



9

Resources

Learning objectives in this unit

- Talking about resources
- Discussing options and reaching decisions
- Using conditionals
- Dealing with misunderstandings

Case study

- Starting a CSR project

Starting point

- 1 Think of examples of
 - natural resources
 - company resources.
- 2 In which of the four basic resource areas (financial, human, physical, or intangible) would you find these resource types?
 - production facilities
 - existing staff
 - ability to raise funds
 - existing funds
 - changes to staff
 - goodwill / reputation / brands
 - IT

Working with words | Talking about resources

- 1 Marks and Spencer plc is an international company. What do you know about it? In what ways could it show that it uses both natural resources and company resources in a responsible way? Read the text and compare your ideas.

M&S pledges to manage resources responsibly

1 _____
 Ask anyone in the UK what Marks and Spencer plc stands for and you'll get a range of answers. This is because the company has had to refocus several times in an attempt to retain its **competitive advantage**. In today's business world companies have to accept that **corporate accountability** is now fundamental to company strategy. Businesses now need to ensure that they deploy all resources in a responsible way. M&S has embraced this challenge.



2 _____
 M&S knows that with its staff it commands a huge **knowledge base** that it needs to protect and enhance, therefore it has recognized its responsibility to nurture current employees and to offer employment opportunities to the wider community. As a result, resources have been allocated to various HR projects, including staff secondment to charities, and providing up to 2,600 work experience placements in stores.

to them that Marks and Spencer was a responsible business. By last year that proportion had grown to 97%,¹ proving its customers supported a company with green credentials that would also optimize its use of resources.

3 _____
 Marks and Spencer also listened to its customers, something it has an excellent **track record** for, and ensured its resources were being maximized by creating a new, all-embracing Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programme. It realized that one **critical success factor** for CSR was transparency, so it set out to consult customers about the issue of social responsibility. It became clear that public awareness of the **sustainability of resources** was on the increase. Mike Barry, head of CSR explains, 'Four years ago 50% of customers said it mattered

4 _____
 Marks and Spencer plc responded by pledging to introduce a range of changes. It began by analysing the utilization of existing resources with the intention of running a greener business. Some small-scale changes include recycling coat hangers, discouraging the use of plastic bags, and allowing its own-brand chickens more room to roam.

5 _____
 Cynics might say that such well-publicized HR and CSR projects are simply a way to enhance the company's image. There's no doubt these projects allow Marks and Spencer to publicly demonstrate how both company and natural resources are being put to good use, rather than being squandered or mismanaged. However, it's also clear that many areas of society can benefit.

2 Match these headings with paragraphs 1–5.

- Respecting customer opinion
- Just a PR tool?
- Becoming a more responsible company
- Responsibility and business
- Being a responsible employer

3 Match the noun phrases in bold in the text to definitions 1–6.

- 1 a company’s obligation to justify its actions to its stakeholders, customers, and society
- 2 the skills and expertise of a company’s employees
- 3 the efficient use of materials and energy in a way that minimizes harm to the environment
- 4 the benchmark which measures how well a project / strategy has been implemented and is running
- 5 how well a company / person has achieved something over a number of years
- 6 something that helps a company be more successful than other companies in the same market

4 Find eight verbs in the text in 1 that collocate with *resources*.

5 Put the verbs you noted in 4 into categories 1–3 based on their meaning.

- 1 get the best out of resources 2 waste resources 3 do something with resources

6 52▶ Listen to three people talking about CSR and answer questions 1–3.

- 1 What’s the first person’s argument against CSR projects?
- 2 What’s the second person’s argument for CSR?
- 3 What’s required of a CSR partner with the third person’s company, and why?

