

UNIT 11

Cultures

VOCABULARY

A Choose the best word (a, b or c) to complete the text.

When people hear the word *culture*, they often think about the cultural life, the history or the *customs*¹ of a country. But when you are in business, you also need to think about *company cultures*.

Companies have different *cultures*: they believe in different things, and they have different ways of working. For example, some companies are formal so staff use² when they speak to each other and they have to wear business³. Other companies have a system of⁴ Fridays, when staff can⁵ anything they like at the end of the week.

Sometimes, there are also big differences in the amount of time⁶ that staff can get. In some companies, staff get more paid annual⁷ than in others, for example. Or staff can choose when they start and finish work – a system called ‘.....’⁸. People can start work at 8, 9 or 10 a.m. and finish at 4, 5 or 6 p.m.

Finally, bosses and employees can communicate in many different ways. Some line managers like to get regular written reports, but others prefer⁹ communication.

- | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1 a) <u>customs</u> | b) uses | c) habits |
| 2 a) family names | b) positions | c) business cards |
| 3 a) dressing | b) fashion | c) suits |
| 4 a) formal | b) casual | c) normal |
| 5 a) wear | b) suit | c) dress |
| 6 a) out | b) off | c) away |
| 7 a) weekends | b) benefit | c) leave |
| 8 a) shift work | b) part time | c) flexitime |
| 9 a) back-to-front | b) face-to-face | c) back-to-back |

B Complete the sentences.

- We can't wear what we like at work. We are all in un i f o r m.
- Jane is a nurse at the local health centre. This week, she is on the night _ _ _ f _.
- Is Ricardo looking for a _ _ _ _ -time job or a full-time one?
- Is 1st January a p _ _ _ _ h _ l _ d _ _ in your country?
- My son is not of school age yet so I'd like to know if the company has any c h _ _ _ c _ _ _ facilities.
- Sergei is going to take t _ _ _ _ f for health reasons.
- What's his job t _ _ _ _ now? Is he 'General Director'?
- You should learn to speak a little of the local _ _ _ g _ _ _ before you go.

C Complete the sentences with words from the box.

control customer innovation performance trust

- 1 Shuru Electronics strongly support innovation. They always welcome new ideas and are open to change.
- 2 They want to introduce an incentive scheme for efficient employees to reward good
- 3 We are essentially a-focused business, but of course we also pay attention to sales and profit.
- 4 At Floryval, we empower employees. We really give them a lot of over their work.
- 5 We want relationships between workers and managers to be open and honest. That's why we encourage at all levels of our company.

LANGUAGE
REVIEW

ould/
ldn't

A Match the sentences (1–8) with the sentences (a–h).

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 I think someone should talk to the boss. | a) I think all our staff need to develop their computer skills. |
| 2 He should try to be a bit more punctual. | b) Our online business is really bad. |
| 3 I don't think you should wear formal clothes to the party. | c) People in this country think it's rude to be late. |
| 4 Do you think I should buy my hosts a present? | d) They're always very kind to me. |
| 5 She should go on the training course, too. | e) They're always very useful. |
| 6 You shouldn't miss any of the meetings. | f) We can't work extra hours on Saturday. |
| 7 We should develop a better website as soon as possible. | g) Take them seriously and deal with them immediately. |
| 8 You shouldn't ignore customer complaints. | h) Most of the guests will be in jeans. |

B Complete the sentences with *should* or *shouldn't*.

- 1 We should order online. It's faster.
- 2 We be late for meetings. It's rude.
- 3 You say anything about the food.
- 4 I don't think you interrupt the presenter. She'll take questions at the end.
- 5 I think Sandra move to another department. She's not happy in Sales.
- 6 They use children in advertisements. I find it shocking.
- 7 Do you think I apologise for this short delay?
- 8 I don't think you use first names. They have a rather formal company culture.

C Complete the text with *should* or *shouldn't*.

Doing business in Japan

People planning to do business in Japan *should*¹ know a few things about the country, its history and its people.

First of all, you² hire a good interpreter – someone who speaks the language and who knows the customs and traditions.

Many people in Japan shake hands when they meet, but you³ be too fast. You⁴ wait and see if they offer their hand first.

When somebody gives you their business card, you⁵ look at it and read it carefully. You⁶ write on it, because Japanese people think this is very impolite.

Some advice about meetings – you⁷ worry about silences during a meeting. You⁸ respect those silences. And finally, remember that you⁹ make too much eye contact.

could/would

D A business person is entertaining a colleague at home. Complete these conversation extracts with *Could I*, *Could you* or *Would you*.

- 1 A: This chocolate mousse is delicious. *Could I* have some more?
B: Of course! We made it especially for you.
- 2 B: like a cigarette?
A: No, thanks. I don't smoke any longer.
- 3 A: That was a lovely meal. Thank you very much.
B: like tea or coffee?
- 4 A: make a quick phone call, please? My mobile is at home.
B: Sure! Use the phone in the study. It's quieter in there.
- 5 A: Now then, about that meeting I missed this morning. tell me what it was about?
B: Well, we just discussed the details of the product launch.
- 6 A: order me a taxi, please. It's getting late.
B: like a lift to the station?

WRITING

Linkers:
*and/because/
but/so*

A Complete the sentences with words from the box.

and (x2) because (x2) but (x2) so (x2)

- 1 Before I left for South Korea, I learnt to speak a little of the local language *and* read about the history of the country.
- 2 We have a formal company culture, we always use first names when we speak to each other.
- 3 I felt uncomfortable there was a long silence during the meal.
- 4 Their employees aren't happy about the changes many of them are leaving.
- 5 Our new boss is OK, we don't like the changes he wants to make.
- 6 The new manager is having a difficult time he doesn't understand local culture.
- 7 I had a lot of training in cross-cultural relations I feel prepared to work abroad.
- 8 In my last job it was more relaxed. People used first names there was no dress code.

- B** You are an employee in a company where many things are changing. You are not happy about some of the changes. Write an e-mail to the Human Resources Manager. Explain what you are unhappy about and ask for an appointment to see her.

Organise your e-mail like this:

- 1 Start with 'Dear Ms Roberts'.
- 2 Say one or two positive things about your job and/or the company.
- 3 Briefly explain your problems. (Choose two or three points from the list or use your imagination.)
- 4 Ask when Ms Roberts could see you to talk about this in more detail.
- 5 Close with a suitable ending.

Problems

- you have to wear a uniform at all times
- not enough face-to-face communication
- too many meetings
- fixed working hours
- a lot of paperwork

Topic sentences

C Match the sentence halves.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| 1 Food is important | a) and most people start work at that time, too. |
| 2 In my country, most people live | b) for both young and old people. |
| 3 Most people have small families – | c) in flats, not houses. |
| 4 Visitors often say | d) usually one or two children. |
| 5 School starts early – 7 o'clock! – | e) that we are hospitable. |

D Complete the text with the topic sentences from exercise C.

Notes

- a) 2 However, many people have a small house in the country. They like to spend their weekends there.
- b) Only ten years ago, the average was four children. The situation is different now, partly because both men and women want a career.
- c) We also finish early, and that is good. School is over at 1.30, and a lot of office workers finish at 2 o'clock.
- d) Many people are happy with just a snack before school or work, but dinner is a special occasion for everyone, every day. It is usually at about 7 o'clock in the evening. We don't eat fast so dinner sometimes goes on until after eight.
- e) We like meeting new people. We are a small country so we have to be open to the world. Also, tourism is one of our main industries.