

Unit 9: Challenge

Objectives

- Talk about stress and time management
- Ask direct and indirect questions
- How to deliver bad news
- Interrupting and dealing with interruptions



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1. Which of the factors below produce the most stress? Discuss it with your teacher / partner.

- overwork
- business travel
- looking after children
- change
- waiting for other people to do things
- meeting deadlines
- dealing with finance
- boring, repetitive tasks
- public speaking
- promotion

2. In your opinion, what are the three most stressful jobs? Is your job stressful? (optional)

- air traffic controller
- CEO
- doctor
- firefighter
- secretary
- police officer
- waiter
- teacher
- taxi driver
- journalist
- project manager
- flight attendant

3. You are going to listen to people speaking about their jobs. All the phrases below are from the audio. Match them to the definitions (a-h).

1. to be under pressure

2. a heavy load to carry

3. to juggle too many balls

4. to have a lot on your plate

5. to lose sleep over something

6. to hit the wall

7. to pull your hair out

8. to push to the limit
- a. a lot of stress or responsibility

b. to reach a point where you can no longer continue because of stress

c. to have a lot of work

d. to try to do too many things at the same time

e. to feel stressed due to various demands or challenges

f. to stress oneself to the maximum

g. to worry about something, often too much

h. to become extremely frustrated or stressed



4. Listen to the audio, then match the people with their jobs and answer questions (1-2).



Consultant



Logistics manager



Broker



Event manager

	Sebastian	Karen	Denis	Lidia
1. What does the speaker do?				
2. What causes stress according to the speaker?				

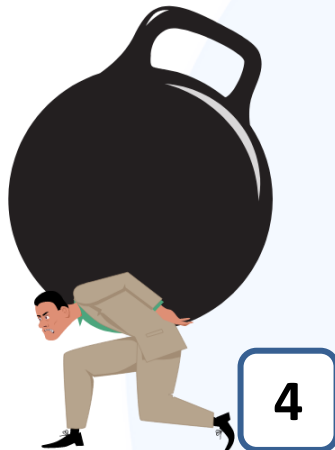
5. Complete the idioms in A with words in B. Then match each idiom to the pictures (1-8) and explain the meaning.

A

- to juggle too many _____
- to lose _____ over something
- to pull your _____ out
- a heavy _____ to carry
- to have a lot on your _____
- to hit the _____
- to be under _____
- to _____ to the limit

B

- wall
- push
- load
- sleep
- pressure
- hair
- balls
- plate



6. Rewrite the underlined part of each sentence with an idiom from exercise 5.

1. I feel overwhelmed when I have too many tasks at work. _____.
2. Managing the new project feels like a big burden. _____.
3. She's trying to handle too much at once by working and studying at the same time. _____.
4. I can't join the dinner party tonight; I'm very busy with the upcoming presentation. _____.
5. After working for hours, I finally reached my limit and had to take a break. _____.
6. He's worried about his financial problems. _____.
7. I'm so frustrated with this project, I feel like going crazy! _____.
8. This task is a real challenge! _____.

7. Discuss with your teacher / partner.

1. Is stress always a bad thing?
2. Can work-related stress cause health problems?
3. How can companies reduce stress?
4. Can bad management be the cause of stress? Has it ever happened to you?
5. Is your job stressful? Why?
6. What has been the most stressful situation in your career?

extra writing

Answer the question **(50-80 words)**:

How can you live a stress free life? Give 5 suggestions.

extra vocabulary

face a problem / challenge - If you face a problem, or a problem faces you, you have to deal with it.

E.g. This is one of the many problems faced by working mothers.

extra vocabulary

overcome difficulties / problems - to defeat or succeed in dealing with problems.

