

A Colleagues

Look at this extract of someone talking about their job and their colleagues.

Well, Philip is my **opposite number** [has the same position/does the same job as me] in the company's New York office.

He and I have a good **working relationship** [how we communicate and work together]. Last month we got a new boss, who quickly established a good **rapport** [/ræp'ɔː/ communication/relationship] with everyone in the office. I do socialise with my **workmates** [informal: colleagues, especially in non-professional jobs] but we try not to **talk shop** [informal: talk about work].

The company is generally very **hierarchical** [/hɑːrə'ɔːkɪkəl/ has a structure with powerful and less powerful people]; there's a **pecking-order** [a system where some people have the right to get benefits/promotions before others] for everything. I **do a job-share** [we each have a 50% contract for the same job] with a woman called Rosemary. It suits us both as we each have children to look after.

B Daily work routines

Nancy gets to work at about 8.45. She has to **clock in** and **clock out** [use an electronic card to record the time she arrives and leaves each day]. She works fixed hours; she has a **nine-to-five job**. Brett can come in at any time from eight o'clock till ten in the morning; he works **flexi-time** / he's **on flexi-time**, but his core hours are 10.00 to 12.00 and 2.00 to 4.00. Archie doesn't go to the office at all. He works from home with his computer; he's a **teleworker**. Bert works different times each week; every third week he works nights; he does **shift work** / he's a **shift worker**. Mick has his own company; he's **self-employed** and works from home. His wife works for different companies at different times; she's **freelance** / she works **freelance**.

C During the day (different work-patterns)

Most of the day I do routine tasks, but occasionally there's a crisis or I have to **meet a deadline** [have something finished by a fixed day or time]. At certain times of the year I have a very **heavy workload** [amount of work I have to do] but at other times it can be quite **light**.



I start work at my machine at seven o'clock when I'm on the **day shift**. The job's very **mechanical** [you don't have to think about what you are doing] and **repetitive** [the same thing every day].

All I ever think about is **knocking off** at three [informal: finishing work]. The shift I hate most is the **night shift**. I start at ten and work all night till six in the morning. The job's a bit **monotonous** [boring because it never changes].



I have a **glamorous** job [very exciting, which everyone admires]. I'm a pilot. The hours are **irregular** and **antisocial** [do not enable one to have a normal social life], but I'm not **stuck behind a desk** [informal: sitting in an office all day] and there's a lot of variety. The **stress levels** can be quite high when you know people's lives depend on you. I feel sorry for people who are **stuck in a rut** [stuck in a job they can't escape from] or working in **dead-end jobs** [jobs with no prospects of promotion].



D Types of work

I have a lot of **paperwork** to do by tomorrow. [letters/reports to write, forms to complete]
My father did **manual work** all his life and was very fit. [hard and physical]
I think I'd like **vocational work**, like being a nurse or a teacher. [which helps people]

Exercises

7.1 Correct the mistakes in this paragraph.

I think I have a good work relationship with most of my colleagues. I tried to establish a good report with them from the very beginning. The person I like most is my opposite member in our office in Paris. Generally, when I socialise to my colleagues outside of work, we try not to talk about shop, but it's not easy and sometimes we have a good gossip about people who are not there.

7.2 Give three adjectives which you think describe each of these jobs (for example, *stressful*, *glamorous*, *dead-end*). Think of words you would use in your own language, then try to translate them into English. Use a dictionary if necessary.



- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------|
| 1 assembly-line worker | 5 lifeguard |
| 2 shop steward | 6 trawlerman |
| 3 PR officer | 7 private eye |
| 4 bodyguard | 8 refuse collector |

7.3 Use words and phrases from B and C on the opposite page to complete these sentences.

- I would get bored if I had a nine
- When I arrive in the morning and leave the office in the evening I use this card to
- I'm very tired; recently I've had a very heavy
- I don't want an office job. I don't want to spend all day stuck
- I can clock in any time between eight and ten and clock out between four and six; I'm on
- I'd hate to feel trapped in my job and to be stuck in
- He's not here this evening, he's working nights; you see, he does
- I work for different companies at different times as it suits me. I'm
- I used to work for someone else, but now I'm my own boss; I'm
- I stopped working in the hamburger restaurant. It was just a dead-.....
- When I was working in the factory, all I could think of all day was the moment when I could knock
- Being a nurse is a good job, but you can't go out much with friends. The hours are a bit

7.4 Using a dictionary if necessary, give one example of ...



- a manual job
- a vocational job
- a job with great variety
- a job with irregular hours
- a job with routine tasks
- a job with regular deadlines
- a job with lots of paperwork



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A Getting a job

Look at this job ad (informal)/advertisement (formal) for the IT (Information Technology) industry.

