

Discussion

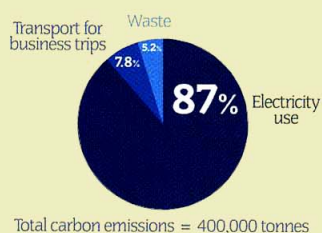
- 1 What do you think is the best approach for companies aiming to reduce their emissions – carbon offsets or carbon emission reductions? Why?
- 2 To what extent do companies try to make commercial gains out of their environmental strategies?
- 3 Who do you think should take responsibility for tackling climate change – individuals, companies, or governments? Why?

Task

- 1 Read about Corutel and look at the sources of their carbon emissions.

Corutel's carbon emissions

Corutel is one of Europe's leading mobile phone companies, with 32 million customers in 23 countries. Given its position, Corutel is keen to set a good example of corporate responsibility and offset its carbon emissions. As a first step, Corutel measured its carbon footprint.



- 2 The management team at Corutel have arranged a meeting with representatives from Carbon-lo, a green consultancy firm, to negotiate ways to help the company achieve its objectives. Work in groups of four.

Students A and B, you represent Corutel. Read your notes below and prepare to present the company's main principles in relation to its environmental strategy at the meeting.

Students C and D, you represent Carbon-lo. Turn to File 52 on page 148, read your notes, and prepare to present ideas that you think will help Corutel achieve its objectives.

What we want

- To be able to advertise our green credentials to our customers and investors.
- To use offsetting rather than emission reduction because one easy payment can be made per year and it will make it easier to budget for the environmental strategy.
- To have a company forest (as seen on Carbon-lo's website), but other offsetting projects will also be considered.

What we don't want

- An emission-reduction strategy wouldn't be effective. Saving energy shouldn't be a priority for staff as they are extremely busy and it shouldn't be their responsibility.
- A reduction in the amount of business trips is not possible. Allowing people from different countries to meet face-to-face is an important part of the company's development.
- Customers should not be included in this project because it is expected that they would want the company to accept responsibility for this and not pass it on to them.

- 3 Hold the meeting. Aim to negotiate a five-point action plan that will help the company achieve its objectives.

The Expert View

There is now a heightened global awareness of the dangers of climate change. This has led to major banks and investment companies probing the carbon-reduction strategies of the businesses in which they invest. Additionally an increasing number of major companies are not only adopting carbon-reduction strategies themselves, but are also putting similar requirements on their supply chains. More individuals expect businesses they work for or trade with to implement carbon-reduction plans. Business as usual or cosmetic change will not suffice. Conversely, businesses embracing higher environmental standards may be able to save money, motivate talented staff who want to work for responsible companies, and create new business opportunities.

Prof. David Grayson, CBE, Professor of Corporate Responsibility, Director of the Doughty Centre for Corporate Responsibility
 Cranfield School of Management

Company profile

The CarbonNeutral Company

The CarbonNeutral Company (TCNC) was established over ten years ago and is the leading carbon offset and climate consulting business, with major clients including Barclays, BSKyB, Honda, and UBS. CarbonNeutral® is the company's registered mark, and is awarded when CO₂ emissions have been reduced to net zero. Since it broke new ground with the sale of carbon offsets in the mid-1990s, it has provided clients with a broad range of carbon offset and climate consulting services, helping them to measure, reduce, and offset their CO₂ emissions. With headquarters in London, and an international network of offices, it has over 300 business clients and 60,000 individual clients worldwide.

Glossary

carbon emissions = polluting carbon substances (e.g. CO₂) released into the atmosphere, mainly by burning fossil fuels

carbon offsetting = the practice of paying money towards projects that help the environment to try to cancel out the harmful effect of CO₂ emissions produced by a person's / company's activities

carbon footprint = a measure of the amount of CO₂ emitted by a person / company

carbon-neutral = when CO₂ emissions are counter-balanced by CO₂ reduction elsewhere, e.g. through planting trees

Developing ethically-responsible policies

Background

The CarbonNeutral Company

How can we help you achieve 'net zero CO₂'?

Through a mix of 'internal' and 'external' reductions. Internal reductions cover the CO₂ which is cut by changing processes, systems, and behaviour. External reductions (or 'carbon offsetting') are reductions that we make happen for you. For every one tonne of CO₂ produced, we arrange for an equivalent one tonne of CO₂ to be saved through a project somewhere else in the world. These projects include:

- Renewable energy: including solar, hydro, and wind as well as biomass and re-use of products like biogas.
- Resource conservation: including energy efficiency, methane recovery, and low-carbon fuel switches.
- Forestry: well-managed, long-term forestry which makes a real contribution to local communities and biodiversity.

Quality standards

We have developed a market-leading quality assurance programme. Our quality measures include:

- The CarbonNeutral® Protocol: This is the standard behind the CarbonNeutral brand mark. It incorporates international best practice and is a public and independently reviewed standard.
- Audit trail: Uniquely, we are the only company trading in carbon credits that commissions an independent third party to verify its carbon business. PWC reviews our operating system and verifies all aspects of our carbon management chain. This ensures, for example, against double counting.
- Guarantee of success: The CarbonNeutral Company guarantees every tonne of a carbon offset project.

Contact us today and join the carbon revolution!

Sky aims to become carbon-neutral

Perhaps Sky is not the first name that springs to mind when you think of fighting climate change. But over the last few years Sky has been committed to reducing its carbon footprint and becoming carbon-neutral.

The main method used to reduce its carbon footprint has been Sky's offsetting policy. Sky has worked with The CarbonNeutral Company to invest in quality offsetting programmes, including wind power projects in India and New Zealand.