7 Work with a partner. Complete sentences 1–9 with these words and phrases.

*short-term profit drain on resources return on investment bottom line
assets market value quantifiable data cost-benefit analysis long-term viability*

- 1 To find out if the project’s worth doing we need a ...
- 2 This project is costing us far too much; it’s a real ...
- 3 We’ll have to do some forward projections to check the project’s ...
- 4 Before I commit a lot of money to the project I need to be sure of a good ...
- 5 We need to be sure that our projected figures are based on ...
- 6 Our highly-skilled workforce is one of our key ...
- 7 Rather than future stability, the company’s strategy is all about ...
- 8 Our reputation as a responsible employer has enhanced the company’s ...
- 9 The shareholders were disappointed because the drop in sales had an impact on our ...

»» For more exercises, go to **Practice file 9** on page 118.

8 Work with a partner. Using vocabulary from 3 and 7, discuss the pros and cons of investing in projects 1–4 for

- the current employees
- the customers
- the shareholders.

Projects

- 1 Invest in extensive IT and skills-based training programmes for all members of staff, and include residential team-building weekends for managers.
- 2 Offer work to asylum seekers in the local area: train them and provide them with free language lessons to enable them to work effectively.
- 3 Invest in a project to protect the environment – encourage staff to leave their cars at home and install solar panels on the roof of office buildings.
- 4 Relocate the customer services department to a developing country. Pay the staff in that country a higher salary in comparison with other companies.

9 Would your company invest in any of the projects in 8? What projects does your company currently have? What new projects would you suggest, and why?

Context

Floralope is located in Hungary and manufactures seed packets for companies in neighbouring countries. Floralope is part-owned by a Dutch company, so any major decisions have to be discussed with them. Recently, Floralope has found it hard to keep up with its competitors, due to outdated systems and a more demanding customer base. Investing in a new IT system would help keep existing customers and could enable expansion. The question is whether this is a wise investment and if long-term expansion is the right strategy. Zoltan and Judit from the Hungarian company, and Margit from the Dutch parent company, meet to discuss the situation.

Meetings | Discussing options and reaching decisions



- 1** How might the company's current resources affect the decision to expand and invest in a new IT system?
- 2** 53–56▶ Listen to four extracts from the meeting. Check your ideas in **1** and answer questions 1–2.
 - 1 What type of company resources were discussed?
 - 2 Which resources are problematic?
- 3** 53–56▶ Listen to the four extracts again and answer questions 1–2.
 - 1 Who takes a positive lead in the meeting? How do you know?
 - 2 Who seems quite negative throughout? How do you know?
- 4** Put the phrases in **bold** in sentences a–l into these categories.
 - 1 Summarizing / bringing the meeting to an end: _____
 - 2 Talking about the future of the company as a whole: _____
 - 3 Discussing options: _____
 - a So, **looking at the situation from a long-term perspective**, if the IT system is updated, you'll be more efficient in terms of your customer admin ...
 - b **We need to develop a clear strategy to move the business forward.**
 - c **Well, we have a number of options.**
 - d OK, that's all very positive, but **I think we need to look at the bigger picture.**
 - e **I think our options are quite clear here.**
 - f **How would it work if you took on some younger people?**
 - g And we're in a great location, so I think **we're in a really strong position** to find new staff.
 - h **Basically we don't have much choice** for a long-term plan like this – we can either provide training for everyone, which will be a substantial investment, **or we accept that it's totally unfeasible.**
 - i **We have to bear in mind the long-term viability** of a commitment like this.
 - j **So the general consensus is that long-term we have the human resources** for the strategy.
 - k **Are there any other points to consider?**
 - l **Right, so we're decided.**

5 Look at phrases 1–6 from the meeting and answer questions a–d.

- 1 Yes, but we do have some employees who've worked on SAP-type systems in previous jobs.
 - 2 I mean, there's no point in investing in a system upgrade if we don't have the space, the personnel, or the finances to carry it through.
 - 3 Provided we check out the feasibility of these options thoroughly, I'm convinced we can find a system upgrade that will work for us.
 - 4 I'm not sure that would work.
 - 5 Realistically, would we be able to finance this strategy?
 - 6 Assuming we decided to commit to the full amount, we could also look at ways to save money in other areas.
- a Why is *do* used in phrase 1?
 - b Are phrases 2–6 used for *deciding not to follow an option* or for *evaluating an option*?
 - c Which phrases from 2–6 focus on positive results?
 - d Which phrases from 2–6 focus on negative results?

