

## READING PASSAGE 1

You should spend about 20 minutes on **Questions 1-13**, which are based on Reading Passage 1 on pages 2 and 3.

### The Importance of Business Cards

*The exchanging of business cards is as close to a universal ritual as you can find in the business world*

The ritual may be universal, but the details of business cards and how they are swapped vary across countries. Americans throw their cards casually across a table; the Japanese make the exchange of cards a formal ceremony. While there are cards that are discreet and understated, others are crammed full of details and titles. Some business people hand out 24-carat gold cards, and there are kindergarten children who have cards with not only their own contact details but also with the job descriptions of their parents and even grandparents. This practice has become so common in parts of New York, for example, that the use of such cards is now prohibited by some of these institutions. 1

Cards have been around a long time in one form or another. The Chinese invented calling cards in the 15th century to give people notice that they intended to pay them a visit, but these were for social purposes only. Then, in the 17th century, European business people invented a new type of card to act as miniature advertisements, signaling the advent of the business card. 2 In today's world, business cards can cause people to have strong emotional reactions. According to one experienced company director, very few things can provoke more heated discussion at a board meeting than the composition of the company's business cards 3

Lots of companies try to promote themselves by altering the form of the card. Employees at one famous toy company give out little plastic figures with their contact details stamped on them. 4 One fast food company has business cards which are shaped like a portion of French fries. A Canadian divorce lawyer once gave out a card that could be torn in two — one half for each of the spouses. For many business commentators, such gimmicky business cards prove that the use of a physical business card is nearly at an end. 5 After all, why bother exchanging bits of thick paper at all when you can simply swap electronic versions by smartphone.

However, one can just as well argue the opposite: that business cards are here to stay, and in a business world full of meetings and correspondence, it is more important than ever that your card is unique. Attempts to reinvent business cards for the digital age have not been

successful. Even at the latest technology conferences, people still greet each other by handing out little rectangles made from paper rather than using a digital alternative.

To understand business cards, it is necessary to understand how business works. That business cards are thriving in a digital age is a forceful reminder that there is much about business that is timeless. According to Kate Jones, a business lecturer, there is one eternal and inescapable issue. Her 2006 study of more than 200 business executives in North America found that trust was the key element for running a successful business.<sup>6</sup> It is vital to be able to look someone in the eye and decide what sort of person they are.

In this way, you can transform acquaintanceship into relationships. A good proportion of business life will always be about building social connections — having dinner or playing sport with clients and colleagues — and while computers can deal with administrative tasks, it is human beings that have to focus on the emotional.<sup>7</sup>

The rapid advance of globalization means that this relationship-building process is becoming ever more demanding. Managers have to put more effort in when dealing with international counterparts, especially when there is not a common language,<sup>8</sup> which is so often the case these days. A recent UK survey showed that chief executives of global organizations now routinely spend three out of every four weeks on international travel.<sup>9</sup> It is in these situations that business cards are doubly useful, as they are a quick way of establishing connections. Cards can also remind you that you have actually met someone in a face-to-face meeting rather than just searched for them on the internet. Looking through piles of different cards can enhance your memory in ways that simply looking through uniform electronic lists would never do.<sup>10</sup>

Janet McIntyre is a leading expert on business cards in today's world. She maintains = believes that as companies become more complex, cards are essential in determining the exact status of every contact you meet in multinational corporations.<sup>11</sup> Janet also explains how exchanging business cards can be an effective way of initiating a conversation because it gives people a ritual to follow when they first meet a new business contact.<sup>12</sup>

The business world is obsessed with the idea of creating and inventing new things that will change the way we do everything, and this does lead to progress. But there are lots of things that do not need to be changed, and in Janet McIntyre's view, tradition also has an equally valuable role to play. Therefore, the practice of exchanging business cards is likely to continue in the business world.<sup>13</sup>

## **Questions 1 - 5**

Do the following statements agree with the information given in Reading Passage 1?

