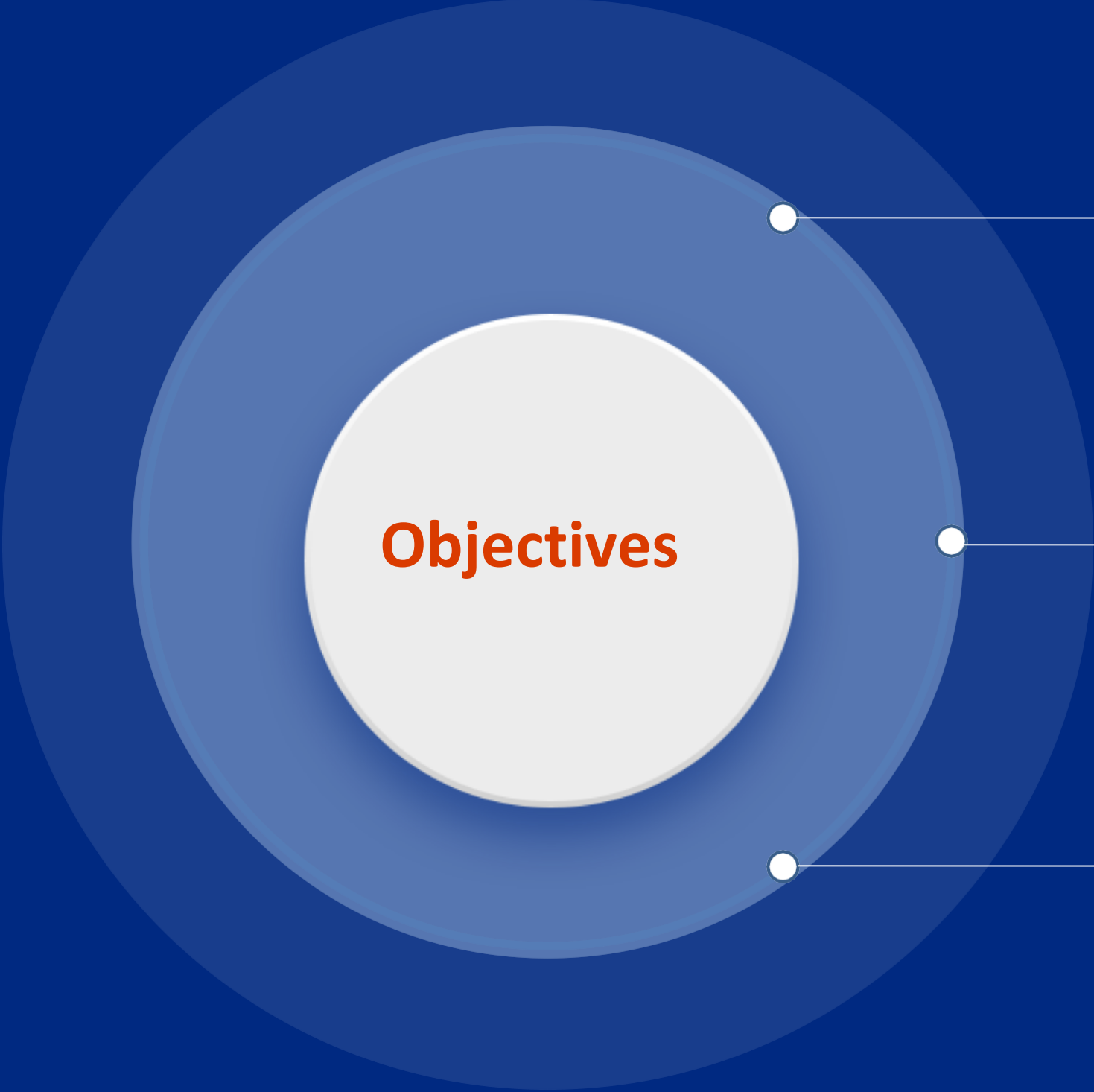


Business Advanced

Unit 3: Change





Objectives

Talk about organizational change

Give a formal presentation about the future

Show understanding

Starting Point

Answer these questions:

- 1. What do you like or dislike about your place of work? Think about space, layout, lighting, equipment, noise, 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. How well does your organization adapt to changing times? Read the article and evaluate the extent to which the following 10 statements apply to your company. Please, explain.

CORPORATE CULTURE

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.

But what about you? Read these statements and decide to what extent they apply to where you work.

