



# 6 Ethical business

## Learning objectives in this unit

- Talking about ethical business
- Explaining plans and arrangements
- Inviting and recommending
- Responding to spontaneous invitations
- Talking about the future

## Case study

- Promoting ethical business

## Starting point

- 1 What effect (positive or negative) can companies have on the environment and the local community?
- 2 Do you know of any companies that are well known for their social responsibility? Is this a selling point for the company?
- 3 Do you know of any companies that have an image problem because of their activities?



## Working with words | Ethical business

- 1 Work with a partner. What are the characteristics of an 'ethical business'?
- 2 Read the text about a company called Patagonia. In what ways is the company an ethical business? How does this compare to your ideas in 1?

## Our Reason for Being

Patagonia grew out of a small company that made tools for climbers. Mountain climbing is still at the heart of our business, but we also make clothes for skiing, snowboarding, surfing, fly fishing, paddling and trail running. All of these are silent sports. They don't require a motor or the cheers of a crowd – the rewards come from connecting with nature.

Our values reflect a business that was started by a band of climbers and surfers who love wild and beautiful places. This means that we act responsibly and take an active part in the fight to repair the damage that is being done to the health of our planet.

We acknowledge that the wild world we love best is disappearing. That is why we share a strong commitment to protecting natural

lands and waters. Caring for the environment is very important to us. We donate our time, services and at least 1% of our sales to hundreds of environmental groups all over the world who are working to protect and restore the environment.

But we also know that our business activity – from lighting our stores to dyeing shirts – creates pollution as a by-product. So we work steadily to reduce the impact we have, and do more than simply comply with the regulations. We use recycled polyester in many of our clothes and only organic, rather than pesticide-intensive, cotton.

Staying true to our principles during thirty-plus years in business has helped us create a company we're proud to run and work for.

- 3 Read the text again and answer questions 1–5.

- 1 How have the company's founders influenced what the company does now?
- 2 What does the company have a commitment to? How does it show this commitment?
- 3 What points are made about the manufacturing process?
- 4 Why are the owners proud of the company?
- 5 Do you or would you buy products from companies like Patagonia? How important is it for you to buy products from ethical companies?

4 Choose a word / phrase from A and B to make phrases to complete the questions.

A		B	
act	comply with	time	an active part in
share	reduce	responsibly	true to its principles
take	donate	the impact	a strong commitment to
stay		regulations	

- 1 Do most companies in your country always \_\_\_\_\_ or do they sometimes bend the rules?
- 2 Do you know of any companies that \_\_\_\_\_, services or money to help local organizations?
- 3 How can businesses \_\_\_\_\_ they have on the environment?
- 4 Why should a company \_\_\_\_\_ and deal with any pollution that is a by-product of its business activity?
- 5 Does your company \_\_\_\_\_ the life of the local community. If so, what does it do?
- 6 Should a company \_\_\_\_\_ and values even if this means a loss of profit?
- 7 What companies in your country \_\_\_\_\_ protecting the environment?

5 Work with a partner. Ask and answer the questions in 4.

6 23▶ Listen to a radio interviewer questioning Shamsul Aziz, a spokesperson for a leading gas and oil exploration company. Answer questions 1–4.

- 1 How would you describe the interviewer's style?
- 2 How does the spokesperson react to the questions?
- 3 What does the company do for  
a its staff? b the environment? c the local communities where it operates?
- 4 Do you think the company is doing enough for the environment and local community?

7 Which of these nouns from audio 23▶ do you associate with

- 1 an ethical company?
- 2 an unethical company?  
*bribery ethics deception responsibility fairness generosity values corruption prejudice credibility greed discrimination*

8 Complete the table with the adjectives of these nouns from 7.

Noun	Adjective	Noun	Adjective
deception		ethics	
responsibility		corruption	
fairness		prejudice	
generosity		greed	
credibility		discrimination	

9 Work with a partner. Turn to File 14 on page 140. Read about two companies and discuss how ethical you think they are, using some of the nouns and adjectives in 7 and 8.

»» For more exercises, go to Practice file 6 on page 112.

10 Work in small groups to prepare a short speech at a press conference. Follow the instructions in File 16 on page 140.



## Context

Hummingbird Teas sells speciality teas from China, India and South Africa. The unique selling point of the business is its ethos. It sources teas from small, local farmers and supports fair trade. It has recently brought in Clare, from a PR company, to help raise its profile. Clare has been organizing a trip for reporters from ethical consumer magazines to see Hummingbird's operation. She is meeting with the reporters to give details of the trip.