Sky has also worked with TCNC to reduce carbon emissions. It has ensured that all its UK sites are supplied by renewable energy sources, it has renewed its company vehicle fleet to reduce CO₂ emissions, and introduced a 'switch it off' campaign to encourage employees to turn off electrical devices that are not being used.

The results speak for themselves. Sky offset 45,000 tonnes of CO₂ in 2006–2007 and is well on its way to meet the target of 225,000 tonnes by 2011.

Campaigners question offsetting policy

Green campaigners today labelled carbon emission offsetting policies 'an indulgence' and called on companies to start taking their responsibility to the environment seriously. Henry Shanklin, an environmental campaigner from Australia, said, 'Offsets give the polluter a passport to pollute. By buying offset credits the companies feel like they don't have to reduce their own emissions. They offer peace of mind, but not solutions. We would rather see people and companies change their behaviour and reduce their own emissions, rather than rely on others to offset them for them.'

Practically speaking | Raising a difficult point

- 1 68▶** Listen to five extracts from conversations at work and answer questions 1–2.
- 1 In each case, what is the difficult point that is raised?
 - 2 How does the person raising the point sound? How does the other person respond?



- 2 68▶** Listen again and complete sentences 1–5.

- 1 Look, _____, but could you try to be a bit quieter when ...
- 2 OK, well ... Look, _____. Please _____, but ... do you think it would be possible ...
- 3 Look, _____ ... I know you spent a lot of time on it ... You see _____, it really needs a bit more work.
- 4 I'm not _____, but, well, I'm really delighted ...
- 5 With _____, Thomas, _____ I don't think it's quite as simple as that ... _____, there is still an enormous number of unanswered questions.

- 3** Rewrite statements 1–5 using phrases from 2 to make them less direct.

- 1 'Your design for the new brochure is rubbish. We're going to ask someone else to do a new version.'
- 2 'Your laugh is really loud and annoying. It disturbs everyone else in the office.'
- 3 'The price you've quoted for this job is ridiculously high. There's no way we can afford to pay this amount.'
- 4 'Your performance over the last year has been really poor. We're not going to increase your pay until you start improving.'
- 5 'Stop leaving your unwashed mugs around the office. They always go mouldy and they're disgusting!'

»» For extension and revision, go to **Useful phrases** on page 135.

- 4** Work with a partner. Have a conversation about one of these situations. Take turns to raise the difficult point using an appropriate phrase.

- 1 You share a small office. One of you constantly has meetings with other colleagues in the office. It's very difficult to work while this is happening.
- 2 You are in a meeting. One of your colleagues presents some facts and / or figures which you know are completely wrong.
- 3 One of your colleagues is taking a lot of time off work, officially because of stress, and this is increasing the workload and stress for the other team members.
- 4 Your colleague has produced some publicity material which doesn't match the brief they were given – you know they've worked hard on this, but it isn't right.

Key word | *mean*

Match phrases 1–5 with *mean* in italics to synonyms a–e.

- 1 *I don't mean* to sound rude.
 - 2 *I mean*, ... it's just that ...
 - 3 You *mean* I'm not smart enough?
 - 4 It just seems a bit *mean* ...
 - 5 You haven't told us what these figures actually *mean*.
- a in other words
b signify
c I'm saying
d a little ungenerous
e it's not my intention

Language at work | Using inversion for emphasis

1 Compare the sentences labelled A with the alternatives from the negotiation labelled B, and answer questions 1–4.

- 1 What are the differences in form between the two alternatives?
- 2 Which sentence(s) begin(s) with a phrase followed by a verb + subject inversion?
- 3 Which sentence(s) is / are a conditional?
- 4 Why might you choose to use the B sentences rather than the A sentences?

A One of our contracts has just trebled their order and another new contract has just come in.

B Not only has one of our contracts just trebled their order, but another new contract has just come in.

A We have never suggested that we can be flexible on these dates.

B At no time have we suggested that we can be flexible on these dates.

A If I had been given more notice on these other jobs, this wouldn't have happened.

B Had I been given more notice on these other jobs, this wouldn't have happened.

» For more information, go to **Language reference Unit 11** on page 132.

2 Read this notice and underline any sentences that include a verb inversion. Can you write these sentences in another way?

Memo

Notice to all staff – staff overtime

Following complaints about inconsistencies across departments in overtime procedure, it has been agreed that staff who work extra hours on their current projects are entitled to ask for time off in lieu. Not only are staff required to formally request this time off through their central administrators, they will also be expected to confirm the request with their line managers.

Under no circumstances will staff be paid overtime for working extra hours on their own projects. Were a member of staff to take on work outside their project team, this would be paid at a freelance rate agreed on between the member of staff and the manager of the outside team.

3 Rewrite these sentences using an inversion to add emphasis or formality.

- 1 We will never be willing to compromise our customer-care policy.
At no time _____.
- 2 If you joined the union, you would get free advice on this matter.
Were _____.
- 3 There is no situation in which we will negotiate a new deal.
Under _____.
- 4 We wouldn't have allowed this to happen if we had known about the consequences.
Had _____.
- 5 You asked us to cut our costs *and* reduce our lead time.
Not only _____.

» For more exercises, go to **Practice file 11** on page 123.

4 Some health and safety rules in your company have been ignored recently, resulting in injuries to staff. You need to make an announcement to remind staff of the rules and procedures. Work with a partner and create a formal statement using the phrases in 3. Include some of the following issues.

- fire drills
- hot food and drink
- driving and cycling on site
- carrying heavy loads

Make your announcement to the rest of the class.

4 66▶ Listen to the second part of the call. Work with a partner and discuss questions 1–3.

- 1 What suggestions are put forward?
- 2 How do the others react to the suggestions?
- 3 What solution would you have chosen?

5 66▶ Listen again and complete phrases 1–10.