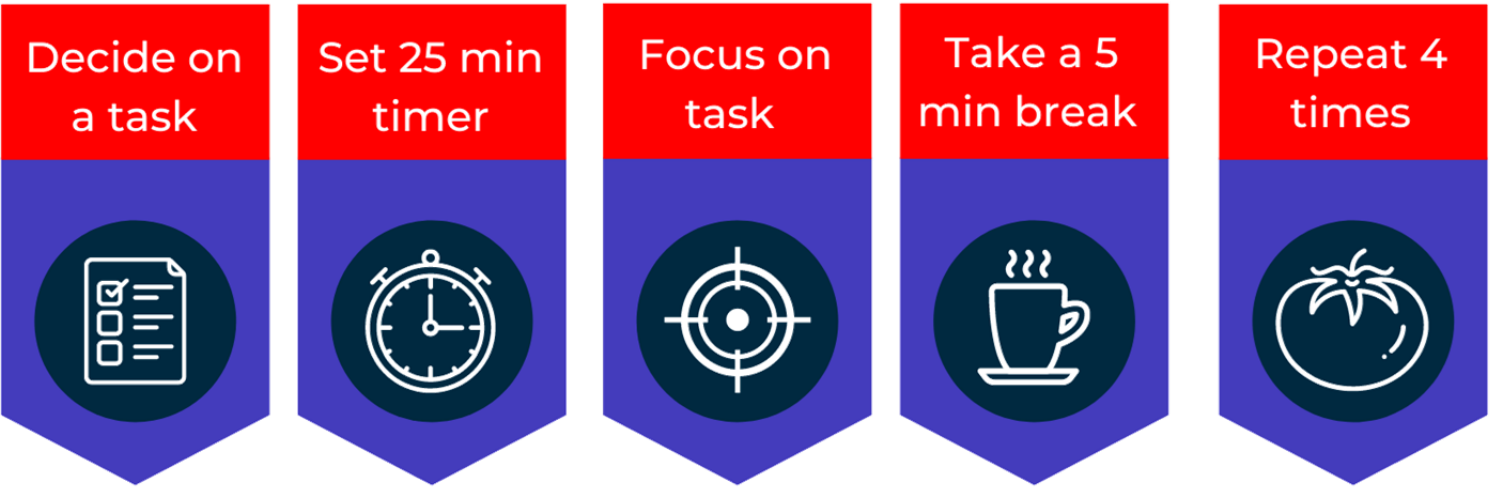
E.g. Eventually she managed to overcome her shyness in class.

1. Answer the questions.

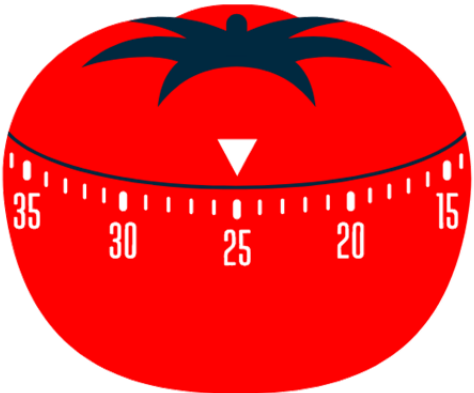
- 1. Is it difficult for you to complete what you need to do on time? Why?
- 2. How do you decide what to do first?

2. Look at the time management techniques below and discuss them with your teacher / partner. What other time management strategies do you know?

POMODORO TECHNIQUE



TAKE A 25 MINUTE BREAK



EAT THE FROG

Do the hardest / most important task first thing in the morning.



3. Read about Ryan Serhant and his 1000 Minute Rule, then answer the questions.

1. What is the 1000 Minute Rule?
2. How does Ryan Serhant suggest treating time?
3. What does he do to save time?
4. What's the task triage system?



Ryan Serhant is a real estate broker, CEO, and founder of SERHANT, a real estate company. He's also a bestselling author, producer, and star of Bravo's television series 'Million Dollar Listing New York'.

'In my company we actually calculate how much every meeting costs. Not just for my time, but for each employee's time based on their salaries.

So I can look around and say, 'I got 10 people in this meeting. This meeting is costing me eleven thousand dollars. If I'm not pulling out a hundred and eleven thousand dollars worth of value from this meeting, that's costing me 11 grand, I don't want to have the meeting.'

1000 Minute Rule

The "1000 Minute Rule" is a unique time management concept developed by Ryan Serhant. It is based on the idea that everyone has the same 1,440 minutes each day, but after we take away the time we spend sleeping and eating, we're left with around 1,000 minutes. An interesting aspect of this rule is treating time like money. For example, if a client's complaint takes up five minutes, it's like losing \$5. Ryan sees time as incredibly valuable and believes that we shouldn't **waste time** on less important tasks.

To maximize the use of time, Ryan employs personal assistants, leases a car, and outsources tasks to ensure he's using his time efficiently. This way he's able to **save time** that can be dedicated to more important activities because time, unlike money, cannot be earned back. If you're **running out of time**, make sure that you **spend** it on what matters most. Ryan tries to **make time for** important tasks, even when **pressed for time**. His method helps him to **fit in time** for both urgent and essential activities.

To prioritize tasks, Ryan Serhant uses a task triage system. This system divides work-related tasks into three categories based on their urgency and importance:

1. 'Spend your minutes here, now', focuses on high-value tasks like top client calls.
2. 'Spend zero minutes here', includes tasks that don't add unique value, like bookkeeping, which should be delegated.
3. 'Spend your bonus minutes later', involves using unexpected free time efficiently. So as Ryan sees it, if you have a scheduled meeting that ends 10 minutes early, you've just been given 10 bonus minutes of time which you can spend calling clients. This way you can even **make up for lost time**.

