

Working with words

1 Complete these sentences with the best option.

- It was obvious there was a _____ in the market for more affordable lenses.
a space b break c gap
- Unless we can secure more financial _____, we won't be able to go ahead with our expansion plans.
a approval b backing c aid
- My advice is to build up a _____ of contacts who can offer advice and support to your business.
a network b system c connection
- How much start-up _____ do you need for equipment, rent and supplies for the first year?
a wealth b assets c capital
- Some start-ups get funding from business _____ who can offer advice as well as money.
a guardians b messengers c angels
- Investors will want to look at your business _____ in detail to assess the potential of your idea.
a map b plan c chart
- We need a lot of funding to start the business so we're going to approach a _____ capitalist.
a business b venture c project
- Banks are wary of giving _____ to start-ups – they prefer to finance businesses already in profit.
a stocks b assets c loans
- Most investors want to be confident they'll receive a good return on _____.
a investment b asset c speculation
- It was announced today that SFR Ltd has bought a 60% _____ in Lin Productions.
a portion b stake c piece

2 Choose the correct answer from the words in *italics*.

- This proposition is *hugely* / *totally* ridiculous – there's no way we can agree to it.
- So far we've had *a really* / *an absolutely* successful year.
- Their demands are *extremely* / *absolutely* outrageous.
- The prices you've been quoted seem *completely* / *incredibly* high.
- The concept is extremely *brilliant* / *clever* – there's no way it could possibly fail.
- The procedure is *really* / *absolutely* complex, but I'm sure you'll understand it fairly quickly.
- It's totally *impossible* / *difficult* to cut costs any more.
- Researching an appropriate business model is *completely* / *hugely* important before looking for funding.

Business communication skills

1 Two business acquaintances meet up at a trade fair. Correct the mistakes in the phrases in *italics* in their conversation.

Barbara Is that you Josef? ¹*What you do here?*

Josef Hello, Barbara ²*I don't see you for ages.*

Barbara ³*How does life treat you?*

Josef I've been working on a big project for Avrim. ⁴*How's you with business?*

Barbara Well, I've moved house, changed jobs and I'm about to set up on my own. Actually, with that in mind, ⁵*could you make me a favour?*

Josef If I can – what do you need?

Barbara ⁶*The things is, I look for someone* _____ to come into partnership with me. Would you be interested?

Josef Me? ⁷*That not something I can deciding on right now.*

Barbara OK. I'll email you the details and maybe we could discuss it over lunch.

Josef Well, ⁸*I'll surely think about it.*

2 Match 1–10 to a–j.

- That's actually ... ____
 - Let's talk ... ____
 - By the way, could ... ____
 - The thing is, we're looking ... ____
 - It's been a long time since ... ____
 - With that in mind, maybe ... ____
 - What have you ... ____
 - Are you still working ... ____
 - I haven't seen you ... ____
 - We're looking for an investor and ... ____
- a for SFL?
b I could ask you for a favour.
c for someone to help us out.
d we've been in contact.
e about that over dinner.
f I wondered if you were interested.
g for ages.
h been up to?
i you do me a favour?
j the reason why I'm calling.

Talking about duration

1 Use the present perfect continuous with *How long...?*, *for* and *since* to talk about continuous activities or repeated actions that started in the past and are still going on now.

How long have you been learning English?

I've been learning for three years / since I joined ILS.

2 Use *for* to talk about amounts of time (*for three weeks, for two months*). Use *since* to talk about points in time (*since 10.30, since Monday, since the end of May*).

3 When talking about a state (see page 103), use the present perfect simple, because stative verbs are not used in the continuous form.

How long have you known Pia?

I've known her for five years. (Not: 've been knowing)

Unfinished time periods

1 Use the present perfect continuous or simple with unfinished time periods like *recently, all day, this week*.

I've been trying to call her all day.

We've had six offers so far this week.

2 Use the present perfect continuous when talking about activities that are temporary or unfinished.

Temporary activity: *I've been staying with my brother this week. (I usually live in my own flat.)*

Unfinished activity: *I've been talking to my accountant this week. (The discussions are continuing.)*

3 Use the present perfect simple for stative verbs.

My boss has been away in London this week. (It is Thursday and he is still not back.)

4 Use the present perfect simple when talking about completed actions and to give details of quantities.

I have seen my accountant three times this week. (Those three occasions are in the past.)

No time period

When no time period at all is mentioned, the difference between the present perfect simple and continuous depends on whether the action is finished (and we stress the result) or unfinished (and we stress the action).

Sam's read your report. (He's finished it.)

Sam's been reading your report. (He hasn't finished it and the activity is continuing.)

BUT the present perfect continuous can be used to talk about recent activities that are **finished** if there is some evidence of the recent activity.

It's stopped now, but it's been snowing and the roads are still very dangerous.

1 Complete these sentences with the present perfect simple or present perfect continuous form of the verbs in brackets.

- I can certainly recommend Mr Hiro to you – I _____ (know) him for a long time.
- The Finance Director is in Hong Kong – he _____ (stay) at the Excelsior for the last two weeks.
- Someone _____ (use) my printer – feel how hot it is – and half the paper's gone!
- We _____ (negotiate) the new contracts since May, but we still can't agree.
- I _____ (read) the report, but I haven't got to the final recommendations yet.
- I _____ (go sailing) for five or six years now – I go most weekends.
- So far we _____ (have) over 400 complaints, so we've definitely got a problem.
- I'm sorry for the delay – _____ (you / wait) long?
- I _____ (try) to get in touch with customer service for days but the line is always busy.
- It _____ (rain) for days and days – when is it ever going to stop?

2 Match 1–10 to the most likely context in a–j.

- I've been writing the report. ____
 - I've talked to Mr Holmes. ____
 - What have you done? ____
 - The weather has been getting better. ____
 - I've written the report. ____
 - Jack's been skiing. ____
 - I've been talking to Mr Holmes. ____
 - The weather has got better. ____
 - Jack's gone skiing. ____
 - What have you been doing? ____
- I'm asking about your life in general since we last met.
 - I have finished my discussions with Mr Holmes.
 - It's summer now and it's warm every day.
 - The report is not finished.
 - It's warmer than it was, but it's not warm every day.
 - I am still in discussions with Mr Holmes.
 - I'm asking what tasks you've completed on your 'to do' list.
 - Jack is an expert skier. Ask him about Austria.
 - The report is finished. Here it is.
 - Jack is on holiday in Austria at the moment.

