# PEOPLE

## A) Good Friends

Read the text. Use a dictionary if necessary but note that it is not essential to understand every word. Then answer the questions.

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**Good friends**

Psychologists have long known that having a set of cherished companions is crucial to mental well-being. In addition, a recent study by Australian investigators concluded that our friends even help to prolong our lives. The scientists analyzed data from a decade-long survey called the Australian Longitudinal Study of Aging, which was initiated in 1992. It concentrated on the social environment, general health, lifestyle and age of death of 1,477 persons older than 70 years. Study participants were asked how much personal and telephone contact they had with friends, children, relatives and acquaintances.

Researchers were surprised to learn that friendships increased life expectancy to a far greater extent than, say, frequent contact with children and other relatives. This benefit held true even after these friends had moved away to another city and was independent of factors such as socioeconomic status, health and way of life.

What exactly underlies this effect on longevity? Apparently, the scientists posit, it is not merely the mutual buoying of spirits that occurs among associates. What is more important is that the support given and received by friends is voluntary and pleasurable and not just the result of a sense of duty or convention. In contrast to our own families, we are able to choose our friends.

According to the Australian scientists, the ability to have relationships with people to whom one is important has a positive effect on physical and mental health. Stress and the tendency toward depression are reduced, and behaviors that are damaging to health, such as smoking and drinking, occur less frequently. The investigators speculate that in times of calamity in particular, our support networks can raise our moods and feelings of self-worth and offer helpful strategies for dealing with difficult personal challenges.

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I. **Which words and expressions in the first paragraph could the following substitute for?**
   a. friends one loves and cares for
   b. extremely important
   c. extend
   d. begun
   e. focused
   f. subjects

II. **Find in the text a word which:**

   a) means 'people' (more formal)
   b) means 'is the hidden cause of
   c) would be spelt differently in British English. How?
   d) means a 'serious accident or very bad event'

III. **Use words from the text to complete this table.**

| noun | verb | adjective |
|------|------|-----------|
|  |  | conventional |
| help | help |  |
|  | expect | expectant |
| pleasure | please |  |

IV. **Sum up the benefits of having good friends (add more)**

V. **Discussion:**
   - Do the propositions also apply to Facebook friends?
   - Some people maintain that one good friend is enough. Do you agree?

## B) Team building

**I.    What are the advantages and disadvantages of working in teams?**

**II.    For each box in the quiz below, tick the three statements that most apply to you..**

### What sort of team player are you?

| Doers vs Thinkers | Detail vs Ideas | Mind vs Heart | Planners vs Improvisers |
|---|---|---|---|
| a) I consider what I say. | a) I often come up with unusual solutions. | a) I like to think logically. | a) Meetings have to be prepared for carefully |
| b) I contribute a lot in discussions. | b) It's important to be realistic | b) I keep emotions out of decision-making. | b) I like surprises. |
| c) Action is more important than reflection. | c) People see me as a creative person. | c) I avoid confrontation. | c) I hate time-wasting at meetings. |
| d) I listen to others before I say anything. | d) I like practical solutions. | d) I sometimes tread on people's toes. | d) Too much time can be spent on preparation. |
| e) Discussion gives me energy and ideas. | e) You shouldn't overlook details. | e) Understanding people is as important as being right. | e) People say I'm a punctual person. |
| f) I don't say a lot at meetings | f) You shouldn't get lost in details. | f) I care about other people's feelings | f) I need a deadline to get me going. |

**III.    Work in groups and compare your answers. Then discuss these questions.**

a.    How important are thinking styles in effective teamwork?

b.    Do you think your group would make a good team, based on the results of the quiz? Explain why or why not.