» For more exercises, go to **Practice file 9** on page 118.

6 Margit discussed the strategy proposed by Floralope with a senior manager at the Dutch parent company. Some ideas were rejected and alternative suggestions were made. Work in groups of four. Students A and B, turn to File 38 on page 145. Students C and D turn to File 19 on page 140.**Agenda****Impact of new IT system**

- 1 Human resources – training and staff issues?
- 2 Financial resources – how will the IT system and training be funded?
- 3 Timescale – when will the new system be introduced?

Follow the agenda and hold a meeting to discuss the alternative suggestions. Try to reach a decision.

7 Work with a partner. Discuss projects 1–6 in relation to your company and answer questions a–c.

- 1 new computer system
 - 2 new building / relocating
 - 3 new product / service
 - 4 refurbished offices
 - 5 increase in staff numbers
 - 6 merger / restructuring
- a Which projects would be appropriate for your company?
 - b What resources would be necessary?
 - c How would the resources be managed?

8 Present your ideas to the rest of the class.

» Interactive Workbook » Email

Key expressions**Setting the context / discussing strategy**

Looking at the situation from a long-term perspective ...
We need to develop a clear strategy to ...
I think we need to look at the bigger picture.
We have to bear in mind the long-term viability ...

Stating / discussing options

We have a number of options.
I think our options are quite clear here.
How would it work if you / we ...?
Basically, we don't have much choice ... We can either ... or we (accept that) ...
We're in a really strong position to ...

Discussing feasibility / evaluating options

There's no point in ... -ing, if we don't / can't ...
Provided we ..., I'm convinced we can ...
I'm not sure that would work.
Realistically, would we be able to finance this strategy?
Assuming we decided to ..., we could also ...

Reaching agreement

So, the general consensus is that ...
Are there any other points to consider?
Right. So we're decided.

» Interactive Workbook
» Phrasebank

Language at work | Using conditionals

1 Look at these extracts from the strategy meeting and underline all the verbs.

- 1 ... if the IT system is updated, you'll be more efficient in terms of your customer admin ...
- 2 Provided we check out the feasibility of these options thoroughly, I'm convinced we can find a system upgrade that will work for us.
- 3 ... there's no point in investing in a system upgrade if we don't have the space, the personnel, or the finances ...
- 4 ... if we'd invested in our production facilities five years ago, ... we would have knocked down the old building and had one purpose-built.
- 5 If we made them our key users, we could gradually train up the rest.
- 6 ... if you'd recruited more young employees at the start, they would have had some IT knowledge from school.
- 7 If we only had a couple of people initially who could use the system, how could they cope with the extra work?
- 8 ... if we hadn't invested in the system, we'd be way behind the competition.
- 9 If we work more efficiently with the customers, our reputation can only improve too.

2 Work with a partner. Look at the conditional sentences in 1. Identify the conditional type (zero, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, mixed) for each sentence.

3 Match the sentences in 1 to these categories. Do you notice any connection with your answers in 2?

- 1 Predicting the results of a decision in the future: _____
- 2 Making a suggestion: _____
- 3 Stating a fact: _____
- 4 Questioning the results of a future situation: _____
- 5 Expressing regret for past inaction: _____
- 6 Talking about the present results of a past action / inaction: _____

»» For more information, go to **Language reference Unit 9** on page 131.

4 Work with a partner. Take turns to discuss these situations. Use conditionals to talk about past, present, or future consequences. See the example.

Example: Last year your company outsourced catering. Now the standard of food in the canteen is lower and the number of employees eating there has fallen by 40%.

