

2019上听力答疑课

猫刀

BH3T2P3

- 23** According to Steve Marriott, what problem do some of Carserve's remote workers have?
- A** They think that they do not receive enough company information.
 - B** They want a greater amount of informal contact with colleagues.
 - C** They feel uncomfortable without a separate office base.
- 24** According to Steve, some staff believe that
- A** they need to prove that they are working hard.
 - B** their breaks should be taken at intervals.
 - C** the support they receive from management is inadequate.
- 25** In Steve's opinion, what was the underlying management problem when he joined Carserve?
- A** There was confusion about who gave orders.
 - B** Objectives were not made clear to staff.
 - C** Long-term planning was not carried out.

- 26** Steve improved the situation at Carserve by
- A** introducing regular work meetings.
 - B** encouraging managers to trust staff.
 - C** modifying the system of supervision.
- 27** Why have Carserve's teams become more effective?
- A** Distance has forced them to become more organised.
 - B** They are expected to make decisions quickly.
 - C** Their meetings have become more frequent.
- 28** What does Steve Marriott say about staff contacting managers?
- A** Managers sometimes fail to respond promptly.
 - B** Managers don't want to be disturbed in their work.
 - C** Staff may be uncertain about when it is appropriate to do so.

- 29** How have managers been affected by the change to remote working?
- A** They now have to deal with employees' personal problems.
 - B** They now have to assess staff more regularly.
 - C** They now spend more time travelling than talking to staff.
- 30** To help managers, Carserve is planning training on the subject of
- A** making the best use of technology.
 - B** organising remote teams.
 - C** reducing managerial control.

BH3T2P3

Woman: These days, more and more people are employed by a company, but work from home. They're sometimes called 'remote workers'. Carserve is a vehicle breakdown company whose phone operators are all based at home. Steve Marriott, an internal business consultant with Carserve, is in the studio today. Steve, do people really enjoy working from home?

Man: If you measure enjoyment by staff retention and improved productivity, the answer is definitely yes. But this doesn't happen by itself. In Carserve, we like the fact that our staff keep in touch with each other, through personal phone calls and emails. We also use email for company communications, instead of using office noticeboards, though of course we can't guarantee that everyone reads them all. But the absence of a sharp division between work and home sometimes creates a definite sense of insecurity, which we can't always remove.

Woman: Wasn't there a risk in introducing remote working?

Man: Before it was started, the greatest fear was that, with the change in the support provided, people would be less productive. As it's turned out, staff have to be actively encouraged to take short breaks. You see, they tend to feel they have to answer the phone at the first ring, in case their manager thinks they're sitting around watching TV, even though they know we don't do that kind of checking up.

Woman: When you joined Carserve you weren't happy with the ways things were being run, were you? What was the problem?

Man: The management focused on what could be put down on paper, like an organogram showing reporting lines. But they tended to avoid the less concrete issues, like how to ensure the workers knew what they were expected to achieve. So despite detailed planning and plenty of memos, in reality people were working in a bit of a vacuum.

Woman: How did you turn that around?

Man: Communication is important, but regular meetings are no substitute for a change of attitude. Managers have to start from the assumption that the remote workers are doing their job properly, even though they aren't being supervised. So that's what I focused on.

though the teams aren't physically working in the same place. How does that work?

Man: Surprisingly, perhaps, it makes them more effective. Because they know they're only coming into the office for a team meeting, they plan that meeting much more carefully than perhaps they would do otherwise. And between meetings they communicate by email or phone, and that tends to take the pressure off reaching a decision before thinking it right through.

Woman: Earlier, you mentioned the use of electronic communication internally, like the phone, and computers for emails. Have these replaced face-to-face contact?

Man: Not entirely. In fact, managers often work from home too, and staff are sometimes afraid, wrongly in fact, that a phone call will disturb them, or that an email won't be read on time. So, we make sure staff can regularly talk to their managers face-to-face.

Woman: Doesn't remote working make it difficult for managers to carry out their work?

Man: It certainly changes its nature. As part of our performance management process, managers visit staff at home twice a month. When everyone works in one office, you get on with some, and have less rapport with others, and usually that doesn't matter. But when you travel around visiting staff in their own homes, you have to develop relationships with them that are based on their needs, which may mean helping them with aspects of their non-working lives that are affecting their work.

Woman: So, have you organised training for managers, to deal with this new way of working?