- 1 ... that's _____ the question.
- 2 ... that _____ work.
- 3 Would you _____ accepting delivery by the final day of the exhibition?
- 4 That's not out of _____.
- 5 ... I refuse _____ on this.
- 6 I have to _____ on this ...
- 7 Could you _____ with some samples of the product?
- 8 We can't _____ that.
- 9 What would you _____ a smaller run for us ...?
- 10 ... I'd _____ to prioritize that.

6 Which phrases in 5 would be used by someone who

- a is trying to reach a compromise?
- b is not willing to compromise?
- c might be prepared to compromise?
- d knows that what he / she is offering is not really satisfactory?

7 67▶ Listen to the final part of the conference call. Do you think they have come to an acceptable agreement for all parties?

8 67▶ Listen again and note down the phrases they use to agree on a solution.

9 Work with a partner. Student A, turn to File 50 on page 148. Student B, turn to File 03 on page 136. Then follow steps 1–2.

- 1 Have a discussion and agree on a solution, using the phrases from the *Key expressions*.
- 2 Compare the solution you came to with other pairs in the class. Did the employee or the line manager benefit most from your solutions?

▶▶ For more practice, go to **Practice file 11** on page 122.

10 Work with a partner. Think of a problem or a change you would like to make at work. Use an idea from the list or think of your own. Then follow steps 1–3.

- a pay rise
- longer schedules
- cooking facilities at work
- a move to another office
- more holiday days
- free parking

- 1 Discuss with your partner how you want to present your proposal for change and think about what the effects will be on you / your colleagues / your work.
- 2 Make brief notes about your proposal and then give them to another pair to analyse.
- 3 Read the notes from another pair and think of some possible objections to their proposal.

11 Work together with the other pair. Take turns to discuss each other's proposal and negotiate a solution.

📄 ▶▶ Interactive Workbook ▶▶ Email

Key expressions

Stating the position

We are in a very difficult situation.
We have reached the point where we have no other option than to ...
This is beyond our control.
We are stuck with this situation.

Initiating a negotiation

Could you make do with ...?
What would you say to doing ...?
Would you consider ...?

Showing a willingness to negotiate

Let's try to find a way round this.
That's not out of the question.
I'd be willing to ...

Being unwilling to negotiate

I have to say no to ...
That's out of the question.
I'm afraid it is just not possible.
I refuse to budge on this.
I have to stay firm on this.
That just won't work.
We can't possibly ...

Agreeing on a solution

Are we all agreed?
I'll go along with ...
That sounds feasible.

📄 ▶▶ Interactive Workbook
▶▶ Phrasebank

Culture question

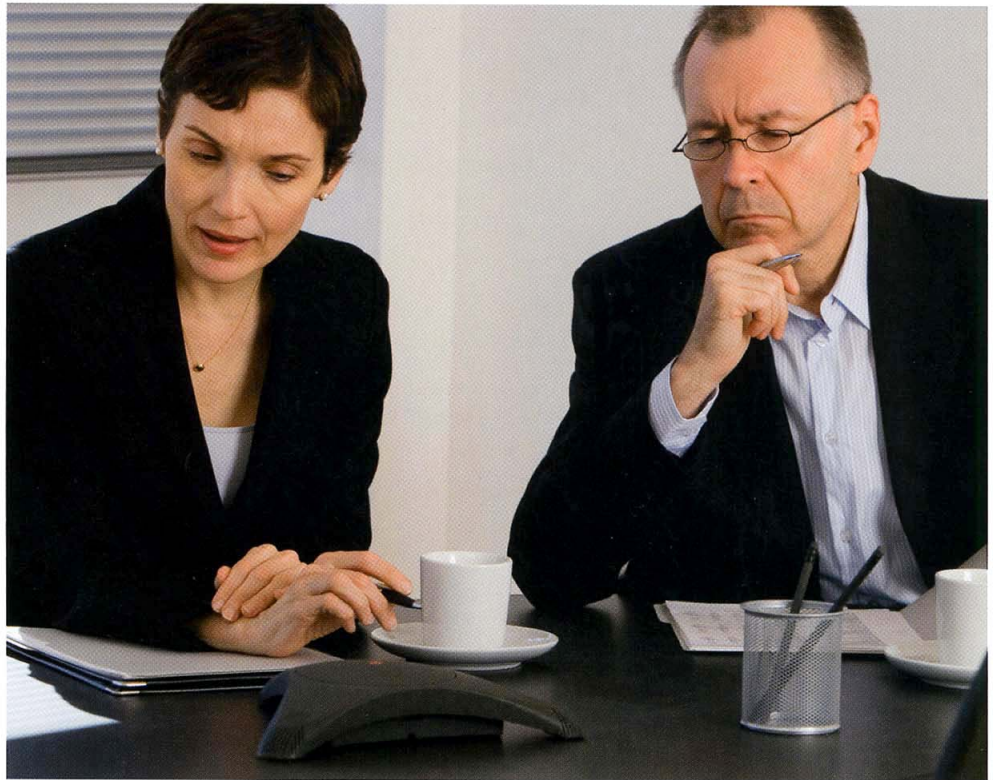
Think about your negotiation style.

- How competitive are you during negotiations? Do you like to start with potentially unrealistic offers / expectations?
- Do you expect confrontation or do you try to avoid it?
- Do you prefer to base your arguments on logic or on emotions? Why?
- Do you think that negotiation style is connected to culture, to personality, or to both? Why? Can you think of some examples?