**IV.  Match the prefixes of these words to their meanings**

| Prefix | Meaning of prefix | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 *mis*manage | a) not | b) badly | c) former |
| 2 *pro*-European | a) opposite | b) in favour of | c) before |
| 3 *pre*dict | a) not enough | b) against | c) before |
| 4 *post*-industrial | a) after | b) too much | c) not enough |
| 5 *dis*honest | a) two | b) former | c) not |
| 6 *ex*-president | a) opposite | b) former | c) after |
| 7 *under*developed | a) against | b) not enough | c) opposite |
| 8 *anti*social | a) opposed to | b) two | c) before |
| 9 *bi*lateral | a) against | b) after | c) two |
| 10 *re*connect | a) again | b) former | c) after |
| 11 *ir*responsible | a) again | b) not | c) against |
| 12 *hyper*active | a) not enough | b) very | c) opposite |

**V.  Complete these two short texts with some of the words above.**

The_____[1] of the United States was present at the signing of a_____[2] agreement between the USA and the EU on research into computer software. The agreement, which had been widely_____[3] for some time, came about through support from_____[4] senators.

Some of the_____[5] countries profiled last month have run into serious balance of payments problems. In each case this has been due to_____[6] of debts and _____[7] leaders who have run up enormous expense accounts.

**Team building involves more than throwing a few people together**

'Teamworking' has infiltrated every nook and cranny within just about every organisation. You can't get away from 'teams' that are supposed to be able to create something that is greater than the sum of its parts. Or so the theory goes.

Yet the truth about teams is that the large majority of them do not achieve the synergies they could. For example, poor teamworking is the culprit when meetings regularly overrun, when there are frequent arguments between team members or there is an unhealthy level of competition between individuals. Other signs of unproductive teamworking are people not always completing tasks assigned to them or last-minute panics to meet deadlines. More often than not, ineffective teams are the result of poor planning.

There are six measures that need to be taken before you can get the most out of a team.

(1) _____

In other words, a clear reason for the team to exist. But don't think of goals as a wish lists – they have to be achievable, yet challenging enough to motivate team members.

(2) _____

Members must be able to express their opinions freely without fear of retribution, and feel that suggestions will be taken seriously. The team might also need to agree whether politically sensitive topics of discussion in meetings should be kept within the confined of the team or shared with other employees.

(3) _____

It is easy to think (albeit subconsciously) that a junior team member may have less to contribute than more experienced members.

This is not only demoralising, it also makes no sense - people that have nothing to contribute should not have been selected for the team in the first place. You need to ensure that every member has an opportunity to add his or her thoughts to discussions.

(4) _____

Disagreements are natural and, in fact, debate should be encouraged. A team made up only of 'yes men' can make disastrous decisions that few people honestly agreed with the first place. Consequently, there should be explicit rules on how lengthy disagreements should be tackled. For example, team meetings may not be the most appropriate place for a discussion that involves only two people, so the team could agree to certain issues being taken 'off line'.

(5) _____

Most high-performing teams (whether it is in the workplace, sports or even in a pub quiz) have leaders. A good leader should be able to play to individual strengths and compensate for their weaknesses. A good leader is critical, says Gary Spellins, Managing Director of Managed Services, Lex Service plc, which delivers a range of outsourcing solutions to the public and private sector. 'It should be someone who can act as a catalyst and a constant reminder of what the team needs to achieve.' The leader must, above all, be skilled in sharing responsibility and delegating work to others, coaching them to achieve tasks, and providing constructive feedback on how the tasks went.

(6) _____

Team members need to be able to see how they are doing against the objectives set at the beginning of the project.

From *Accountancy* magazine

**V.** **In the table, you can find the headlines of each section 1-6 and two, which are not related to the text. Identify the two unrelated headlines and state the numbers of the sections next to the corresponding main idea in the table.**

| paragraph | headline of the section |
|---|---|
| | Measuring progress against goals |
| | Involvement of all team members |
| | Common goals with challenging targets |
| | The origins of team building |
| | Conflict Resolution |
| | Open Communication |
| | The psychological effects |
| | Leadership |

**VII.    Answer the questions**

    a.    What is meant to be the advantage of creating a team? (paragraph 1)

    b.    Which word means the same as the answer to question 1? (paragraph 2)

    c.    What are the five signs of unproductive teamworking that the article mentions?


**VIII.    (🔊 010) Building a team: Doug Cole runs team-building courses for managers. Listen to the first part of the interview and name the key points you have just heard.**

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____


**IX.    (🔊 011) Listen to the second part of the interview and answer these questions.**

    a.    When might you need someone to co-ordinate a team's activities?