Man: Yes, a great deal of thought goes into finding out what would most benefit staff. Many people would focus on how to use the technology, but in our experience that isn't a priority. We've already run workshops on managing remote teams, but many managers find it hard to let go of their traditional control, and feel that remote working is a recipe for chaos. We're trying to tackle this.

Woman: Steve Marriott, thank you very much.

Man: Thank you.

BH3T3P2

13–17, match the extracts with the aims, listed A–H.

ct, choose the aim of the workshop.

r (A–H) next to the number of the extract.

- **A** to develop marketing strategies
- **B** to improve co-operation between two departments
- **C** to decide on a programme for reorganising the company
- **D** to discuss a takeover bid by another company
- **E** to develop managers' interpersonal skills
- **F** to suggest ways of increasing profitability
- **G** to modify decision-making procedures
- **H** to improve teamwork within one department

18–22, match the extracts with the outcomes, listed **A–H**.

Extract, choose the outcome of the workshop.

Number (**A–H**) next to the number of the extract.

- | | |
|-------|---|
| ..... | A More information will be passed down regularly. |
| ..... | B A topic was chosen for a future training course. |
| ..... | C A procedure for dealing with emergencies was introduced. |
| ..... | D Staff recruitment will be reduced. |
| ..... | E One of the participants decided to leave the company. |
| ..... | F A future meeting will review progress. |
| ..... | G Senior management was persuaded to reverse a decision. |
| | H The company's appraisal system was abolished. |

Woman: This was a workshop for department heads, and it was supposed to make us more effective and flexible in dealing with staff. We worked in teams of four, and simulated various situations, taking it in turn to be the manager and the employee, and after each activity the rest of the team gave feedback on our style and performance. That was really demanding, and, after a while, people began to get quite critical towards each other, and actually some people got irritable. but it was very worthwhile. We agreed we were all pretty bad at doing staff appraisals, so we arranged for the next session to deal with this. Actually it was some people's first experience of looking in depth at their own behaviour and reactions.

Man: The Chief Executive was there, and all the senior managers and department heads, and the idea was that we'd plan how to introduce the new structure that's going to be put in place next year. First, the CE presented the company's objectives and the new organisation, then we broke up into small groups to discuss how to implement it all. After that, each group gave their comments to the whole seminar. Some very sensible criticisms were made, which the boss clearly wasn't expecting, but he did agree not to split up the marketing department after all. Anyway, we ended up by agreeing on a timetable for a meeting to brief the workforce and for the various moves, so we're probably quite well prepared now.

Woman: I went to something called a 'team role laboratory', which was for the manager, supervisors and all the staff of my department. The idea was to focus on everyone's behaviour and working relationships. It was a very powerful experience, as you can imagine, because it brought up all sorts of feelings. There's a lot of resentment at some people never being around when there's an emergency, and at the way one of the supervisors lets people get away with anything. In fact, this made him realise he's not cut out for the job, and he's since resigned. We also tried to establish what the department's objectives were, and it was an eye-opener to some people to discover what we're actually supposed to be doing, and how we fit in with the rest of the company.

Man: They'd invited the managers of a different-sized store in each division, together with some of the higher-level managers, and we were grouped in vertical lines. So, I was with my area manager and her division manager. We had to brainstorm how to cut costs and improve margins in the light of last year's poor figures. At first, I was afraid of disagreeing with my boss in case it was held against me in the future, but, after a while, we felt more like equals. It made me realise how little I'm told about the big issues in the company: some of my suggestions couldn't be implemented for reasons I didn't know anything about. So, one good thing that came out of it was that my boss agreed to meet me and the other store managers once a month to tell us what's going on in the company.

Woman: Mine was a workshop on horizontal team effectiveness, which means that Production and Sales met to see how we could work better together. First, Sales said how they saw us, and we gave our opinion of them, then we each explained how we organise our work, how we're affected by other parts of the company, and so on. That gave us all a much more accurate picture of what was actually going on. And that led on to looking at how we could help each other more, which was very useful. We agreed on more realistic timescales for dealing with orders and on a system for the managers to consult each other on problems. We also decided to get together again in six months' time, to see how things are going.

