

Unit-5: Case Studies: Goal Setting, and Career: Go Kiss the World by Subroto Bagchi

Pre-reading: Group-Work

Pre-reading

Think on your own on the following lines:

Where do you see yourself in the next five years?

What is your dream job/ goal?

Do you think achieving your dream job/ goal requires a proper plan or not?

How are you preparing yourself for your dream job?

About the speaker

Subroto Bagchi is Chairman of Odisha Skill Development Authority. His present charter is to create employability skills for 1.5 million youth by 2024, mostly school dropouts. This is a full-time assignment, in the rank of a Cabinet Minister. For his services to the State, he takes a salary of Rupee 1 per year. Bagchi has spent four decades with the Indian IT industry where he is best known as a co-founder of Mindtree. Mindtree is one of India's most admired software companies that built the AADHAR platform among its many other contributions. Bagchi is a well known writer with best-sellers like *The High-Performance Entrepreneur*, *Go Kiss the World*, *The Professional*, *MBA at 16*, *The Elephant Catchers* and *SELL*. His latest book *SELL* received the CK Prahalad Award for the best business book of 2018. His books have been translated in all major Indian languages as well as Chinese and Korean.

Bagchi has been inducted into the Order of Engineers by the University of Florida and honoured for his contributions to management and Information Technology by the Utkal University, Bhubaneswar with an Honorary Doctorate in Literature and by the Veer Surendra Sai University of Technology with an Honorary Doctorate in Science. Bagchi has served the boards of IIM Bengaluru, Indian Oil, IIIT Bhubaneswar and he currently serves the Board of Governors of the Software Technology Parks of India.

Lesson: Go Kiss the World

12 June 2008, Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore, India

I was the last child of a small-time government servant, in a family of five brothers. My earliest memory of my father is as that of a District Employment Officer in Koraput, Orissa. It was, and remains as back of beyond as you can imagine. There was no electricity; no primary school nearby and water did not flow out of a tap. As a result, I did not go to school until the age of eight; I was **home-schooled**. My father used to get transferred every year. The family belongings fit into the back of a jeep – so the family moved from place to place and without any trouble, my mother would set up an establishment and get us going. Raised by a widow who had come as a refugee from the then East Bengal, she was a **matriculate** when she married my father.

My parents set the **foundation** of my life and the value system, which makes me what I am today and largely, defines what success means to me today.

As District Employment Officer, my father was given a jeep by the government. There was no garage in the Office, so the jeep was parked in our house. My father refused to use it to commute to the office. He told us that the jeep is an expensive **resource** given by the government- he reiterated to us that it was not” his jeep” but the government’s jeep. Insisting that he would use it only to tour the interiors, he would walk to his office on normal days. He also made sure that we never sat in the government jeep – we could sit in it only when it was **stationary**.

That was our early childhood lesson in governance – a lesson that corporate **managers** learn the hard way, some never do.

The driver of the jeep was treated with the **respect** due to any other member of my Father’s office. As small children, we were taught not to call him by his name. We had to use the suffix ‘dada’ whenever we were to refer to him in public or private. When I grew up to own a car and a driver by the name of Raju was appointed – I repeated the lesson to my two small daughters. They have, as a result, grown up to call Raju, ‘Raju Uncle’ – very different from many of their friends who refer to their family driver, as ‘my driver’. When I hear that term from a school- or college-going person, I cringe.

To me, the lesson was significant – you treat small people with more respect than how you treat big people. It is more important to respect your **subordinates** than your superiors.

Our day used to start with the family **huddling** around my Mother’s chulha – an earthen fireplace she would build at each place of posting where she would cook for the family. There was neither gas nor electrical stoves. The morning routine started with tea. As the brew was served, Father would ask us to read aloud the editorial page of The Statesman’s ‘muffosil’ edition – delivered one day late. We did not understand much of what we were reading. But the ritual was meant for us to know that the world was larger than Koraput district and the English I speak today, despite having studied in an Oriya medium school, has to do with that routine. After reading the newspaper aloud, we were told to fold it neatly. Father taught us a simple lesson.

He used to say, “**You should leave your newspaper and your toilet, the way you expect to find it**”. That lesson was about showing **consideration** to others. Business begins and ends with that simple precept.

Being small children, we were always enamored with advertisements in the newspaper for transistor radios – we did not have one. We saw other people having radios in their homes and each time there was an **advertisement** for Philips, Murphy, or Bush radios, we would ask Father when we could get one. Each time, my Father would reply that we did not need one because he already had five radios – alluding to his five sons.