## Presenting | Explaining plans and arrangements | Inviting and recommending



- 1 24▶** Read the *Context*. Listen to Part 1 of the meeting and make any necessary changes to these notes.

- Trip planned to China or South Africa (to be confirmed)
- Five days travelling around different tea plantations
- Opportunities for sightseeing will be provided
- Two possible dates for trip: February and March
- Two internal flights

- 2 24▶** Listen again. Complete these phrases for explaining the plans and arrangements for the trip.

- 1 We \_\_\_\_\_ once you've decided what you'd like to see.
- 2 So, \_\_\_\_\_ how Hummingbird's operation works in China.
- 3 The \_\_\_\_\_ spend four days at one of the sites where the tea is grown.
- 4 You \_\_\_\_\_ accompany the workers in their daily work.
- 5 We've looked at all the options, and \_\_\_\_\_ two dates.

- 3 25▶** Listen to Part 2 of the meeting.

- 1 What activities and visits can the reporters take part in?
- 2 What advice does Clare give about the guide?

- 4 25▶** Listen again and complete these phrases.

- 1 We \_\_\_\_\_ watch the tea being prepared.
- 2 English isn't spoken so \_\_\_\_\_ with our guide.
- 3 On the subject of language – \_\_\_\_\_ a project set up to promote schooling in the Tibetan language.
- 4 That \_\_\_\_\_ really interesting.  
I \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5 ... as it \_\_\_\_\_ travel with our interpreter.
- 6 A visit to the site \_\_\_\_\_.
- 7 I was there for the first time last month ... It's \_\_\_\_\_.
- 8 Mmm ... \_\_\_\_\_ I'm looking for.
- 9 Well, alternatively, \_\_\_\_\_ introduce you to the team who work for Hummingbird in China.
- 10 That would be great – \_\_\_\_\_.

## Tip | advise and recommend

*Advise* and *recommend* are both quite formal ways of making a suggestion. Be careful with the word order.

We **advise** you to set this up directly (with the locals).

We **recommend** (that) you stay with our guide.

- 5 Put the phrases in 4 into these categories.
- a Inviting: \_\_\_\_\_
  - b Recommending: \_\_\_\_\_
  - c Responding to an invitation or recommendation: \_\_\_\_\_

» For more exercises, go to Practice file 6 on page 112.

6 Read this information about activities organized by Hummingbird Teas. Work with a partner. Choose information A or B and take turns to invite and make recommendations of things to do or points to look out for. Decide for yourself if you want to accept or decline.

<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Hummingbird Teas</i> </p> <p><b>Invitation:</b> Information day – How and why does Hummingbird Teas practise fair trade?</p> <p><b>Recommended activities on the day:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation about the Slow Food movement in Europe and how Hummingbird Teas' activities complement this</li> <li>• Tea tasting – rare and exotic teas</li> </ul> <p><b>Advice:</b> Arrive early for tea tasting – only ten people in each group</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Hummingbird Teas</i> </p> <p><b>Invitation:</b> Informal visit day, including presentation – The man behind Rooibos tea</p> <p><b>Recommended activities on the day:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hummingbird Teas helps to make a difference – Slide show of tree replanting in the Himalayas</li> <li>• Tea-making workshop – How to make the perfect cuppa</li> </ul> <p><b>Advice:</b> Taste teas at workshop before buying</p>
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7 Work with a partner. Your company has arranged an open day to give customers an insight into its operation. (If you don't work for a company, use File 15 on page 140.)

- 1 Make a list of
  - the things you plan to show your guests on the day
  - any recommendations of things to do or points to look out for
  - things you hope to invite your guests to do.
- 2 Find another partner (from a different company if possible). Take turns to
  - explain your plans for the day
  - make any recommendations
  - invite your partner to do things
  - respond appropriately.

» Interactive Workbook » Email

## Key expressions

### Explaining plans and arrangements

- We'll email you the (final) itinerary.
- We're planning to ...
- The idea is to ...
- We're going to arrange ...
- You'll get the opportunity to ...
- The flight leaves on ...

### Inviting

- We'd like to invite you to ...
- You're welcome to ...
- Alternatively, we'd be delighted to ...

### Recommending

- We strongly recommend you ...
- It would be a good idea to ...
- ... is highly recommended.
- It's well worth a visit.

### Responding

- That would be great.
- That sounds really interesting.
- Good idea.
- That makes sense.
- I'd like to take you up on that.
- It's just the kind of thing I need.
- That's not really what I'm looking for.