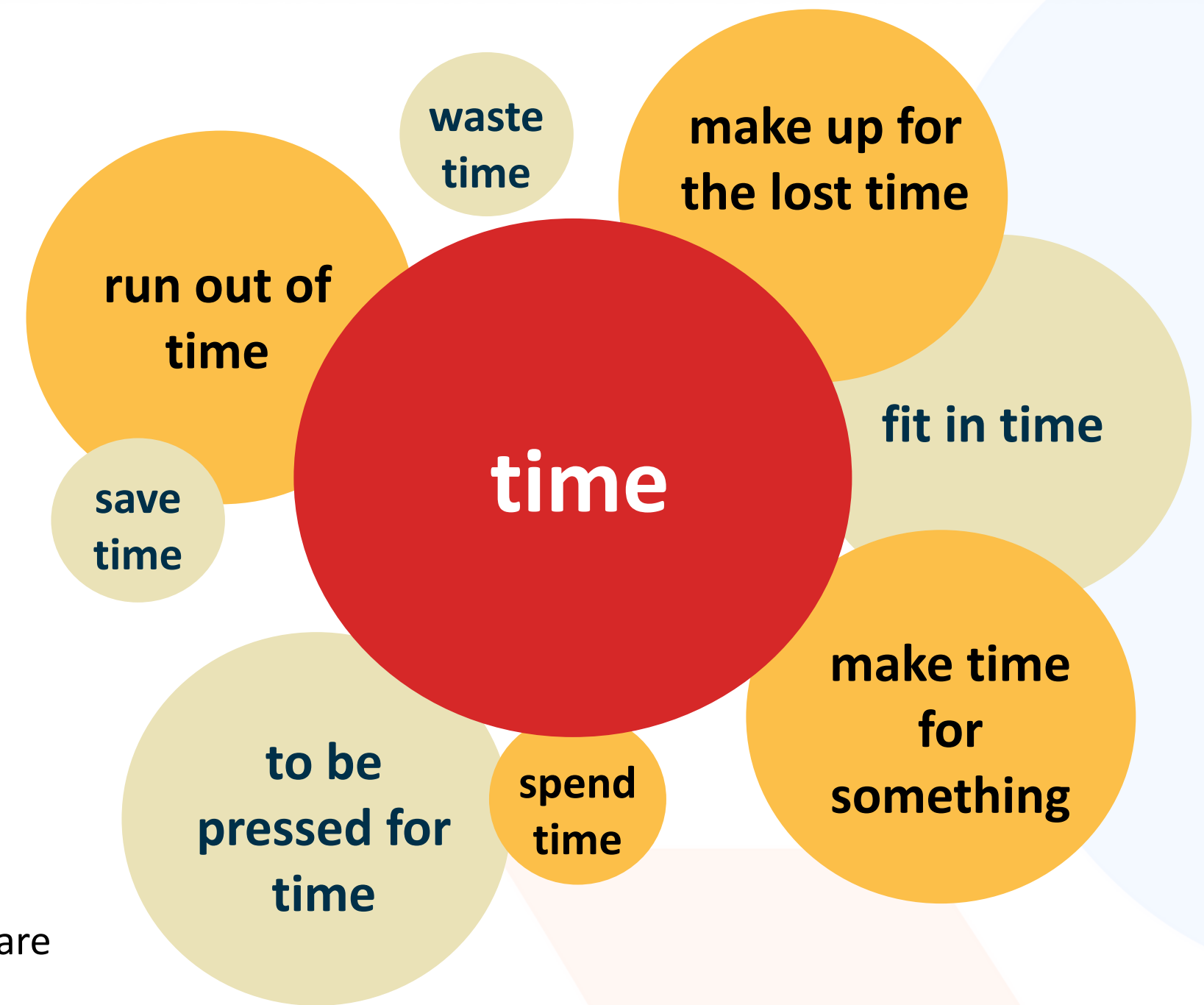
4. Match definitions (1-8) to the collocations with the word 'time'.

1. not using time effectively
2. doing things quickly and efficiently
3. in a hurry, short on time
4. almost no time left
5. use time for an activity
6. squeeze an activity into a schedule
7. prioritize time for something
8. catch up after a delay

5. Complete the questions with some of the collocations from exercise 4.

1. How do you _____ on the weekends?
2. What is something you always _____, no matter how busy you are?
3. How do you _____ for hobbies during a busy week?
4. Can you name a useless activity at work that you _____ on?
5. Do you make better decisions when you have much time or when you are _____?
6. Do you multitask to _____?

6. Answer the questions in exercise 5.



1. Are you good at time and stress management? Respond to the questions below.

1. *I was wondering if* you could give advice on how not to waste time.

2. *I'd like to know* how I can make more time for hobbies.

6. *Would you mind* sharing strategies for effective time management?

3. *Could you tell me* how I can fit in time for unexpected tasks?

5. *Do you know what I should* do if I have a lot on my plate?

4. *Do you have any idea* how to stay calm under pressure?