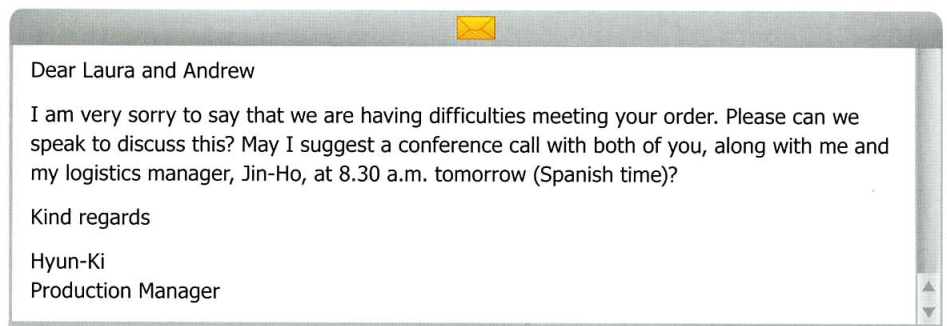
Context

Alanas Pharma Inc. is a cosmetics firm based near Barcelona, Spain. Its products have had a run of poor reviews in women's magazines, and it received some bad publicity in Germany and the Netherlands over its animal testing policies. It hopes to reverse this negative perception with its new range of skin creams – all organic and hypo-allergenic. The plan is to launch the range at an international cosmetics exhibition in Berlin in two months' time. The company has outsourced production to a factory in South Korea and is expecting the first batch of stock to be shipped to Berlin in time for the launch.

Negotiating | Reaching agreement



- 1 This email arrived last night from South Korea. What is the problem? What issues might this problem cause for the marketing managers, Laura and Andrew?



- 2 **65▶** Listen to the first part of the conference call. Work with a partner and discuss questions 1–3.
 - 1 What exactly is the problem at the factory?
 - 2 Who is more sympathetic about the problem, Laura or Andrew?
 - 3 What could happen to Alanas Pharma Inc. if the problem is not resolved?
- 3 Put phrases a–g from the first part of the conference call into these categories.
 - 1 Refusing to change plans: _____
 - 2 Accepting the need to change plans: _____
 - 3 Describing the current position: _____

a ... we are in a very difficult situation.
b ... let's try to find a way round this.
c ... this is beyond our control.
d I'm afraid it is just not possible.
e We are stuck with this situation.
f I have to say no to ...
g ... we have reached the point where we ...



3 Match 1–8 to a–h, so that each sentence completes a verb phrase used in the statements in 2.

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| 1 We always conduct | a sensitive to the needs of the communities we work with. |
| 2 We have | b our customers, colleagues, and suppliers. |
| 3 We work | c achieve the highest quality in everything we do. |
| 4 We are committed to | d cohesively with all our partners and colleagues. |
| 5 We hold ourselves | e our business with fairness and honesty. |
| 6 We strive to | f accountable to all our stakeholders. |
| 7 We pride ourselves | g a passion for innovation. |
| 8 We continue to be | h on our achievements in this field. |

4 Work with a partner. Look again at the values in the statements in 2. Discuss whether your company also has these values.

5 Work with a partner. Produce a values statement for a company from 1 or for another well-known organization. When you are happy with it, read it out and see if the rest of the group can guess the organization.

6 64▶ Listen to this discussion about a study of global attitudes to American brands and cultural values by the market research company NOP World and answer questions 1–3.

- 1 According to the study, why have global attitudes to America changed in recent years?
- 2 What does Carla say has been the effect on certain American brands?
- 3 What arguments does Doug make which challenge the results of the study?

7 Match these adverb + adjective combinations from the discussion to the statement that is closest in meaning.

potentially disastrous profoundly worrying relatively stable
appreciably more hostile unexpectedly rapid irretrievably damaging
significantly different increasingly difficult

- 1 'It's going to get harder and harder.' _____
- 2 'Compared to earlier, the price hasn't changed much.' _____
- 3 'The variation between them is noticeable.' _____
- 4 'We didn't think it would change that quickly.' _____
- 5 'It could be a major problem and we can't ignore it.' _____
- 6 'I've noticed recently that they seem quite negative towards us.' _____
- 7 'We're really concerned about this problem.' _____
- 8 'We won't be able to reverse the effects of this.' _____

8 Look at your answers in 7 again. Could you replace any of the adverbs with noticeably, comparatively, considerably, or surprisingly and keep the same meaning?

▶▶ For more practice go to Practice file 11 on page 122.

9 Work with a partner. Student A, turn to File 46 on page 146. Student B, turn to File 09 on page 137. Then follow steps 1–2.

- 1 Read the text and prepare to tell your partner about it.
- 2 Explain the situation to your partner – highlight the key problems, and say what it will mean for the company. Use these phrases if you wish.

This is ... It has been ... It's going to be ... The situation is ... The customers are ...

10 Work with a partner. Prepare a short statement about your company's values for a group of new employees. Include an explanation of why these values are important.

11

Values

Learning objectives in this unit

- Talking about values
- Reaching an agreement
- Using inversion for emphasis
- Raising a difficult point

Case study

- Developing ethically-responsible policies

Starting point

- 1 How would you define the term 'values'?
- 2 How important is it for a company to have values?
- 3 Would a company's values influence your decision to be an employee or a customer of that company?

Working with words | Talking about values

- 1 Look at these pictures of some global brands and discuss questions 1–2.



- 1 Which countries do they originate from?
- 2 Do you associate positive, negative, or neutral values with these brands? Why?

2 Read these values statements from two different companies.

- 1 Can you tell which of the companies in 1 they match? Why do you think so? Turn to File 45, page 146 for the answers.
- 2 What similarities or differences can you find between the two statements?
- 3 What do you think each company's statement says about the values of the culture it originates from?

Our values

We value integrity, honesty, openness, personal excellence, constructive self-criticism, continual self-improvement, and mutual respect. We are committed to our customers and partners and have a passion for technology. We take on big challenges, and pride ourselves on seeing them through. We hold ourselves accountable to our customers, shareholders, partners, and employees by honoring our commitments, providing results, and striving for the highest quality.