→ *If we hadn't outsourced catering, we would still have a good canteen.*

- 1 Your company is making a loss – it needs to cut costs because it is close to bankruptcy.
- 2 The government is considering raising interest rates, but they are concerned about the effects on consumer spending.
- 3 Your department hired a bad manager, Ian. Since his arrival, three people have left.
- 4 You chose the wrong career path. You are now bored and disillusioned with your job.
- 5 Some staff will be relocated to Berlin (it might be you). You have lots of friends there.
- 6 Your annual pay review is coming up. You want to go on holiday to the Caribbean, but you can't afford it at the moment.

»» For more exercises, go to **Practice file 9** on page 119.

5 YP fitness studio is having its yearly review meeting. Work with a partner and turn to File 13 on page 139. Talk about what happened and the future plans.

6 Think about the past year in your company, department, or team. Make notes about what happened and add some suggestions for next year using headings 1–3. Then discuss your notes with a partner.

- 1 Past action / inaction and past results
- 2 Past action / inaction and present results
- 3 Suggestions / predictions for next year plus results

Practically speaking | Dealing with misunderstandings

1 57▶ Listen to five conversations. In which conversation(s) does the person react to the misunderstanding

- 1 in a polite way?
- 2 in a less polite way?



2 57▶ Listen again. In which conversation (1–5) do you hear these phrases?

- a I didn't mean that! ____
- b I don't know what you're talking about. ____
- c Sorry if I didn't make that clear. ____
- d I was thinking more along the lines of ... ____
- e Look, you've got it wrong. ____
- f What do you mean? ____
- g That's not really what I meant. What I actually wanted to say was ... ____
- h What I meant was ... ____
- i ... can I put this straight? ____
- j The amount may seem ..., but actually ... ____
- k No, that's not right. ____
- l No, that's not exactly what I'm saying. ____

3 Work with a partner and answer questions 1–3.

- 1 Which phrases in **2** are direct (*D*) and which are less direct (*L*)?
- 2 Which words and structures are used to make the message less direct?
- 3 When might you want to be less direct and when might you want to be more direct?

4 Change the phrases in 1–5 to make them less direct using words from the list.

exactly actually really sure mean quite

- 1 That's not what I mean, I said ... _____
- 2 I didn't mean that. _____
- 3 What do you mean? _____
- 4 I don't know what you're talking about. _____
- 5 No, that's not right. _____

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

5 Work with a partner. Student A, make suggestions / complaints 1–4 and deal with any misunderstanding. Student B, misunderstand Student A. Change roles and repeat.

- 1 suggest new facilities for staff at your company (e.g. gym, canteen, TV room, etc.)
- 2 suggest an idea for your partner's next holiday
- 3 make a complaint about your partner's work
- 4 suggest a task for your partner to do at work

Key word | look

Match sentences 1–6 to the uses / definitions of *look* a–f.

- 1 Look, you've got this wrong.
- 2 It looks as if Nadine's left the office.
- 3 You look great in that new outfit!
- 4 I have to look for my car keys every morning.
- 5 Could you take a look at this email before I send it?

- a it seems / it is apparent
- b to focus on something, think about it, and give a reaction
- c to describe appearance
- d to indicate you're highlighting something
- e to search



Culture question

- In your own language do you normally use direct or indirect language when informing someone they have misunderstood?
- How would you feel if someone corrected your English during a meeting?
- Would you be more direct in a meeting with native English speakers or with non-native English speakers? Why?

Company profile Michelin

Michelin is one of the oldest tyre manufacturers in the world. As it is involved in what is considered an environmentally damaging industry, Michelin has developed an approach called 'Performance and Responsibility'. This concept allows the company to demonstrate that it is actively taking measures to reduce the industry's negative impact on the environment. It also has various projects throughout the world connected to its CSR programme.

