



## Expressions to Highlight Solutions

English for Startup Incubator  
[cakap.com](http://cakap.com)



# Learning Objectives

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After this lesson, students will be able to:

- identify information from the texts given correctly;
- practice writing a letter to offer solutions to a problem with the appropriate expressions; recognize useful expressions commonly used to highlight solutions correctly; and
- review on the use of past progressive by doing the exercise correctly.



# Warm Up

Read the following list of typical problems when starting a business, and discuss the question.



- ☐ Poor customer care
- ☐ Lack of qualified employee
- ☐ HR and payroll problems
- ☐ Many powerful competitors
- ☐ Not enough funding
- ☐ Poor management
- ☐ Communication issues



What are the possible solutions for these issues?

# Reading

Read a letter below, highlight the unfamiliar words and ask for their definition to the class. Then do the activities on the next page.

Dear Andrew,

I have read your email, and I am sorry for not recognizing that you've been struggling hard with this time management issue. I have been observing your work in the office for quite some time now, and I noticed that you had excellent skills in sales. Your clients are good, and most are famous people. However, I think you are right. You cannot go further with your talents unless you know proper time management. Well, I've talked to the HR team, and the company agrees to equip you and all staff with the time management tools you need. I am sure that we can start using this tool to help us manage our time better. If you require any help, I am here to help you. Good luck with your work.

Regards,  
Tom  
Supervisor of Marketing Team



# Reading Comprehension

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Identify if the statements are **true** or **false** based on the letter you read on the previous slide.

1. Andrew has a good performance as a marketing team.
2. Andrew was unable to manage his time well.
3. Andrew has written an email telling about his problem to the HR division to look for some advice.
4. The company had provided a time management tool long before Andrew wrote and told Tom his issue.
5. Tom suggests that Andrew use time management tools.
6. Tom will help Andrew if he has problems dealing with the time management tool.
7. Andrew and Tom seem to work for the same department.
8. If Andrew uses the tools provided appropriately, he will solve his time management issue.

# Answer Key

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Check your answers below.



1. Andrew has a good performance as a marketing team.



2. Andrew was unable to manage his time well.

3. Andrew has written an email telling about his problem to the HR division to look for some advice.

4. The company had provided a time management tool long before Andrew wrote and told Tom his issue.



5. Tom suggests that Andrew use time management tools.



6. Tom will help Andrew if he has problems dealing with the time management tool.



7. Andrew and Tom seem to work for the same department.



8. If Andrew uses the tools provided appropriately, he will solve his time management issue.

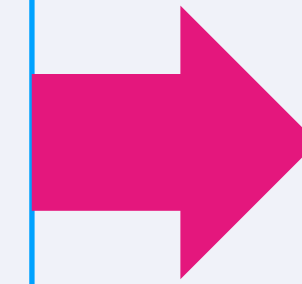


# Useful Expressions

Study the description below to learn the flow and expressions when writing to offer solutions.

## Apologizing

- First of all, I'm so/terribly sorry about that.
- Let me apologize ...
- I apologize for ...



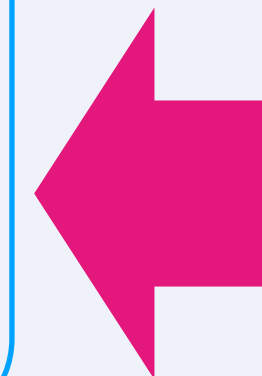
## Clarifying the problems

- We very much regret to hear that ...
- We are very concerned to hear that ...
- Due to ..., I believe that more help is needed.



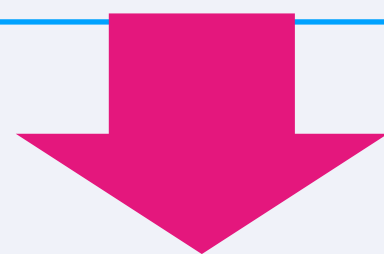
## Taking responsibility

- There seems to be a misunderstanding.
- I'm afraid there has been some sort of ...
- We assure you that we are doing everything we can ...



