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Introduction

This is the course *Anglès tècnic* corresponding to the studies of the CFGM of 'Gestió administrativa'. It is composed of two parts: the written material and the web material. The written material includes the basic grammatical and lexical contents, as well as texts related to business and administration. The web material is composed of online activities and exercises to practise the contents of each unit.

Each unit is composed of three separate sections: “**Companies**”, “**Company operations**” and “**Careers**”. And each section includes readings related to the administrative field, grammar reference and explanations about oral and written language and multiple examples, such as emails, letters or conversations.

Apart from grammar, the material includes vocabulary related to the administrative world, and examples of the language used for greetings, making requests, making suggestions, and other functions of the language. You can practise the contents of the written material with a variety of interactive exercises and activities in the course website and in the web material. However, you should be aware that the characteristics of a distance course make it very difficult to get enough practice of the oral skills (listening and speaking), so you will need some extra practice on your own.

The course contents are divided into three units, and each unit is composed of different texts, conversations, etc. with the vocabulary used in your professional field.

The written material is conceived as a manual. You do not have to study and learn all the contents in the book, though it is advisable to read it, and meet the characters that appear in every section. They will guide you through your learning process. The aim of this book to offer you the vocabulary and language tools that you might need at your workplace.

Here are some tips about the best way of using this course:

- Check and write down the deadlines for submitting the activities (you will find the course schedule in the 'Pla de Treball').
- Look at the contents page in the written material to see what the unit is about and which topics you will practise.
- Go to the self-correcting exercises and the activities on the web to practise the contents of the unit.
- Go to the course website and check the activities that you will have to submit. You will find two oral activities (speaking and listening), an interactive grammar quizz and some written exercises in a text file, which you will have to download and submit for correction.
- Use all or some the resources available for you: written material, web material, complementary material, websites, reference books, etc., and then

do the exercises as well as you can. You can start doing the activities in the order that you prefer, but do not leave everything for the last day.

- Submit your activities before the deadline.

You can use a dictionary if you have problems with the language, but you should also make an effort to understand the main ideas of a text without knowing all the words. As for automatic translators, they are very useful to understand short written texts (like the instructions of an exercise), but do not use them to translate the whole material or to write a text in English. The idea of presenting the written material in English is that you can learn the language by using it, so it makes no sense to use an automatic translator to do the work for you. Remember also that you can ask your teacher or your classmates anytime you need their help.

Apart from all these technical resources, it is very important that you adopt a specific attitude to be successful in this course. We understand how difficult English is for many of you, but we can assure you that if you work hard, you do all the activities and you are patient, you will have no problems with English.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the module you will be able to:

- 1.** Transfer the information given in a foreign language from a written code to an oral one, and vice versa.
- 2.** Identify the most important aspects and the discursive organization corresponding to the oral and written texts given in a professional field.
- 3.** Interpret the required information given by the speaker in a foreign language on the phone, in-person or written, taking into account the context and the situation.
- 4.** Select the appropriate (synthetic, wide or partial) reading from the received information, according to the proposed action or exercise.
- 5.** Write texts with accurate vocabulary, required formal aspects, rules and formalities of each country related to commercial worldwide operations.
- 6.** Communicate in a foreign language in an ordered, coherent and effective way in a commercial activity.
- 7.** Formalize and write documentation related to the commercial activity in foreign markets that requires the use of a foreign language with the appropriate operation data and information systems.
- 8.** Write a translation mentioning the important aspects and the specific nature of the text.
- 9.** Translate from and to texts, forms, reports and other documents related to the international commercial activity, taking into account the specific vocabulary and using computer-assisted translation techniques.
- 10.** Solve comprehension and expression problems related to the linguistic and communicative contents in the professional field.
- 11.** Respect registry and socio-cultural standards of the country addressing the oral or written communication, in the field of the international commercial activity.
- 12.** Take into account the importance of language as a vehicle of communication and understanding in the field of international commercial activity, technology, culture and knowledge.

