

Business Advanced

Unit 2: Careers





Starting Point

- 1. What is the best career decision you ever made? What happened?
- 2. Looking back at your career, is there anything you would change? Why?/Why not?



1. 'The 9-to-5 Cure: Work on Your Own Terms and Reinvent Your Life,' is a book by Kristin Cardinale. The book talks about the concept of the 'patch-worker'. What do you think a patch-worker is? Compare your ideas with her definition:

- The patch-worker carries all of the standard responsibilities of the freelancer but has an agenda beyond earning money: life ...
- A patch-worker is a freelancer who selectively accepts work based on lifestyle factors that they determine to be personally important.



2. A 'patch-worker' career isn't for everyone. Read Kristin's questions and answers below to see if it suits you.

ARE YOU A PATCH-WORKER?

DO YOU HAVE THE ENERGY?

Do you have the energy required to complete all of the initial startup tasks?

Can you **come up with** the ideas? Are you too **burnt out from** your current or past job to do the work? Are you willing to put in the time and effort to help you **stand out from** the crowd?

DO YOU HAVE THE FOCUS?

Do you have the mental focus necessary to open, operate and maintain a new business? When you are self employed you don't have a boss keeping you on task and sending you reminders about approaching deadlines. You have to coach yourself, to motivate and **propel yourself forward** by staying on task. Can you do that?

DO YOU HAVE THE ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS?

Running a business requires basic organizational skills, period. You need not be a perfectionist - in fact, that may hinder your success. Will your accounts **stand up to** external scrutiny? Can you start and stay organized?

CAN YOU MULTITASK LIKE A PRO?

If there is one thing that being a patch-worker requires to **stay ahead of** the game, it is the ability to multitask. Can you **play the part of** CEO, secretary, accountant and driver all in a single day? More importantly, are you willing to?

CAN YOU DRUM UP YOUR OWN LEADS?

To be a successful patch-worker, you absolutely need to scout out new opportunities and then determine if they fit into your lifestyle framework. Do you have the network? Have you been **keeping in with** key people? Can you **get out there** and sell?

CAN YOU MAKE YOUR OWN DECISIONS?

Any and all decisions are yours to own. You must take full responsibility for the ideas, the execution and the outcomes, and **stand up for** what you decided. When things go really well, it's nice to bask in the glow and take full credit. However, when things go awry, you have to be able to deal with the consequences. Can you handle it?

3. Think of definitions for the multi-word verbs in bold in the extract in 2, using the context in the text to help you.

1. burn out from _____
2. come up with _____
3. get out there _____
4. keep in with _____
5. play the part of _____
6. propel yourself forward _____
7. stand out from _____
8. stand up for _____
9. stand up to _____
10. stay ahead of _____

4. Choose six of the multi-word verbs in 3. You will write questions about careers. Then work with a colleague. In turns ask each other your questions.

Example: What is the best idea you've ever come up with at work?

5. Listen to the interview with career coach Susan Whittaker. Are the following statements true or false (*F*)?  Audio 2.1

1. The interviewer becomes convinced by Susan's views during the interview.

2. Susan believes that career progress is the responsibility of the individual.

3. She thinks it is counterproductive for managers to allow staff to leave.



6. Match verbs (1-8) to phrases (a-h) to form fixed phrases from the interview. Then listen to the interview to check your answers.  Audio 2.1

- | | | |
|-----------------|-------|----------------------------|
| 1. broaden | _____ | a. a stage where... |
| 2. follow | _____ | b. backwards |
| 3. go beyond | _____ | c. horizontally |
| 4. grow into | _____ | d. in a better position |
| 5. move | _____ | e. less conventional paths |
| 6. put yourself | _____ | f. the scope of your job |
| 7. reach | _____ | g. your horizons |
| 8. take a step | _____ | h. your role |

7. Match the phrases you formed in 6 to their definitions below (A-H). Provide *at least* three examples using the phrases from 6.