Starting a CSR project

Background

Michelin's 'Green Gold' project

A small rubber project in north-eastern Brazil set up by Michelin has become a flagship for the French tyre giant's corporate social responsibility programme. With five rubber trees needed to produce one truck tyre, Michelin is an obvious target for those who claim that big business is using up natural resources too intensively. Although the company can't change the number of trees needed in the manufacturing process, it has initiated a successful project to offset the effects of its activities.

The Ouro Verde ('Green Gold') project in Bahia state is a 'marvellous human adventure', the late Edouard Michelin said at its inauguration. Having owned a 9,000-hectare site there for 20 years, the French firm considered closing the loss-making plantation and laying off the workers. Instead, it passed ownership to twelve local Michelin managers, who set up a cooperative with the backing of loans underwritten by the parent company. Far from laying off workers, 200 have been hired over the past two years.

Lionel Barré, the plantation director at Michelin, says that the initiative stands as 'an example of sustainable development in a



poor region'. The last two years have seen a burst of activity: the cooperative has planted cocoa next to the rubber trees to diversify its output, recycled some of its revenue into providing facilities for its employees, and replanted parts of the depleted Atlantic rainforest in eastern Brazil, which contains 171 of Brazil's 202 endangered species.

Discussion

- 1 How could the local community benefit from this cooperative?
- 2 How could Michelin benefit from starting this kind of project?
- 3 Could there be any disadvantages for Michelin?
- 4 58► Listen to an interview with a Michelin director and compare your ideas.



Task

1 QP Plastics is a petrochemical company with a long history of manufacturing in Nigeria. The last few years have seen losses, but rather than closing the plant, QP Plastics wants to encourage locals to take it on as part of a CSR project. The company wants to retain a share of the business.

Work in groups. Read the facts and figures about Port Harcourt in Nigeria and discuss what kind of CSR project might benefit this region.

Location	Port Harcourt is located in southern Nigeria and has long been an important merchant port. Today it is at the centre of Nigeria's oil industry. Its exports include petroleum, coal, tin, palm products, cocoa, and groundnuts. Among the industries of the area are timber processing, car manufacturing, food and tobacco processing, and the manufacture of rubber, glass, metal, paper products, cement, petroleum products, paint, enamelware, bicycles, furniture, and soap.
Population	1,320,214
Literacy	57%
Education	two universities and several vocational colleges
Main industry	petroleum, but plastics and textiles are in decline
Property	Costs for industrial rents / office space are high.
Infrastructure	international airport, but the road system is very poor
Utilities (power and water supplies)	poor
Tax incentives	Pioneer companies located in economically disadvantaged areas are given a tax holiday period of five to seven years. Those involved in local raw material development qualify for additional concessions.

2 With reference to the Michelin example, discuss your ideas for a CSR project in Port Harcourt. During your discussion, try to answer questions 1–5.

- 1 Will the government be involved in the project?
- 2 Will you select a group of locals to help you set up the project?
- 3 What do you hope to achieve with the project?
- 4 What improvements can you contribute to the region?
- 5 Can you foresee any problems with the project? If so, how can you avoid them?

3 A cost-benefit analysis will be needed to decide whether the project is feasible. Before this is possible, the project needs to be carefully planned. In your group, make notes on questions 1–2.

- 1 What resources (financial, human, and physical) should be available in order for the project to take place?
- 2 Think about both long-term and short-term strategy – what are the potential consequences of your decisions?

4 Using your notes from 2 and 3, present your CSR project idea to another group. Do they have any further advice?

5 A dramatic turn of events has taken place. Turn to File 41 on page 145 and read the email. In your groups, discuss what you think your company should do. Consider these questions.

- 1 Should you continue with the discussions about the project or should you withdraw?
- 2 What would be the consequences of
 - continuing with the project?
 - closing the plant?