Ambitious Achievers¹

Up to £30k² basic³

Money motivated, eager, looking to work in a dynamic, fast-moving industry?

We are looking for ambitious, dynamic sales professionals with the talent and **drive**⁴ to develop a **rewarding**⁵ career within the IT

industry. You will work in **close-knit**⁶ teams, maintaining and developing relationships with a **diverse**⁷ range of clients.

Ideally you will possess some previous IT **sales experience**⁸ and a good knowledge of computers. Most importantly you will have a strong desire to succeed.

If you **fit this description**⁹ and are seeking a **lucrative**¹⁰ career in IT sales then call Claire Walden or Graham Keen on 01960 479 6021.

- ¹ people determined to succeed and achieve great things
- ² thirty thousand pounds
- ³ guaranteed minimum salary without overtime or bonuses
- ⁴ strong motivation
- ⁵ giving you a lot back
- ⁶ working in a close relationship
- ⁷ of different types
- ⁸ experience selling things
- ⁹ have these qualities
- ¹⁰ producing a lot of money

The text has some words with similar meanings in connection with work; learn them in pairs:

motivated and **eager** (person) **dynamic** and **fast moving** (industry/profession)
 to seek a career in ... and to look to work in ... (note look *to*, meaning consider or hope, not look *for*)

B During your working life

In some countries, women are allowed **maternity leave** and men **paternity leave** if they're having a child. [time away from work to have a new baby]

What **perks** (informal) / **(extra) benefits** (formal) do you get in your job? [extra things apart from salary, e.g. a car]

How important is **job satisfaction** to you? [the feeling that your job is worth doing and fulfils you]

What's your **holiday entitlement**? [number of days you have the right to take as holiday]

Do you get regular salary **increments**? [formal: increases/rises]

Most people don't want to **reach/hit a glass ceiling**. [reach a level where you cannot get further promotion, even if you deserve it]

Most people think they are **overworked and underpaid**. [often said together as a humorous fixed expression]

Exercises

8.1 Make these rather informal sentences more formal by using words and phrases from the opposite page.

- 1 Do you often look at the job ads?
- 2 I haven't worked in sales before.
- 3 There's a lot of money in selling computers. I made 70k last year.
- 4 We sell quite a mixed range of products.
- 5 I thought I would apply for the job since it sounded just like me.

8.2 Find expressions on the left-hand page which mean the *opposite* of the underlined words or phrases.

- 1 a very loosely organised team
- 2 a very frustrating job
- 3 to have low motivation
- 4 a rather static and slow-moving profession
- 5 a drop in your salary

8.3 Read the text and answer the questions.

- 1 Why does 'a career' sound better than 'a job'?
- 2 What are 'ambiguous' situations?
- 3 What expression means 'not depending on other people'?
- 4 What is the abstract noun that means 'your ability to find clever or imaginative ways of doing things'?
- 5 What mental quality do you need for this job?
- 6 What job do you think this advertisement is for?

An exciting outdoor career

If you're an out-of-the-ordinary person who is looking for more than just a job, we are offering a unique career that requires you to use your intelligence, self-reliance and responsibility. If you have an adventurous spirit, a strong, positive personality, a tough mind and a high level of personal integrity, and if you think you can deal with rapidly-changing, ambiguous and unpredictable situations that will test your resourcefulness to the limit, then contact us now.

Phone 070037652, or e-mail
personnel@leadership.com

8.4 Put these expressions into two groups: *usually negative* (-) and *usually positive* (+). Some of them are new expressions not on the opposite page.

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1 to hit a glass ceiling | 5 to be passed over for promotion |
| 2 to have a lot of perks | 6 to get turned down for a job |
| 3 to be snowed under | 7 to be short-listed for a job |
| 4 to be demoted | 8 to be a high-flyer |

8.5 Some words here are not used correctly or in their usual way. Correct them.

- 1 I started studying French at university, but I didn't finish my career and left after one year.
- 2 My boss rose my salary with £2,000 a year. I was delighted.
- 3 I'm underpaid and overworked, like everybody! And I'm always stressed up.
- 4 My holiday titlement is four weeks a year.
- 5 He got maternity leave when his wife had a baby.

8.6 Imagine you are a careers adviser. What advice would you give to someone who is ...

- 1 money motivated and who is prepared to take risks?
- 2 a very talented musician who is not necessarily money motivated?
- 3 an achiever who has a background in IT and is a very confident person?
- 4 suffering from a lack of job satisfaction in their present job?