- A. cancel the effects of any progress you had made

- B. change jobs for a similar salary and responsibilities

- C. create more opportunities for yourself

- D. develop further than current limitations allow

- E. develop to a point where you can do your job well

- F. do something original or unusual

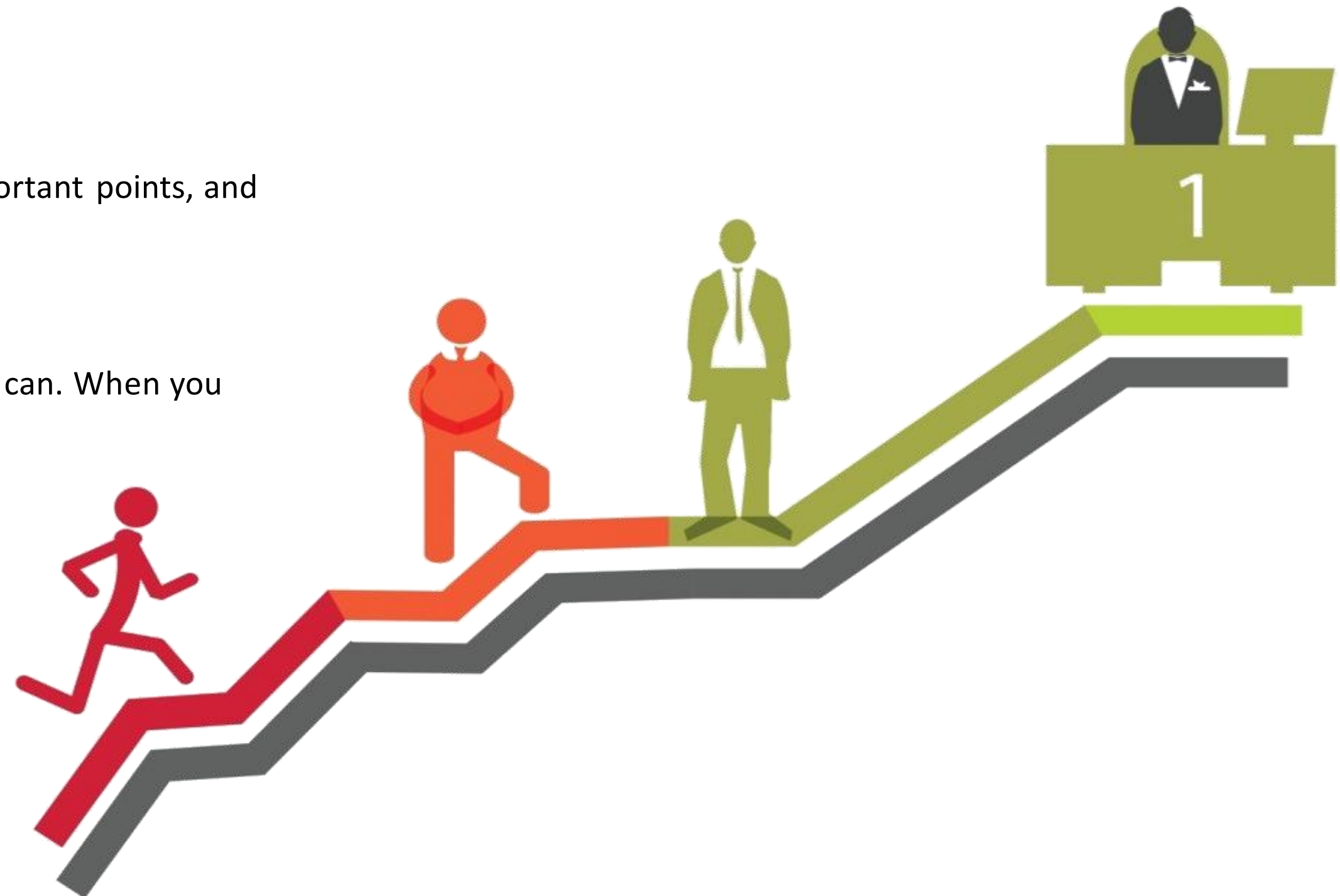
- G. get to a point

- H. improve your situation

8. Prepare a short talk for new employees about career development opportunities in your company. Consider the following aspects:

- Job shadowing
- Sabbaticals
- Training opportunities
- Appraisals
- Promotion prospects
- Teamwork
- Corporate culture
- Mentoring schemes
- Networking events

1. Discuss with your partner what you are going to talk about. Decide on six important points, and come up with an outline for the talk.
2. Take turns to practice your talk. Use as many of the phrases from 3 and 6 as you can. When you listen to your partner, note down the new phrases you hear.



1. Read the *Context*. Can you predict what kind of issues may be discussed during this meeting?

Context

The members at Coben Walsh, a small but expanding accountancy company, are considering amending their recruitment policy. In the past they have always recruited graduates, but they are finding it utterly difficult to attract suitable candidates. Heidi Dawson, the HR Manager, and her new Deputy, Arun Chauhan, have been investigating the option of offering jobs to school leavers. They have now called a meeting with the partners, Andy Coben and Rachel Walsh.