Contents

Anglès

Unit 1

Companies

1. Profiles
2. Workplace setting
3. Main Departments in a Company

Unit 2

Company operations

1. Events
2. Money
3. Innovation

Unit 3

Careers

1. Work
2. Job Search
3. Working Abroad

Companies

Núria Terradellas Palau

Anglès

Índex

Introduction	5
Learning objectives	7
1 Profiles	9
1.1 Grammar reference: Subject and object pronouns	11
1.1.1 Verb 'to be'	14
1.2 Communication: Greetings and introductions	15
1.2.1 Informal greetings and introductions	16
1.2.2 Formal greetings and introductions	17
1.2.3 Characteristics of oral language	18
1.2.4 Formal vs informal conversations	19
1.2.5 Asking for and giving personal information	20
1.2.6 Filling in a form	21
1.3 Writing: Informal Emails	25
1.4 Grammar reference: Expressing possession	27
1.4.1 Possessive adjectives and pronouns	28
2 Workplace setting	31
2.1 Grammar reference: Comparative and superlative sentences	32
2.1.1 Comparative sentences	32
2.1.2 Superlative sentences	34
2.2 Picture description: BizWorld's office	35
2.2.1 Grammar reference: 'There is / There are'	37
2.2.2 Grammar reference: Quantifiers	38
2.2.3 Grammar reference: Prepositions of place	41
2.3 Giving directions	43
2.3.1 Writing: Business Letters	48
2.3.2 Connectors and punctuation	49
3 Main Departments in a Company	53
3.1 Grammar: Present simple and present continuous	55
3.1.1 The present simple	55
3.1.2 Expressing dates and clock times	57
3.2 The present continuous	60
3.3 Communication: Evergreen Builders. Purchasing Department	62
3.3.1 Speaking on the phone	63
3.4 Writing: Characteristics of written language	67
3.4.1 A formal email: example	68

Introduction

This unit, “Companies”, is intended to describe the different parts of a company, the departments, the workplace setting, the workforce and some of the activities that usually take place in companies. You are going to learn vocabulary and expressions used at work, and learn about the structure of formal and informal emails, by reading some examples, and some tips for writing formal and informal emails.

The unit has three separate sections. In each of them there are texts, conversations, grammar reference, and a writing section. After the texts, there is a table with the new vocabulary. In every section there are conversations and useful vocabulary used in communicative contexts. There is also a writing section, which includes explanations and multiple examples, such as emails, or letters. There is a revision of basic grammar rules with examples and exercises. You can revise the grammar and at the same time learn helpful vocabulary used in the administrative field.

In the first section, “**Profiles**”, you will meet three different characters and read about their life and work. You will learn how to introduce yourself and others in formal and informal contexts, and ask and give personal information. You will also see some examples of informal emails.

In the second section, “**Workplace setting**”, there is the description of an office. You will learn how to describe different settings, and how to give directions. At the end of the section you will see a business letter and its layout. And finally, you will learn about connectors and punctuation.

In the third section, “**Main Departments in a Company**”, there is a brief description of the most common departments in a company. We will meet Samantha Oliver, and read about her daily routine. You will get familiar with the adverbs of frequency, telling the time, and other expressions related to time, how to say the years, etc. We will learn about Samantha’s work in the Purchase Department, read some emails related to an urgent order, and a phone conversation. You will learn some expressions used in phone conversations.

All characters appearing in this work are fictitious. They are serving the purpose of showing plausible contexts and situations which students of administrative management might encounter, thus, providing them with helpful vocabulary and resources to use in a real workplace situation.

Each unit has a central theme and it provides information and examples set in business contexts with the aim of giving the students the tools to develop their language skills in their workplace. Furthermore, there are exercises and activities online to practise the contents of the unit.

We wish you every success in your professional life!

Learning objectives

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

1. Identify professional and everyday information in an oral discourse in standard language, analysing the global contents of a message and relating it to the corresponding language resources.

- Identify the main idea in a message.
- Identify and follow oral instructions.
- Be conscious of the importance of understanding the main ideas in a message even if you do not understand all the elements that make up the message.
- Recognize the finality of face-to-face and telephone messages, or messages transmitted through other auditory means.
- Get specific information in messages referring to usual aspects of everyday and professional life.
- Place a message in its context.
- Identify the main ideas in a well-structured speech in standard language about well-known aspects and transmitted in the media.

2. Interpret professional information in simple written texts, analysing the message in a comprehensive way.

- Read simple texts in standard language.
- Interpret the general meaning of a message.
- Relate the text to its corresponding context.
- Interpret a message transmitted through different means: post, fax and e-mail, among others.
- Identify the terminology used in a message.
- Interpret technical manuals.

