

Business Advanced

Unit 7: Learning



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Unit 7: Grammar reference and Homework



Working with Words

1. Complete sentences (1-7) with phrases from the list.

- personal development plans

shared vision

skills deficit

structural change
- collective aspiration

employee participation

paradigm shift

performance management

1.

‘After months of hesitation, we ended up leaving the company and started our own business together. We knew it would work because we had a _____ of what we wanted to achieve.’
2.

‘Honestly, I would like to encourage _____ in all departmental decisions.’
3.

‘In the next year, carrying out our business in an ethical way is both a _____ and a mutual responsibility for us all.’
4.

‘The company was completely reorganized after the Bankruptcy Trustee came in - a radical _____ was implemented.’
5.

‘There was a real _____ in the team when Gareth left and Jens was appointed team leader. Everyone suddenly became far more target-oriented and enthusiastic. Sales went up dramatically.’
6.

‘We need to have more control over staff progression, so we need to start taking _____ more seriously, and I think we should introduce formalized _____ for each member of staff.’
7.

‘Where are all the competent IT specialists? There seems to be a real _____ in this area!’

2. Correct the mistakes in this conversation.

Markie: Why haven't they put salaries up by 10% over the board? Why is it just management level that get that?

Carter: That's what always happens. You need to get in the reality world and realize that this is just the way it is.

Markie: I know, but I think this decision is actually counter-productive with the long run. Some staff might leave. It will cost a lot to recruit new staff.

Carter: True, but they'll always defend these types of decisions. They'll argue that management deserve bigger pay rises because they're the ones who have to think about the huge picture and make decisions.

Answer key

1.

1. shared vision

2. employee participation

3. paradigm shift

4. structural change
5. collective aspiration

6. performance management / personal development plans

7. skills deficit

2. Possible answers

- "put salaries up by 10% over the board" → "increased salaries by 10% across the board"
- "get in the reality world" → "face reality"
- "counter-productive with the long run" → "counterproductive in the long run"
- "deserve bigger pay rises" → "deserves bigger pay rises"
- "the huge picture" → "the bigger picture"

3. Complete the gaps in the text below with the correct word or phrase from the list. Use each word or phrase only once.

collective aspiration - shared vision - paradigm shift - performance management - personal development plans - in the real world - structural - employee participation - in the long run - the bigger picture - skills deficit - across the board

Learning and Growth in Startups

Learning in startups is a challenging yet rewarding journey. Unlike traditional companies, startups require a **1.** _____ that unites the team toward a common goal. Without a **2.** _____, employees can struggle to understand their role in achieving the company's objectives.

One of the main challenges startups face is adapting to a **3.** _____ in the way work is carried out. Traditional practices may not apply, so agility and innovation are critical. However, without proper **4.** _____, employees may feel disengaged or lack motivation, which can hinder productivity.

To succeed, startups often encourage **5.** _____ by involving all employees in decision-making processes. This not only increases accountability but also builds a sense of belonging among team members. Additionally, creating **6.** _____ tailored to each employee helps align individual growth with the company's goals, ensuring personal and professional development.

In the fast-paced world of startups, thinking **7.** _____ is essential for leaders. While day-to-day tasks are important, it's equally vital to understand how decisions impact the company **8.** _____. Failing to do so can lead to short-sighted choices that harm sustainability.

Another common issue is a **9.** _____ when it comes to technical or specialized roles. Startups must address this by providing targeted training or hiring skilled professionals to bridge the gap. Moreover, introducing **10.** _____ changes to workflows and organizational structures may be necessary to keep up with growth.

Finally, startups should strive for fairness **11.** _____ when implementing policies, such as pay raises or promotions, to maintain morale and trust within the team. In summary, the ability to manage challenges effectively is what sets successful startups apart in **12.** _____.

Answer Key:

1. shared vision
2. collective aspiration
3. paradigm shift
4. performance management
5. employee participation
6. personal development plans
7. the bigger picture
8. in the long run
9. skills deficit
10. structural
11. across the board
12. in the real world

1. Put the words in *italics* in the correct order to complete the conversation.

Alex: Hi, Jamie. I'm calling to discuss the recent delivery problems we've been having.

Jamie: Oh, hi, Alex. I've heard there have been a few delivery issues recently. **1. problems / the / Could / were? / what / you / exactly / clarify**

_____?

Alex: Yeah, sure. Basically, it's White Route Logistics, they just don't seem able to deliver on time anymore.

Jamie: **2. mean / you / Do / that**

the other logistics companies we use aren't causing any of the problems?

Alex: Well, not exactly. **3. is / I'm / saying / What**

that it's mainly an issue with White Route Logistics, but we have also had a couple of problems with Utome.

Jamie: **4. logistics / of / What / name / other / again? / was / the / company / the**

_____?

Alex: Utome.

Jamie: Oh, yes. That's right. That reminds me. **5. Have / notice? / Hans / you / handed / that / his / has / in / heard**

_____?

He's been headhunted by that web company, Utopia.

Alex: Really? I knew he wasn't particularly happy. **6. about / way, / By / talking / the**

people leaving, have you heard about Helga?

Jamie: No. What's happened?

Alex: Apparently, she's taking early retirement. Anyway, sorry. **7. That's / of / digression. / a / bit / a**

Jamie: **8. main / back / issue. / to / Let's / get / the**

_____.

2. Choose the correct words in *italics*.

1. **A:** Can I speak to Monica Win, please?

B: Did you *ask / said / say* Monica Win?