Audio 2.2

2. Listen to Extract 1 from the meeting while referring to the agenda below. Heidi is chairing the meeting and the handwritten notes are prompts to herself. Write down the following points:

1. the points on the agenda that are covered
2. the points where any digressions or interruptions occur
3. the expressions Heidi uses for each of her handwritten prompts

Start meeting and establish meeting objectives

Agenda: Recruitment policy meeting

Attendees: Heidi Dawson (chair), Arun Chauhan, Andy Coben, Rachel Walsh.

- 1 Outline of current recruitment issues
 - recruitment difficulties *ask Arun to present his findings*
 - staff retention *get Arun to talk about this*
- 2 Proposal to recruit school-leavers
- 3 Discussion

3. Listen to Extract 2 from the meeting and answer questions 1-3.



Audio 2.3

- 1. What are the proposed conditions for school-leaver positions?
- 2. Why does Heidi think school leavers would want to work for the company?
- 3. Why does Rachel think it would be better to focus on improving graduate intake?

4. Match expressions a-d to categories 1-4.

- | | | |
|---|---|-------|
| a. Can I suggest we come back to this point a bit later on? | 1. Dealing with interruptions/ digression | _____ |
| b. Could I just say something here? | 2. Expressing reservations/ disagreeing | _____ |
| c. You probably won't like this idea, but ... | 3. Interrupting | _____ |
| d. You're absolutely right, but .. . | 4. Putting forward ideas | _____ |

5. Listen to Extracts 1 and 2 again and take notes of any other expression you may hear for the categories in 4.



Audio 2.2



Audio 2.3

6. Which expressions from 4 and 5 are used to put forward an idea which ... ?

- 1. you believe to be unpopular _____
- 2. is under consideration _____
- 3. you are confident about _____

Key Expressions

Managing the discussion

- *So let's get started.*
- *The purpose of today's meeting is ...*
- *Can I suggest we come back to ... ?*
- *Coming back to ...*
- *I'll get on to that in a moment.*

Involving people

- *Perhaps you'd like to talk us through ...*
- *Did you want to talk about ... ?*

Asking for / giving permission to speak

- *Would this be the right moment to mention ... ?*
- *Could I just say something?*
- *If I could just come in there ...*
- *Go ahead.*

Putting forward unpopular ideas

- *I know you 're not keen on it, but ...*
- *You probably won't like this idea, but ...*
- *I'm not sure what your feelings are about this, but ...*

Putting forward ideas under consideration

- *We were wondering if ...*
- *Something else we've been thinking about is ...*

Putting forward ideas you are confident about

- *I'm sure you'll understand the need to ...*
- *The obvious solution to this problem must be to ...*