3. Produce well-structured and simple oral messages, taking an active part in professional conversations.

- Describe brief, unexpected events related to your job.
- Identify and use the direct, formal or informal registers in a message.

- Use the appropriate protocol in presentations.
- Make a correct use of the terminology of your job.
- Justify the acceptance or the refusal of a proposal.

4. Produce simple texts in standard language by using the appropriate register in different situations.

- Write short texts referring to everyday and/or professional aspects.
- Use the social conventions in documents.
- Fill in documents referring to your professional field.
- Organize the information in a coherent way.
- Apply the appropriate rules and specific vocabulary when filling in documents.

5. Show the correct attitude and behaviour in different professional situations by using international conventions.

- Define the most distinctive aspects of the customs of English-speaking communities.
- Describe the social conventions of your country.
- Identify the values and beliefs which are characteristic of English-speaking communities.
- Identify the social and professional aspects of your job in all types of oral and written messages.
- Apply the social conventions in English-speaking communities. (...)

1. Profiles

In this section, we will meet three employees. Craig, who works for a courier company called Biz Services, and Mr Barry Walton and Ms Eileen Taylor, work for the company **BLD Supplies**. BLD Supplies is a distributor of construction supplies and building materials based in Liverpool. Read their profiles:

Profile 1: Barry Walton

FIGURA 1.1. Profile 1: Barry Walton



“My name **is** Barry Walton. I **m** from Toronto, in Canada, but I live in Liverpool because I married five years ago and I moved to the UK. My wife’s name **is** Lucy. She **s** a nurse at a local hospital. She works part-time.

I work as an accountant in the Accounting Department of BLD Supplies. It **is** a full-time job. I **m** a confident, independent, and reliable person.

I like my job, but **there are** a lot of cultural differences between Canada and Britain even though we all speak the same language. My Canadian colleagues **aren’t** so formal, but I get on well with my new co-workers anyway.

I **m** also on a business course at BizWorld. So, I am always very busy. I speak English and French, and I want to learn Spanish.”

TAULA 1.1. Vocabulary

Accountant: comptable	Even though: encara que	Nurse: infermer
Accounting Department: departament de comptabilitat	Full-time: a temps complet	part-time: a temps parcial
Business: negoci	Get on well: congeniar	Reliable: responsable
Confident: segur de sí mateix	Married: casat	Wife: muller

Profile 2: Eileen Taylor

“I **m** Eileen Taylor. I **m** from Liverpool, in the UK. I have always lived here. I **m** single. I work as an administrative assistant at BLD Supplies, I **m** in the Customer Service department. I **m** hard-working, and a very organized person. I enjoy working in a team.

In our department, we communicate with customers, employees and other individuals. We answer questions and give information. Besides, we take orders and address complaints.

FIGURA 1.2.
 Profile 2: Eileen Taylor



I'm really fond of my job. I like meeting people and helping them to solve their problems. I have a new colleague, Barry Walton. He **isn't** British, he's Canadian. Even though he's very nice, he **is** still adjusting to his new position."

TAULA 1.2. Vocabulary

Administrative assistant: auxiliar administratiu	Customer service: servei al client	Order: comanda
Although: encara que	Employee: treballador	Post: lloc de feina
Besides: a més	Fond of my job: m'agrada la feina	Single: solter
Customer: client	Hard-working: treballador	Team-player: persona que sap treballar en equip

In Craig Kumar's profile, he is not introducing himself like Barry or Eileen, who used the first person. Here we use the long forms of the verb 'to be' (he 'is').

'In' is used before months:
 'in October', 'in March'.

Profile 3: Craig Kumar

FIGURA 1.3. Profile 3: Craig Kumar



Craig Kumar works for a courier company called Biz Services. He is an office worker. His office duties include answering phone calls and emails and general office work. He is a very reliable and diligent employee. He likes his job, but it is not a permanent position.

Apart from his job, Mr Kumar is on a business course at Biz School. He is a part-time student. He studies Digital Business, French, Office Management and other subjects. The course lasts six months. It starts in October, and finishes in March. The course costs 450 Pounds per month although Craig does not have to pay for it, because the company that he works for is in charge of all the expenses, including training.