B5T1-16

- A low pay
- B long hours
- C heavy responsibility
- D unpleasant superior
- E poor promotion prospects
- G firm heading for trouble
- F initiative not appreciated
- H excessive travel

Actually I could see the way things were going. Orders were down and the company wasn't responding to market changes. So I got out. And I wasn't the only one, though I was one of the first. In fact, about thirty people left. Anyway, I got the interview with this company within a week and I got a good feeling as I walked in the door – everything clean and everyone obviously working very hard. Although it was a new field for me, I'm now reskilled. What's more, I couldn't believe how generous the annual leave is; it's so much time off compared to before.

B4T2P2

Recent change in the company

Questions 13–17, match the extracts with the recent changes, listed **A–H**.
For each extract, choose the change in the company the person mentions.
Write one letter (**A–H**) next to the number of the extract.

- | | |
|-------|--|
| ..... | A A new section was established. |
| ..... | B Existing premises were re-designed. |
| ..... | C A new manager was appointed. |
| ..... | D A training programme was expanded. |
| ..... | E The staff recruitment process was revised. |
| ..... | F Some technology was updated. |
| ..... | G New accounting procedures were introduced. |
| ..... | H Employees were given input into a company system. |

– Strength of the company

Questions **18–22**, match the extracts with the strengths of the company, **A–H**.

With each extract, choose the strength that each person mentions.
Write the letter (**A–H**) next to the number of the extract.

- | | |
|-------|---|
| ..... | A staff promotion and incentives |
| ..... | B product innovation |
| ..... | C publicity techniques |
| ..... | D range of services |
| ..... | E pricing policies |
| ..... | F customer relations |
| ..... | G financial planning |
| ..... | H recruitment and induction |

Man: There seem to have been so many changes already this year . . . it's hard to keep up, to keep taking things on board. The CEO's nothing if not dynamic, that's for sure! Well, they say this new system will work better, compared to the previous one, with its habit of crashing the network on a weekly basis. It's certainly been tough, battling to meet our performance targets, only to find your PC can't access anything all afternoon. It's just so frustrating! So let's hope it proves to be one innovation that's of real benefit, that helps us help clients with what they need . . . because that's what we're best at, the front line, and I hope we never lose sight of that. Satisfying them is what's rewarding, after all.

Woman: It always comes down to people in the end, and that's why keeping staff happy is so crucial to success. We have to have a culture of creativity, of imagination, to keep improving. Our growth and profits come from our ability to keep bringing out new models, new features, that keep us ahead, and of course, those ideas all come from people. That's why I think this latest in-company development makes sense. Instead of having different people spread about in different departments all over the company, while trying to think in related ways, it's much better to group them in one section, especially since we've got the space. I think it's a good example of intelligent management – proper strategic thinking at its best. I'll be very interested to see what fresh angles come out of the new set-up.

Man: Well, yes, it's very much in line with the way we usually go about things, so I'm sure it'll prove to be a change for the better. I mean, if we're saying we want to monitor things, to relate achievement to targets and so on, then of course we should be looking to have more aspects tied in and programmed. It's only fair that the sales staff should become involved in the setting of targets in the first place, so that's a useful improvement, which'll make them feel more accountable for results. I also think it could have an impact on how they deal with their customers, because they'll have more of a stake. We've always been good at bringing staff on, providing attractive career paths, quarterly bonuses and so on, that keep them motivated.

Woman: Well, in a small company like ours, everything has to count for something, otherwise we'll sink . . . competition's so tight now, we have to be sure that we're doing the right thing. Without scale, we're never going to be able to compete on price – that's just a fact of life – but where we've always been good, I think, is on getting our name noticed out there. Ingenious promotions, placements, high-profile local sponsorship, that kind of thing . . . it all adds up. And I think they've put the right person in charge this time. John's skills will transfer very well from his old section, and his IT knowledge is second to none, which will come in very handy here as we battle away with our rather antiquated computers!

Man: I have to say I feel almost uneasy about our success . . . it's as if it's too good to be true, and that eventually all this expansion will have to come to a halt. I don't know if I trust the long-term predictions for growth. But then again, I guess we really have got the right package – a reliable product that customers know they can trust in a market where things are changing so rapidly that they can often feel rather bewildered by all the new developments. What they want to be sure of is getting value for money, and we're succeeding by offering high-quality products that don't cost the earth. Anyway, I suppose this refurbishment is the right thing to do, to rearrange the sections like this . . . it's certainly easier than looking for a new site, at any rate.