Disagreeing / Expressing reservation

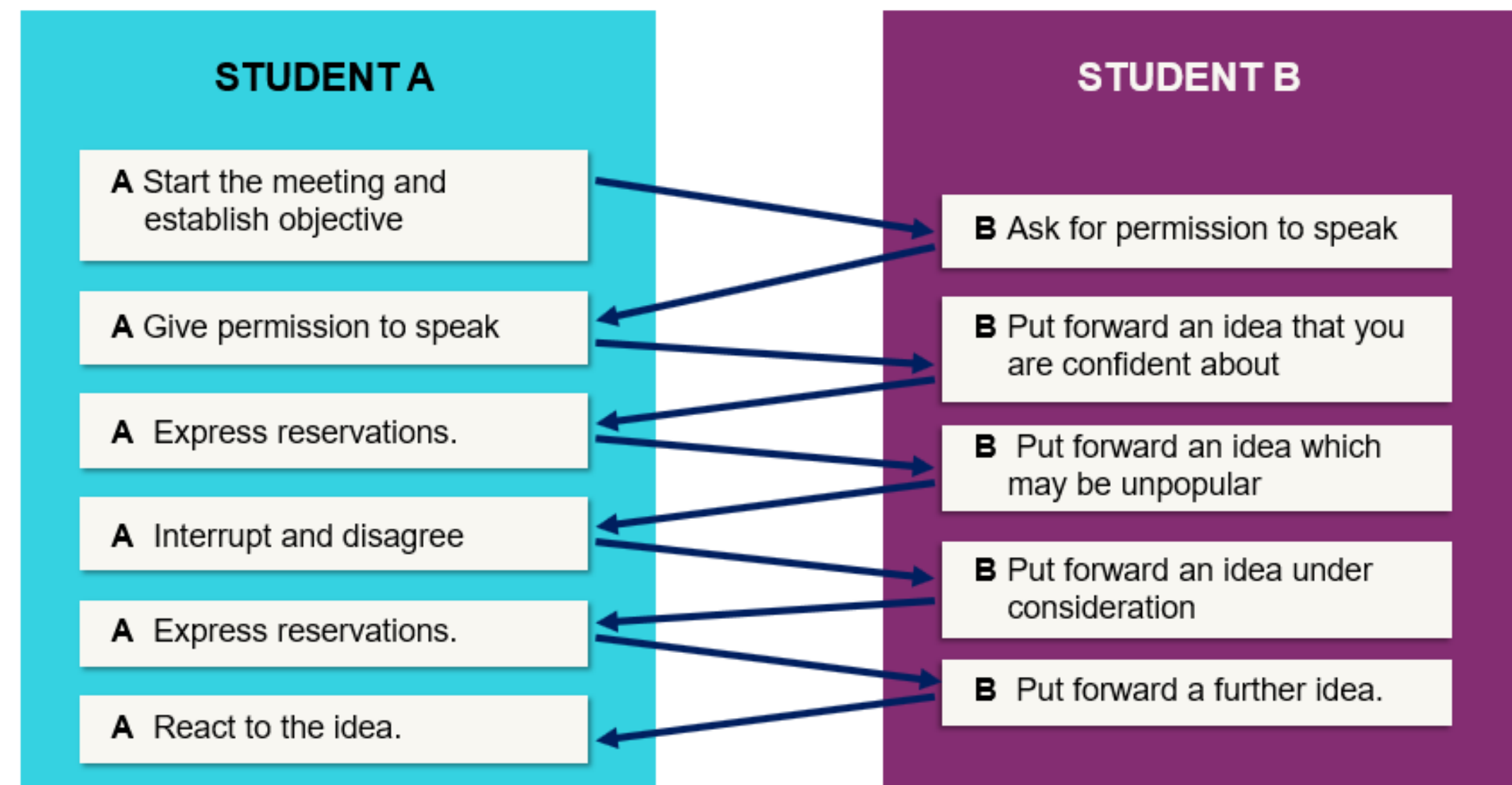
- *It's interesting you should say that, because actually ...*
- *You're absolutely right, but ...*

7. Work with a colleague. In addition to the school-leavers programme, HR and the partners decide to investigate some ways to enhance the company's graduate intake and retention. Can you add any other ideas (or reservations) to their list below?

Ideas for improving graduate intake / retention

- Have a greater presence at national graduate recruitment fairs.
Will this really help?
- Increase the starter salary.
Too costly for the company?
- Introduce penalties for graduates who don't stay beyond their training.
Demotivating? May discourage some graduates from applying?
- Increase communication between graduates already working for the company and those considering applying (e.g. in blogs, pod casts on company website).
No control over what is said about the company?
Other ideas?

8. Now have a meeting using the ideas from 7 and the following flow chart.



9. You are holding a meeting to discuss how to improve staff efficiency. Use the agenda below or create one for your company. Discuss your ideas, and try to reach a decision on each item on the agenda.

Student A: You are chairing the meeting. Manage the discussion and make sure everybody keeps to the agenda.

Student B/ C: see the following page.

Agenda: Improving staff efficiency

1. Too much time wasted in the cafeteria.
2. Messages are not being passed on.
3. Complaints about attending training in off-site training centres.
4. High absenteeism.

Student B

Item 1

- ☐ Limit employees to one coffee a day
- ☐ Increase price of coffee
- ☐ Other ideas?

Item 2

- ☐ Issue everyone with a company smartphone
- ☐ Hold a daily team meeting first thing in the morning
- ☐ Other ideas?

Item 3

- ☐ Set up closely monitored e-learning programmes
- ☐ Give x number of hours for study in working time
- ☐ Other ideas?

Item 4

- ☐ Pay employees a bonus for keeping days absent to a minimum
- ☐ Allow employees greater flexibility so they can work from home if they choose
- ☐ Other ideas?

Student C

Item 1

- ☐ Change opening hours
- ☐ Close down the cafeteria
- ☐ Other ideas?

Item 2

- ☐ Employ more alternative staff
- ☐ Improve communication by sending staff on a training course
- ☐ Other ideas?