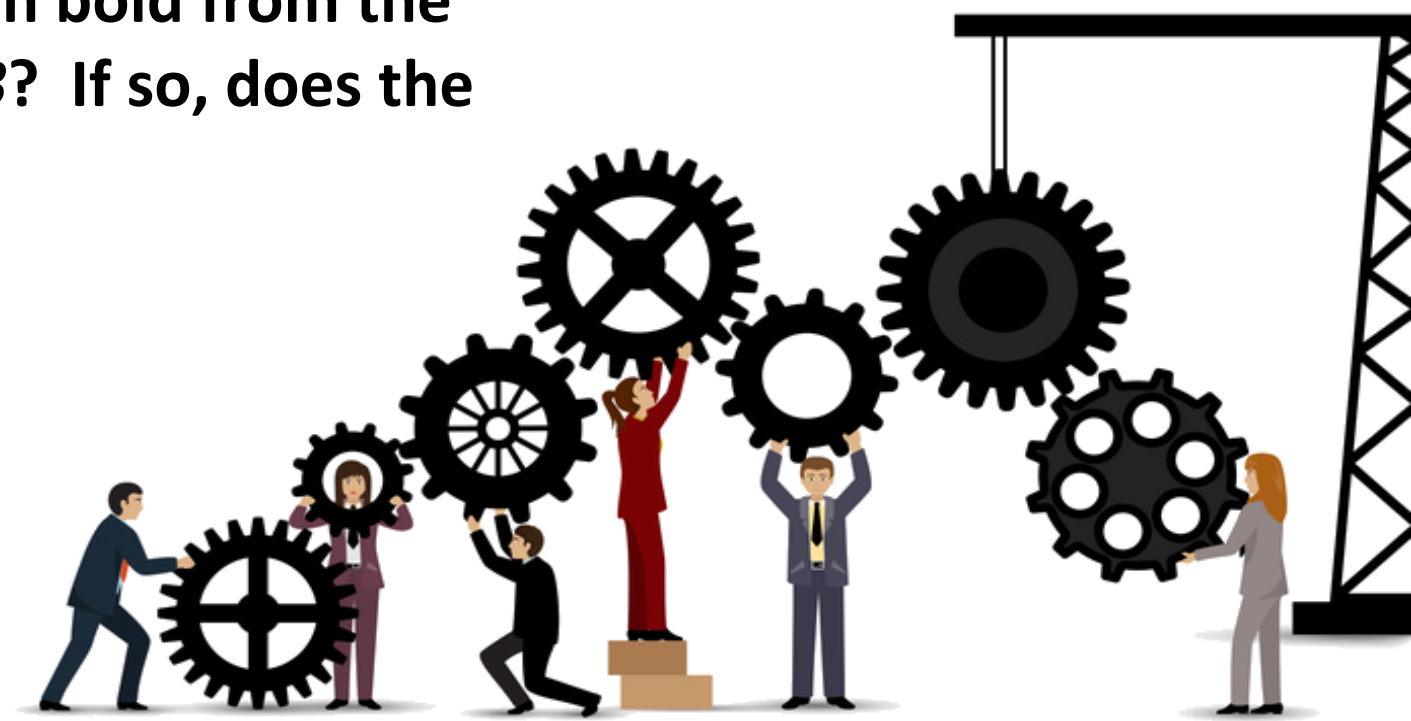
1. The company buildings create a **dynamic** working atmosphere.
2. Staff are judged by the hours they work, not what they achieve.
3. Staff need to have excellent IT skills.
4. In order to be able to work here, you need to **access** paper files.
5. Staff can work wherever and whenever is most **effective**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

2. Compare your answers in 1 and discuss any differences.

3. Find words in bold in the text in 1 that are similar in meaning to the words in *italics* in the following sentences (1-10)

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

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



[illegible]

**9. Imagine that you work for a manufacturing company which has a problem with morale in the factory.
Read about the possible causes in the email, then follow steps (1-3) below.**

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

Regards, Brian

Some of the major factors causing low morale may be:

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

Context

A large insurance company is developing a plan for preparing for the future, and one of its leaders has been asked to participate in a seminar on the future of workplace practices. The leader is expected to present their insights to the management team, including the CEO. Since the management team is multidisciplinary, technical terms and jargon may not be clear to everyone.



1. Discuss the following questions.

1. How often do you give presentations?
2. What kind of audiences do you present to?
3. How do you feel about giving presentations?
4. How often do you listen to presentations and who gives these presentations?
5. What difficulties do you have when listening to a presentation in English?