2. Listen to an expert answering the same questions and note down the responses.
Do you agree with the advice?

Audio 9.2

1. I was wondering if you could give advice on how not to waste time.

Expert: _____

2. I'd like to know how I can make more time for hobbies.

Expert: _____

3. Could you tell me how I can fit in time for unexpected tasks?

Expert: _____

4. Do you have any idea how to stay calm under pressure?

Expert: _____

5. Do you know what I should do if I have a lot on my plate?

Expert: _____

6. Would you mind sharing strategies for effective time management?

Expert: _____

3. Choose the correct option to complete the explanations in the *Language point*.

LANGUAGE POINT

1. We use indirect questions to sound **polite / impolite**.
2. The word order of an indirect question **is / is not** like a normal statement.
3. For indirect questions with a 'yes' or 'no' answer, we use **if / what**.
4. What phrases make indirect questions sound more polite?

extra tip

Mind the word order and tenses:

Could you tell me what your career goals **are**?

Could you tell me what your career goals **were**?

Could you tell me what your career goals **have been**?

Could you tell me what your career goals **will be**?

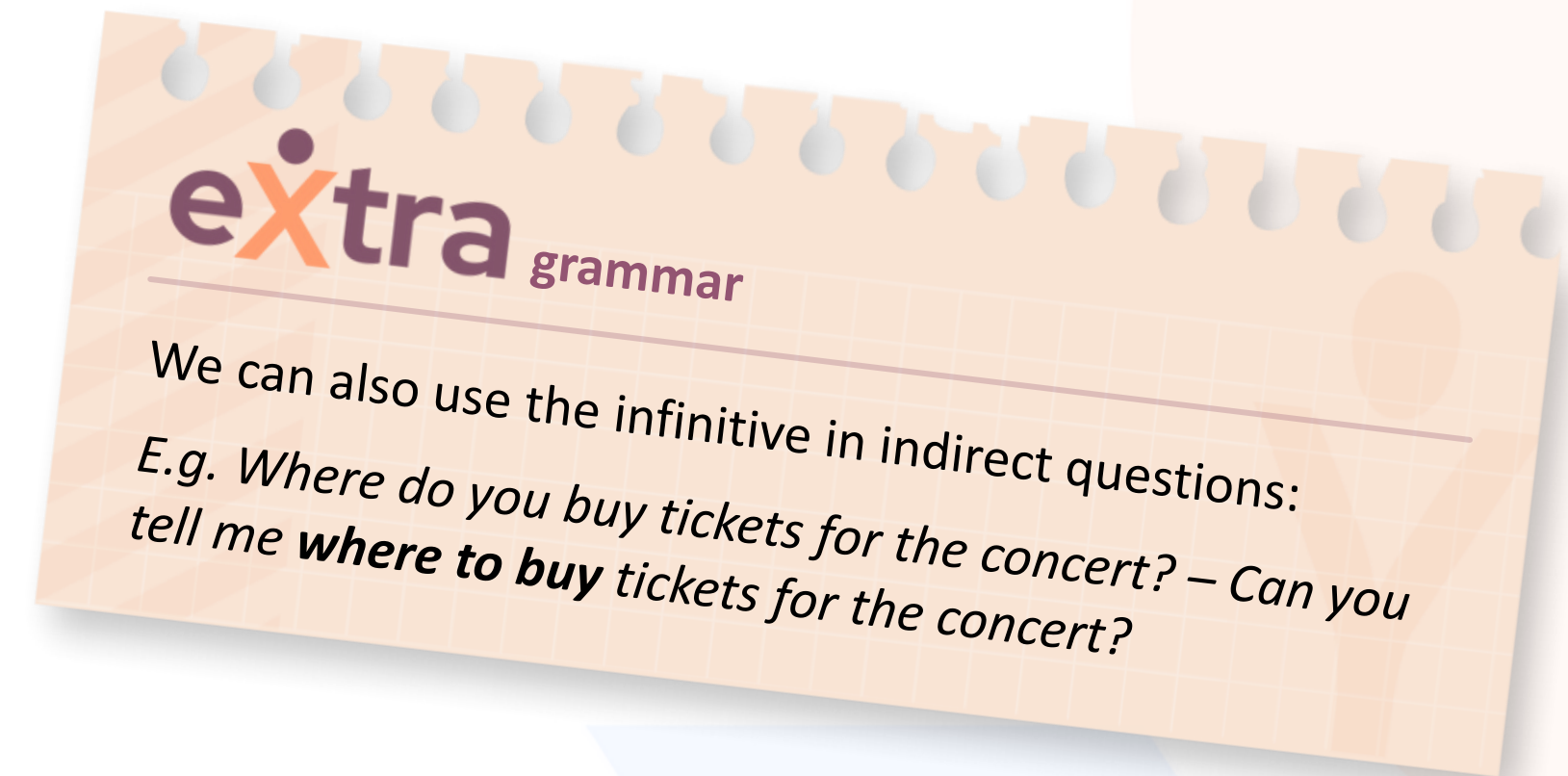
Direct and indirect questions

4. Correct the mistakes.

1. I was wondering if could you update me on the project status?
2. Would you mind telling me what time the meeting does start?
3. Could you tell me how do we handle client complaints?
4. You would mind if I asked for a day off next week?
5. Do you know what time starts the meeting?
6. Do you have any idea where does Amanda work?