Item 3

- ☐ Give employees the choice of which courses they take part in
- ☐ Make sure certain training courses are completed before employees get promoted
- ☐ Other ideas?

Item 4

- ☐ Set up team-based pay so the onus is on the employees to make sure that everyone is there
- ☐ Give the employees greater flexibility in the hours worked
- ☐ Other ideas?

Culture Question

- Do you openly criticize ideas that you don't like? Explain.
- Do you think that different cultures have different attitudes to open criticism?
- How would you feel if someone openly criticized your ideas during a meeting?



1. Listen to two meetings where the members *gave their impressions after the event*. Complete sentences 1-12.



- 1. _____a bit more progress today.
- 2. _____a face-to-face meeting with the partners.
- 3. But_____the other side of the argument?
- 4. I_____a bit too forthright, but I need to be sure ...
- 5. I_____much to the discussion ...
- 6. If_____one of the recruitment consultants ...
- 7. Well,_____it really ...
- 8. Well, it_____we'd just gone round in circles.
- 9. What_____improving our graduate intake?
- 10. Yes,_____Arum - as you're the one who's ...
- 11. Yes,_____how Rachel would react to the school-leavers proposal.
- 12. Yes, but_____to the meeting though.

2. Which sentences in 1 show that the speaker ... ?

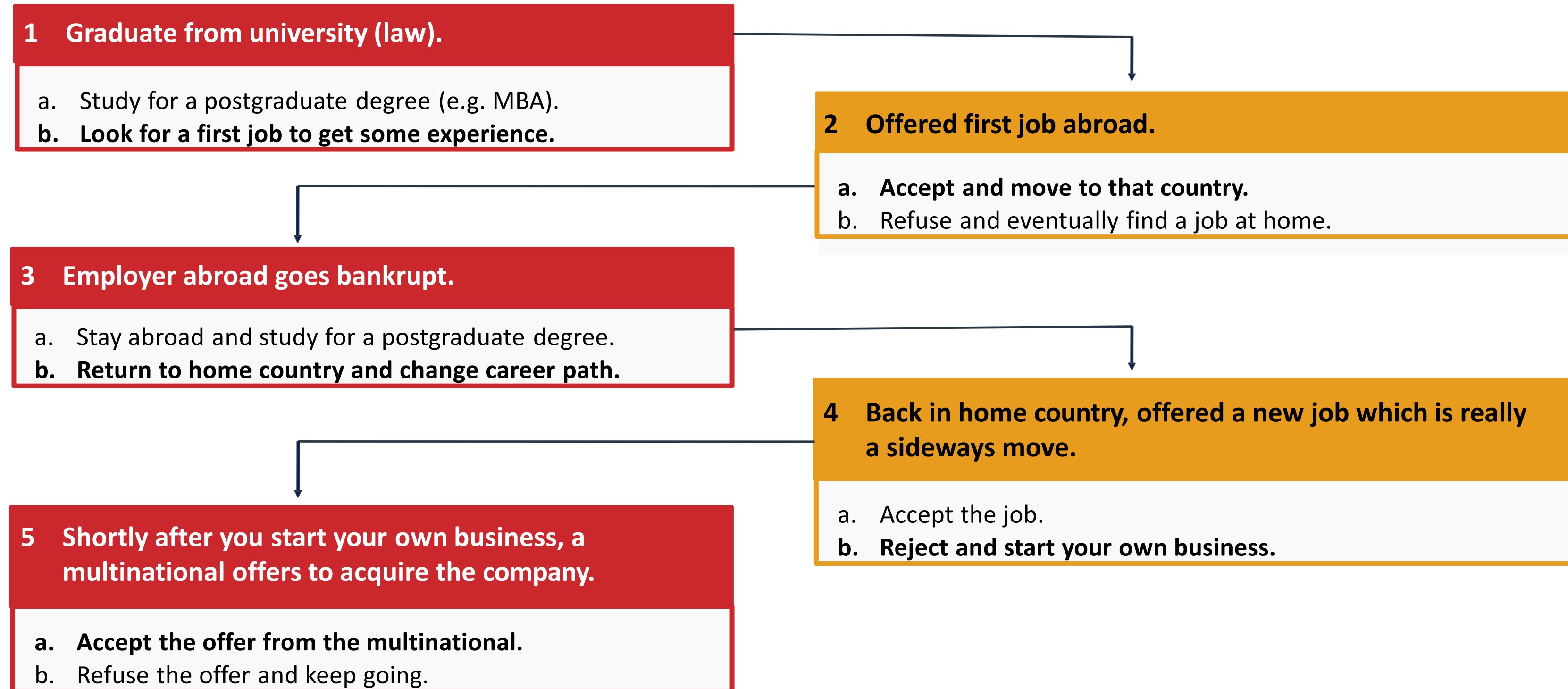
- a. is satisfied with something _____
- b. is relieved about something _____
- c. is dissatisfied with something _____
- d. regrets something with hindsight _____