2. I'm not quite clear *with / about / at* your last suggestion.

3. Could you run it *by / through / along* me again?

4. Could I ask you to spell *it / with / out* some details?

5. No, it's *bad / not / problem* that we don't have the resources. We don't have the time to do this.

6. Just a *second / little / thought*. It may not be entirely relevant, but have you noticed how tired David's been looking recently?

7. Actually, it *doesn't / won't / isn't* matter - it's a bit off the topic right now.

Answer Key

1.

1. Could you clarify exactly what the problems were?
2. Do you mean that the other logistics companies aren't causing any of the problems?
3. What I'm saying is...
4. What was the name of the other logistics company again?
5. Have you noticed that Hans has handed in his notice?
6. By the way, talking about people leaving...
7. That's a bit of a digression.
8. Let's get back to the main issue.

2.

- | | |
|----------|------------|
| 1. say | 5. problem |
| 2. about | 6. thought |
| 3. by | 7. doesn't |
| 4. out | |

The future in the past

Was going to

We can use *was going to* to talk about the future from a point of view in the past regarding things that were planned, or former intentions.

- *I **was going to** attend the conference in Berlin, but my flight got canceled.*
2. It is the intention that is in the past and has changed. The time the intention refers to can be in the future.
 - *We **were going to** host a picnic **this weekend**, but the weather forecast predicts rain.*
 3. The time the intention refers to can also be in the past.
 - *I **was going to** meet my manager **yesterday**, but she was unavailable.*
 4. This structure is often used to explain why something did not happen, make excuses, explain changes to plans, or give background to our current intentions/thoughts.
 - *Hi, Sarah. I **was going to** email you this morning, but I got caught up in meetings.*
 - *We **were going to** hold the event at the park, but it was under maintenance.*
 - *I **was going to** invite Tom for coffee tonight. Do you think it's a good idea?*
 5. We can also use perfect tenses with *going to*, for different perspectives in the past.
 - *She's **been going to** start her own business for years — I don't think she'll ever do it.*
 - *They **had been going to** move abroad, but their plans changed at the last minute.*

Other structures

A number of other structures are also possible:

1. The past continuous can be used for former arrangements (just as we would use the present continuous for a current arrangement).
 - *I **was having** lunch with the new client at 1:00 p.m., but they canceled at the last minute.*
2. *Was to / were to* is possible as the past form of be to, particularly to talk in a formal style about past plans and arrangements.
 - *We **were to** announce the new product line during the annual meeting, but it was postponed.*

1. Use Katrina’s ‘to do’ list to make sentences using 'the future in the past'. Use the past continuous, *was to*, *was supposed to* and *was going to*.

Tuesday: to do

- 1. Finish working on Carter case (too busy)
- 2. Meeting: Arad, her office, 10.00 a.m. (she was off sick)
- 3. Meeting & lunch, Hungarian rep, 12.30 p.m. (his plane was delayed, didn’t arrive till 3.00 p.m.)
- 4. File corporate credit card expenses (couldn’t find receipts)
- 5. Book flights for Windu conference (website kept crashing)
- 6. Meet Sazi at Cafe Cafeina for after-work drink (closed, went to Café Devin’s instead)
- 7. Check bank account-salary will go in today (I was wrong-will have to wait until tomorrow!)



1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

Answer key: possible answers

- 1. Katrina was going to finish working on the Carter case, but she was too busy.
- 2. Katrina was going to meet Arad at her office at 10:00 a.m., but she was off sick.
- 3. Katrina was going to meet and have lunch with the Hungarian representative at 12:30 p.m., but his plane was delayed, and he didn’t arrive until 3:00 p.m.
- 4. Katrina was supposed to file the corporate credit card expenses, but she couldn’t find the receipts.
- 5. Katrina was going to book flights for the Windu conference, but the website kept crashing.
- 6. Katrina was to meet Sazi at Café Cafeína for an after-work drink, but it was closed, so she went to Café Devin’s instead.
- 7. Katrina had been going to check her bank account for her salary deposit, but she realized it would not be available until tomorrow.

2. Look at other examples of 'the future in the past' in sentences a-g. Which one expresses ... ?

1. an arrangement ____

2. an intention ____

3. a prediction ____

4. a promise ____

5. a personal conviction ____

6. an excuse ____

7. an obligation ____

a. I was going to phone you this week, but I heard you were out of the office.

b. They were supposed to get back to me by Monday, but it's Wednesday and I still haven't heard from them.

c. She assured us that she'd have the figures by the end of November.

d. I was going to send it to you, but I forgot. Sorry.

e. We brought in a new CEO thinking that she would be able to change the company culture.

f. I always knew he would do well in the company.

g. I was visiting the client tomorrow, but they've just had to postpone the appointment.

Answer key

2.

1. an arrangement – g

2. an intention – a

3. a prediction – e

4. a promise – c

5. a personal conviction – f

6. an excuse – d

7. an obligation – b

Key Expressions

Checking facts

- *Did you say ... ?*
- *What was ... again?*

Checking understanding

- *What you're saying is that ...*
- *Do you mean that ... ?*

Asking for clarification

- *I'm not quite clear about your last suggestion.*
- *I'm not quite sure I understand.*
- *Could you run it by me again?*
- *Could you clarify exactly what the problems were?*
- *Could I ask you to spell out some details?*

Dealing with a misunderstanding

- *No, it's not that we don't ...*
- *We don't ...*
- *What I'm saying is ...*
- *That's not what I mean. What I mean is ...*

Digressing

- *Just a thought. It may not be entirely relevant, but ...*
- *That reminds me. Have you heard ... ?*
- *By the way, talking about ...*

Resuming

- *Actually, it doesn't matter - it's a bit off-topic right now.*
- *Anyway ... sorry. That's a bit of a digression.*
- *Let's get back to the main issue.*