_____

_____

    b.    What does co-ordination involve?

_____

_____

    c.    When might you need someone to drive the situation?

_____

_____


**X.    Group Discussion**

- The speaker said in the interview that a team leader is not always necessary. Do you agree?
- What is your experience with teams and team leaders? You may also refer to popular teams in sports or other areas.
- Do you see yourself as a team leader or follower supporting the group? Give reasons.

# C) Employees

**Changing jobs / Keeping staff**

**I.** **(🖵 012) Listen to three people talking about their experience of changing jobs or careers and answer the questions.**

a) Answer these questions for each speaker.

1. What was their job and what is their job now?

2. What reasons do they give for changing jobs?

3. How did they go about getting a new job?

4. What other options could they have considered?



Tyler    Fabia    Karl

b) What do you think each speaker has learnt from the experience?

c) Tell a partner about a job change you have made/would make.
Why did you /would you make it?

**II. Find these pairs of phrases in audio script on the following page. Explain the difference in meaning between the phrases in each pair.**

1.   taking early retirement / made redundant
2.   temporary secondment / relocation
3.   being unemployed / laid off
4.   a sideways move / a change of direction
5.   transferable skills / update my skills
6.   a glass ceiling / opportunity for advancement
7.   corporate culture / rules and red tape
8.   personal development / training

*Audio Script:*

*Tyler*

*I left high school at 16 … with no qualifications … so my career prospects were not good … but I got a job at the local automobile factory, working shifts on a production line. Work was kind of monotonous – but I had job security and the money was good. I'd worked there for almost thirty years when I was **made redundant** … the company got taken over, and just like that they decided to downsize and shut the factory down. You can imagine … in a small town like ours, when you get that many men **laid off** all at once because there's no work for them, there's no chance of finding another job. I'd lived there all my life so **relocation** to a new place was not an option. I had some redundancy money, and I went for retraining, first on a shorter computer course to **update my skills** and increase my employability, then a two-year course in programming. And because of my background, I ended up as an IT consultant to manufacturing companies. So it was a complete career change, but I don't regret it. It was a whole lot better than **being unemployed**, and having no job to go to, or just **taking early retirement**.*

*Fabia*

*I worked for a multinational insurance company in Lausanne for six or seven years. The salary was good but there wasn't a lot of **opportunity for advancement** … I was beginning to feel dissatisfied. And I … I didn't feel particularly valued by the management … I felt expendable … like a commodity really … I was working really long hours for little recognition. I could have made a sideways move, I suppose, but I decided to opt for self-employment. We moved to Geneva, where I set up my own recruitment agency – finding stuff for insurance companies. I've come to understand why people really want to change jobs – and it's hardly ever about money. Usually it's for personal reasons, like my own experience. A lot of my clients have some sort of issue with their boss – see them as incompetent maybe. Sometimes we have very successful women who feel there's **a glass ceiling** where they work, and know they can only get on if they move elsewhere. For others, it's all about growth opportunities – they're looking for **training** and **personal development** but it's just not on offer in their company.*

*Karl*

*I worked for Ericsson in Sweden until a couple of years ago – I was production manager – and I was a bit restless … I had a good standard of living, my youngest child had just gone to university, and I suppose I was looking for a new challenge … **a change of direction**. And to be honest, I didn't feel particularly comfortable with the **corporate culture** any more … and I was getting frustrated by too many **rules and red tape**. I was considering applying for a **temporary secondment** to a production plant in the UK, when I came across a charity who were looking for an administrator to work in a specialist hospital in Addis Ababa in Ethiopia, and I suddenly realized that what I was looking for was a complete career change. So I discussed it with the family … I got the job and I've been here ever since… I actually found that a lot of the skills I had were **transferable skills** – like leadership and planning. I don't regret it at all. Of course there are a few things I miss, and my salary is much lower … but personally I feel much happier. It's very challenging here, but my quality of life is much better.*

# D) What the state of your desk says about you

*Read the following text and complete the tasks below.*

Do you have trouble locating your computer screen amid the jungle of old coffee mugs and scattered papers? Or is your workspace a minimalist's dream?