The Expert View

In most parts of the world nowadays, companies are expected to contribute to good causes and community projects. In some places, this might now be considered part of a 'licence to operate' from society. Typically, the approach of companies has evolved from corporate philanthropy to more strategic, corporate community investment. The latter involves businesses supporting activities which maximize benefits to the business as well as to society. Business benefits may be building people (improving staff morale and skills) or building markets and reputation (increasing sales by linking the company with a social cause). Being a responsible business does not mean avoiding tough decisions (e.g. closing factories), but it does involve seeking ways to minimize any negative environmental and social impacts of these decisions.

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



Case study

- 2 Note that it is possible to have a positive tag after a positive statement, to express a reaction to something you have just heard, for example.

And you're happy with that decision, are you?

Functions of questions

Beyond asking for information, questions can have a range of functions. We can use them

- 1 to check that the audience is following / understands
It's not, is it, a question of threats, but of opportunities, do you see?
- 2 to set up / introduce a subject which you then explain
What are our objectives for the coming year? Well, first of all, we hope to ...
- 3 to give yourself time to think, or to give the audience a pause in concentration
And then, erm, how can I put this? Well, we have decided that ...
- 4 to challenge what someone has said
And you really believe that these measures will have an effect, do you?
~ Well, they should certainly help relieve the pressure in the short term.
- 5 to lead someone towards a specific point of view
That may not be a good thing, surely?
Don't you agree that it's better to wait?

Unit 9 | Conditionals

Form

These are the main conditional forms.

Type	Situation	Result
zero	<i>If + present</i> <i>If you hand in work late,</i>	present <i>you make a bad impression.</i>
first	<i>If + present</i> <i>If we lose the contract,</i>	<i>will + infinitive</i> <i>we'll be in trouble.</i>
second	<i>If + past tense</i> <i>If we lost the contract,</i>	<i>would + infinitive</i> <i>my job would be on the line.</i>
third	<i>If + past perfect</i> <i>If we'd got the contract,</i>	<i>would have + infinitive</i> <i>we would have made a lot of money.</i>

Zero conditionals

- 1 Use zero conditionals when the relationship between the situation and result is always true or always the same; there is no element of chance or doubt.
If we hit our targets, we get a bonus.
- 2 We can also use two past tenses, to talk about something that always used to be true.
We got time off in lieu if we worked weekends.
- 3 Informally, we can use this structure where a first conditional would be more appropriate in a formal situation.
If we lose the contract, we're in trouble.

First conditional

- 1 Use the first conditional when a situation is very likely to have the result given.
If you arrive late, you'll miss the first part of the meeting.
- 2 The present continuous and present perfect are possible in the *if*-clause.
If Jenny's working on this project, she'll learn a lot of useful stuff.
If Amit's broken his leg, you'll have to give the presentation.
- 3 Other modal expressions such as *can*, *may*, *be going to* are possible in the result clause.
If we don't gain market share, we may be in a sticky situation.
I'm going to change distributors if Kikibo don't get their act together.

Second conditional

- 1 Use the second conditional when a situation is hypothetical or imagined.
If taxes rose, we would consider relocating.
- 2 The second conditional is also useful to make suggestions, offers, warnings, etc. more distant and polite.
If you arrived at meetings on time, we'd get much more done.
- 3 *Might* and *could* are also possible in the result clause.
We could save hundreds of hours if we adopted the new system.

Mixed conditionals

- 1 It is possible to use the *if*-clause of a second conditional (*if* + past simple) with the result clause of a third conditional (*would* + perfect infinitive). This is an example of a mixed conditional.
If you cared more about your work, you would have been promoted years ago.

Note that here we are talking about a general hypothetical situation, with an imagined past result.

- 2 More often we use the *if*-clause of a third conditional (*if* + past perfect) with the result clause of a second conditional (*would* + present / continuous infinitive).
If I had got the job, I would earn €100,000 by now. (would + present infinitive)
If I had got the job, I would be commuting for four hours a day. (would + continuous infinitive)

Note that here we are imagining something that didn't happen in the past, with a present result.