We also did not have a house of our own and would occasionally ask Father as to when, like others, we would live in our own house. He would give a similar reply,” We do not need a house of our own. I already own five houses”. His replies did not gladden our hearts in that instant.

Nonetheless, we learnt that it is important not to measure personal success and sense of well-being through **material possessions**.

Government houses **seldom** came with fences. Mother and I collected twigs and built a small fence. After lunch, my mother would never sleep. She would take her kitchen utensils and with those, she and I would dig the rocky, white ant-infested surroundings. We planted flowering bushes. The white ants destroyed them. My mother brought ash from her chulha and mixed it in the earth and we planted the seedlings all over again. This time, they bloomed. At that time, my father’s transfer order came. A few neighbors told my mother why she was taking so much pain to beautify a government house, and why she was planting seeds that would only benefit the next occupant. My mother replied that it did not matter to her that she would not see the flowers in full bloom. She said, “I have to create a bloom in a desert and whenever I am given a new place, I must leave it more beautiful than what I had **inherited**”.

That was my first lesson in success. It is not about what you create for yourself, it is what you leave behind that defines success.

My mother began developing a cataract in her eyes when I was very small. At that time, the eldest among my brothers got a teaching job at the University in Bhubaneswar and had to prepare for the civil services examination. So, it was decided that my mother would move to cook for him, and, as her **appendage**, I had to move too. For the first time in my life, I saw electricity in homes and water coming out of a tap. It was around 1965 and the country was going to war with Pakistan. My mother was having problems reading and, in any case, being Bengali, she did not know the Oriya script. So, in addition to my daily chores, my job was to read her the local newspaper – end to end. That created in me a sense of **connectedness** with a larger world. I began taking interest in many different things. While reading out news about the war, I felt that I was fighting the war myself. She and I discussed the daily news and built a bond with the larger universe. In it, we became part of a larger reality. To date, I measure my success in terms of that sense of larger connectedness. Meanwhile, the war raged and India was fighting on both fronts. Lal Bahadur Shastri, the then Prime Minister, **coined** the term “Jai Jawan, Jai Kishan” and galvanized the nation into patriotic fervor. Other than reading out the newspaper to my mother, I had no clue about how I could be part of the action. So, after reading her the newspaper, every day I would land up near the University’s water tank, which served the community. I would spend hours under it, imagining that there could be spies who would come to poison the water and I had to watch for them. I would daydream about catching one and how the next day, I would be featured in the newspaper. Unfortunately for me, the spies at

war ignored the sleepy town of Bhubaneswar and I never got a chance to catch one in action. Yet, that act unlocked my **imagination**.

Imagination is everything. If we can imagine a future, we can create it, if we can create that future, others will live in it. That is the essence of success.

Over the next few years, my mother's eyesight dimmed but in me, she created a larger **vision**, a vision with which I continue to see the world, and, I sense, through my eyes, she was seeing too. As the next few years unfolded, her vision deteriorated and she was operated on for cataract. I remember when she returned after her operation and she saw my face clearly for the first time, she was astonished. She said, "Oh my God, I did not know you were so fair". I remain mightily pleased with that adulation even till date. Within weeks of getting her sight back, she developed a corneal ulcer and, overnight, became blind in both eyes. That was 1969. She died in 2002. In all those 32 years of living with blindness, she never complained about her fate even once. **Curious** to know what she saw with blind eyes; I asked her once if she sees darkness. She replied, "No, I do not see darkness. I only see light even with my eyes closed". Until she was eighty years of age, she did her morning yoga every day, swept her own room, and washed her own clothes.

To me, success is about a sense of independence; it is about not seeing the world but seeing the light.

Over the many **intervening** years, I grew up, studied, joined the industry, and began to carve my life's own journey. I began my life as a clerk in a government office, went on to become a Management **Trainee** with the DCM group, and eventually found my life's calling in the IT industry when fourth-generation computers came to India in 1981. Life took me places – I worked with outstanding people, did **challenging** assignments, and traveled all over the world.

In 1992, while I was posted in the US, I learnt that my father, living a retired life with my eldest brother, had suffered a third-degree burn injury and was admitted to the Safderjung Hospital in Delhi. I flew back to attend to him – he remained for a few days in the critical stage, bandaged from neck to toe. The Safderjung Hospital is a cockroach-infested, dirty, inhuman place. The **overworked**, under-resourced sisters in the burn ward are both victims and **perpetrators** of **dehumanized** life at its worst. One morning, while attending to my father, I realized that the blood bottle was empty, and fearing that air would go into his vein, I asked the attending nurse to change it. She bluntly told me to do it myself. In that horrible theater of death, I was in pain and frustration, and anger. Finally, when she **relented** and came, my father opened his eyes and murmured to her, "Why have you not gone home yet?" Here was a man on his deathbed but more **concerned** about the overworked nurse than his own state. I was stunned at his stoic self.