3. Now match the sentences in 1 to structures (a- d) below.

- a. third conditional _____
- b. modal + perfect infinitive _____
- c. fixed phrase + past simple _____
- d. fixed phrase + past perfect _____

4. Look at the following 'nearly CV'. The career choices made are in bold. Discuss the alternative career and the consequences.

Example: If only they'd known the employer abroad would become insolvent, moneywise.



5. Think of your 'nearly CV':

- how you feel about these decisions with hindsight
- possible alternative decisions and their consequences

Practically Speaking | Getting your point across

1. What techniques can you use to get your point across?



2. Listen to five conversations and fill in the following sentences (1-10).



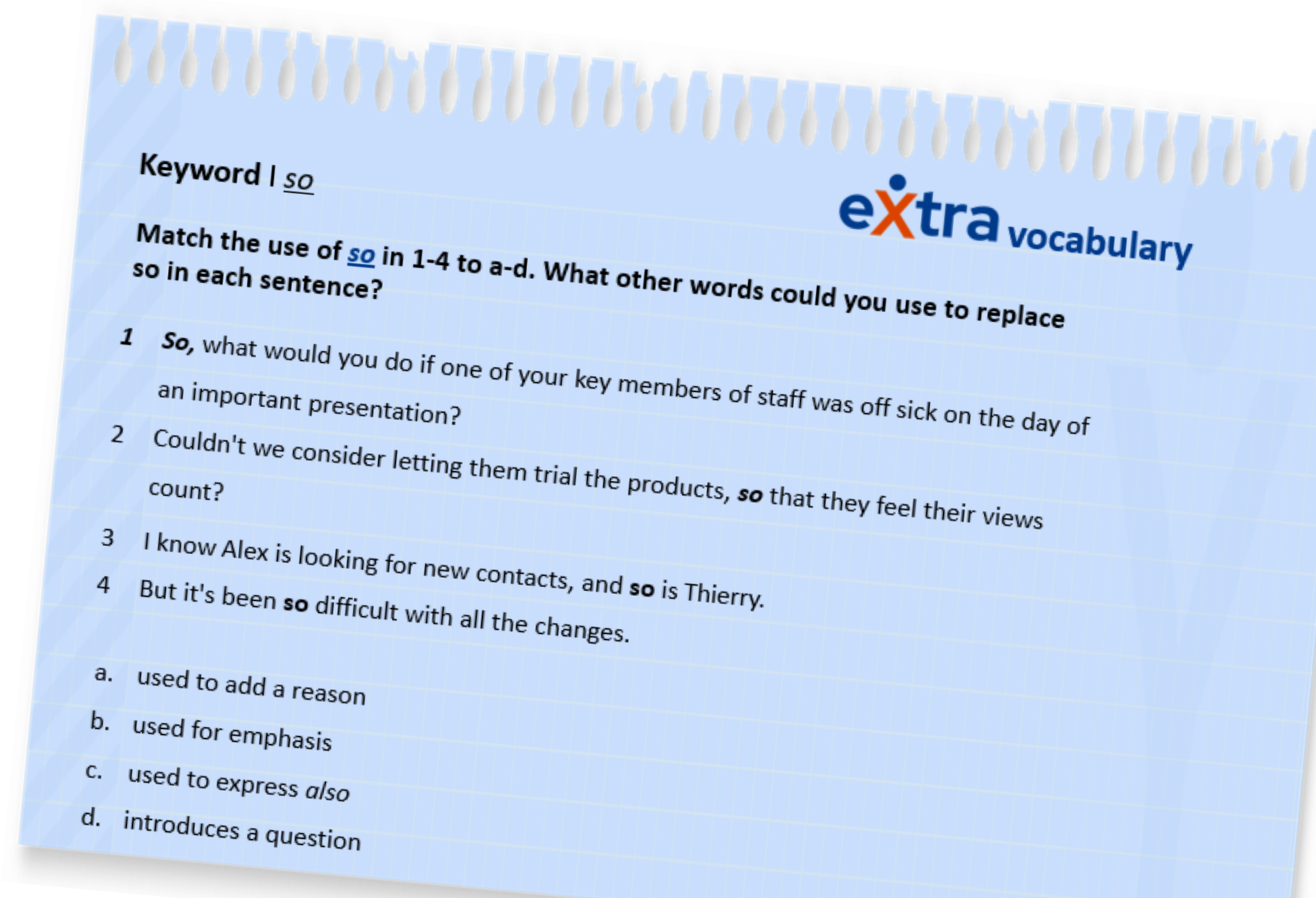
Audio 2.5

1. ... look, _____ that I need to see a dramatic improvement ...
2. _____ it's worth sending it to the people responsible for ...
3. _____ there's no point in it sitting in your in-tray ...
4. But _____ I'd like to see more evidence of how you ...
5. Look ... _____ couldn't we consider letting them ...
6. No, _____ the ones drawn up for internal purposes.
7. Um, well ..., _____ ?