Audio 3.2 3.3 3.4 3.5

2. Listen to four extracts from a formal presentation. Complete 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: _____

2. Current research

- Rise in 'demuting' - 12 million people in UK will be working from home by 2025.
- New generation of 'career nomads' - employees moving around changing jobs/careers.

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: _____

4. Effects on the employer

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

NOTES: _____

3. Listen to the four extracts one more time and refer back to the slides in 2.
Write down the expressions which are used for functions (1-12) in the table below.


Audio 3.2


3.3


3.4


3.5

Slide 1 / Extract 1	Expressions
1. put the presentation in context	
2. refer to a point that will be raised later	
3. outline the structure	
Slide 2 / Extract 2	
4. introduce the second slide	
5. explain the terms: 'demuting' and 'career nomads'	
Slide 3 / 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	
Slide 4 / Extract 4	
11. introduce the last point	
12. finish the presentation	

4. Read the audio scripts. Check your answers to 3.

3.2

Extract 1

All right, just to fill you in on some of the background; research from Henley Management College in the UK has shown that middle managers are under increasing pressure and it's going to get tougher. Why? Because the flexible working revolution means that management will become more about resourcing and measuring results than about following day-to-day procedures. People are expected to be working more flexibly in the future. In fact, it's estimated that by 2050 most people will have been working flexibly for more than a decade. That's something to think about, and I'll return to this point later ... So, I've divided my talk up into three sections. First of all, I'll consider the current research. After that, I'll go on to talk about the impact on the workforce as a whole, and I'll conclude with some comments about how this will affect employers.

3.3

Extract 2

I'd like to start by saying a few words about some of the changes predicted in a recent report. One significant change will be the rise in 'demuting'. By 'demuting' I mean working remotely from wherever you are, and not needing

to travel to an office. So, the opposite of commuting really. It's anticipated that as many as 12 million people in the UK will be working from home by 2025. If the 20th century was about the 47.6-hour week for British workers, the 21st century is going to be about a new generation of 'career nomads'. Now, I don't know if you're familiar with this term? Well, 'career nomads' refers to employees who are changing the rules of time management in ways that suit their new approaches to work and leisure time. To put it another way, employees who no longer think in terms of a job for life, but move around, changing jobs, and even careers. We need to ask ourselves – is this a good thing, and for whom?

3.4

Extract 3

OK, moving on now to look at how this all affects the workforce. One possible consequence of the home becoming the focus of most people's working lives will be a rise in 'binge-time careerism' – this is where employees work non-stop for an agreed period and then take the equivalent amount of time off. Personal development could also benefit as new ways of working give rise to 'shadow careers' – and perhaps here I should just explain

what I mean by 'shadow careers' – that's when amateur activities are pursued to professional standards. So for example, ... Turning to the next point, research commissioned by British Telecom points out that 24-7 access to company emails and information via phones and BlackBerries could simply translate into staff working harder and longer, unless organizations devise formal policies to deal with their new working practices. And as I said earlier, it's predicted that there will be tension between employers and employees over some new ways of working. I'll say more about the effects on employers in a moment. Just to digress for a second – the report suggests that the trend towards home working could have other positive social side effects. It points to the fact that three-quarters of people questioned believe that flexible work patterns and the rise of home-based businesses are likely to revive local communities. And six out of ten people believe the shift will make larger communities and cities more personal and people-friendly.

3.5

Extract 4

For employers, however, the flip side to all this will be the sheer number of alternatives available to individuals. And this brings me to the last point. Whenever I hear employers discussing how they are going to compete for talent, the focus always seems to be on competition with other employers. But today's technology-aware workers already have more opportunities than ever before to make a distinct choice between corporate life and working, in whatever capacity, for themselves – and we anticipate that this trend will only increase. And this is why by the mid-21st century a major cultural change will have taken place. The workforce will have acquired the power to make choices, and employers need to recognize this and start planning for it now. To sum up, forward-thinking employers would be wise to view this element of choice as just as serious a competitor as other employers are considered to be. And solving this dilemma must surely become a key priority. So, that brings me to the end of my talk. Thank you very much for listening. And I'll be happy to take any questions now.

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, ...*

Signaling 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 are 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.*

5. Role-Play. You are going to report back to your colleagues and CEO on your findings from the seminar. Prepare an outline for a presentation to summarize your findings using the slides and your notes from 2.