A Modern business techniques

When John left school he was desperate for a job so he took the first one he was offered – in **telesales**¹. He thought **telemarketing**² sounded quite glamorous but soon found that most of the people he phoned hated **cold-calling**³ and put the phone down when he tried the **hard sell**⁴. When he realised that the company made most of its money through the rather dubious techniques of **inertia selling**⁵ and **confusion marketing**⁶, he decided to leave and train as a hairdresser instead.

- ¹ selling or marketing goods and services by phone
- ² see note 1
- ³ phoning people who have not requested a call in order to try to sell them something
- ⁴ attempt to sell something by being very forceful
- ⁵ when a company behaves as if you agreed to buy something because you did not actually refuse it
- ⁶ selling products and services in a package, in a way that makes it very difficult to work out which company is cheapest

B Buying and selling

Supermarkets sometimes sell an item very cheaply just so that they attract a lot of people into the shop where they will also buy more profitable items – the item being sold very cheaply is called a **loss leader**.

If a company finds a **niche market**, it finds a specialised, small group of customers with particular interests that that company can meet.

People sometimes make a purchasing decision based on **brand loyalty**. [confidence in that particular make and a tendency always to choose it]

If you **shop around**, you try different companies or shops to see which offers best value.

If you buy something **on approval**, you have the right to return it if it is not satisfactory.

If you **have first refusal on** something, the seller promises that you will be asked if you would like to buy it first, and only if you do not want it will it be offered for sale to others.

If an item is said to **come/go under the hammer**, it is sold at an auction. [sale of goods or property where people make gradually increasing **bids** and the item is then sold to the highest bidder]

C A business career

Sally started her own catering business and this turned out to be very **lucrative**¹. However, she got increasingly irritated by all the **red tape**² involved in business and when a larger company suggested **merging**³, she was interested. The two companies did not agree immediately on all the details of the takeover but they managed to **reach a compromise**⁴ and **hammer out a deal**⁵ without too much delay. In some ways Sally was sad that her company had been **swallowed up**⁶ but she is now quite glad to be free of the hassles of **entrepreneurship**⁷. She has used the money raised by the sale of her **capital assets**⁸ to buy a large house in the south of France.

- ¹ producing a lot of money
- ² bureaucracy (negative)
- ³ joining together to form one new company
- ⁴ come to an agreement in which both sides have to give in a little bit on what they would have otherwise liked
- ⁵ talk seriously and in detail until a business agreement is made
- ⁶ taken over by a larger company (slightly negative)
- ⁷ involvement in business and taking financial risks
- ⁸ buildings and machines owned by a company

Exercises

9.1 Match the two parts of these business collocations from the opposite page.

- | | |
|-------------|-----------|
| 1 loss | selling |
| 2 capital | refusal |
| 3 confusion | leader |
| 4 first | tape |
| 5 hard | marketing |
| 6 inertia | loyalty |
| 7 brand | assets |
| 8 niche | sell |
| 9 red | market |

9.2 Look at A and B opposite. Fill the gaps in these sentences.

- 1 A unique painting will come the hammer in London tomorrow.
- 2 It's a sensible idea to shop a bit before buying a computer.
- 3 Jeremy has promised me that, if he ever decides to sell his motorbike, I can have refusal on it.
- 4 I don't mind trying a hard sell on a person who has already expressed an interest in our products, but I hate-calling.
- 5 I wasn't sure whether the desk would fit into my office so I bought it approval.
- 6 If you want to make a for something in an auction you first have to catch the auctioneer's eye.
- 7 If you work in telesales you spend most of your day on the
- 8 They produce special clothes for people who like to do yoga and have really captured this market.

9.3 Replace the underlined words with a word or phrase from C with a similar meaning.

- 1 As their business interests were really very similar, it did not take them very long to come to an agreement.
- 2 If you want to go into the import and export business, you had better be prepared for a lot of bureaucracy.
- 3 At the moment they are discussing the possibility of their companies becoming one.
- 4 Sportswear is a very profitable business to be in at the moment.
- 5 Only a few people have a real talent for the risk-taking of opening a new business.
- 6 A number of small companies have been taken over by that large multi-national in the last six months.

9.4 Answer these questions about the words and phrases on the opposite page.

- 1 Find three words or phrases that have negative associations – for most people at least.
- 2 Name two things that might count as capital assets.
- 3 Find three expressions that relate to ways of buying things.
- 4 Find three expressions that relate to ways of selling things.
- 5 Find three expressions that are based on a metaphor and explain what the metaphor is and why it is appropriate.