Every office worker has a particular type of desk they keep, and a number of studies suggest that how you keep your workspace might affect how you work, from the idea that disorderly environments produce creativity — to the idea that too much clutter can interfere with focus.

Deliberately or not, we're constantly making statements about ourselves through our personal presentation, says Sam Gosling, professor of psychology at the University of Texas at Austin, and author of the book Snoop: What Your Stuff Says About you.

"One of the reasons physical spaces, including one's office desks, can be so revealing is that they're essentially the crystallisation of a lot of behaviour over time," he says.

Lily Bernheimer, an environmental psychology consultant and director at UK-based Space Works Consulting developed five personality desk types for UK co-working company Headspace Group, drawing on the work of Gosling and other personality and environmental psychologists.

A research fellow at the University of Surrey in the UK, Bernheimer came up with an evidence-based breakdown that combined insights from personality research, environmental psychology and 'big five' personality traits: extroversion; agreeableness; conscientiousness; neuroticism and openness to experience.

So, what does your desk space say about your personality?

## The clutterer

The clutterer's workspace is chaotic, colourful and often covered in knick-knacks and personal effects. Bernheimer says clutterers tend to be more extroverted and welcoming of colleagues. "If they have a choice in where they sit, they're more comfortable and happy being at the circulation crossroads in the office."

The downside? They're often so busy and active that they may not have much time to tidy up as their less social colleagues. But their messy space is much more welcoming than the sparse minimalism or oppressive piles of papers of their less outgoing counterparts.

## The minimalist

Love a routine and a post-it note? You might be a minimalist. But just because minimalists don't enjoy clutter, it doesn't mean they're not extroverted, says Bernheimer: "An extremely tidy and organised workplace doesn't indicate that you're introverted."

Instead, a minimalist is more likely to be high in the traits of conscientiousness, discipline and cautiousness. They are hardworking, reliable, achievement-oriented and thrive on structure and planning, she says. Be warned though, if you're not making at least a small personal mark on your desk, your lack of human imprint might indicate you don't plan to stay long in your role.

## The expander

Expanders love to stake a claim on their area of the office. "People who are more dominant personality types are more defensive of their space," says Bernheimer. In fact, over time, their personal effects may start to encroach on other people's spaces; a coat on a spare chair or debris radiating out from their desk onto that of others. "They may try to mark more and more territory for themselves by moving their coffee cup and their sandwich out further to claim more territory."

Expanders love a spot in the centre of the room and may be more aggressive about carving out their physical space. Should you be worried? Well, sitting next to an expander might make you thankful for that partition. And, if you work in a hot-desking or co-working space, they'll likely feel more defensive and territorial of their work area and could seek to claim some of yours.

## The personaliser

Do you have a curated collection of books or magazines on your desk? What about artwork, travel photos or mementos? You may be a personaliser. "A simple, stylish or unusual workspace tells people that you're high in the trait called 'openness', which means you're likely to be high in creativity, intellectuality and openness to new experience," says Bernheimer.

Personalisers are curious, extroverted and creative, says Bernheimer. They're also more likely to be satisfied in their jobs, psychological well-being and physical health — a benefit for both the employee and the employer.

## The surveyor

Hate having your back to the door? Feel insecure if your desk is in a high traffic area? There's a good reason for that. "Evolutionarily, it would have been advantageous to us to situate ourselves in places where we had a good view of potential threats," says Bernheimer.

Surveyors prefer their personal space — too much distraction, stimulation or interaction can throw them off their game. They may prefer to sit with their backs against an office wall and to work alone. They might even be a little grumpy.

But don't judge too harshly: while surveyors might be introverted, they are also highly creative and productive, says Bernheimer. Just leave them alone to get on with it, and don't sneak up behind them when they're working.

