

# 3 Change

## Learning objectives in this unit

- Discussing working practices
- Giving a formal presentation
- Speculating about future changes
- Showing understanding

## Case study

- Planning office space

## Starting point

- 1 What do you like or dislike about your place of work? Think about space, layout, lighting, equipment, noise, location, etc.
- 2 What does 'flexible working' mean to you?
- 3 Will the way you work in the future be different? If so, how and why?

## Working with words | Discussing working practices

### 1 Read this text. Which description is closest to your organization?

Quite a few organizations invest in new offices and information systems in order to improve efficiency, but they do comparatively little to **transform** a corporate culture that is often rooted in a previous era. Others seek to **implement** innovations in their working practices and **procedures** – such as flexible hours, teleworking, policies for work-life balance – without **putting in place** the necessary infrastructure of facilities and technology. Some companies manage to combine a poor infrastructure with an aversion to any kind of cultural change. But of course there are a few that get it right, combining both innovative working practices and the **means** to make them work.

### 2 How good is your organization at changing with the times? Decide to what extent you agree with the statements below in relation to your company.

- |  |           |
|--|-----------|
| 1 The company buildings create a <b>dynamic</b> working atmosphere.                  | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 2 Staff are judged by the hours they work, not what they achieve.                    | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 3 Staff need to have excellent IT skills.  | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 4 In order to be able to work here you need to <b>access</b> paper files.            | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 5 Staff can work wherever and whenever is most <b>effective</b> for the job in hand. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 6 Meetings have a sense of <b>purpose</b> , and result in decisions.                 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 7 The demands of working at the company put pressure on people's home lives.         | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 8 Seamless technology across all our sites enables us to perform competitively.      | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 9 Most staff aren't given the <b>option</b> to work flexible hours.                  | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 10 Staff are consulted before any new procedures are put in place.                   | 1 2 3 4 5 |

Strongly agree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly disagree

### 3 Look at the texts in 1 and 2 again. Find words in **bold** that are similar in meaning to the words in *italics* in sentences 1–10.

- 1 We need to come up with ways of being more *efficient* in our work.
- 2 We're *entering* quite a difficult period, and there are plenty of challenges ahead.
- 3 At the interview you have to prove you have the *ability* to do the job well.
- 4 We like to give all staff the *opportunity* to come back to us with any comments.
- 5 We have *changed* the job description quite significantly.
- 6 It's important to *carry out* thorough research before redesigning jobs.
- 7 It's quite a lengthy *process* from agreeing the changes to implementing them.
- 8 I don't really understand the *meaning* of the last paragraph.
- 9 He's in his sixties, but he's still an *energetic* man with lots of new ideas.
- 10 Call IT and ask them to *install* all the software you need.



**4** Can you use the words in **bold** from the texts in the sentences in **3**? If so, does the meaning change?

**5** **14▶** Listen to an interview with Iñaki Lozano, a consultant specializing in space management and new ways of working, and answer questions 1–3.

- 1 What three organizational aspects of companies do BICG focus on?
- 2 Why is their work necessary, and what are the advantages?
- 3 Who is most likely to resist change / embrace change?

**6** **14▶** Listen to the interview again. What nouns collocate with verbs 1–8?

- |                     |                  |
|---------------------|------------------|
| 1 accommodate _____ | 5 generate _____ |
| 2 achieve _____     | 6 exchange _____ |
| 3 anticipate _____  | 7 assess _____   |
| 4 facilitate _____  | 8 measure _____  |

**7** What other nouns do the verbs 1–8 in **6** collocate with? Match them to a–h below.

- |                                   |                                       |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| a targets / objectives            | e progress / productivity             |
| b special requirements / requests | f development / growth                |
| c ideas / interest                | g performance / a situation           |
| d knowledge / points of view      | h potential difficulties / objections |

**8** Work with a partner. Ask and answer questions about working conditions in your companies using the collocations from **6** and **7**.

»» For more exercises, go to **Practice file 3** on page 106.

**9** Work with a partner. You work for a manufacturing company and meet to discuss a problem with morale in the factory. Read about the possible causes in the email, then follow steps 1–3.

- 1 Briefly outline the main points.
- 2 Discuss possible approaches to improve morale.
- 3 Decide on an action plan for change.

Dear all

Following a series of low productivity figures, I've been looking into the situation in the factory. I have talked to a number of staff and the general impression is that they are not motivated and they are doing the bare minimum to achieve their daily targets. From my point of view, this seems to be a self-perpetuating cycle of low morale – the figures are down so the supervisors are applying more pressure, which means people feel less valued, etc. Anyway, I thought I ought to let you know my findings so far (see below).

**Possible causes of low morale:**

- the impact of recent technical changes in production
- work-life balance issues
- working by output / result, not by time spent
- cost-saving initiatives
- instability of jobs in the sector

Let me know if you'd like to discuss this further.

Best regards

Brian





# Business communication skills

## Context

A large insurance company is creating a strategy for facing the future and one of its managers has been asked to attend a seminar on the future of working practices. The manager is expected to report their findings to the management team including the CEO. As the management team is cross-functional, specialist terminology and jargon may not be understood by everyone.

## Presenting | Giving a formal presentation



### 1 Work with a partner. Discuss the following questions.

- How often do you give presentations and what kind of audiences do you present to?
- How do you feel about giving presentations?
- How often do you listen to presentations and who gives these presentations?
- What difficulties do you have when listening to a presentation in English?

### 2 15–18▶ Listen to four extracts from a formal presentation. Fill in the notes on the slides below.

#### 1 Facing the future

##### Introduction:

Flexible working – by 2050 most people will have been working flexibly for more than a decade.