8. Well, _____ the scale at the bottom of the page, what I mean .
9. Yes, _____ . Am I supposed to notify everybody ...
10. Yes, but _____ , they'd have liked to be more involved ...

3. Match the phrases in 2 to these techniques for getting your point across.

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| a. Reformulating: ____ | c. Illustrating a point: ____ |
| b. Clarifying: ____ | d. Summarizing: ____ |



4. Role Play. You are both in an update meeting and you are discussing the points in the following agenda. Have the meeting using the flowchart below.

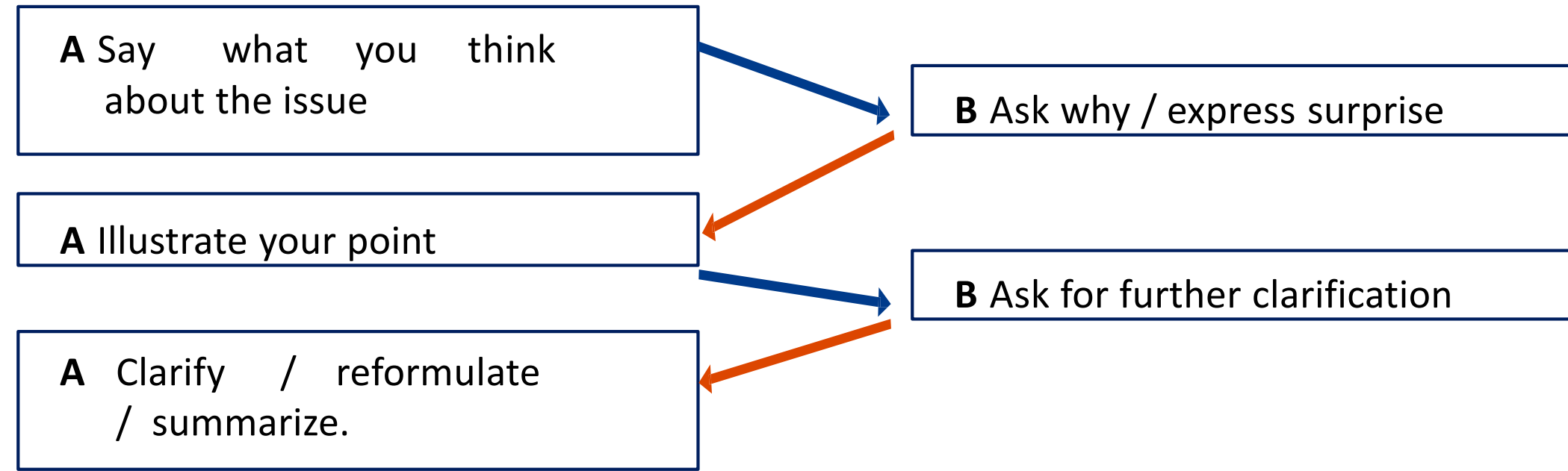
Agenda:

Update meeting

1. Monthly reports
2. The competition
3. Sales figures
4. Travel budget

Student A: You have two minutes to get your point across.

Student B: Ask questions for further clarification.



Monthly reports

You would like everybody's report to be handed in one week earlier than originally planned.

Sales figures

Official figures have not yet been released, but you believe your group did particularly well.

The competition

The competition have been very active recently - you saw a number of very good presentations at the conference last week.

