

Business Advanced

Unit 1: Connections



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Unit 1: Grammar reference and Homework



1. Complete these sentences with the verbs from the list. Change the form of the verb if necessary.

build (x2) – process – form – manage – take - keep (x2) – read - weigh up – give - work

1. Before relocation, we _____ the pros and cons of staying in our own country or moving to a new location with lower costs.
2. Ben will be managing a multicultural team so he'll need to _____ his intercultural skills.
3. For me, the hardest part of doing business in a different culture is _____ unknowns - I don't like dealing with unfamiliar situations.
4. Here in the south, we like to _____ our time to get to know people before we do business with them.
5. I can't give you a final decision until I've _____ all the information you sent me.
6. If you want to _____ good relationships with clients from other cultures, you need to inform yourself about their customs and ways of doing things.
7. I'll _____ my eyes open when I go to the meeting in California so I can learn about office etiquette.
8. Kyle found it difficult to _____ the situation at BRK - he couldn't understand what was going on at all.
9. My eight-month placement with LTX _____ me an insight into how business is conducted in India.
10. Rebecca _____ an open mind while she was investigating the cause of the communication breakdown - she wanted to talk to everyone before she reported to the managing partners.
11. Richard's move to the American office will _____ both ways - he'll learn about our culture and we'll get extra help with the project.
12. Some people _____ an opinion of a company based on first impressions, so the attitude and behaviour of reception staff is very important.

Answer key

1. weigh up
2. build
3. process
4. take
5. read
6. build
7. keep
8. manage
9. gave
10. kept
11. works
12. form

2. Replace the words / phrases in *italics* with adjectives from the list. Make any changes that are necessary.

*out-of-the-way - outspoken - run-of-the-mill - down-to-earth - unexpected - low-key - up-and-coming –
time-consuming - easy-going - open-minded - tedious - self-assured*

1. BRC's new office building is attractive, but it's *quite difficult to get to* _____ and doesn't have good transport links.
2. Data entry is one of the more *boring and repetitive* _____ aspects of the job.
3. I don't like to attract a lot of attention so my retirement party was *simple and not extravagant* _____.
4. I was *open and honest* _____ in my criticism of the plan and this offended my hosts.
5. Kevin is very *practical and sensible* _____, which helps us keep things in perspective when there are problems in the office.
6. My manager has a *relaxed* _____ attitude towards timekeeping so I don't worry if I'm late for work.
7. One of the most *surprising* _____ things was the number of times meetings were rescheduled.
8. Sometimes the fact that he is so *confident in himself* _____ does come across as arrogance.
9. The position they offered was not particularly interesting - in fact it was rather *ordinary* _____.
10. They've just opened a new branch in an area of town that is *growing in popularity* _____. 11. This project is *taking a lot of time* _____, so hopefully the results will pay off.
12. We prefer to do business with companies that are *willing to listen to different ideas* _____ and not afraid to take risks.

Answer key

1. out-of-the-way
2. tedious
3. low-key
4. outspoken
5. down-to-earth
6. easy-going
7. unexpected
8. self-assured
9. run-of-the-mill
10. up-and-coming
11. time-consuming
12. open-minded

1. Stella and Lucas are discussing Lucas's visit to a potential site for the company. Choose the best answer from the words in *italics*.

Stella: How did you feel about the beach site?

Lucas: I've got to say that I'm not 100% ¹*agreed / convinced / decided*. I mean, it's beautiful. But it's more of a holiday resort than a business centre. There's too much of a holiday feeling - and it's not even especially close to the airport. All in all, it's going to be a bit more complicated than we ²*anticipated / considered / proposed*.

Stella: I see. What about the potential pitfalls? What's your impression of the local workforce?

Lucas: Well, I ³*shouldn't / wouldn't / didn't* go so far as to say that they don't speak English at all, but I did run into a couple of problems. ⁴*I'm saying not / I'm not to say / I'm not saying* it's a bad thing that their French is better than their English, it's just that English will be a major factor as well, so I'm a bit ⁵*aware / careful / wary* of that. I'll do more research if you want, but I can't promise ⁶*nothing / something / anything*. I'm a bit reluctant to recommend the site at this stage.

Stella: What about the city-centre site?

Lucas: I ⁷*ought to / 've got to / shall* say that I've never seen anywhere quite like it. I'm totally convinced by its potential, as it's really got everything you could ask for. I'm sure you'll agree that the local facilities are first class. There's also an old factory which I'm fully ⁸*confident / assured / insured* we can acquire and refit.

Stella: I'm not sure whether the budget will stretch ...

Lucas: That's not ⁹*an explanation / a reason / a rationale* to delay. As you'll see from my projected figures, the price of the disused factory is a bargain! We ¹⁰*can't / mustn't / don't* go wrong!

Stella: Then that shouldn't be a problem.

Answer key

- 1. convinced
- 2. anticipated
- 3. wouldn't
- 4. I'm not to say
- 5. wary
- 6. anything
- 7. ought to
- 8. confident
- 9. a reason

2. Correct the mistake in each sentence.

- I'm fully sure that you'll agree to the proposal.
_____.
- I'm not just 100% convinced - I mean, theoretically it's a good idea, but ...
_____.
- I wouldn't go so much as to say that I think it is fantastic, but it certainly has potential.
_____.
- I collected from your report that he would not be coming.
_____.
- To be just, the whole matter could have been worse.
_____.
- From how I could see, there are already several established retail outlets.
_____.