There I learnt that there is no limit to how concerned you can be for another human being and what the limit of inclusion is you can create.

My father died the next day. He was a man whose success was defined by his principles, his **frugality**, his **universalism**, and his sense of **inclusion**.

Above all, he taught me that success is your ability to rise above your discomfort, whatever may be your current state. You can, if you want, raise your consciousness above your immediate surroundings. Success is not about building material comforts – the transistor that he never could buy or the house that he never owned. His success was about the legacy he left,

the mimetic continuity of his ideals that grew beyond the smallness of an ill-paid, unrecognized government servant's world.

My father was a fervent believer in the British Raj. He sincerely doubted the capability of the post-independence Indian political parties to govern the country. To him, the lowering of the Union Jack was a sad event. My Mother was the exact opposite. When Subhash Bose quit the Indian National Congress and came to Dacca, my mother, then a schoolgirl, garlanded him. She learned to spin khadi and joined an underground movement that trained her in using daggers and swords. Consequently, our household saw diversity in the political outlook of the two. On major issues concerning the world, the Old Man and the Old Lady had differing opinions.

In them, we learnt the power of disagreements, dialogue, and, the essence of living with diversity in thinking. Success is not about the ability to create a **definitive dogmatic** end state; it is about the unfolding of thought processes, **dialogue**, and **continuum**.

Two years back, at the age of eighty-two, Mother had a paralytic **stroke** and was lying in a government hospital in Bhubaneswar. I flew down from the US where I was serving my second **stint**, to see her. I spent two weeks with her in the hospital as she remained in a paralytic state. She was neither getting better nor moving on. Eventually, I had to return to work. While leaving her behind, I kissed her face. In that paralytic state and a **garbled** voice, she said, "why are you kissing me, go kiss the world." Her river was nearing its journey, at the **confluence** of life and death, this woman who came to India as a refugee, raised by a widowed Mother, no more educated than high school, married to an **anonymous** government servant whose last salary was Rupees Three Hundred, robbed of her eyesight by fate and crowned by adversity was telling me to go and kiss the world!

Success to me is about vision. It is the ability to rise above the immediacy of pain. It is about imagination. It is about sensitivity to small people. It is about building inclusion. It is about connectedness to larger world existence. It is about personal tenacity. It is about giving back more to life than you take out of it. It is about creating extraordinary success with ordinary lives.

Thank you very much; I wish you good luck and God's speed. Go! Kiss the world.

Glossary

Huddling	: to come close together in a group
Seldom	: almost never
Appendage	: something that exists as a small or less important part of something larger
Coined	: to invent a new way or expression
Intervening	: happening between two times or between other events or activities
Perpetrators	: someone who has committed a violent or a harmful act (or a crime)
Relented	: to act in a less severe way towards someone and allow something that you had refused to allow before
Dogmatic	: strongly expressing your beliefs as if they are facts
Garbled	: confused and unclear, or giving false ideas
Confluence	: a situation in which two things join or come together

Post reading

I. Answer the following questions on the basis of your understanding of the above text.

1. “Why are you kissing me, go kiss the world.” What could be the meaning of this line in your opinion? Explain with reference to the speech.
2. What are the important points in this speech, which you can incorporate into your life?
3. What kind of family, the speaker belongs to? How it shaped his character?
4. How does, in your opinion, upbringing plays an important role in the career planning of an individual?
5. How does the speaker define success? Do you agree with his idea?
6. Prepare your own speech in about 150 words to motivate your juniors for their career planning.

II. Take help from the dictionary and write down the contextual (with reference to the speech) meaning of the following words:

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------|
| a. Foundation: | h. Challenging: |
| b. Resource: | i. Overworked: |
| c. Consideration | j. Frugality: |
| d. Advertisement: | k. Universalism: |
| e. Connectedness: | l. Inclusion: |
| f. Imagination: | m. Continuum: |
| g. Trainee: | n. Vision |

Goal setting

What is a Career Goal?

A career goal is a well-defined statement explaining the profession that an individual intends to pursue throughout his career. It is important for every employee or job seeker to define their career goals clearly. It helps them to come up with effective action plans. Setting unrealistic goals can lead to disappointment. But that does not mean that one should avoid formulating career goals altogether. Creating resolutions is the easiest way to keep oneself motivated to achieve your dreams.

Breaking down Career Goals

Setting career goals is an incredibly easy process. All one needs to do is to set targets.