1. Decide who will present which parts of your presentation, and what expressions from 3 you will use to structure and signal the different parts.
2. Present your part of the presentation to each other. Check against your notes from 2 that your partner includes 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. Sketch out the structure of your presentation on a series of slides. Include:

- background information
- an outline of the structure
- explanation of specialist terms
- reference to a later point
- reference to an earlier point
- links from one section to another
- a conclusion

7. Optional. Listen to each other's presentations, and take notes of the key points. When you have finished, check your understanding and ask questions.



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?



1. Look at sentences (1-10). For each sentence, answer questions (a-d).

- 1. The flexible working revolution means that management **will become** more about resourcing and measuring results.
- 2. It's estimated that by 2050 most people **will have been working** flexibly for at least a decade.
- 3. It's anticipated that 12 million people **will be working** from home by 2025.
- 4. The 21st century **is going to be** about a new generation of 'career nomads'.
- 5. The trend towards home working **could have** other positive side-effects.
- 6. We anticipate that this trend **will only increase**.
- 7. Home-based businesses **are likely to revive** local communities.
- 8. By the mid-21st century a major cultural change **will have taken place**.
- 9. People **are expected to be working** more flexibly in the future.
- 10. Solving this dilemma **must surely become** a key priority.

Questions:

- a. What structure/tense is used in **bold**?
- b. How certain is the speaker in each sentence?
- c. Could the structure used be replaced by any other future structure?
- d. How would an alternative structure change the meaning of the sentence?

2. Members of the Federation of European Employers were asked: 'Will there be a major cultural shift in future work?' Listen to their predictions and note phrases used for predictions.



Audio 3.6

3. Put the phrases you noted in 2 into categories (a-d) below.

- a. certain _____
- b. probable _____
- c. possible _____
- d. unlikely _____

4. Listen again and note four future time phrases. Audio 3.6

5. Give your predictions for possible changes in your company /department. Think about the aspects below.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| • your working day | • your own ideas |
| • technologies | • budgets |
| • relationships with colleagues/boss | • the business |
| • the competition | • you/your colleagues' role/prospects |



Practically Speaking | Showing understanding

1. Listen to four conversations and answer the questions.

- 1. What problems do the people have?
- 2. How do their listeners respond?



Audio 3.7

2. Listen again and complete phrases 1-10.

- 1. I know _____.
- 2. It's quite _____.
- 3. No, it _____?
- 4. It _____ sending an email ...
- 5. I hear _____. I mean ...
- 6. I _____ for a lot of you ...
- 7. Believe me, I can _____.
- 8. I _____ at my last company ...
- 9. I _____ the request again, though.
- 10. Well, _____ word it ...

3. Match the phrases in 2 to categories a-c.

- a. Showing that you understand the problem: _____
- b. Explaining why you are able to understand the problem: _____
- c. Offering practical solutions: _____

extra

vocabulary

Key word | quite

Match the use of *quite* in 1-5 to synonyms a-e.

1. It's *quite* hectic over here ...

2. No, not *quite*.

3. There were *quite* a few technical hiccups.

4. I'm finding it *quite* a task to manage my work.

5. a) I don't want it to look like I'm badgering them.
b) *Quite*. Well you might want to word it so it's not too aggressive ...

a. exactly

b. several

c. very

d. absolutely

e. very difficult



Showing you understand

- *I know what you mean.*
- *No, it hasn't, has it?*
- *I hear what you're saying ...*
- *I can see where you're coming from.*
- *I totally understand.*

Explaining why you understand

- *It's quite hectic over here, too.*
- *I know this is a tricky time for a lot of you.*
- *I had a similar problem at ...*
- *That happened to me, too.*

Offering practical solutions

- *It might be worth ...*
- *I still think you should ...*
- *You might want to ...*
- *What about ...?*
- *Have you tried ...?*

4. Look at sentences 1–4. Discuss how you would respond in order to show understanding.

1. "I don't think that was a very convincing presentation."
2. "I need to change offices – mine is getting too noisy."
3. "This report just doesn't make sense."
4. "My workload has increased dramatically since we merged with the Cork office."

5. Role-Play. Think about a problem you currently have at work. Alternatively, use one of the following problems. In turns explain the problem, and respond appropriately. Try to develop the conversation as much as possible.

Problem 1: Time differences

You work for a multinational company with offices all round the world. You need to coordinate a project, but it is very difficult to call a meeting because not everyone can be in the office at the same time (different time zones)

Problem 2: Absenteeism

On your team of 12 you have two employees who regularly take days off work claiming to be sick - usually on a Friday or Monday. The other team members are beginning to complain.

6. Discuss your partner's reaction to your problem with the class. How sympathetic / understanding / practical was it?