3. Report these statements as indicated in brackets.

- The trip did not go as planned and I had a lot of problems. (avoiding being negative)
_____.
- The project is going fairly well. (reporting from another source)
_____.
- The meeting went much better than expected. (reporting a personal observation)
_____.
- The proposed site would be perfect for the company. (being persuasive)
_____.

Answer key

- 2.**
- I'm fully confident that you'll agree to the proposal.
 - I'm not 100% convinced – I mean, theoretically, it's a good idea, but...
 - I wouldn't go so far as to say that I think it is fantastic, but it certainly has potential.
 - I gathered from your report that he would not be coming.
 - To be fair, the whole matter could have been worse.
 - From what I could see, there are already several established retail outlets.

3. (Possible answers)

- The trip had some unexpected challenges, but I managed to handle them.
- It has been reported that the project is progressing fairly well.
- From what I observed, the meeting exceeded expectations.
- I strongly believe that the proposed site would be an excellent choice for the company.

Grammar points

Present simple

Use the present simple

1. To talk about general facts, states, and situations

*Water **boils** at 100 degrees Celsius.*

2. To talk about regular or repeated actions, or permanent situations

*Sarah **teaches** English at the university.*

3. To talk about timetabled future events

*The train **departs** at 8:15 a.m.*

Present continuous

Use the present continuous

1. To talk about an action in progress at the time of speaking/writing

*I'm **calling** to check the delivery status.*

2. To talk about a current activity taking place around the time of speaking

*They **are renovating** the old library.*

3. To talk about fixed plans or arrangements in the future

We **are meeting** the team leader tomorrow.

Present perfect simple

Use the present perfect simple

1. To talk about actions that finished recently and for which there is a present result

*She **has submitted** the final report.*

2. To talk about actions that started in the past and are still going on

*Tom **has lived** in London for five years.*

3. To talk about experiences in your life or events in history

*I **have visited** Japan twice.*

Present perfect continuous

Use the present perfect continuous to talk about a recently completed action. The focus is on the activity, not the result.

*The team **has been updating** the project documentation.*

Past simple

Use the past simple

1. To talk about past actions that are over at the time of speaking

*I **saw** an article about the new policies yesterday.*

2. To talk about past states

I **lived** in Paris when I was in college.

Past continuous

Use the past continuous to talk about being in the middle of a past action – there is likely to be an interruption (in the past simple) in the sentence.

The students **were discussing** the topic when the teacher walked in.

Past perfect

Use the past perfect to indicate that an action happened before another action referred to in the past simple.

She **had** already **left** the office before I arrived.

1. Choose the correct words in *italics* to complete these extracts from a company's strategy statement.

- 1. We have *expanded* / *will have expanded* our Dutch operations with a move into retail banking. Initial figures have been / were very promising.
- 2. The fall in our share price *reflects* / *is reflecting* problems in the markets, and in the last year we have continued / continue to outperform the stock market overall.
- 3. We *are growing* / *grow* our business by adapting what makes/ has made our business a success in the UK in recent years to our other international markets.
- 4. Ian Opie *takes* / *will have taken* over as CEO next month, when Rita Flagstad is stepping / has stepped down after eight years in the job.

2. Read Johnny’s notes for his conference presentation. Correct his use of tenses where necessary.

- 1. We have originally hoped to commission Meyer for the redesign, but their books are full until next year.
_____.
- 2. I take questions at the end of this presentation, if you don't mind waiting till then.
_____.
- 3. We are completing the second phase by the end of April next year.
_____.
- 4. As the project nears completion, I'd like to thank all those who had been working on it and are here today.
_____.
- 5. We will have sent these figures to you by email after the presentation, so don't worry about them now.
_____.
- 6. I'll now be handing over to Carla. She worked on this area of the project for the last six months.
_____.
- 7. I wanted to show a short video now, but there’s seeming to be some kind of technical fault, so bear with me.
_____.
- 8. Our sales have levelled off for some years, but now they're growing rapidly again.
_____.
- 9. That's a very good question. Actually, I thought about this in the taxi from the airport.
_____.

Answer key

- 1.
 - 1. have expanded / have been
 - 2. reflects / continued
 - 3. are growing / has made
 - 4. will have taken / has stepped down
- 2. (Suggested answers)
 - 1. We had originally hoped to commission Meyer for the redesign, but their books are full until next year.
 - 2. I will take questions at the end of this presentation, if you don't mind waiting till then.
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 - 9. That's a very good question. Actually, I thought about this in the taxi from the airport.

Key Expressions

Reporting a personal Observation

- *It all sounds very promising.*
- *I found it to be ...*
- *From what I could see, ...*
- *I found it to be more of a ... than a ...*
- *What's your impression of ... ?*

Reporting from another source

- *I understand you ...*
- *According to ...*
- *I gathered from ...*

Expressing doubt

- *I have my doubts.*
- *I can't help feeling that ...*
- *I'm just not 100% convinced.*
- *... which makes me a bit wary.*
- *I'm a bit reluctant to ...*

Avoiding commitment

- *It's hard to say.*
- *I can't promise anything.*
- *I wouldn't go so far as to say...*

Being persuasive

- *I've got / have to say (that) ...*
- *We can't go wrong.*
- *I'm (totally) convinced.*
- *I'm sure you'll agree ...*
- *I'm (fully) confident ...*
- *The pros (definitely) outweigh the cons.*

Avoiding being negative

- *To be fair, ...*
- *I'm not saying ... , it's just that ...*