To illustrate the concept, consider a 17-year-old who wants to become the CEO of a large engineering company in the future. He must go through several stages, the first being passing his 12th-grade exams. After passing, the teenager will then enroll in a four-year engineering course before moving to work in, for example, a multinational company for at least two years.

Next, he may enroll in a management course from a reputable school. Advancing his studies is a good idea to boost his chances of getting the CEO position.

Short-term vs. Long-term Career Goals

As shown in the illustration above, there are short-term and long-term goals. The teenager's primary objective is to become the manager of a company. In order to get there, he needs to achieve his short-term goals, which include passing his high school and college exams, gaining experience by working for a related company, and boosting his experience and skills through further studies.

Short-term goals are those that can be achieved within six months to three years. It may take three to five years or more to achieve long-term goals.

How to Set Career Goals

Defining career goals is just half the battle. An individual must set their mind on accomplishing the goals he or she has set. However, if one doesn't develop or map out their goals properly, it will be harder to achieve them. When setting career goals, an individual should ensure that they meet the following criteria:

Specific

When setting goals, an individual shouldn't just focus on being successful. Instead, he or she should define what success means to them. The ultimate success for one person may just be a milestone to achieving bigger goals for a different person. For one individual, success may be becoming the Chief Executive Officer for a company. For another, success can be attaining financial freedom.

Measurable

As one sets his or her career goals, they should ensure that they also come up with a way to measure their outcome. This can be done by setting a timeframe, such as "complete MBA degree within three years". Once the individual is able to attain the short-term goals within the timeframe he or she sets, then they're on the right path to achieving their ultimate goal.

Avoid negativity

A goal must be something that an individual wants rather than a factor he or she wants to avoid. So, instead of focusing on leaving a particular job or position within the next five years, the employee should aim at where they want to be and think about what they can do to move toward getting there.

Realistic

More than anything, an individual's career goals must be realistic. It wouldn't make sense for an individual to set a goal of winning a Grammy award if they've never performed or played an instrument. On the other hand, the individual setting goals shouldn't keep things too simple. A career roadmap should be a challenge, not a walk in the park. If the individual's goals don't make them a little bit uncomfortable, then they should probably set higher limits.

Tie actions to each goal

For each set goal, a person needs to take certain measures to achieve it. Listing the different activities that are needed to achieve a goal makes the whole process easier.

How to Achieve Career Goals

Write them down

It may seem like an old-school technique, but it's actually very effective. Based on several studies, individuals who write down their career goals see a higher likelihood of achieving them compared to those who don't. There are several benefits to writing down one's goals. For one, an individual is forced to think critically on how to achieve each goal.

Share the plan

Another perk of writing down career goals is that it makes it easy to share them with friends, colleagues, or even a manager. When an individual discloses their short and long-term career goals to other people, they feel more challenged to follow them through to the end.

Visualize success

One thing that high achievers do is to visualize their success. Sports psychologists often ask their top athletes to envision themselves crossing that finish line or kicking the field goal. It's the same concept with career goals. One should think about all the steps they need to reach their goal and plan for the setbacks that they may encounter.

The Bottom Line

A career goal is all about setting short-term and long-term objectives related to one's career path. Setting career goals is important, as it helps propel individuals to accomplish them. This is particularly so when the person shares their plans with a third party.

Reading comprehensions

Activity 1

In today's issue, we're interviewing Dr John Grey, a career planning specialist at the Ministry of Labour.

Magazine: Many schools and universities are now asking students to think about career plans. Can you tell us about this, please?

Dr Grey: Yes. A career plan is something very important in a jobseeker's life. It helps them to work towards their aims. It should include realistic goals and objectives that can be accomplished in the near future. It also needs to include both internal and external challenges. It's a plan that's always evolving and changing.

Magazine: Would you be able to give our readers a few tips about what they need to do when planning their career?

Dr Grey: Well, to help with career planning, you need to try to do the following things:

- Think about your lifestyle now and if you're happy with it. Think about the

lifestyle you want. Do you want a relaxed, slow-paced job? Or do you prefer a hectic job that might, for example, need a lot of travel?

- Think of activities you like and dislike doing. Make a list. It might be a small task like writing notes, or a big one like helping a family member install furniture.
- Think about your interests and what makes you happy. Try to remember any volunteer work you have done or a time you had a summer job. Was there something you liked? If not, have you read about a job that seemed interesting to you?
- Think about your personality? Do you like to be around people or alone? Do you like to sit behind a desk or move around?
- Think about your dream job. Think of its advantages and disadvantages. Don't be too positive; remember to think about the negative aspects of the job.

Once you've completed these steps, you will have a better idea of who you are and what career you should aim for. With this in mind, the final step is developing a plan for achieving your goal.

