

# Consulting

COMMUNICATION

LEVEL

Upper-intermediate

NUMBER

EN\_BE\_3708X

LANGUAGE

English

lingoda






## Goals

- Can understand vocabulary related to consulting and typical phrases for making suggestions
- Can use the imperative to make polite suggestions to clients





**Consultants** help companies to solve their problems with their **expertise** and **specialisation**.

Consulting is all about analysing a problem and offering **advice**, **solutions** and **recommendations**.

In order to **improve a company's productivity** we need to know what to **suggest**. So let's get started.



## Working in consulting



What do you know about  
**consulting?**



## Business problems

**What are some problems that can be faced by companies?  
How might they go about solving them?**





## Consulting

- When faced with complicated problems, it is often in a company's interest to hire **consultants**. As experts in their respective fields, consultants can help guide companies through **difficult transitions** and create future opportunities.



The **consultants** helped the company turn a profit last year.



## Consulting

Consulting is a role which is often misunderstood. Businesses and companies are often **faced with complicated issues** and problems which are difficult to identify and solve. Consultants are considered experts in their field, having worked at a high level in their industry for a considerable portion of their career. As **specialists** and leaders in their respective fields, consultants are often brought into a company to offer advice, suggest alternatives and improve the **efficiency** of a company's **processes**. They are there to observe a problematic situation and turn a company's problems into opportunities.





## Consulting

Often hired as **outsiders**, consultants can provide many benefits to a company looking to increase its **productivity**. They can share their knowledge and expertise with the team, deliver training and provide a fresh perspective to management. The **infusion** of creativity that a talented consultant can provide can be extremely valuable. They are also **adept** at managing change and taking the blame for unpopular decisions, which might have been difficult to agree on **internally**.







## Useful vocabulary

**consulting firm**

With all of these quarterly losses, I think we should consider investing in a **consulting firm**.

**profitable**

With these suggestions we can look forward to a **profitable** quarter.

**productivity**

There is a **productivity** issue in the sales department.

**efficient**

With our expertise, we can help you make the most **efficient** decisions for your company's future.

**to solve problems**

They have come in **to solve problems** we face in the new market.

**management  
structure**

We've decided the best course of action is to reorganise the **management structure** of the company.



## Consulting firms



Do you know of any **consulting firms**?

Consulting firms are also known as **consultancies** or **consultancy firms**.



## Consulting firm

**Explain to the teacher what a consulting firm is hired to do.  
Use the words below as prompts.**



problems

perspective

efficiency

expertise



## Consulting

Often, when a business is facing a problem, it is vague and difficult to define. **Consultants** break down complex and difficult problems into the key issues, and use data to **drive forward** solutions. This can be a complicated role – problems in the business world are often **multifaceted**, with hundreds or even thousands of smaller issues surrounding them. Consultants are experts at applying problem-solving techniques, focusing on whichever issues are the central ones.





## Consulting

In the face of such problems, consultants must develop a deep understanding of how the company or department in question works. Only by understanding the **dynamics** of how a company operates can consultants make assumptions about the **root cause** of the problem. During this early stage of the process, consultants will meet with **key stakeholders, executives**, managers and other important members of the company and listen to their opinions and thoughts. Next, consultants will analyse the information and **brainstorm**, looking for patterns which might result in a potential solution to the problem.





## Discuss

What are some of the challenges involved in being a **consultant**?

What are some of the benefits they can bring to a business?





## The imperative

- We use the imperative to **give orders, instructions, commands** and **warnings**.
- The imperative can be useful for consultants when they are **giving advice** and **recommendations**.
- The imperative with **let's** is often used in this context as it usually sounds more polite and it **softens the command**.
- It gives a sense of the consultant **working together** with the company rather than simply telling them what to do.

less polite	more polite
Don't make that deal.	Let's not make that deal.
Restructure the accounting department.	Let's restructure the accounting department.
Invest more in this area.	Let's invest more in this area.