5. Rewrite each sentence beginning as shown.

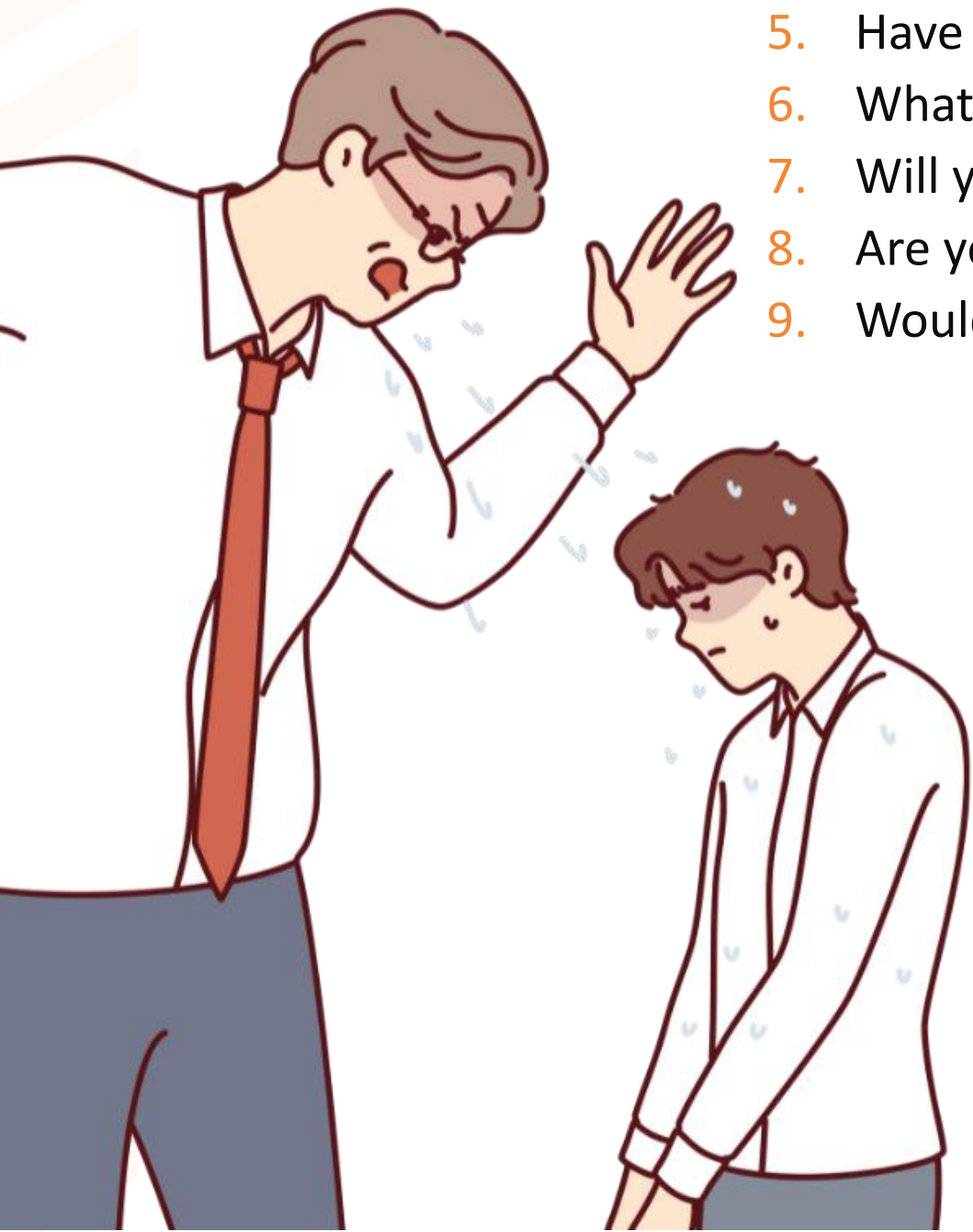
1. What does this word mean?
 - I'd like to know what this word means.
2. Why has everybody left?
 - Could you tell me _____
3. Is the meeting cancelled?
 - Do you know _____
4. Were there many people at the conference?
 - I was wondering if _____
5. Why did it take so long to deliver the order?
 - I'd like to know _____
6. Is the conference room available this afternoon?
 - Would you mind telling me _____
7. How did the marketing campaign go?
 - Do you have any idea _____



6. Your old boss was very rude, but you have a new, nicer boss now. Change what your old boss said into polite questions your new boss would use.