Read the interview carefully and answer the following questions:

1. According to Dr. Grey, what two things need to be included in a career plan?
 - a) Realistic goals and internal and external challenges
 - b) External challenges only
 - c) All your goals of life
2. Why is thinking about your lifestyle important when career planning?
 - a) To help you choose the right career for yourself
 - b) To help you change it
3. Why does Dr. Grey suggest you think about a job you may have done in the past?
 - a) If you liked doing that job, it can help you decide what career to choose in life
 - b) So you can tell other not to do that job
4. Dr. Grey encourages readers to think about the negative side of dream jobs, why?
 - a) To keep them dreaming
 - b) To make them stay realistic

Activity 2

On the basis of your readings describe your short term and long term career plans in detail.

Essay Writing

An essay is a writing that asserts the author's opinion on a topic, whether academic, editorial or even humorous. Writes hone the skills of close reading, analysis, comparison and contrast, persuasion, conciseness, clarity, and exposition. The purpose of an essay is to develop ideas and concepts that will follow a concrete direction while expressing one's own thoughts. Therefore, essays are (by nature) concise and require clarity in purpose and direction.

Structure

Structure your essay in the most effective way to communicate your ideas and answer the question.

All essays should include the following structure.

1. Introduction Introduce the topic with general, broad sentence Provide a summary or road map of your essay (keep it brief but mention all the main ideas)
2. Body The body of your essay consists of paragraphs. Each is a building block in the construction of your argument. The body is where you: Answer the question by developing a discussion. Show your knowledge or grasp of material you have read. Offer exposition and evidence to develop your argument. Use relevant examples and authoritative quotes.
3. Conclusion Summarise all your main points. Include a final broad statement (about possible implications, future directions for research, to qualify the conclusion etc.

Never introduce new ideas in the conclusion- its purpose is to round off your essay and summarise.

Types of essays

- Argumentative
- Expository
- Narrative
- Descriptive
- Persuasive

Argumentative essays

An argumentative essay presents an extended, evidence-based argument. It requires a strong thesis statement—a clearly defined stance on your topic. Your aim is to convince the reader of your thesis using evidence (such as quotations) and analysis.

- The introduction provides your topic and thesis statement
- The body presents your evidence and arguments
- The conclusion summarizes your argument and emphasizes its importance

Expository essays

An expository essay provides a clear, focused explanation of a topic. It doesn't require an original argument, just a balanced and well-organized view of the topic.

- The introduction of an expository essay states your topic and provides some general background
- the body presents the details
- the conclusion summarizes the information presented

Narrative essays

A narrative essay is one that tells a story. This is usually a story about a personal experience you had, but it may also be an imaginative exploration of something you have not experienced. They are much more personal and creative than other kinds of academic writing.

A narrative essay isn't strictly divided into an introduction, body, and conclusion, but it should still begin by setting up the narrative and finish by expressing the point of the story—what you learned from your experience, or why it made an impression on you.

Descriptive essays

A descriptive essay provides a detailed sensory description of something. Like narrative essays, they allow you to be more creative than most academic writing, but they are more tightly focused than narrative essays. You might describe a specific place or object, rather than telling a whole story.

A descriptive essay can be quite loosely structured, though it should usually begin by introducing the object of your description and end by drawing an overall picture of it. The important thing is to use careful word choices and figurative language to create an original description of your object.

Persuasive essays

A persuasive essay presents logical arguments with emotional appeal in order to sway readers to a particular point of view. Persuasive essays can be both a form of academic writing and personal writing. They typically begin with a question that the writer spends the essay arguing in favor of or in opposition to. A personal essay writer will make a firm statement that is backed up by a combination of data, research, and anecdotal experience. A good persuasive essay should feature three essential components known as modes of persuasion: ethos, pathos and logos.

1. **Ethos:** Ethos is an element of argument and persuasion through which a speaker establishes their credibility, knowledge, and good moral character. Readers are more likely to trust someone with credible knowledge, personal experience, or standing within a community. Including ethos—or ethics—in your persuasive writing can help sell your point of view.
2. **Pathos:** Pathos is an appeal made to an audience's emotions in order to evoke feelings. Triggering particular emotions in your audience can help them connect with you as a narrator. This also provides a layer of interest to your readers, making your writing more compelling and stickier.
3. **Logos:** Logos is a rhetorical or persuasive appeal to the audience's logic and rationality. Good persuasive writing outlines a series of logical reasons why the reader should believe the writer's argument.