» For more information on the third conditional, see **Language reference Unit 2** on page 126.

Passives

Passive forms are possible in all types of conditional sentence, in either clause.

- If the contract is lost, we'll be in trouble.*
If we adopted the new system, hundreds of hours could be saved.

Other words instead of *if*

- 1 In many conditional sentences, *when* can replace *if*. This makes a situation sound more likely. The same is true of *every time*.
When we hit our targets, we get a bonus.
Every time we hit our targets, we get a bonus.

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 13 | Unit 9

Language at work, Exercise 5, page 74

YP fitness studio yearly review meeting

Last year

1 Past action / inaction and past results

- invest in new equipment → able to increase membership fee
- failed to develop competitive January special offer → lost potential customers to competition

2 Past action / inaction and present results

- failed to address HR crisis and recruit new personal trainers → only three personal trainers – all overworked, several customers on waiting lists
- developed partnership with local school → overweight teenagers now following fitness programme

Next year

3 Suggestions / predictions for next year plus results

- develop new membership packages → increase number of members
- start more initiatives with teenagers → improve gym reputation and get new young members
- employ more trainers → more personal programmes for customers and more profit
- renovate pool area → improve reputation, increase swimming prices

File 14 | Unit 1

Case study, Task, Exercise 2, page 13

Group C

Vancouver, Canada

- The commercial and cultural heart of Canada's West Coast, and a major convention and tourist destination.
- Attracts national and international tourists (particularly from the Far East).
- A major port. One of the most vibrant economies in Canada, particularly in the areas of technology, tourism, financial services, film production, education, and natural resources.
- Diverse ethnic communities have a strong influence on the restaurants which cater for every taste and budget, and there is also a varied programme of cultural events.
- Lots of pathways along the shoreline connecting up Vancouver's distinctive neighbourhoods. Spectacular coastal and mountain scenery.
- Lots of organized tours to Vancouver's surrounding outdoor attractions, including gourmet barbecue lunches on a remote beach, or seaside restaurant meals. Also combined tours, flexibility, and personalization offered.

File 15 | Unit 5

Working with words, Exercise 10, page 39

Project outline 1

1 Task / project

International charity football match organized by two top teams and a charity promoting peace in an area of conflict.

2 Colleagues / team mates

Very varied, from the club president (who expects VIP treatment), to the charity volunteers.

3 Schedules / pressure

Deadline is fixed and non-negotiable because of the match timetable. Player availability is also a factor.

4 Issues / problems

The television scheduling – due to time zone differences, finding a good local kick-off time is problematic.

5 Confrontation / fairness

Differing attitudes to time is causing conflict. The culture of the charity is 'inclusive', so much consideration is given to finding a satisfactory solution for everyone.

Project outline 2

1 Task / project

A fashion show based in a luxury boutique to promote the new collection (especially the top-end jewellery).

2 Colleagues / team mates

Models
Shop staff
Caterers
Lighting / sound crew
Security staff
Head Office staff

3 Schedules / pressure

The date and time of the show are published and invitations sent to the top 1,000 customers in the boutique's database. The new collection must be launched on time.

4 Issues / problems

There are health and safety issues regarding the maximum number of people who can be in the boutique at any time.

5 Confrontation / fairness

It's a challenge to manage a team made up of people from different companies and areas of expertise, who all come to the project with their own personal needs and agendas. The models are notoriously unreliable and temperamental.

File 16 | Unit 2

Practically speaking, Exercise 4, page 19

Student B

The competition

The competition have been very active recently – you saw a number of very good presentations at the conference last week.

Travel budget

This has been greatly reduced this year, so only employees in senior positions are able to travel overseas.

File 17 | Unit 5

Business communication skills, Exercise 10, page 41

Student A

Situation 1

You are working on a project with very tight deadlines. You are expecting a piece of work from Student B tomorrow. Check with Student B that she / he will deliver on time. (The work is already a week late.)