## Showing Empathy

- I understand...
- I would feel the same way...
- I can understand the reason for your complaint...



## Offering solutions and alternative

- I suggest that ...
- (I think) It would be great if ...
- I'd be glad to offer you ... to make up for this inconvenience.
- If this solution does not meet your needs, then I can suggest... as an alternative.



# Exercise

Read the letter below and answer the questions.

Dear Jacob,

I am concerned with the turnover of the employees in my team. I learned that we're just starting this company, but an employee's average length of stay is only three months. This work schedule is very disadvantageous for the company. It is a must that we solve this problem right away.

I suggest that we specify to the new applicants that we need them to be committed to the job for at least a year. Also, kindly review the employment histories of the applicants. Thus, we can check their stability and commitment.

I hope to meet with you this coming Friday to discuss the issue and look for a more concrete solution.

Regards,  
Tom  
Supervisor of Marketing Team



1. What are the problems?
2. What solutions are offered?
3. Identify which sentences or expressions highlight the solutions!



# Answer Key

Check your answers below.



1. What are the problems? **the turnover of the employees in Tom's team**
2. What solutions are offered? **specifying to the new applicants that are committed to the job for at least a year and reviewing the employment histories of the applicants.**
3. Identify which sentences or expressions highlight the solutions!
  - **I suggest that we specify to the new applicants that we need them to be committed to the job for at least a year.**
  - **Also, kindly review the employment histories of the applicants.**

# Ice Breaking

Guess the word!

Have a look at the pictures and translate the pictures into a phrase.



y = i



t = s

re +



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# Answer Key

Compare your word to the following.



$y = i$



$t = s$

re +



business report

Business reports have vital functions in helping managers and executives make decisions. These documents can have a variety of purposes depending on your needs and industry. But, one important is that you have to remember to present a business report clearly and concisely and highlight the solutions you recommend to help the readers grasp the main points quickly and easily. It usually consists of an introduction, background, findings, conclusion, and recommendation.



# Writing Exercise 1

Complete the following part of a business report with the appropriate expressions in the box.

## Conclusion

Although we have made savings by implementing the central purchasing policy because it is efficient and cost-effective, we've got issues with this implementation. Since we first implemented this policy three months ago, there has been a problem with sales and our branches. We are experiencing a steady reduction in regional sales and the demand from our branches to return to the previous system. If the existing unsatisfactory situation is allowed to continue, it could seriously damage the company's market share.

## Recommendation

1. Given that the central purchasing policy, although cost-effective, has resulted in a decline in sales, \_\_\_\_\_ if we did not continue with this system without modification.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ allocating a small proportion of the annual budget to regional managers. It will allow them to buy lines with known local appeal. \_\_\_\_\_ we monitor sales for a fixed period and review the policy implementation again if necessary.
3. Returning to the previous system of regional buying \_\_\_\_\_, given that the central purchasing policy is both efficient and cost-effective.

- a. we should consider
- b. is not advisable
- c. it would be great
- d. I suggest that

# Writing Exercise 1 – Answer Key

Check your answers below.

## Conclusion

Although we have made savings by implementing the central purchasing policy because it is efficient and cost-effective, we've got issues with this implementation. Since we first implemented this policy three months ago, there has been a problem with sales and our branches. We are experiencing a steady reduction in regional sales and the demand from our branches to return to the previous system. If the existing unsatisfactory situation is allowed to continue, it could seriously damage the company's market share.

## Recommendation

1. Given that the central purchasing policy, although cost-effective, has resulted in a decline in sales, **it would be great** if we did not continue with this system without modification.
2. **We should consider** allocating a small proportion of the annual budget to regional managers. It will allow them to buy lines with known local appeal. **I suggest that** we monitor sales for a fixed period and review the policy implementation again if necessary.
3. Returning to the previous system of regional buying **is not advisable**, given that the central purchasing policy is both efficient and cost-effective.

- a. we should consider
- b. is not advisable
- c. it would be great
- d. I suggest that

# Writing Exercise 2

Read the background and conclusion of a business report below and write the recommendation. Use appropriate expressions to highlight the solutions.