##### Presentation outline (x3 sections):

- 1 current research
- 2 effects on the workforce
- 3 effects on employers

##### Notes

#### 3 Effects on the workforce

- 'Binge-time careerism', employees working non-stop for a period, and then taking time off.
- 'Shadow careers' encouraging personal development.
- 24 / 7 access to work email and phones / BlackBerries leading to longer hours.

##### Notes

#### 2

#### Current research

- Rise in 'demuting' – 12 million people in UK will be working from home by 2020.
- New generation of 'career nomads', employees moving around changing jobs / careers.

##### Notes

#### 4

#### Effects on the employer

- Competing for talent.
- Faced with dilemma as employees gain the power to make choices.

##### Notes



- 3 15–18▶** Listen to the four extracts from the presentation again and refer back to the slides in **2**. Note down the phrases which are used for the following functions.

**Extract 1**

- 1 Put the presentation in context: \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Refer to a point that will be raised later: \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 Outline the structure: \_\_\_\_\_

**Extract 2**

- 4 Introduce the second slide: \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 Explain the terms 'demuting' and 'career nomads': \_\_\_\_\_

**Extract 3**

- 6 Introduce the third slide: \_\_\_\_\_
- 7 Explain the terms 'binge-time careerism' and 'shadow careers': \_\_\_\_\_
- 8 Introduce the information on 24/7 working: \_\_\_\_\_
- 9 Refer to a point that was made earlier: \_\_\_\_\_
- 10 Talk about a point not included in the presentation outline: \_\_\_\_\_

**Extract 4**

- 11 Introduce the last point: \_\_\_\_\_
- 12 Finish the presentation: \_\_\_\_\_

- 4** Turn to audio scripts **15–18▶** on page 153. Check your answers to **3**.

» For more exercises, go to **Practice file 3** on page 106.

- 5** Work with a partner. You are going to report back to your colleagues and CEO on your findings from the presentation. Using your notes in **2**, prepare an outline for your own presentation summarizing your findings.

- 1 Decide who will present which parts of your presentation, and what phrases from **3** you will use to structure and signal the different parts of the presentation.
- 2 Practise giving your part of the presentation to each other. When listening to your partner, check against your notes in **2** that they include all the relevant information, and that they use appropriate language from **3**.

- 6** Think of a change you would like to make at your company. Prepare to present your proposal for change to the board of directors. As the presentation will be formal, you need to prepare well. Sketch out the structure of your presentation on a series of slides. Include

- background information
- an outline of the structure
- explanation of specialist terms
- a reference to something you will say later
- a reference to something you said earlier
- a digression
- links from one section to another
- a conclusion.

- 7** Work in groups. Listen to each other's presentations, and make notes of the key points. When you have finished, check your understanding and ask questions.

» Interactive Workbook » Email

## Key expressions

### Outlining a structure

I've divided my talk up into ...  
First of all, I'll ... After that, I'll ...  
I'll conclude with ...

### Beginning the presentation

I'd like to start by saying ...

### Referring forwards / backwards / sideways

I'll return to ... later.  
As I said earlier, ...  
I'll say more about ... in a moment.  
Just to digress for a second, ...

### Signalling the next section

OK, moving on ...  
Turning to ...  
This brings me to ...

### Ensuring understanding of a specialist subject

Just to fill you in on some of the background, ...  
By ... I mean ...  
Now I don't know if you're familiar with ...  
Well, ... refers to ...  
This is where ...  
And perhaps here I should explain what I mean by ...  
That's when ...  
So, for example, ...

### Ending the presentation

And this is my key point.  
To sum up, ...  
I'll be happy to take any questions now.

» Interactive Workbook  
» Phrasebank

## Culture question

- Is it appropriate in your culture to use humour in presentations?
- How else can you vary the pace?
- What difficulties can be caused when humour is used?

## Language at work | Speculating about future changes

- 1** Look at extracts 1–10 from the presentation. For each one, answer questions a–d.
- What structure is used?
  - How certain is the speaker in each sentence?
  - Could the structure used be replaced by any other future structure?
  - How would an alternative structure change the meaning of the sentence?
- The flexible working revolution means that management **will become** more about resourcing and measuring results.
  - It's estimated that by 2050 most people **will have been working** flexibly for more than a decade.
  - It's anticipated that as many as twelve million people in the UK **will be working** from home by 2020.
  - The 21st century **is going to be** about a new generation of 'career nomads'.
  - The trend towards home working **could have** other positive social side-effects.
  - We anticipate that this trend **will only increase**.
  - Home-based businesses **are likely to** revive local communities.
  - By the mid-21st century a major cultural change **will have taken place**.
  - People **are expected to be working** more flexibly in the future.
  - Solving this dilemma **must surely become** a key priority.

» For more information, go to **Language reference Unit 3** on page 127.

- 2 19▶** Members of the Federation of European Employers were asked: 'Do you think there will be a major change in the way we work in the future?' Listen and note down phrases they use to make predictions.



- 3** Put the phrases you noted in **2** into these categories.
- certain \_\_\_\_\_
  - probable \_\_\_\_\_
  - possible \_\_\_\_\_
  - unlikely \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 19▶** Listen again. Make a note of four phrases the speakers use to refer to a point or period in future time.

» For more exercises, go to **Practice file 3** on page 107.

- 5** Work with a partner. Give your predictions for possible changes in your company / department. Think about the aspects below.
- the business
  - budgets
  - the competition
  - technologies
  - your working day
  - relationships with colleagues / boss
  - your role / prospects
  - your colleagues' roles / prospects