Situation 2

You share an office with Student B and Student C. 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 2.30 p.m. tomorrow. Student B will be on annual leave. Talk to Student C 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 B and Student C. The project you are all working on is seriously delayed because Student C is refusing to accept work from Student B, claiming it is of poor quality. Student B claims she / he followed the brief. Try to help them find a solution so that the project can continue to move forward.

File 18 | Unit 2

Business communication skills, Exercise 9, page 17

Student C

Item 1

- change opening hours
- close down the cafeteria
- other ideas?

Item 2

- employ more administrative staff
- improve communication by sending staff on a training course
- other ideas?

Item 3

- give employees the choice of which courses they take part in
- make sure certain training courses are completed before employees get promoted
- other ideas?

Item 4

- set up team-based pay so the onus is on the employees to make sure that everyone is there
- give employees greater flexibility in the hours worked
- other ideas?

File 19 | Unit 9

Business communication skills, Exercise 6, page 73

Students C and D

You support these original proposals from Floralope.

- 1 Investing in training for all staff on the new system is essential.
- 2 Using cash in the bank to invest in the system is necessary.
- 3 Going ahead with the new system as soon as the cost-benefit analysis has been done.

Discuss the advantages of these original proposals. Think about how the company's performance or reputation will be affected.

File 20 | Unit 5

Language at work, Exercise 5, page 42

Student A

Agenda

- 1 Unfocused meetings
Team members have a tendency to go off track and not to focus on the agenda.
- 2 Team members with different working styles
It's a new team, bringing together people from different departments who don't normally work together.
- 3 Lack of communication outside team meetings
Instructions often lack clarity.

File 38 | Unit 9

Business communication skills, Exercise 6, page 73

Students A and B

You support these alternative suggestions from the Dutch parent company.

- 1 Replacing some of the older staff with more IT-literate staff.
- 2 Raising capital by selling off some unused property and getting a bank loan.
- 3 Delaying the decision for six months until more information has been gathered by
 - reviewing return on investment for a new IT system
 - analysing the company in comparison to the competition
 - conducting a customer satisfaction survey.

Discuss the advantages of these new suggestions. Think about how the company's performance or reputation will be affected.

File 39 | Unit 5

Practically speaking, Exercise 5, page 43

Student B

- 1 Student A is going to give you some feedback on your report. You spent a lot of time preparing the report. With the deadline approaching you asked a colleague to help you with the summary, but the report is still yours.
- 2 Give feedback to Student B about a recent project. You want to congratulate Student B on the success of a recent database project which she / he was managing. You also want to mention concerns about difficulties one team member had with working long hours on the project.

File 40 | Unit 5

Language at work, Exercise 5, page 42

Student B

Agenda

- 1 Unfocused meetings
Team members get too much information in meetings and forget it as soon as the meeting is over.
- 2 Team members with different working styles
There are 'personality clashes' in the team – some members just don't get on.
- 3 Lack of communication outside team meetings
Team members do not say what they think directly, and think that hints are enough.

File 41 | Unit 9

Case study, Task, Exercise 5, page 77

Dear Steering Committee

There has been a press leak concerning our plans for our Nigerian plant – see below. We're not sure who the source can be as the facts are wrong. However, in the light of this, we need to consider carefully what our next move should be regarding the project.

'QP Plastics is to close its main factory in Nigeria, putting 1,300 staff out of work. The site at Port Harcourt, in the south of the country, is to close while it looks for a buyer. QP Plastics said the move was not linked to the increasing wave of violence in the oil-rich Niger Delta where kidnappings of western workers has become increasingly common.'

Obviously, our main concern is the social unrest in the area and the safety of our staff. We should also consider our shareholders and reputation. Please discuss this asap and let me know how we should proceed.

Many thanks

Jason Fletcher