The five core values underpinning the way we do business are:

Integrity We must conduct our business fairly, with honesty and transparency. Everything we do must stand the test of public scrutiny.

Understanding We must be caring and show respect and compassion for our colleagues and customers around the world, and always work for the benefit of our country.

Excellence We must constantly strive to achieve the highest possible standards in our day-to-day work and in the quality of the goods and services we provide.

Unity We must work cohesively with our colleagues across the group and with our customers and partners around the world, building strong relationships based on tolerance, understanding, and mutual cooperation.

Responsibility We must continue to be responsible and sensitive to the countries, communities, and environments in which we work, always ensuring that what comes from the people goes back to the people many times over.

- 2 In zero, first, and second conditionals, we can use *unless* to mean 'except if' or 'if not'.

Unless we keep our contract with Zimierz, we'll be without a Polish partner company.

- 3 Participles such as *providing*, *provided*, *assuming*, and *supposing*, and phrases such as *on the condition that* and *as long as*, can also replace *if*.

Providing the building goes well, our new offices will be ready in May 2012.

As long as the pound stays strong, our projections will be realistic.

Unit 10 | The passive

Forms

- 1 In all tenses (simple, continuous, or perfect) we form the passive with *be* in the appropriate tense + past participle.

Mistakes were being made. (past continuous)

Eight applications have been received. (present perfect)

- 2 Passive modals are also possible in simple, continuous, or perfect forms.

Forms may be filled in with black ink, or typed.

The computer network must be being updated – I can't access it.

Your timesheet should have been received by now.

Semi-modals (e.g. *have to*, *be going to*) follow the same rules.

You're going to be offered a position in the Frankfurt office.

- 3 A passive infinitive is *to be* + past participle. A passive perfect infinitive is *to have been* + past participle.

I'm delighted to be offered the post, but unfortunately I must decline.

I'm delighted to have been offered the post, but unfortunately I must decline.

- 4 A passive *-ing* form is *being* + past participle. A passive perfect *-ing* form is *having been* + past participle.

Being asked to leave the company wasn't pleasant.

Having been offered three options, Jim chose the cheapest.

- 5 The object of an active sentence becomes the subject of a passive sentence. If a verb has two objects, either object can become the subject.

Someone at the door gave us a handout.

We were given a handout.

A handout was given to us.

Verbs that do not take an object (e.g. *go*, *come*, *fall*) cannot be made passive.

Profits fell last year. (Not: Profits were fallen last year.)

Use

- 1 We use the passive to focus attention on the action mentioned, or on the object of the action (the person or thing affected by it). We do not know who does the action, or it isn't important.

The office has been redecorated. It looks so much better than before!

- 2 Using the passive helps create an impersonal style. This is often appropriate in formal English, for example in business letters and reports, where a personal style would not be appropriate.

Results for the first quarter were published on 6 April, and were strong.

- 3 The passive is a useful way of adding distance between an action and those doing it, for example, when giving people bad news.

Regrettably, redundancies will have to be made. Some of those sitting here will be affected. (Compare: I'll have to make redundancies. It will affect some of you.)

- 4 In discourse, we often choose to use the passive if it provides a better link with the sentence before. In these cases, we can say who does the action using *by*.

We asked for ways to improve customer relations. Making changes to our complaints procedure was suggested by several respondents.

Passive reporting

- 1 We use the passive with reporting verbs when we don't know, or would prefer not to say, whose words we are reporting – for example, if their identity is confidential or sensitive.

I've been asked to write you a reference.

- 2 In the active sentence below, *Carol* is an indirect object.

Jim told Carol the likely result of the restructuring.

The indirect object becomes the subject of a passive sentence.

Carol was told the likely result of the restructuring.

Some reporting verbs do not take an indirect object, so cannot form passives in this way. These include: *agree*, *allege*, *announce*, *argue*, *claim*, *decide*, *predict*, *report*, *say*, *state*, and *suggest*. Instead, we use them in a structure with an empty subject: *it + be + past participle + that*.

It was alleged that you stole money from the company.

Unit 11 | Inversion

Questions

The most common uses of inversion word order are in questions and short answers.

- 1 In inversion word order, the auxiliary comes before the subject.

Have you got any paperclips? ~ No. ~ Neither have I.

- 2 *Do / does* is used as an auxiliary with simple-tense verbs.

Does Chris like the new receptionist?

- 3 Ordinary verbs *be* and *have* and modal auxiliaries do not require *do*.

Was I the best candidate?

Can you help us?

As well as in questions, inversion is used in a variety of structures, often rather formally.

Negative expressions

- 1 Inversion is used after the negative words *neither* and *nor*, and after phrases with *not* and *no*.

In no way do I accept their conclusions. Neither do I think the report should be circulated.

Not without careful thought am I writing this letter. Nor is it without having consulted several of my closest associates.

- 2 We also use inversion after adverbs such as *seldom*, *rarely*, *scarcely*, *hardly* (*ever*), *little* that restrict the meaning / reference of the verb that follows.

Rarely have I been to such a well-organized product launch.

Little did we know that she had accepted a position with our rivals.

Only

When *only* is used with time expressions or prepositional phrases, the verb that follows is inverted.

No, I'm sorry. I don't see what you're getting at.
I'm not sure I agree with you.
I'd like a second opinion on this, if you don't mind.

6 | Using vague language

Something about ..., I think!
... you've put me on the spot there.
I'm not quite sure now.
I seem to remember ...
... something like that, in any case.
I'm sure I would have done.
I'm trying to think ...
I'd say you're on the right track.
... it's the kind of thing ...
It just needs a bit more ...
You know, ... and so on.
Something along those lines ...
Yes, ... something like that.
No, not really.
It's difficult to explain, really ...
It almost had a hint of ...
It was kind of ...
... you know, that sort of thing.
... a bit like that, but not quite as ...
It was a bit ... oh, I don't know.