## Background

EVP Corporation has just been operating for three years. It employs 100 people, with most employees tasked with processing fees for insurance clients. Despite operating in a region with substantial unemployment, the annual turnover has been between 60 to 65% every year.

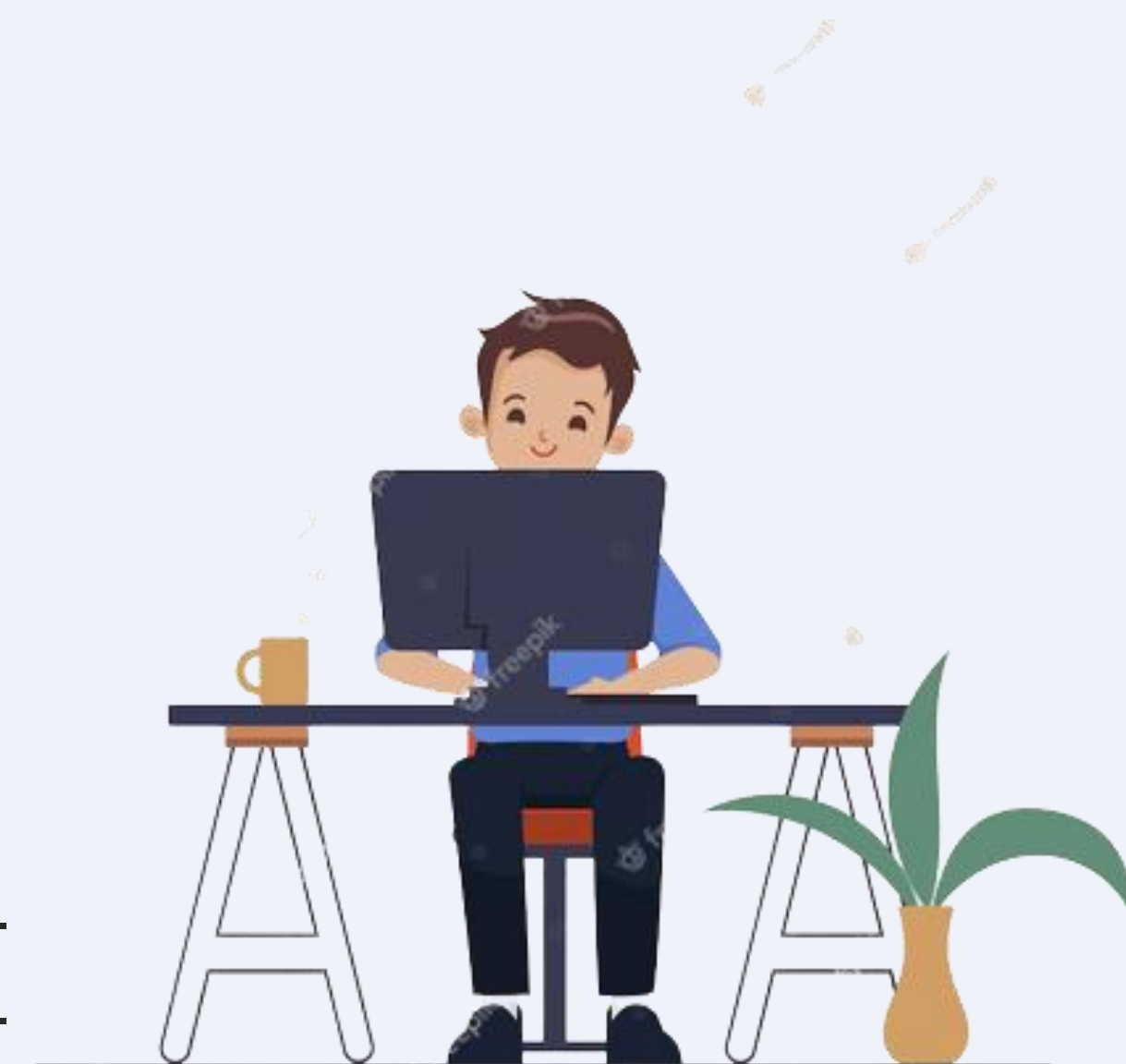
## Conclusion

The main issues that we found were as follows:

1. Lack of support to new mothers in regards to childcare
2. Lack of communication between the staff and upper management

## Recommendation

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_





# Writing Exercise 2 – Sample Answer

Compare your answer to the following sample answer.

