

# 4 | Practice file

## Working with words

- 1 Replace the verbs in *italics> with a phrasal verb from the list with the same meaning. Make any changes that are necessary.*

get round                      set up                      come up with  
take forward                  pay off                      carry out  
bring down                    take up

- I'm thinking of leaving the company to *start* \_\_\_\_\_ my own business.
- We're over budget on this project – we need to do something to *reduce* \_\_\_\_\_ the costs.
- That's a great idea – I knew you would *create* \_\_\_\_\_ a plan to solve the problem.
- The company has *responded to* \_\_\_\_\_ the challenge of recruiting across the EU.
- We *performed* \_\_\_\_\_ a lot of tests before we launched this product on the market.
- We put a lot of money into this idea – hopefully the investment will *have a good result* \_\_\_\_\_.
- We *avoided* \_\_\_\_\_ the problem of relocating extra staff by recruiting locally.
- The first stage of the project went well, and we're now *developing* \_\_\_\_\_ our plans for the next stage.

- 2 Complete the phrases in **bold> in the text with a suitable word from the list.**

technology                      revolutionary                  practical  
advantage                      potential                      features  
state-of-the-art

The Cell Zone™ is a <sup>1</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ **idea** from Salemi Industries – a cell phone booth that lets you make and receive cell phone calls without disturbing anyone. It's a <sup>2</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ **solution** to the problem of making calls in noisy public spaces. The Cell Zone™'s **key** <sup>3</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ are its effective sound-proofing and its unique cylindrical shape. It is both functional and stylish – a product where **cutting-edge** <sup>4</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ is combined with <sup>5</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ **design**. A **major** <sup>6</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ of the Cell Zone™ is that it can be located almost anywhere – airports, nightclubs, etc. or even on the street. It also has <sup>7</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ **benefits** for advertisers who can use the exterior to promote their product or service.



## Business communication skills

- 1 Number these extracts from a presentation about a new product in the right order 1–10 to give a logical structure.
- First, I'll give you a brief overview of the product.
  - Basically, Minute Monitor combines a department's time schedules. It ...
  - Does that sound OK?
  - Now I'd like to move on to some of its features. I'd like to demonstrate this by using the tool itself.
  - Then I'll talk about its benefits. After that I'd like to show you some of its features.
  - Good. The greatest benefit of this is that all your staff's appointments are logged in one main diary so everyone can see who's in the office and when.
  - What I'd like to do in this presentation is demonstrate a new scheduling tool.
  - Have a look at the screen – with your current system you can't link everyone's calendars. However, with Minute Monitor, you'll all be able to access this central one.
  - Is everything clear so far?
  - OK. We call the product Minute Monitor, and it's a pretty simple concept.

- 2 Complete the rest of the presentation with the words and phrases from the list.

this means                      the biggest potential benefit of  
in the future                      the other major advantage  
at the moment                      is another great thing about  
whereas

Minute Monitor scheduling tool can be set up with your current system immediately, <sup>1</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ similar tools on the market require much higher investment to make them compatible. <sup>2</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ is that the program is very user-friendly and doesn't require a lot of previous knowledge or training. A drop-down user-guide helps you with every step, which <sup>3</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ Minute Monitor. <sup>4</sup>\_\_\_\_\_, your system is able to schedule 25 employees' appointments, but with Minute Monitor you can increase this to 50. <sup>5</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ that project leaders can have a better overview of the activities taking place. <sup>6</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ Minute Monitor is that project scheduling can be delegated to admin staff <sup>7</sup>\_\_\_\_\_, giving the team leader more time on the project.

## Language at work | Present, past and future ability

Use *can* or *(be) able to* to talk about ability. *Can* has only two forms: *can* (present) and *could* (past). Use *be able to* when an infinitive is needed.

### Present ability

1 Use *can* to talk about general or present ability.

*I can speak French, but I can't speak German very well.  
Could you speak louder – I can't hear you.*

2 *Is / are able to* is possible instead of *can* but *can* is more common.

*Are you able to hear me at the back of the room?*

### Past ability

1 Use *could* to talk about general ability in the past and with verbs of perception (*feel, see, hear, etc.*).

*Anna could speak four languages when she was six.  
I could see that she was upset.*

2 For a single specific action in the past (as opposed to general ability), to mean 'tried and succeeded', use *was able to*.

*I was able to run fast enough to catch the bus.  
I could run fast when I was young.*

However, if the specific action is negative, use *couldn't* or *wasn't able to*.

*I called customer services again and again, but I couldn't / wasn't able to get through.*

3 To talk about a specific action in the past, especially when we succeed in doing something difficult after trying hard, use *managed to*. It can be used in the positive or negative.

*They didn't want to give us the discount at first, but we managed to persuade them.*

4 To refer to past ability with a connection to the present, use the present perfect form of *be able to*.

*I have always been able to learn languages quite easily.*

### Future ability

Since *can* has no infinitive form, use *be able to* to talk about future ability

1 after *will* and *going to*

*Perhaps Jane will be able to help you.  
I'm afraid I'm not going to be able to do anything for you.*

2 after modals

*I may / might be able to help you.*

3 after verbs like *would like to* and *want to*

*I would like to be able to help you.*

1 Complete these sentences with the correct form of *can* or *be able to*. Sometimes more than one answer is possible.

- 1 Do you think you \_\_\_\_\_ come to the launch party next week?
- 2 We may \_\_\_\_\_ offer you a slightly better discount – I'll try my best.
- 3 So far I \_\_\_\_\_ (not) contact her, but I'll keep trying.
- 4 As far as I \_\_\_\_\_ see, you have a valid complaint.
- 5 Do you know if Amanda \_\_\_\_\_ speak Spanish?
- 6 Do you think you are going to \_\_\_\_\_ finish on time, or will you need a few more days?
- 7 I'm afraid I \_\_\_\_\_ (not) come to the meeting next week.
- 8 We'll need an interpreter because I \_\_\_\_\_ (not) speak Chinese.
- 9 \_\_\_\_\_ (she) finish that report yet?
- 10 I \_\_\_\_\_ understand your worries, but I think we should take the risk.

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

- 1 A Did the hotel have a good view of the mountains?  
B Yes, I *could / was able to* see Mont Blanc from my room.
- 2 A When I got to the office, the door was locked.  
B How *could you / did you manage to* get in?
- 3 A So what happened when you missed the plane?  
B Luckily I *could / was able to* take another flight.
- 4 A Were you late for the meeting?  
B No. Fortunately I *could / was able to* find a taxi.
- 5 A If the safe was locked, how *could you / were you able to* get the documents out?  
B One of the managers had a spare key.
- 6 A What did you think when you heard Jan had been promoted?  
B Well, at first I *couldn't / wasn't able to* believe it.
- 7 A Did you renegotiate the contract?  
B Yes, we *could / managed to* obtain a slightly better deal.
- 8 A *Could you / Were you able to* contact Katie?  
B No, but I'll call again later.