In boxes 1 -5 on your answer sheet, write

**TRUE**                   *if the statement agrees with the information*

**FALSE**                  *if the statement contradicts the information*

**NOT GIVEN**           *if there is no information on this*

1. Children's business cards have been banned in some kindergartens.
2. It was the Chinese who first began the practice of using business cards.
3. Designing business cards can be a controversial process for some companies.
4. A famous toy company has boosted its sales by using one type of unusual business card.
5. Some business commentators predict a decline in the use of paper business cards.

## **Questions 6-13**

*Complete the notes below.*

*Choose **ONE WORD ONLY** from the passage for each answer.*

*Write your answers in boxes 6-13 on your answer sheet.*

### **How business works**

#### **Kate Jones's research**

- The most important aspect of business is having 6..... in others.
  - 7 ..... do not have the ability to establish the good relationships essential to business.

#### **Business and globalisation**

- Managers must work harder when they don't share the same 8..... with their contacts.
- AUK sun/ey indicates that 9..... takes up the largest part of business leaders' time.
- A business person's 10..... of a meeting can be improved by looking at business cards.

#### **Janet McIntyre**

- Business cards clearly show the 11..... of each person in a large company.
  - The ritual of swapping business cards is a good way of starting a 12..... at the beginning of a business relationship.
- Janet feels that in the business world, 13..... is just as important as innovation.

## **READING PASSAGE 2**

You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 14-26, which are based on Reading Passage 2 on pages 6 and 7.

### **Questions 14-19**

Reading Passage 2 has seven paragraphs, A-F.

Choose the correct heading for each paragraph from the list of heading below.

Write the correct number, i-viii, in boxes 14- o19n your answer sheet.

### **List of Headings**

- i Opposition by employers to parental leave
- ii An illustration of a trend in one country
- iii An explanation for the limited success of government initiatives
- iv Pressure for change from an unlikely source
- v The need for cooperation at a global level
- vi The contrast in attitudes towards leave for mothers and fathers
- vii A range of measures to encourage more equal responsibility
- viii The implications of maternity leave

**14 Paragraph A**

**15 Paragraph B**

**16 Paragraph C**

**17 Paragraph D**

**18 Paragraph E**

**19 Paragraph F**

## Paternity Leave

*Men have long been discouraged from playing an equal role at home. That is at last starting to change*

**A** At a course for fathers-to-be in New York, participants are introduced to baby maintenance for beginners: how to keep their babies fed, warm and clean. The City Dads Group was founded when Matt Schneider and Lance Somerfeld became fathers and discovered that people saw their place as firmly outside the home. New York was full of parents' support groups, but nearly all were aimed at mothers. Frustrated, the friends set up their own group, which has spread to 17 cities in the USA, helping fathers who want to get involved from day one.

**B** In general, legal and financial support for new parents is better than it has ever been. According to the International Labor Organization (ILO), 85% of countries now provide at least 12 weeks' maternity leave. In all but two of the 185 countries it surveys, mothers are entitled to some leave paid for by the state, companies or some combination of the two. Although only a third of countries meet the ILO's recommended minimum of at least 14 weeks off for new mothers, paid at two-thirds their salary and funded publicly, the picture is improving.

But how many countries meet the ILO's guidelines on paternity leave? None because no such guidelines exist. Though it published detailed advice regarding female employees, the organization has drawn up no formal recommendations on fathers' rights and duties. Until recently, national governments have been similarly uninterested; less than half of countries offer paternity leave of any sort. Only around half a dozen offer new fathers more than a fortnight, and companies, not the state, usually foot the bill for the costs of paternity leave. In the eyes of most people, responsibility for bringing up baby still falls squarely on the mother.

**C** Now a different view is slowly emerging, as growing evidence suggests that children benefit from seeing more of their fathers. But much of the demand for a shift in approaches to childcare has come from women, who have started to conclude that they are victims as well as beneficiaries of generous maternity-leave policies.