FOLLOW UP

The most useful business words for you to learn are those that relate to your own field. Go to the website www.business.com. This has links to sites organised according to a range of general and specialist business fields. Print out any useful pages and keep them in a special file.

A Here are some important words for talking about business agreements.

- to **put in/submit a tender**: to supply a written offer to do a job for an agreed price
 to **win a tender**: to be given a job, after submitting a tender
 to **meet/miss a deadline**: to supply / fail to supply something by the agreed time
 a **penalty clause**: part of a contract specifying what will happen if an agreement is broken
 an **outstanding account**: an account that has not yet been paid
 to **default on a payment**: to fail to pay something that had been agreed
 to **acknowledge receipt**: to inform the sender when something is received
 to **ship an order**: to send out goods that have been ordered – nothing to do with boats; what is sent is the **shipment**
 to **expire**: to end – of something that was agreed for a fixed period; the noun is **expiry**

B Reading humorous books about work can be a fun way of learning new words on the topic. Here is an example from a popular book which makes fun of the modern workplace.

Some Rules of Management

(from a Handbook for Managers)

- The problem is not a lack of resources, it's a lack of meetings.
- If you're talking, you're **communicating**¹.
- Low **morale**² is caused by character **flaws**³ in your employees.
- If 10 people can complete a project in 10 days, then 1 person can complete the project in 1 day.
- **Teamwork**⁴ is when other people do your work for you.

¹ this verb suggests that listeners understand what the speaker is trying to convey

² amount of confidence felt by a person or group

³ weaknesses

⁴ working together for a common purpose

C Here are some things that people have said about business.

We demand that big business give the people a square deal; in return we must insist that when any one engaged in big business honestly endeavors to do right, he shall himself be given a square deal. (*Theodore Roosevelt*)

It is difficult but not impossible to conduct strictly honest business. What is true is that honesty is incompatible with the amassing of a large fortune. (*Mahatma Gandhi*)

The growth of a large business is merely the survival of the fittest [...] The American Beauty rose can be produced in the splendour and fragrance which bring cheer to its beholder only by sacrificing the early buds which grow up around it. (*John D. Rockefeller*)

The salary of the chief executive of the large corporation is not a market award for achievement. It is frequently in the nature of a warm personal gesture by the individual to himself. (*J. K. Galbraith*)

Accountants are the witch-doctors of the modern world and willing to turn their hands to any kind of magic. (*Lord Justice Harman*)

British management doesn't seem to understand the importance of the human factor. (*Charles, Prince of Wales*)

Exercises

10.1 Rewrite these sentences using the word in brackets.

- 1 Do you have many accounts which have yet to be paid? (outstanding)
- 2 Until what date is your contract valid? (expire)
- 3 Please let us know when you receive our payment. (acknowledge)
- 4 It is very important that you complete your work by the agreed time. (meet)
- 5 We would like to invite companies to send us proposals as to how they would do the job and what they would charge for it. (submit)
- 6 It is company policy to take legal action against customers who fail to pay their accounts. (default)

10.2 Look at B opposite. Complete the sentences using a word from the box.

employee flaw lack morale project resources

- 1 Joanna is working on a very interesting at the moment.
- 2 Unfortunately, there's a in your reasoning.
- 3 What used to be called Personnel is now called Human
- 4 The new manager is doing his best to raise in the office.
- 5 Sadly our new product has met with a total of consumer interest.
- 6 We are extremely sorry to lose Matt as an

10.3 Which of the people quoted in C is making each of these points?

- 1 Top businessmen often award themselves bonuses regardless of their performance.
- 2 It is impossible to be both rich and honest.
- 3 Managers don't pay enough attention to the people who work for them.
- 4 Large businesses succeed by destroying small businesses.
- 5 Companies must treat customers fairly; then government will treat companies fairly too.

10.4 Match the parts of the collocations from C.

- | | |
|----------------|-----------------|
| 1 a chief | a fortune |
| 2 a personal | of the fittest |
| 3 a square | business |
| 4 the survival | factor |
| 5 an award | gesture |
| 6 to turn | executive |
| 7 the human | deal |
| 8 to amass | your hand to |
| 9 to conduct | for achievement |

10.5 Choose one of the collocations from exercise 10.4 to fit each of these gaps.

Jack is now the (1) of a large company. He managed to (2) by designing some computer software which sold all over the world. He's a talented man, prepared to (3) any job that needs doing. He is good to his employees, always giving them (4) because he knows how important (5) is if you want (6) successfully. Last year he won (7) in business. In a remarkable (8), he gave his prize money away to his employees.