- 1. Why did you leave work early yesterday?
- 2. Coffee!
- 3. I want a word with you in private!
- 4. Check these figures again!
- 5. Have you finished the report?
- 6. What time is the meeting?
- 7. Will you contact the clients?
- 8. Are you going to handle the follow-up emails?
- 9. Would you care to do your job?

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____
- 6. _____
- 7. _____
- 8. _____
- 9. _____



1. When was the last time you had to break bad news to someone? Which of the strategies below did you use?
Tell your teacher / partner.

- A. **The glass is half full** – you focus on the positives and minimize any negatives, you are optimistic and believe that you will do well.
- B. **The glass is half empty** – you are realistic and honest because there might be problems.



Audio 9.3

2. Listen to the conversation and answer the questions.

- 1. What's the news?
- 2. What strategy does Alex use? *The glass is half full or The glass is half empty?*
- 3. How does Jamie react?

3. Match the sentence beginnings (1-7) with the endings (a-g).

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Unfortunately, we have to _____ | a. it's time to look at every choice we have. |
| 2. Due to the truck problem, _____ | b. check our stock. |
| 3. I'm very disappointed _____ | c. but we can't afford to stop production. |
| 4. Despite our best efforts, _____ | d. we can't make the truck get here faster. |
| 5. I'm sorry to have to say this, _____ | e. deal with a delay. |
| 6. I think we should _____ | f. with the delay myself. |
| 7. I really think _____ | g. we are unable to get our delivery for three more days. |



4. Imagine you're Alex. Read the strategy and the phrases provided below, then use them to describe the situation you heard in the audio.



5. Work with a partner / teacher. Read the situations below and practise delivering and managing bad news.

Situation 1

Student A

You're a team leader. You have to inform your team member that a major project has been cancelled.

Student B

You're a team member who just learned that the project you've been working on is cancelled. Respond.

Situation 3

Student A

You're a department head. You must inform your staff about a 20% reduction in employee benefits.

Student B

You're an employee who has just been told about the 20% cut in your benefits. Respond.

Situation 2

Student A

You're an HR manager. You need to announce that the office is relocating to a different country.

Student B

You're an employee and the HR manager has just announced that the office is relocating to a different country. Respond.

Situation 4

Student A

You're a supervisor. You need to tell your team that they will be working on Saturdays next month.

Student B

You're an employee and your supervisor has just announced that you'll be working on Saturdays next month. Respond.

1. Answer the questions.

1. How often do you interrupt other people?
2. How do you react when someone interrupts you?
3. Is it common in your culture to interrupt?

2. Do the test and discuss the result with your teacher / partner (optional).**1. You want to share an idea in a busy meeting. Do you:**

- a) Wait for the right moment to say your idea?
- b) Say your idea right away to make sure it's heard?

2. A colleague is talking about something you don't understand in a meeting. Do you:

- a) Wait for them to finish and then ask questions?
- b) Ask them to explain it while they are talking?

3. In a meeting, the talk is moving away from the main topic. Do you:

- a) Interrupt with a question to get back to the topic?
- b) Wait for the talking to stop and then bring up the main topic again?

4. You are in a meeting and someone keeps interrupting you. Do you:

- a) Tell them you'd like to finish what you're saying?
- b) Try to talk in short parts to fit your ideas in?

Mostly As

You like to wait for the right time to talk and ask questions in meetings. You are patient and think it's important to let others finish speaking before you speak.

Mostly Bs

You prefer to share your thoughts and ask questions straight away in meetings. You are direct and want to make sure you're understood right away.



Audio 9.4

3. Listen to extract 1 from a meeting and say whether the following statements are true or false.

1. The meeting is about a new marketing campaign.
2. Social media is mentioned as a way to improve the campaign.
3. There was an increase in engagement from past ads.
4. Everyone agrees to use only digital media.



Audio 9.4

4. Listen to extract 2 and complete the notes.

1. Michele claims that _____
2. Alberto explains that _____
3. Angelica says that _____

5. Complete the sentences with the words below.

- on
- to
- take
- just
- in
- add
- on

1. Could I _____ say something?
2. Hold _____ a minute.
3. I'm coming _____ that now.
4. I _____ your point.
5. Can I come _____ here?
6. Could I just comment _____ that?
7. Can I _____ something, Tim?