» Interactive Workbook » Phrasebank

## Practically speaking | Responding to spontaneous invitations

- 1 **26▶ Listen to three invitations and answer questions 1–2.**
  - 1 What are the people being invited to do?
  - 2 Are the invitations accepted (A), partly accepted (P) or declined (D)?
- 2 **26▶ Listen again. What phrases do the speakers use to**

1 invite?	3 partly accept?
2 accept?	4 decline?
- 3 **Invite as many people as you can to these activities (or make up your own). When you receive an invitation, decide if you want to accept, partly accept or decline. Refer to the Useful phrases on page 134.**
  - go to the cinema (to see?)
  - go for dinner (where?)
  - watch a football match (which team?)
  - go swimming in the lunch break (where?)
  - go to the theatre (to see?)
  - have a coffee (where?)

## Language at work | Talking about the future

**1** Match these extracts from audio 24▶ and 25▶ to situations 1–5. What tense is used in each situation?

- a She's **coming** in later on this morning to speak with you.
- b This **will give** you a real insight into their lives.
- c We've looked at all the options, and we're **going to** arrange two dates.
- d The February flight **leaves** on the 15th.
- e A ... it would be a good idea to travel with our interpreter.  
B That makes sense. We'll **speak** to our colleagues and let you know.

- 1 someone making a decision as they speak \_\_\_\_
- 2 someone talking about a plan, intention, something they have already decided to do \_\_\_\_
- 3 someone talking about an appointment or arrangement \_\_\_\_
- 4 someone making a prediction \_\_\_\_
- 5 someone talking about a timetable or schedule \_\_\_\_

» For more information and exercises, go to Practice file 6 on page 113.

**2** Work with a partner. Decide which option in *italics* is **not** possible in each sentence.

- 1 I can't see you on Friday – I'll do / 'm going to do / 'm doing a training course in London.
- 2 According to the weather forecast, it'll be / 's going to be / 's being hot tomorrow.
- 3 The flight from Paris *arrives* / *is going to arrive* in Tokyo at 10.45 each day.
- 4 A By the way, I'm out of the office tomorrow.  
B OK, I'll let / 'm letting Christina know.
- 5 I'm not in the office on Monday – I'm going / going to go / 'll go to an exhibition.
- 6 I *meet* / 'm meeting / 'm going to meet with Mrs Brasseler at 3.30 this afternoon.
- 7 A Could you give me some information about Mr Ward's visit?  
B Of course, I email / 'll email the details now.
- 8 I think Greta *is noticing* / *will notice* a lot of changes in the office when she returns from maternity leave.

**3** Work with a partner. Ask and answer these questions using *will*, *going to*, the present continuous or the present simple.

- 1 Have you got a busy weekend?
- 2 Are you doing anything tonight?
- 3 What's the weather forecast for the weekend?
- 4 What time is the last train?
- 5 What do you think about the threat of global warming?
- 6 Are you free tomorrow afternoon?
- 7 Have you booked your next holiday?
- 8 What plans have you got for projects at work or home?

**4** Write future dates and times that are important for you on a piece of paper. Think of work commitments, career plans or key events for your company. Use words like *in 2012*, *7.30 tonight*, *next Friday*, *next October*, *when I am 60*, etc. Compare your dates with a partner. Ask them to explain the importance of each date.

*Example: A Why is 25 May 2019 important?*

*B That's when the company will be exactly 50 years old. We're going to have a big celebration with all our major clients – it will be a big achievement for us.*

## Promoting ethical business

### Background

#### A Tribes Travel

Core business: fair trade, ecotourism and responsible travel

- We use a Fairtrade travel mark for all our ecotourism. This involves: paying people a fair wage for the services they provide, making sure these people aren't exploited, and ensuring our tourism (and money generated from this) has a positive effect on local people and the environment.
- We promote learning about each other's cultures through local guides and involve local people in the trips.
- Our tourist groups are small to ensure minimum impact on the wildlife, environment and local communities.
- We have an affiliated charity which supports poverty reduction, education, cultural preservation and conservation projects within areas affected by tourism.

#### B Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream

Core business: selling ice cream

Company's mission is to inform public about and assist in ethical and environmental matters.

Our projects are

- the Climate Change College (being run in many countries) – to inform about changing climate
- UK: working with the Fairtrade Foundation to buy sugar from Paraguay and vanilla from India for vanilla ice cream
- global warming project: plant in Netherlands uses renewable energy for manufacturing (wind, sun, water, biomass); factories in Vermont have invested in wind energy and plan to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 10% in the next three years
- buying 'climate tickets' to fly our businesspeople – to counteract the effect of flying on the environment.