**D** This may appear paradoxical, as most countries have found that when they offer decent maternity leave, they increase female employment. If women have no right to take time off, or are entitled only to short or poorly paid spells of absence, many have little choice but to leave the workforce when their baby is born. If they can take a few months of paid leave before returning to their old job, they are more likely to continue working. But it turns out that long maternity breaks have unintended consequences. Time away from the labour market reduce women's earning power, as their skills degrade and they miss chances to gain experience and win promotion. **D** Moving into

senior management becomes particularly hard, partly because of discrimination by bosses and hiring committees, who reject candidates they think may be away a lot, and partly because many high-level jobs are hard to combine with serial leave-taking. And the effect is magnified when lengthy maternity leave is combined with policies to encourage part-time work, which tempt more women back into the labour force but keep them in junior position.

**E** Rather than simply cutting maternity leave in response to such findings, a growing number of governments are trying to spread the child-rearing burden (or joy, depending on how one looks at it). Britain recently became the latest country to combine maternity and paternity leave into a single chunk of parental leave, to be split between mother and father however they see fit. Several European countries, as well as Australia and New Zealand, already have such a system.

The problem is that dads tend not to take up the offer. In Austria, the Czech Republic and Poland, where all parental leave is transferable, only about 3% of dads make use of it. In Britain, the government estimates that 2-8% of dads will take more than their existing fortnight.

The main reason for low take-up by fathers is financial: 22 even pre-childbirth, women are paid less than men, meaning that their salaries are easier to forgo during a period of unpaid or low-paid leave. But pressure related to culture also weigh heavily. Mothers still tend to be seen as the main carers, with dads portrayed in domestic terms as blundering sidekicks or well-meaning buffoons. 23

**F** To overcome these obstacles, some countries are giving fathers a firm nudge. In a few, including Chile, Italy and Portugal, paternity leave is compulsory. 24 Others offer incentives that are hard to turn down. Sweden grants a bonus to parents who share leave more equally.

Swedish fathers now account for more than a fifth of all parental leave taken, compared with almost none when shared leave was introduced. Germany introduced the same system and saw the proportion of fathers taking time off rise from 3% in 2006 to 32% in 2013, and Poland has switched to gender-specific quotas, replacing the previous system of shared leave. 25

Where leave is well-paid and not seen as 'belonging' to the mother, fathers seem willing to request it. State meddling in what has historically been regarded as a natural division of labour may annoy some people. But traditional maternity leave, which channels men into breadwinning and women into child-rearing, is hardly neutral. And shared involvement by parents stands to improve women's careers, children's development and perhaps even dads' life satisfaction. 26

### **Questions 20-21**

Choose TWO letters, A-E

Write the correct letters in boxes 20 and 21 on your answer sheet

According to the writer, which **TWO** problems may be caused by maternity leave?

- A** women may be less effective at work after maternity leave.
- B** women may find it difficult to find suitable part-time work
- C** women may find they are paid less for doing the same work
- D** women's chances of professional advancement may be effected
- E** women's pay may be insufficient to support them during maternity leave.

Questions 22-26

Complete the summary below.

Choose ONE WORD ONLY from the passage for each answer.

Write your answers in boxes 22-26 on your answer sheet.

### **Encouraging more fathers to take paternity leave**

Even in countries where paternity leave is easy to get, few fathers make use of it, chiefly for 22 \_\_\_\_\_ reasons. However, issues connected with 23 \_\_\_\_\_, including traditional views of male and female roles in the family, may also play a part.

Some countries, such as Chile, have made it 24 \_\_\_\_\_ for men to take paternity leave. Sweden and Germany both offer a bonus to families where parents share leave, and in Poland, mothers and fathers each have 25 \_\_\_\_\_ of leave which are specified for them. Sharing children in this way may be good for both mothers and fathers, and may also support the 26 \_\_\_\_\_ of the child.