6. Make the learners read the Key Expressions and help them with the meanings they do not understand.

Interrupting

- *Could I (just) say something?*
- *Can I come in here? / Could I jump in?*
- *Could I just comment on that?*
- *Could I add something?*
- *Do you mind if I say something?*
- *Before you speak, let me just say ...*
- *Hold on a minute.*
- *Sorry to interrupt but ...*
- *Excuse me for interrupting ...*

Agreeing

- *That's a good point.*
- *I see what you mean.*
- *I take your point.*

Requesting patience

- *I'm coming to that now / in a moment / shortly.*
- *Please bear with me for a moment.*

Dealing with interruptions

- *The point I was making was ...*
- *As I was saying, ...*
- *Going back to what I was saying*
- *Hold on, please.*
- *We'll come back to you in a moment.*
- *May I just finish?*
- *If I can just finish,...*
- *Sorry, I just have one more thing to say.*

7. Work with your teacher / partner. Read the situation below and develop a dialogue, using the key expressions.
Interrupt and deal with interruptions.

Situation

You are part of a tech startup that has just released a new smartphone app. Unfortunately, a significant bug has been discovered, which causes the app to crash unexpectedly resulting in negative reviews. There is pressure to fix the issue quickly and manage the situation to maintain the company's reputation.

Student A

Project Manager

You believe in quick action to fix the app bug and want to tell the customers immediately about the problem. You think the team should work fast to solve the issue and keep the users updated.

Student B

Lead Developer

You think it's important to take more time to fix the bug properly and not rush the solution. You want to ensure the fix is tested thoroughly before telling the customers or updating the app.

Interrupting

- *Could I (just) say something?*
- *Can I come in here? / Could I jump in?*
- *Could I just comment on that?*
- *Could I add something?*
- *Do you mind if I say something?*
- *Before you speak, let me just say ...*
- *Hold on a minute.*
- *Sorry to interrupt but ...*
- *Excuse me for interrupting ...*

Agreeing

- *That's a good point.*
- *I see what you mean.*
- *I take your point.*

Requesting patience

- *I'm coming to that now / in a moment / shortly.*
- *Please bear with me for a moment.*

Dealing with interruptions

- *The point I was making was ...*
- *As I was saying, ...*
- *Going back to what I was saying*
- *Hold on, please.*
- *We'll come back to you in a moment.*
- *May I just finish?*
- *If I can just finish, ...*
- *Sorry, I just have one more thing to say.*

8. Work with your teacher / partner and role-play the situation.

Situation

Your team is getting ready to open a new shop in three weeks. But there are some delays with deliveries and getting the shop ready. There are already ads and special events planned for the opening. You need to figure out how to use the time left well so the shop can open as planned.

Student A

Operations Manager

You want to open the new store on time by working more hours. You think changing the date is bad for the store's image and suggest opening with fewer products.

Student B

Head of Sales and Marketing

You prefer to delay the store opening to make sure everything is ready. You want to tell customers about the delay and plan a bigger event to make them happy.

1. Discuss the meaning of the collocations with the word 'challenge' with your teacher and answer the questions.

1. Do you enjoy taking on challenges? Why or why not?
2. What is the biggest challenge you have ever faced in your life?
3. Can you think of a challenge that helped you develop a new skill or talent?
4. What new thing would you like to try but haven't yet?



2. You are going to watch a TED talk 'Try something new for 30 days'. Before you watch, match the underlined phrases to their correct meaning below (a-k):

1. A few years ago, I felt like I was stuck in a rut, so I decided to follow in the footsteps of the Great American philosopher Morgan Spurlock and try something new for thirty days.
2. It turns out thirty days is just about the right amount of time to add a new habit.
3. I went from desk-dwelling computer nerd to the kind of guy who bikes to work for fun.
4. Even last year, I ended up hiking up Mount Kilimanjaro, the highest mountain in Africa.
5. I also figured out that if you really want something badly enough, you can do anything for thirty days.
6. Every November, tens of thousands of people try to write their own fifty-thousand-word novel from scratch in thirty days.
7. You might be sleep-deprived, but you'll finish your novel.
8. Now, is my book the next great American novel? No, I wrote it in a month; it's awful!
9. I learned that when I made small, sustainable changes, things I could keep doing, they were more likely to stick.
10. When I gave up sugar for thirty days, day thirty-one looked like this.

- a. to have an unexpected result.
- b. a person who spends a lot of time at a computer.
- c. really wanting something.
- d. starting from the beginning.
- e. not having enough sleep.
- f. very bad or unpleasant.
- g. changes that last and don't cause harm.
- h. to keep doing something.
- i. to stop doing something.
- j. too fixed in one particular type of activity and needing to change.
- k. to finally be in a particular place or situation.





3. Watch the first part of the video (00:00 – 01:38) and answer the questions.

1. Who inspired Matt to try new things?
2. What did he learn while doing thirty-day challenges?
3. What were Matt's challenges?
4. How did he benefit from this experience?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UNP03fDSj1U&t=183s&ab_channel=TED-Ed



4. Watch the second part of the video (01:39 – 03:27) and say if the statements are True or False.

1. Matt wrote a fifty-thousand-word novel in thirty days.
2. He recommends getting plenty of sleep while writing a novel.
3. Matt believes that big, crazy challenges are more likely to become long-term habits.
4. He suggests trying something new for the next thirty days.