## Polite suggestions

- The imperative is generally not the most polite way to make recommendations.
- Using **conditionals** and **modal verbs softens** your suggestions.

If you want to save money, you *could* do this instead.

You *should* perhaps consider a merger with the other company.

I *would* recommend that you pull out of that market.







## Useful verbs when giving advice and instructions

**to recommend**

The director is going **to recommend** some changes around here.

**to advise**

The firm came in **to advise** the management on the best course forward.

**to insist**

I am here **to insist** you close the deal before business closes on Friday.

**to suggest**

What would you like **to suggest**?

**to propose**

What we are going **to propose** might be very unpopular amongst the staff.

**to consider**

One recommendation was **to consider** restructuring the sales department.



## Phrases to give advice and instructions

**Let's...**

**You really need  
to...**

**It is in your best  
interest to...**

**I strongly  
suggest that...**

**You should  
consider...**

**I would  
recommend that...**

**Perhaps you  
could...**

**I propose that...**





## Answer the questions

Using the phrases you have learnt, give advice or instructions in each of the following scenarios.

1. The value of the company is falling quickly.
2. Sales of a new, highly-anticipated product are very disappointing.
3. A staff member has been caught leaking company information to a competitor.
4. The company's marketing department is underfunded.





## Order the phrases from strongest to softest

I insist that you  
reform the HR  
department.

Reform the HR  
department!

Perhaps you could  
reform the HR  
department.

I would recommend  
that you reform the  
HR department.



## Consulting

After having thoroughly considered all possible ideas, consultants will **gather** the most promising ones and turn them into a solution which is **practical** and able to be **implemented** at a low cost. Once a solution has been put together, consultants will present their summary of the problem, along with their **observations** and findings, to the **relevant stakeholders** in the company. Finally, they will present their solution, along with recommendations and suggestions for how to proceed.





## Consulting

Solutions to a company's problems are often unpopular. Many companies hire consultants to deal with financial problems in an effort to reduce costs. After analysing the company's financial situation, recommendations may include reducing the size of the staff or reducing the **scope** of promotional campaigns.





## Consulting

Consultants can take many forms, and differ in the kind of **expertise** they provide depending on the industry. In certain industries, consultants require **considerable amounts** of technical knowledge.

Consultants might be **brought into a company** to deal with a range of business problems. Examples of problems that consultants may be tasked with include coming up with strategies to **gain market dominance**, making decisions on whether to **merge** with another company, reducing costs in specific departments, and introducing products to new markets.





## Different types of business

**What kind of expertise and skills might a consultant need to succeed in the following industries?**



general skills



industry-specific knowledge



IT

finance

communications





## Consulting

**Read through this report on the issues facing a company.**

The company is losing money fast. The marketing department is spending an enormous amount of money on global advertising. At the same time, sales of our products have stopped increasing. There are new competitors in the market with products that rival ours at a lesser price. It feels like the brand is losing out to these new companies. Additionally, employees at the company have expressed their frustration with long working hours.

**Can you identify the problems?**



## Analyse the problems



Think about the issues facing the company.

Write down some potential solutions.



## Role play

**Now present your solutions to the company management (your teacher). Be prepared for any questions or disagreements. Remember to use the phrases you have learnt during the lesson.**



I would  
recommend  
that...

I propose that...

Let's...

You really need  
to...



## Reflect on the lesson

Take a moment to review any new **vocabulary, phrases, language structures** or **grammar points** you have come across for the first time in this lesson.

Review them with your teacher one more time to make sure you don't forget!