TABLE

Essay type	Skills tested	Example prompt
<u>Argumentative</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forming an opinion via research Building an evidence-based argument 	Has the rise of the internet had a positive or negative impact on education?
<u>Expository</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge of a topic Communicating information clearly 	Explain how the invention of the printing press changed European society in the 15th century.
<u>Narrative</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creative language use Presenting a compelling narrative 	Write about an experience where you learned something about yourself.
<u>Descriptive</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creative language use Describing sensory details 	Describe an object that has sentimental value for you.
<u>Persuasive</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Element of argument Appeal made to the audience's emotions Appeal to the audience's logic 	Explain and convince us why we should not compare ourselves with others.

Practice:

A. Match each term below to its correct definition.

a. Introduction	1.: is the first paragraph in an essay. It introduces the topic and indicates the focus of the essay.
b. Thesis statement	2.: the first part of the introduction that introduces the topic and gives some general information about it.
c. Transitions	3.: the most important sentence in an essay that comes at the end of the introduction. It expresses the main idea or purpose of the whole essay.
d. Topic sentence	4.: these make up the main section of an essay where all the key ideas and supporting details are discussed.
e. Conclusion	5.: is usually the first sentence of a paragraph and expresses its main idea or central focus.
f. Concluding sentence	6.: these are found in the body paragraphs. They come after the topic sentence and provide support for its main idea.
g. Supporting ideas	7.: usually follow supporting ideas and develop them through such things as explanations, examples, or definitions.
h. Body paragraphs	8.: this comes at the end of a body paragraph to restate the main idea.
i. Background	9.: this is the last paragraph of an essay. It reminds the reader of the thesis statement and summarises the key points discussed in the body paragraphs.
j. Details	10.: words or phrases that link important ideas within a paragraph or between paragraphs.

B. Create an essay outline on the topic of healthy eating using the form below. Begin by brainstorming and then complete the outline. Remember to only use key words and short phrases in your outline.

Topic: The Benefits of Healthy Eating.

Introduction

Thesis statement:

Body paragraph 1

Topic sentence:

Supporting idea 1:

Details:

Supporting idea 2:

Details:

Body paragraph 2

Topic sentence:

Supporting idea 1:

Details:

Supporting idea 2:

Details:

*** A conclusion is not required in an outline as it simply recaps ideas already discussed in the essay. Conclusions never include new or additional information.**

Grammar: Common Errors in English

The English language is well known for being the language of international communication in the modern world – and wherever you originate from, and whatever native tongue you speak, it's likely that learning English will be invaluable in both your personal and professional lives. Of course, the English language frequently frustrates new learners with various grammatical hurdles and stumbling blocks. Here are a few of them to be taken care of:

COMMON GRAMMATICAL ERRORS

Incorrect subject-verb agreement

The relationship between a subject and its verb

Incorrect: It is a combination of factors that cause the present situation

Revised: It is a combination of factors that causes the present situation

Note: I/you/they/we these cause
he/she/it/this causes

Note: common academic mass/uncountable nouns are software, data, information, equipment, machinery, knowledge, space, oxygen, steel, water, environment and technology – these do not have plural forms; this means that informations does not exist!

Activity:

1. Of all the countries in that area of the world, perhaps Nigeria the most potential. (have/has)
2. Houses built in Victoria less than those in New South Wales. (cost/costs)
3. As most sports magazines can attest, playing sports such as tennis and basketball not only mental ability but also physical strength. (require/requires)
4. Common knowledge to anyone who studies science, the earth on its own axis once every 24 hours. (revolve/revolves)
5. Of all the grammar points I have studied in my seven years of English, the most recent unit me the most for a variety of reasons. (confuse/confuses)

Wrong tense or verb form

The verb form that shows whether you are referring to the past, future or present

Incorrect: It was not until a sociological view of the situation was combining with a psychological approach that some progress was made.

Revised: It was not until a sociological view of the situation **combined** with a psychological approach that some progress was made.

Activity

1. After I had eaten my lunch, I told her while she was eating hers. (was talking/have talked/talked)
2. He has a party every weekend and his friends go to it without fail. (come/are coming/came)
3. He told me that the sun with a beautiful display of colours. (rises/rose/is rising)
4. She was late and he on the corner long before she came. (has been standing/had been standing/is standing)

Incorrect singular/plural agreement

Agreement between noun forms

Incorrect: Tourism have been considered one of the most important factor in the town's economic development.

Revised: Tourism **has** been considered one of the most important **factors** in the town's economic development.

Note: *Uncountable nouns such as knowledge, information, advice, progress, research and machinery can be problematic.*

Incorrect word form

Using the wrong form – verb, adjective, noun or adverb – of a word

Incorrect: The primary emphasis of early research on leadership was psychologically and focused on the personality characteristics typical found among success leaders.