5. Summarize the video using the prompts below.

Thirty-day challenges:

1. take a picture every day for a month
2. climb Mount Kilimanjaro
3. write a fifty-thousand-word novel
4. give up sugar for thirty days
5. bike to work
6. 10,000 steps/day

- A few years ago, I felt like ..., so I decided
- The idea is actually pretty simple,
- There are a few things that I learned while doing these thirty-day challenges.
- The first was, ...
- I also noticed that ...
- Last year, I ended up ...
- I also figured out that ...
- It turns out all you have to do
- By the way, the secret is ...
- So here's one last thing I'd like to mention, ...
- I learned that
- There's nothing wrong with ...
- In fact, ...
- So here's my question to you, ...
- So why not think about



6. Which of the challenges above (1-6) would you like to take up? Why?
What other challenges can you think of?

7. Use the prompts in exercise 5 to speak about a challenge that you've faced.

1. Choose the correct option.

1. Mary often loses _____ thinking about her upcoming presentation.
a) weight b) sleep c) control
2. When you're overwhelmed, it feels like you're _____ too many balls.
a) throwing b) juggling c) catching
3. I was _____ my hair out trying to solve the problem.
a) brushing b) cutting c) pulling
4. Carrying all these responsibilities feels like a _____ load.
a) heavy b) light c) small
5. With all these tasks, I definitely have a lot on my _____.
a) plate b) table c) mind
6. In the marathon, I felt like I _____ the wall at mile 20.
a) built b) hit c) saw
7. Working on a tight deadline means I am _____ pressure.
a) under b) relaxed c) over
8. The training session was so intense; it really pushed me to my _____.
a) best b) start c) limit

2. You are a finance manager. Use some of the phrases below to tell your team that some jobs will be cut because you're combining departments.

- Unfortunately, we have to...
- Due to [reason], we are unable to...
- I'm sorry to have to say this, but...
- I'm not sure that we'll be able to...
- I appreciate your understanding as we...
- To be fair, there will be a few...
- I'm sure that we can...
- Of course, there will be a few...

3. Complete the sentences with the words below.

- **save**
 - **pressed**
 - **up**
 - **waste**
 - **make**
 - **fit**
 - **spend**
 - **ran**
1. We can't _____ time on unnecessary meetings; our project deadline is approaching.
 2. Sending emails instead of having meetings can _____ time.
 3. I'm really _____ for time today with back-to-back meetings, so let's keep this brief.
 4. We _____ out of time in the meeting and couldn't discuss the marketing strategy.
 5. I like to _____ time each morning planning my day.
 6. Even though my schedule is full, I'll try to _____ in time to review the report.
 7. It's important to _____ time for team building activities to maintain a positive work environment.
 8. After the holiday, we'll need to work extra hard to make _____ for lost time.

4. Rewrite the underlined part of each sentence using a collocation from exercise 2.

1. It's important to allocate time for brainstorming sessions.
2. During the long flight Sarah passed the time reading books.
3. I'll try to squeeze in time for a quick meeting between my appointments.
4. After the system was back online, we had to work extra to compensate for wasted time.
5. We cut time on reports by using templates.
6. We used up all the time discussing one topic and missed the others.
7. We often lose time in long meetings that aren't productive.
8. I'm short on time today due to several urgent tasks and have to skip lunch.

5. Rephrase the questions.

1. What is the deadline for this report?
 - Could you tell me _____?
2. How many people will attend the conference?
 - Do you have any idea _____?
3. Why was the project delayed?
 - I was wondering _____.
4. When can we expect the shipment to arrive?
 - Can you tell me _____?
5. Who is responsible for client relations?
 - I'd like to know _____.
6. Are we meeting our sales targets this quarter?
 - Could you let me know _____?
7. What were the main points of the meeting?
 - Do you know _____?
8. How will the new regulations affect our business?
 - Could you explain _____?

6. Put the words in order to make indirect questions.

1. wondering / I / was / when / is / the / deadline.
2. like / know / I'd / to / who / is / our / supplier.
3. tell / me / Could / you / if / ready / is / the / report?
4. have / any / Do / you / idea / where / are / the / files?
5. know / Do / you / when / the / is / next / audit?
6. mind / Would / you / explaining / the / new / protocol?

7. Match the sentence halves.

- | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Could I just _____ | a. with me for a moment. |
| 2. Do you mind _____ | b. if I say something? |
| 3. Hold on _____ | c. one more thing to say. |
| 4. I see _____ | d. to that in a moment. |
| 5. I take _____ | e. a minute. |
| 6. I'm coming _____ | f. your point. |
| 7. Please bear _____ | g. what you mean. |
| 8. Sorry, I just have ____ | h. comment on that? |