7 | Expressing dissatisfaction

I have to admit, I'm not getting much out of it.
It's doing my head in!
It's really testing my patience.
I think I've reached my limit.
It hasn't lived up to expectations so far.
I have to say, I was expecting something a bit more ...
It's just not up to scratch.
To be frank, I'm not very happy with ...
I can't really see the the point of ... -ing.
To be honest, I'm finding it a bit frustrating that ...
I just don't think this is the best use of my time.
This is ridiculous.
This is just not good enough.

8 | Dealing with difficult questions

Admitting ignorance

I'm afraid I don't know any more than you do.
Sorry, I don't know what you mean.
I'm afraid I'm not up to speed on ...

Refusing to answer

I'm sorry, but I can't answer that.
I would prefer not to talk about it.
I'm afraid I can't disclose that information – it's confidential.

Avoiding the question

Well, it's not that straightforward.
It's hard to say at the moment.
I can't really comment.

Distancing yourself from the question

I'm afraid I'm really not in a position to talk about that.
It's not for me to say.
It's nothing to do with me.

9 | Dealing with misunderstandings

Saying you haven't understood

I don't know what you're talking about.
What do you mean?
I don't get it.

Responding to a misunderstanding

I didn't mean that.
Sorry if I didn't make that clear.
No, you've got it wrong.
I was thinking more along the lines of ...
That's not really what I meant – what I actually wanted to say was ...
What I meant was ...
Can I put this straight?
It may seem ..., but actually ...
No, that's not right.
No, that's not exactly what I'm saying.

10 | Expressing personal views

Encouraging someone to express personal views

So what did you think of ...?
Such as?
You're not in favour of ..., then?
I was interested in what you said earlier about ...
What did you like about it in particular?
It must have been ...?
How does it feel to ...?
You were saying earlier that ...
I heard ...
What do you mean?
So ...?
What are your thoughts on ...?
I'd like to know what you think about it.

Expressing personal views

To be honest with you, ...
Personally speaking, ...
I have to say ...
To tell you the truth, ...
To be perfectly honest, ...
Honestly?
Personally, I think ...
I look at it like this: ...
My attitude is ...

11 | Raising a difficult point

I don't mean to sound rude, but ...
This is a bit delicate.
Please don't take offence.
Please don't take this the wrong way.
You see, the thing is, ...
I'm not quite sure how to put this.
With respect, ...
I have to say that ...
The fact is, ...
Don't be offended, but ...
I'm sorry to have to say this, but ...

12 | Giving and responding to compliments

Complimenting

That was great.
A very worthwhile meeting / discussion.
You're looking well.
I like your ...
I thoroughly enjoyed that.
It was very interesting.
Great design.
I love ...
Well done, you did a great job.
You have very nice ...
That was brilliant.
I saw your ... and I thought it was excellent.

Responding

Thanks.
Thank you. I felt it went well.
Thanks for the feedback.
I don't know how you can say that, but thanks anyway.
I was hoping it'd be well received.
Glad you enjoyed it.
I'm glad you liked it.

File 01 | Unit 1

Business communication skills, Exercise 4, page 9

Student B

Contrary to expectations, this country is being surprisingly slow to awaken investors' interest. The cost of production in this country is lower than in a lot of other European states, and the number of skilled workers is high and constantly improving. The infrastructure is adequate to deal with the predicted volume of traffic, but if some serious action is not taken soon in terms of offering incentives for investment, then the potential will not be met.

File 02 | Unit 1

Business communication skills, Exercise 9, page 9

- 1 You have just returned from a market research trip overseas. Report back to your team on
 - what you learnt about the local market
 - how well the market is doing generally
 - how your new product line is being received
 - the presence of the competition.
- 2 You are behind schedule on a project. Your boss has just called you into his / her office. Fill him / her in on
 - the status quo (current situation)
 - the reasons for the delay
 - how you are going to catch up in the future
 - whose fault the delay is.
- 3 You work for a football club. You have just been to a press conference where it was announced that the coach is resigning. Report back to the team on
 - his motives
 - his plans for the future
 - his experience of working at the club
 - some negative comments about some of the players
 - where the football club goes from here (what you intend to do about finding a new coach).

File 03 | Unit 11

Business communication skills, Exercise 9, page 89

Student B
Manager

You are Student A's line manager. You have a very close-knit team and you feel that it is important for team spirit and for productivity to have regular chats and face-to-face updates. You also feel it is essential for this team spirit that everyone on the team is treated the same.

Student A has a request. Discuss the possibilities of this request. State your position, try to negotiate some terms with A, and come to an agreement.

File 04 | Unit 1

Case study, Task, Exercise 2, page 13

Group B

Edinburgh, UK

- 'Buzzing' cultural city attracting a large number of tourists all year round, and particularly in August for the Edinburgh festival.
- Wide variety of food-related venues / styles, e.g. fabulous seafood, cafés, tea rooms, quality restaurants, pubs.
- Clients are usually well entertained by their Edinburgh hosts, taken out for lunch in a restaurant or pub, or to a restaurant in the evening.
- Language: English is the first language spoken by most Scottish people.
- Economy is focused on the service sector, especially tourism, financial services, and banking.
- Very compact city, making it easy to get around on foot.
- Some established competition, e.g. historic taverns or ghost walking tours and visits to the farmers' market, but most Scottish food-related tours seemed to be focused on castles in the Highlands.