**TASKS**

**I. Study the first part of the text and explain the following verbs/terms in English.**

to scatter –

to affect –

deliberate –

to reveal –

personality trait –

extroversion –

agreeableness –

conscientiousness –

neuroticism –


**II. What does your desk look like and where in the room is it located?**


**III. Describe your ideal workplace – where is it located, what is on it, how is it decorated?**


## E) Motivation

**I. Which factors would motivate you in your job?**

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____


**II. Read the short text. Is it negative or positive about incentive schemes?**

**Incentive schemes or cash?**

Employers often don't know whether to offer **incentive schemes** (such as travels, trips, excursions, social events, merchandise) or cash to help their company achieve its goals. When you ask employees what they want, they generally say 'more money' – but salary increases or **annual bonuses** are not always the best way to **motivate staff**. **Non-cash rewards** such as *merchandise* and travel can be a far more effective way to **improve performance, boost staff morale** and **foster company loyalty**.

### III. Why do non-cash incentive schemes work better?

a) They provide a lasting reminder of the achievement and the positive feelings that go with it.
b) They offer rewards that can be shown to others or talked about – and it is socially acceptable to 'boast' about the achievement. The same certainly cannot be said for cash.
c) They provide a guilt-free form of reward, often something employees would not otherwise do or buy, whereas they may feel guilty for not spending cash on necessities.
d) They have a higher perceived value. The actual cash value is secondary to the recognition.
e) The employee's family is often involved in the reward selection and the reward chosen may benefit the whole family.
f) Extra cash in the monthly pay packet disappears into the bank account or wallet. In fact, 72% of people receiving cash rewards use it to pay bills, can't remember what they spent it on, or don't even know they received it!

### IV. Read the text again and answer questions a-d.

a) What are the advantages of incentive schemes for employers?
b) What are the advantages of non-cash incentives for employees?
c) What are the disadvantages of cash rewards?
d) Do *you* think incentive schemes are better than cash rewards? Why or why not?

### V. Match the phrases in **bold** in the text to these definitions.

a) encourage employees to want to work harder: _____

b) something done well by your own effort or skill: _____

c) make employees feel better about themselves and their work: _____

d) praise and reward for something you have done: _____

e) make people work more efficiently: _____

f) programmes that provide extra rewards for good work: _____

g) be useful to someone or improve their life in some way: _____

h) bonuses that do not involve money: _____

i) encourage commitment to the company: _____

j) extra money for good work - added to salary once a year: _____

**VI.** **(🔊 013) Listen to three people talking about their jobs indicate which of the following information in the text is right (✔) or wrong (X).**

|   |   | ✔ | X |
|---|---|---|---|
| **A** | Speaker 1 is soliciting drugstore articles to hotels. |   |   |
| **B** | Speaker 1 is mainly working in German-speaking countries. |   |   |
| **C** | Speaker 1 does not work autonomously. |   |   |
| **D** | Speaker 1 makes more money on top of her basic salary. |   |   |
| **E** | Speaker 1's achievements are not recognized by her employer. |   |   |
| **F** | Speaker 2 mainly uses the reward vouchers for himself. |   |   |
| **G** | Speaker 2: Job satisfaction is not related to praise and positive feedback. |   |   |
| **H** | Speaker 2: The special trips for managers are also awarded as monthly prizes. |   |   |
| **I** | Speaker 2 climbed Mt. Kilimanjaro on one of those trips. |   |   |
| **J** | Speaker 2's company offers many opportunities for professional training. |   |   |
| **K** | Due to her job, speaker 3 gets the chance to travel different countries on most of her trips. |   |   |
| **L** | Staff discounts apply to first-degree relatives of speaker 3. |   |   |
| **M** | Speaker 3 is satisfied with her salary. |   |   |

**VII. Which of these words and phrases from audio (🔊 013) are**

a) material benefits? *profit-sharing scheme*

b) non-material benefits? *fulfilment*

> ~~*profit-sharing scheme*~~    ~~*fulfilment*~~    *company car*    *autonomy*    *feel valued*
>
> *be acknowledged*    *commission*    *staff discount*    *attendance reward*    *appreciation*
>
> *on-time bonus*    *compensation plan*    *positive feedback*    *(personal) development*
>
> *praise*    *satisfaction*    *private medical insurance*    *non-contributory pension plan*