Travel budget

This has been greatly reduced this year, so only employees in senior positions are able to travel overseas.

5. Role Play. In turns ask each other questions on the topics in the list below. Ask for clarification on any details which are not quite clear. Respond using the phrases from 2.

- your performance this year
- how you deal with stressful situations
- your current work/ project
- your team's strengths and weaknesses

Talking Point

The 'gig' economy: changing the future of careers

By Emily Harper, London School of Economics

Not too long ago, employment was defined by stability. Most people aimed for full-time jobs with fixed hours, regular paychecks, and comprehensive benefits like pensions and health insurance. Such jobs provided financial security and made long-term planning feasible.

Today, the employment landscape is undergoing a profound transformation. Increasing numbers of individuals are turning to the 'gig' economy, opting for freelance work, short-term contracts, and entrepreneurial pursuits. Advocates celebrate this shift as empowering and innovative, while critics warn of instability and lack of benefits.

This shift mirrors historical labor patterns. Before the Industrial Revolution, independent tradesmen and artisans dominated the workforce, operating in decentralized markets. Modern technology appears to be reviving this model by enabling peer-to-peer exchanges through digital platforms.

The rise of technology has played a key role in enabling the gig economy. Smartphones and digital platforms like Uber, Airbnb, and TaskRabbit connect workers directly with consumers. These platforms facilitate flexible employment opportunities, allowing individuals to monetize their skills and assets.

For example, Airbnb allows homeowners to rent out spare rooms, while Uber enables drivers to earn income using their personal vehicles. Similarly,

platforms like Etsy and Fiverr provide avenues for artisans and freelancers to sell products and services worldwide.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is further revolutionizing the gig economy. AI-powered platforms can match workers with tasks more efficiently, using algorithms to analyze skills, availability, and user preferences. AI also assists freelancers by offering tools for content creation, design, and data analysis, expanding their capabilities without requiring advanced expertise.

AI-driven gig platforms are automating processes, from scheduling to payment systems, improving reliability and scalability. At the same time, AI is creating new categories of gig work, such as remote customer service supported by chatbots and AI trainers who help refine machine learning models.

However, this AI integration poses challenges.

Workers may face increased competition from automated systems, putting downward pressure on wages.

Additionally, there are concerns about algorithmic bias in job matching and performance evaluations, raising ethical questions about fairness and transparency.

This model reduces traditional barriers to employment. With minimal investment, individuals can start working immediately, whether as delivery drivers, graphic designers, or virtual assistants.

However, this flexibility comes at a cost. Gig workers often face income unpredictability, lack of job security, and limited access to benefits like health insurance and retirement plans.

Proponents of the gig economy argue that it promotes independence, creativity, and better work-life balance. Workers can set their own schedules, pursue multiple projects, and adapt their work lives to personal preferences. Yet, detractors point to the absence of stability and employer-provided benefits as significant drawbacks.

The gig economy blurs the line between personal and professional life, offering both opportunities and challenges. However, this shift also introduces wider risks that cannot be ignored. Workers may struggle with a lack of social safety nets, such as health insurance, pensions, and unemployment benefits, which are often tied to traditional full-time employment. Additionally, the unpredictability of income can lead to financial instability, making long-term planning difficult. The rise of AI and automation further complicates the landscape, potentially displacing jobs and eroding wages. Policymakers and organizations must adapt to ensure fairness, accountability, and sustainability for workers.

Ultimately, the future of employment will depend on balancing innovation and security in this rapidly evolving economic environment.

Discussion

- 1. What is a 'gig' economy?
- 2. What kind of jobs are suitable for a 'gig' career?
- 3. What are the pros and cons of a 'gig' career? Work with a partner. List your ideas and then add any others mentioned in the article.

Pros	Cons

- 4. Would you consider this kind of career?
- 5. What are the wider risks of this new kind of economy?



‘Exploring a gig on the side can be a practical way to test entrepreneurial waters. This accessible path to entrepreneurship may inspire creativity and drive economic growth.’



Emily Harper

- 1. Read the quote above. Think of something you would like to do as a 'gig on the side'. This could be based on your skills or a gap you have seen in the market.
- 2. Hold a meeting to discuss your 'gig' ideas. Persuade the others that your idea is feasible. The others will ask questions to help you develop the idea into a realistic plan. You can use this chart to help you prepare.

My gig on the side is ...	
People need it because ...	
The risks are that ...	
The next steps I need to take are ...	