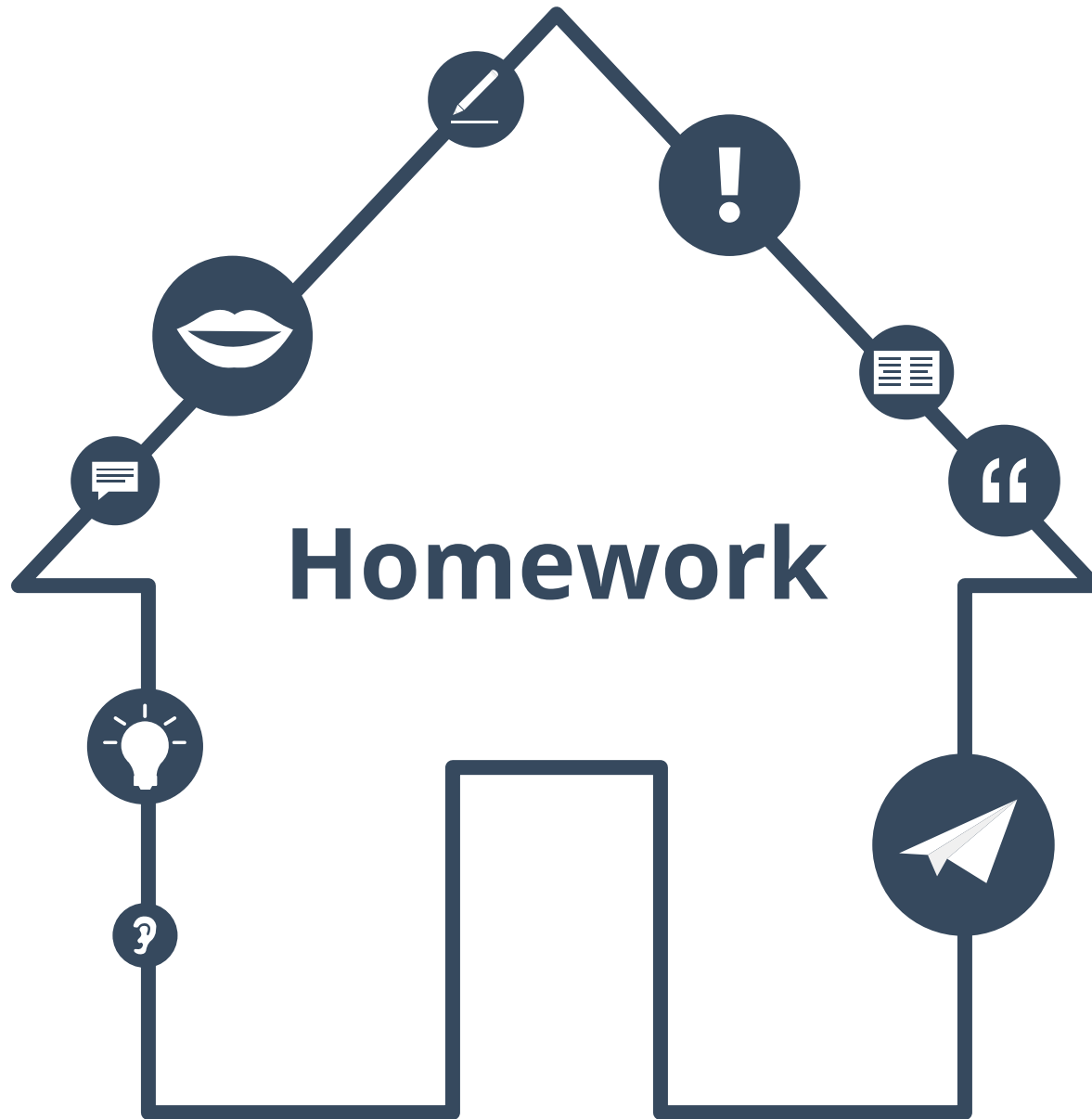
## Answer key

### **Exercise p. 20**

Reform the HR department!

I insist that you reform the HR department.

I would recommend that you reform the HR department.  
Perhaps you could reform the HR department.





reducing the  
current cost of  
salaries

updating  
company  
branding for  
the 21<sup>st</sup> century

introducing a product to a new market





## Give instructions and advice

**Compose an email to your client summarising the solutions you have just come up with.**

**Don't forget to use the phrases you learnt during the lesson.**

-□×

To: telefonco@lingoda.com

Subject: Potential solutions and opportunities

Dear...





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