File 05 | Unit 10

Case study, Task, Exercise 2, page 85

Students C and D

Issue 2: The cost of production facilities and salaries

The rent for the production facilities is much more expensive than in other parts of the country. The facilities are also ageing and run down, and staff are not happy about their working conditions. Salaries are also relatively high.

You have to cut costs and you have two options with approximately the same cost-saving benefits. Decide which option to take.

- move to more modern production facilities in Wales – the rent will be cheaper and the cost of living is lower, so salary expectations of staff will also be lower
- modernize the current facilities and cut the number of employees by making some people redundant

When preparing your briefing, be aware that this decision will not be popular with the staff because they will either have to move and take a pay cut, or face the possibility of losing their job.

File 06 | Unit 2

Business communication skills, Exercise 9, page 17

Student B

Item 1

- limit employees to one coffee a day
- increase price of coffee
- other ideas?

Item 2

- issue everyone with a company mobile
- hold a daily team meeting first thing in the morning
- other ideas?

Item 3

- set up closely-monitored e-learning programmes
- allocate x number of hours for study in working time
- other ideas?

Item 4

- pay employees a bonus for keeping days absent to a minimum
- allow employees greater flexibility so they can work from home if they choose
- other ideas?

File 07 | Unit 8

Business communication skills, Exercise 6, page 65

Context: You are researching customer reactions to your new product.

- You don't have as much quantifiable data as you'd originally planned, but will submit the final report by the agreed deadline.
- You are making good progress, but can't give exact figures now – still processing the feedback.
- You need to wait for more questionnaires to come back before finishing the report.

Key points you intend to cover

- give an overview of responses to the product so far
- explain some of the difficulties involved
- talk about 'effective questionnaires'

File 08 | Unit 2

Practically speaking, Exercise 4, page 19

Student A

Monthly reports

You would like everybody's report to be handed in one week earlier than originally planned.

Sales figures

Official figures have not yet been released, but you believe your group did particularly well.

File 09 | Unit 11

Working with words, Exercise 9, page 87

Student B

Company Y fact file

- makes laptop and desktop computers for home and business use
- is highly successful, with a reputation for quality and reliability
- advertises its laptops as robust enough to be taken anywhere, using the slogan 'Ready to go whenever you are'

Company Y laptops a health hazard!

A laptop fire on an intercontinental flight caused panic amongst passengers. Fortunately, the cabin crew were able to extinguish the fire, but it's still unclear why this happened. This isn't the first time that a laptop from Company Y has caught fire. There have been several other reports of laptops exploding or bursting into flames without warning. One destroyed a truck in America, while another caused a huge fire in a family home in Britain. As a result of the latest incident, several airlines have now banned passengers from travelling with laptops made by Company Y. According to the company, the fault lies with the batteries, which are made and supplied by another company.

Company Y's situation following the news article

- Company Y issued a statement publicly blaming their supplier for the problem.
- Despite the statement, sales of their laptops are falling, and an increasing number of corporate customers are cancelling their contracts.
- To limit the damage, the directors have agreed to replace any laptops that have been destroyed, and have recalled all recently sold laptops for free battery replacement.

File 42 | Unit 10

Working with words, Exercise 4, page 79

Team leader A					
Please evaluate the following:					
	(1 = excellent, 5 = poor)				
	1	2	3	4	5
Ability to achieve results	✓				
Commitment to the project	✓				
Honesty and openness			✓		
Ability to make decisions	✓				
Willingness to consult team about decisions					✓
Flexibility in dealing with change				✓	
Communication with team				✓	
Understanding of team's needs and concerns					✓
Allowing team to do their work unsupervised		✓			
Self-awareness					✓

Team leader B					
Please evaluate the following:					
	(1 = excellent, 5 = poor)				
	1	2	3	4	5
Ability to achieve results	✓				
Commitment to the project	✓				
Honesty and openness	✓				
Ability to make decisions			✓		
Willingness to consult team about decisions	✓				
Flexibility in dealing with change		✓			
Communication with team	✓				
Understanding of team's needs and concerns	✓				
Allowing team to do their work unsupervised		✓			
Self-awareness		✓			

File 43 | Unit 10

Case study, Task, Exercise 2, page 85

Students A and B

Issue 1: The cost of cocoa beans

The company currently uses Criollo cocoa beans because they are known to be the best quality bean. However, they are also the most expensive bean.

The chocolate made by the company always has a high percentage of cocoa solids in it, at least 70%; some items have 85%.

You have to cut costs and you have two options with approximately the same cost-saving benefits. Decide which option to take.

- choose to use a cheaper, lower-quality bean
- reduce the cocoa content in the chocolate

When preparing your briefing, be aware that this decision will not be popular with the product managers and marketing managers because they have invested a lot of hard work in building up the company's brand image based on the quality of the products.

File 44 | Unit 5

Case study, Task, Exercise 2, page 45

Student B

Outlet manager

You've been at the company since it began. You started work as a server and moved up to a management position. You've been chosen to represent all outlet managers at this meeting. The main objective for outlet managers is to improve team spirit and prevent more staff from leaving.

Your suggestions

- Re-establish the 'all-for-one' principle – reduce the amount of paperwork that outlet managers are expected to do so that there is more time to work alongside staff.
- Give servers the opportunity to take part in training courses to improve their skills and allow them to move up in the company.

Ideas that you do not support

- You do not support any change in the company's organizational structure. You see the original structure as one of the company's strengths.
- You do not think that servers should have influence over what sandwiches should be sold. These decisions should be based on customer feedback and sales figures.

File 45 | Unit 11

Working with words, Exercise 2, page 86

Statement 1 = Microsoft

Statement 2 = Tata

File 46 | Unit 11

Working with words, Exercise 9, page 87

Student A

Company X fact file

- produces coffee, chocolate, and related food and drink products
- sources cocoa and coffee beans from a variety of producers in different parts of the world
- has used the Fairtrade label on a small number of its key products, suggesting that it treats its suppliers well and pays a fair price for the goods it buys

Company X in Fairtrade scandal!