## Background

EVP Corporation has just been operating for three years. It employs 100 people, with most employees tasked with processing fees for insurance clients. Despite operating in a region with substantial unemployment, the annual turnover has been between 60 to 65% every year.

## Conclusion

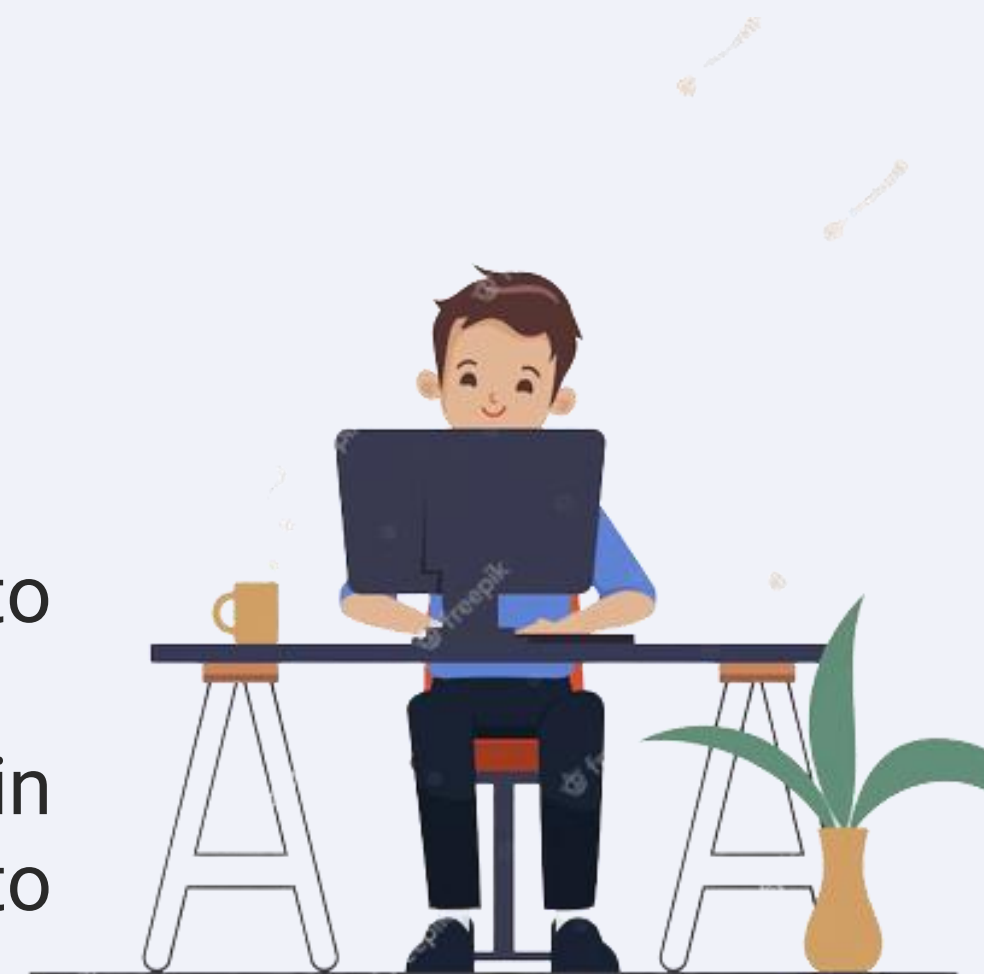
The main issues that we found were as follows:

1. Lack of support to new mothers in regards to childcare
2. Lack of communication between the staff and upper management

## Recommendation

To address these two main issues, we **suggest** that we take the following steps:

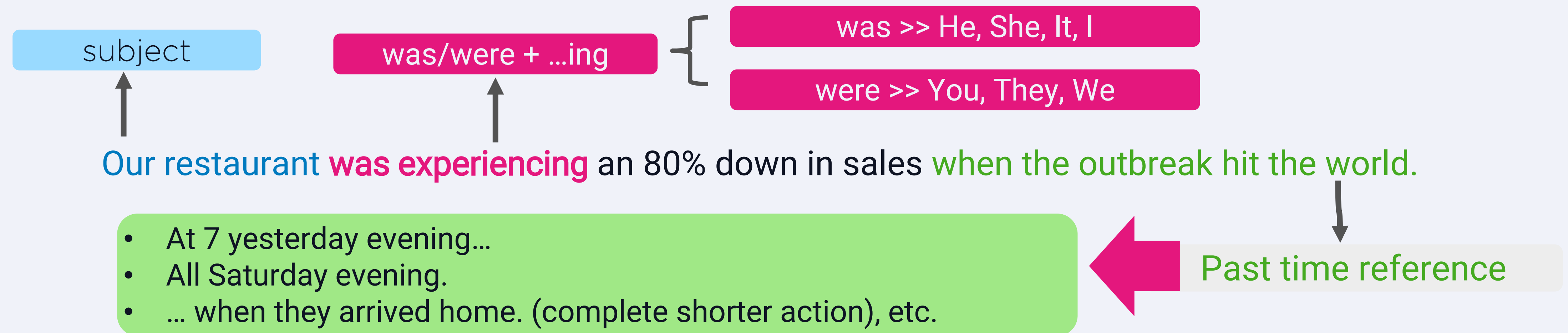
1. An in-house childcare center can be established at minimal cost to EVP, encouraging mothers to return to work.
2. Each department **should** choose an employee ambassador to represent the interests of staff in management meetings. This ambassador can express concerns and relay outcomes to their teams to increase engagement.



# Grammar Bits – Past Continuous Tense

Read the following brief description.

We **use the past continuous** to talk about **action that was in progress around a particular time in the past**.



## Other examples:

- Yesterday we **were preparing** for our presentation at the office and I left the document there.
- I **was waiting** for you all Saturday evening but you didn't show up or give me any call.
- Talking about opening a new café, I **was** always **dreaming** about it.



# Grammar Exercise

Choose the best answer.

- I \_\_\_\_ television when the phone rang.  
a. was watching                      b. were watching.
- She \_\_\_\_ her car when she suddenly ill.  
a. was driving                      b. were driving
- Paul \_\_\_\_\_ when Mary came at 7.05.  
a. was preparing for dinner          b. were preparing for dinner
- At 8.15 yesterday evening, Tom \_\_\_\_ on the design of the package for his new product.  
a. was working                      b. were working
- Yesterday you \_\_\_\_\_ of the new business idea and this morning you came with the complete business plan. How amazing!  
a. was still thinking                      b. were still thinking
- The bank called when you \_\_\_\_\_ our new business plan to the investor.  
a. was presenting                      b. were presenting



# Answer Key

Check your answers below.

1. I \_\_\_\_ television when the phone rang.  
☒ a. was watching                      b. were watching.
2. She \_\_\_\_ her car when she suddenly ill.  
☒ a. was driving                      b. were driving
3. Paul \_\_\_\_ when Mary came at 7.05.  
☒ a. was preparing for dinner                      b. were preparing for dinner
4. At 8.15 yesterday evening, Tom and I \_\_\_\_ on the design of the package for his new product.  
a. was working                      ☒ b. were working
5. Yesterday you \_\_\_\_ of the new business idea and this morning you came with the complete business plan. How amazing!  
a. was still thinking                      ☒ b. were still thinking
6. The bank called when you \_\_\_\_ our new business plan to the investor.  
a. was presenting                      ☒ b. were presenting

# Learning Reflection

Think of today's lesson and answer the questions.

- What did we learn today? what topic is it?
- Which part that you liked? Why?
- Which part that was challenging for you?
- Tell us the new vocabularies you learned today.
- Which tenses/ grammatical function did we cover today? Tell us an example using that grammar function.
- What do you think we're going to learn in the next meeting?



# References

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# Thank you.



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