: the System 1 did not warn it, while the butcher knew. We often think like turkeys and we do not realise that the good days perhaps passed already, and that nothing lasts forever. Analysts got a fantastic tool into their hands, the spreadsheets. It is so easy to extrapolate effortlessly, like the turkeys did!

System 2 fails in its forecasts and statistics when using a sample, which is too small, or a one-sided assumption. One of the charity projects that did not work well for Bill Gates was his support of small schools. Statisticians claimed to have proven pupils from these schools achieve better results than those from large schools. Although that was true for some, there was an equal percentage of small schools that did otherwise. I will detail further examples of failed and one-sided interpretation of statistics in the future essay.

I still owe you an explanation on what a black swan is. It is a phenomenon with three fundamental parameters. First, it is impossible to predict it. Second, it has catastrophic or totally fantastic impacts. And finally, there is always someone who later says: “I always said it”. Unfortunately, this person can never repeat such a great forecast ever again. Let September 11 or the Internet be some of such examples.

**Tasks**

1. **Answer the questions.**
   a) What did D. Kahneman define?
   b) How did he demonstrate the System 1 reaction?
   c) When does the System 2 fail?
   d) What is “the black swan” ?

2. **Find the words meaning:**
   a) result
   b) asserted
   c) easily
   d) effect
   e) identical
   f) small man
   g) ex