### Discussion

- 1 Who are the likely target customers for each of the products? What kinds of things matter to these customers?
- 2 How do the companies' activities promote their ethical position?

### Task

- 1 Work in two groups. Choose company A or B. You are going to plan an event or a series of events to inform a wider market about the company's operation and activities.
  - 1 Decide what events / activities could raise the profile of the company's ethical position.
  - 2 Make a plan of the event(s).
- 2 Prepare a brief, informal presentation.

Part 1: Give details about what the company does. Explain its position on ethical matters.

Part 2: Explain the plans and arrangements for the event(s). Include invitations and recommendations as appropriate.
- 3 Each group gives its presentation to the class. While you are listening to the presentations, decide which company seems to be the most ethical. After all the presentations, vote for your favourite in terms of ethical position and ideas for events.

### The Expert View

There are higher expectations of business today from customers, employees, and even investors to minimize negative environmental and social impacts, and to maximize positive ones. This is frequently described as corporate responsibility, or running a business in an ethical and sustainable manner. Leading companies have realized that this is not just about risk-minimization – it can also be a way of maximizing business opportunities. Such businesses recognize that a genuine commitment to operating ethically and sustainably can be a source of competitive advantage. Certainly, corporate responsibility cannot be treated as an 'extra' – it has to be built into business purpose and strategy.

David Grayson, Professor of Corporate Responsibility

Cranfield School of Management

## File 14 | Unit 6

Working with words, Exercise 9, page 37

### Company X

- Donated 100,000 trees to Nairobi, Kenya, to aid reforestation
- Provides funds for a project that gives loans to farmers and fishermen
- Established fund to promote research into conservation of drinking water
- Sponsors disabled sports in Germany
- Committed to offering equal entrance requirements and development opportunities to male and female employees

### Company Y

- Failure to perform routine inspections led to corroded pipelines and oil leaks
- Oil spill has polluted large area of coastline
- Lack of attention to safety led to oil refinery explosion – injuries to employees
- Currently an investigation into whether company manipulated oil markets – staff bought large quantities of company's product
- Committed to renewable energy: invested heavily in solar and wind power; runs a project to generate electricity from petroleum coke

## File 15 | Unit 6

Business communication skills, Exercise 7, page 39

**Kokua Likeabike** – based in Germany

**Core business:** selling wooden children's bikes – various models and styles

- Made from various types of wood – environmentally-friendly, sustainable product, sourced from well-managed forests
- Specially designed without pedals for young children to learn to balance before moving on to a 'real' bike
- Distributors and sales partners are worldwide

**Possible open day ideas:**

- Demo of new models
- Tour of the factory
- Trip to wood source for forest management presentation
- Likeabike races – challenge country against country in a race on the bikes
- Ideas exchange – distributors share marketing ideas / strategies from each country
- Gala dinner



## File 16 | Unit 6

Working with words, Exercise 10, page 37

Your company would like to be seen as an ethical business, and you are presenting details of some of the initiatives you have undertaken. You can talk about your own company or use one of the companies below. Your speech should include

- brief details of what your company is and what you do
- your attitude towards corporate social responsibility
- an outline of some of the work that you have been doing
- a short conclusion outlining your hopes for the future.

Prepare your speech and then give the press conference. Be prepared to answer any difficult questions.

### Vodafone

**Sector:** Computers and electronics

Vodafone, Europe's largest cellular telecom company, doesn't have the environmental or political challenges that a big oil company does but it does a superb job of questioning shareholders, employees, customers and outside experts about how its services and infrastructure impedes – or might be able to help – economic development. That has resulted in programs like Mpesa, a pilot project that helps Africans do banking with their mobile phones. Vodafone has also changed the way it builds networks to give emergency health-care workers better access, and helps screen mobile video content for users with children.

### Carrefour

**Sector:** Trading and merchandise

Carrefour, the hyper- and supermarket chain, produces a comprehensive annual responsibility report, which includes simple numerical indicators for things like the quality of its food products, the per cent of local producers among suppliers, and the per cent of women among its managerial ranks. It is committed to promoting responsible fisheries that contribute to the sustainable management of resources. And it operates a waste management and water and energy consumption reduction policy.

### Peugeot

**Sector:** Automotive

Like other carmakers, Peugeot addresses global warming. It has an overall measure of the total greenhouse gas emissions of its vehicles – unique among big automakers. But Peugeot also looks at its cars' impact on road safety and urban areas. It first talked to stakeholders – like city dwellers, drivers, and roadside communities – then developed indicators like noise emissions that its engineers could aim to reduce in new models.

(Source: <http://www.money.cnn.com>)