Revised: The primary emphasis of early research on leadership was **psychological** and focused on the personality characteristics **typically** found among **successful** leaders.

Note: *to address this problem you need to change the format of the sentence to find the correct form – you may need to use a dictionary or thesaurus.*

Unclear pronoun reference

Unclear pronoun reference makes sentences confusing, vague, and difficult to understand.

Incorrect: Both Isabel and Barbara loved her children.

Revised: Both Isabel and Barbara loved **their** children.

Note: Find the pronoun and replace it with the antecedent. If the pronoun reference is clear, the sentence should make sense.

Incorrect use of articles

The incorrect use or omission of a, an and the

Incorrect: The meeting ended with a call for humanitarian approach to be taken over a plight of the refugees around the globe.

Revised: (general – around the globe) The meeting ended with a call for **a** humanitarian approach to be taken over **the** plight of **refugees around the globe**.

Revised: (specific place – in East Timor) The meeting ended with a call for **a** humanitarian approach to be taken over **the** plight of **the refugees in East Timor**.

Note: If a word begins with a consonant, but sounds as if it begins **with a vowel it should be treated as if it starts with a vowel, i.e. an hour, an heir.**

Activity

Choose the correct option

- a. Are you shopping for ____ health club to join so you can get in shape?
- a
 - an
 - the
 - no article is needed
- b. Shop wisely! You could end up choosing ____ wrong club and losing more money than pounds.
- a
 - an
 - the
 - no article is needed
- c. You may find that ____ European vacation is just what you need.
- a
 - an
 - the
 - no article is needed
- d. When you undertake a research, you will need to gather ____ data samples.
- a
 - an
 - the
 - no article is needed
- e. Doctors often use ____ information manuals to keep up to date with new medications.

- i. a
- ii. an
- iii. the
- iv. no article is needed

Incorrect or missing prepositions

Using the wrong preposition is a common error as most prepositions are not stressed or pronounced clearly in speech. They are also often left out accidentally in writing.

Incorrect: The study emphasised on the need of further research to ascertain the influence by television violence to young children.

Revised: The study emphasised on the need of further research to ascertain the influence **of** television violence **on** young children.

Note: *Prepositions need copious practice.*

Omitted commas

Commas should be used in compound sentences, before conjunctions, after transitions and between clauses. Use or omission of commas can change the emphasis of the sentence.

Incorrect: When it comes to eating people differ in their tastes.

Revised: When it comes to eating, people differ in their tastes.

Incorrect: My sister who lives in New York is doing a PhD.

Correct: My sister, who lives in New York, is doing a PhD.

Too many commas

Unnecessary commas make sentences difficult to read.

Incorrect: Field trips are required, in several courses, such as, botany and geology.

Revised: Field trips are required in several courses, such as botany and geology.

Incorrect: The term, “computer literacy,” has become almost a cliché, in educational circles.

Revised: The term “computer literacy” has become almost a cliché in educational circles.

Possessive apostrophe error

Apostrophes indicate possession for nouns, omissions in contractions and are, in general, not used to indicate plurals.

Incorrect: In the current conflict, it’s uncertain who’s borders they are crossing.

Revised: In the current conflict **it is** uncertain **whose** borders they are crossing.

Note: *In academic writing you should avoid contractions.*

Incorrect word use

Using a word with the wrong meaning often due to similar spelling or pronunciation can occur when using spell check!

Incorrect: The recession had a negative affect on sales.

Revised: The recession had a negative **effect** on sales.

Incorrect: The purpose of there visit was political.

Revised: The purpose of **their** visit was political.

Incorrect: The types of information are quiet different.

Revised: The types of information are **quite** different.

PRACTICE

Identify any grammatical errors in the following sentences and correct them where necessary.

1. This report gives an analytical of the financial stableness of XYZ Ltd.
2. The more rapidly the economy grow and the complexities of business increases, the more rapidly the need for accounting grow.
3. The financial information consists of a profit-and-loss statements for the year ending 30/6/96, and a balance sheet as at 30/6/96 for three separate accounting system.
4. Form yourselves into the groups of four or five people and develop marketing plan for the new product.
5. In this article, we will provide conceptual definitions of four vanity-related traits, develop selfreport measures of the traits, and have extensively validated these measures. We then demonstrated the relevance of the traits to a number of consumer-related behaviours. Last, we offer a discussion with implications for future research.
6. The goals of macro-economic policy include increasing gross domestic product; controlling inflation and making unemployment to be as low as possible.
7. Using “action research” as a keyword to do a search, one finds articles distributed among social science, education, IT and other areas, the number of published articles relevant to IT in academic journals is very small.
8. Plagiarism has been increasing at a great rate over the past few years due to the widespread availability of Internet access, which enables students to get copies of other writers’ work which at one time would only have been available in libraries.