Company X has used the Fairtrade labelling in a bid to enhance its reputation, and has seen sales and profits on many of its non-Fairtrade products soar as a result. But is this about to change? An independent report has revealed that Company X does not abide by the terms of the Fairtrade agreement for most of its products, and actually puts pressure on producers to accept lower prices, driving many growers into poverty.

Company X's situation following the news article

- Company directors moved quickly to limit the damage – they issued a press statement playing down the situation.
- Despite the press statement, the share price has fallen very quickly, and sales figures for most key products are much lower than expected.
- Customer surveys suggest the company is no longer trusted.

File 47 | Unit 7

Language at work, Exercise 6, page 58

Discuss what the speaker could say in situations 1–5.

Example: I was going to bring a sample of our new product, but unfortunately I haven't brought it with me today.

Past	Present
1 I intend to take a sample of the new product to the meeting.	I'm at the meeting. I have forgotten the sample of the new product.
2 I have to give a presentation at the conference in Moscow next week.	My boss has asked me to cancel all other arrangements and go to New York for a meeting next week.
3 We think we will make a profit this year.	Our products haven't sold as well as expected.
4 We're aiming to get a 10% discount on all orders over €20,000 during the negotiation.	They are telling us that they can't offer more than an 8% discount on any order.
5 I'm having lunch with Maria tomorrow.	Maria has cancelled our lunch appointment because she's too busy.

File 48 | Unit 12

Case study, Task, Exercise 1, page 101

Student C

Doing business in Brazil

- Remember that relationships are one of the most important elements in Brazilian business culture.
- Cultivate close personal relationships and build trust – you will then have a greater chance of successfully doing business in Brazil.
- Be aware that great importance is placed on the family in Brazil. This means that you will often find a number of family members working for the same company.
- It is common practice in Brazil to hire a *despechante*, or middleman, to help you in your business dealings. A *despechante* will help you navigate Brazilian bureaucracy for a nominal fee.
- DON'T rush business dealings with your Brazilian colleagues and avoid pressing for final decisions.
- Allow time for socializing before and during meetings – this is an important part of the relationship-building process.
- DON'T publicly criticize your Brazilian counterparts. If you need to tell them something negative, do so in private so they do not lose face in front of others.

File 49 | Unit 5

Business communication skills, Exercise 10, page 41

Student C

Situation 1

You are working on a project with very tight deadlines. Student A is expecting a piece of work from Student B tomorrow. Student B is unable to meet the deadline. Help them to discuss the issue, and to reach the best solution for all concerned.

Situation 2

You share an office with Student A and Student B. The office has to be manned constantly so you can't go out at the same time, even for a few minutes. Think of a very important reason which means you have to be somewhere else at 3.00 p.m. tomorrow. Student B will be on annual leave. Talk to Student A and see if she / he can look after the office for you while you are away from your desk.

Situation 3

You work in a team with Student A and Student B. You are very dissatisfied with some work that Student B has just carried out. It's true, she / he followed your instructions, but the quality is very poor and the work seems rushed. You don't want to accept the work, and you would like her / him to do it again.

File 50 | Unit 11

Business communication skills, Exercise 9, page 89

Student A

Employee

You are extremely busy at work and you have an hour's commute every day. You want to start working from home in order to save commuting time and avoid unnecessary interruptions at work. You have an office space at home and an Internet connection, so you feel that your work would not suffer at all from this change and you might even become more productive.

Student B is your line manager. Explain what you want and discuss the possibilities of this arrangement. State your position, try to negotiate some terms with B, and come to an agreement.

File 51 | Unit 5

Case study, Task, Exercise 2, page 45

Student D

Head Office representative

You have been asked to chair the negotiation. You should do the following during the meeting.

- Invite each person to make their suggestions.
- Check that you have understood each suggestion.
- Ask the other participants for their opinions.
- Keep the discussion on track.
- Ask the participants to compromise and agree on at least two suggestions that you can take to Head Office.

File 52 | Unit 11

Case study, Task, Exercise 2, page 93

Students C and D

What we would recommend

- Carbon emission reduction, rather than offsetting. It tends to be more popular with investors and customers.
- For a reduction programme suggest: paper-free bills, conference calls to replace some international travel, hybrid company cars to replace standard cars.
- A policy to educate customers as part of the reduction programme is recommended. Previous clients asked customers to charge phones only when the battery has run down and to unplug the charger once it has charged.

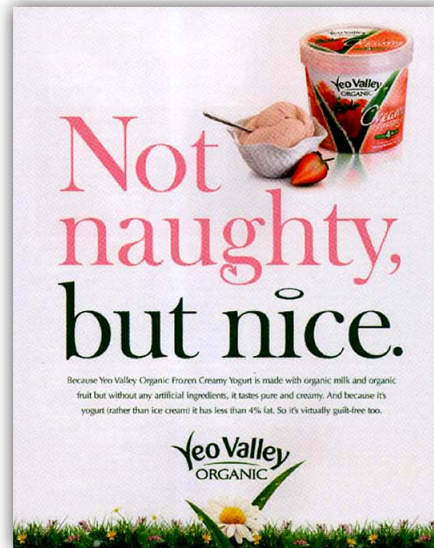
What we wouldn't recommend

- If the company insists on offsetting, investing in forests is not recommended. Studies show that forestry projects are less reliable in offsetting carbon emissions than first thought. This is because trees are vulnerable to a number of problems, e.g. fires. It would be better to invest in renewable energy.

File 53 | Unit 12

Working with words, Exercise 4, page 95

1



2



3