Vocabulary: Technical and Business Vocabulary

Business vocabulary in use
Jobs, people, and organizations

1. Work and jobs

A. What do you do?

I work for

I work on

I run

I manage

I work under

I’m in charge of

I deal with

I’m responsible for

I work with

B. Word combinations with 'work'

In work

To have a job

Out of work

Without a job

To go to work

To leave for work

To get to work

To arrive at work

Off work

Away from work due to illness

C. Types of jobs and types of work

Full time job: a job in which an employee works the maximum number of legal hours

Part time job: a job in which an employee works less than the maximum number of legal hours

Temporary job: a job that finishes after a fixed period (↔ permanent job)

2. Recruitment and selection

A. Recruitment

Recruitment agencies: an organization that helps companies to find people for particular jobs

Agency: a business that serves other businesses

Recruitment: the process of finding people for particular jobs (= hiring)

Headhunters: outside specialists (recruiters) used to find people for very important jobs and to persuade them to leave the organizations they already work for

Employment Agencies: an organization that matches employers to employees

B. Applying for a job

An application: the act of asking for something

To apply for a job: to ask for a job

Application form: a form one fills in when requesting something such as a job

To make an application: to request something situations vacant pages in newspapers with job

ads CV: a summary of your academic and work history- the story of your life - a resume

Covering letter: a letter sent along with other documents to provide additional information

C. Selection procedures

Applicant: a person who requests or seeks something such as assistance or employment

Candidates: one that seems likely to gain a certain position

Reference: the giving of the name of another person who can offer information or recommendation group discussion: an exchange of views on some topic in a group

Interview: an interview is a conversation between two or more people where questions are asked by an interviewer to obtain information from an interviewee

2. Skills and qualifications

A. Educations and training

To have qualifications in

A degree in

To graduate from

To train for particular job

To train in a particular subject
Train as
Qualify as

To go on courses: to take lessons
Qualifications: a quality,
Accomplishment: that fits a person for some function
Graduates: people who've just left university
Paper qualifications: documents that prove that you have certain certificates or diplomas
Work experience: the accumulation of knowledge or skill during work
Management development: the process from which managers learn and improve their skills not only to benefit themselves but also their employing organizations

B. The right person

Methodical/ systematic/ organized: working in a planned, orderly way
Computer-literate: good with computers
Nurate: good with numbers
Motivated: very keen to do well in their job because they find it interesting
Talented: very good at what they do
Self-starter: energetic persons with unusual initiative, who are good at working on their own - are proactive, self-motivated, self-driven
Team players people who work well with other people

Technical Vocabulary

Technical Terms

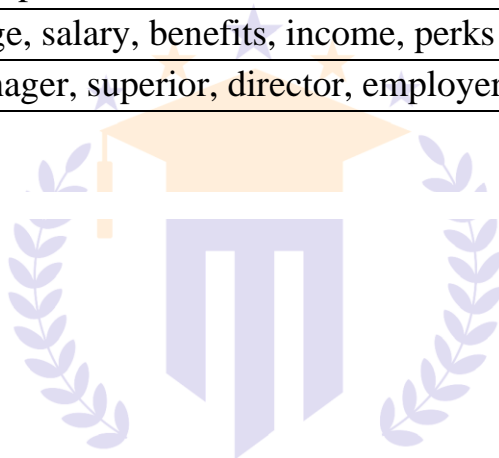
Meaning

Analysis	A detailed examination of something
Automation	The use of automated equipment instead of manpower
Balance	An equal distribution of something
Calculation	A computing determination of an amount
Consultation	Seeking advice from an expert
Depth	The measure of the deepness of something
Dimension	An aspect or a point of view of a condition
Fabrication	The process of inventing and producing something
Intersection	A point where two or more things cross each other
Manufacturing	Similar to fabrication; refers to produce something on a large scale
Refine	The industrial process of removing impurities from something
Regulation	The process of controlling and sustaining something

Exercise:

1.Match the words in column A to the words in column B.

A	B
Fire	Contract, hire, recruit, take on
Meeting	Dismiss, sack, let go, make (someone) redundant
Employ	Create, prepare, produce, generate, develop
Employee	Remunerate
Job	Duties, tasks, assignments
Pay	Talk, conference, get together
Pay	Worker, recruit, veteran, old hand
Boss	Post, position, role
Responsibilities	Wage, salary, benefits, income, perks
Make	Manager, superior, director, employer



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