TAULA 1.3. Vocabulary

Conscientious: meticolós	Duty: deure, obligació	Permanent position: feina fixa
Courier: transportista	Office management: gestió d'oficines	Subject: assignatures
Diligent: diligent, sol·lícit	Office worker: oficinista	Training: formació

Barry and Eileen described themselves:

- Barry: ‘I’m **confident, independent** and a **reliable** person’
- Eileen: I’m a **hard-working**, very **organized** person, and a **good team-player**.

See the following list of adjectives to describe personality:

TAULA 1.4. Personality Adjectives

Adaptable: flexible	Disciplined: disciplinat	introverted: introvertit
Amazing: increïble, sorprenent	Dynamic: dinàmic	Kind: bo
Ambitious: ambiciós	Easy-going: fàcil de tractar	Lazy: mandrós
Artistic: artístic	Efficient: eficient, eficaç	Logical: assenyat, entenimentat
Brilliant: brillant	Calm: tranquil	Enthusiastic: entusiasta
Capable: capaç, competent	Excellent: excel·lent	Lovely: encantador
Careful: cuidadós, prudent	Extroverted: extrovertit	Meticulous: meticulós
Careless: negligent, descuidat	Flexible: flexible	Motivated: motivat, entusiasmat
Challenge-oriented: orientat cap als reptes	Generous: generós	Open-minded: de mentalitat oberta
charismatic: carismàtic	Gentle: dolç, tendre	Organized: ordenat
Clever: intel·ligent, astut	Good-natured: bona persona	Outgoing: extrovertit
Clumsy: maldestre	Helpful: gentil, disposat a ajudar	Patient: persona amb paciència
Confident: segur (d'un mateix)	Imaginative: creatiu, imaginatiu	Passionate: entusiàstic, apassionat
Conscientious: meticulós, escrupulós	Impatient: impacient	Practical: pràctic
Creative: creatiu	Impulsive: impulsiu	Punctual: puntual
Dependable: fiable	Intelligent: intel·ligent	Reliable: responsable
Determined: decidit	Interesting: interessant	Sociable: sociable

Remember!

- Adjectives always come **before the noun**: ‘A hard-working person’
- **Adjectives do not have plural form** in English: ‘A cute boy’, ‘Two cute boys’

1.1 Grammar reference: Subject and object pronouns

Read the following sentences. The words in bold are **personal pronouns**:

TAULA 1.5.

I work as an accountant	'Jo treballo de comptable' ('faig de comptable')
She's a nurse	'Ella és infermera'
He's very nice	'Ell és molt agradable'
We speak the same language	'Nosaltres parlem la mateixa llengua'

For Grammar practice go to section "Self-correcting Exercises".

The **subject pronouns** always have the function of subject in the sentence.

They have the following forms:

TAULA 1.6. The subject pronouns

I	<i>jo</i>
you	<i>tu, vostè / vosaltres, vostès</i>
he	<i>ell</i>
she	<i>ella</i>
it (neutre)	S'utilitza per coses, no per persones
we	<i>nosaltres</i>
they	<i>ells, elles</i>

Notes:

- **I** (pronounced /ai/) is always written with a *capital letter (majúscula)*.
- In English, there is no distinction between the Catalan informal *tu* and the formal *vostè, vostès*.

Examples of the use of subject pronouns:

TAULA 1.7.

I speak English.	'Jo parlo anglès'
You are tired.	'Tu estàs cansat/da', o bé 'Nosaltres esteu cansats'
This is Barry. He works in a hospital	'Aquest és en Barry. Ell treballa en un hospital.'
This is Eileen. She lives in Manchester.	'Aquesta és l'Eileen. Ella viu a Manchester.'
My chair is blue. It is blue.	'La meva cadira és blava' '(...) És blava.'
It is very late.	'(...) És molt tard.'
We are at home.	'Nosaltres som a casa'
How are you ?	'Com esteu vosaltres ?' o bé, 'Com estàs tu ?'/'Com està vostè ?'
These are David and Mary. They are my brother and sister.	'Aquests són en David i la Mary. Ells són el meu germà i la meva germana.'

The **object pronouns** have the function of direct or indirect object. We also use the object pronouns after a preposition.

TAULA 1.8. The object pronouns

me	em (a mi)
you	et (a tu); el, li (a vostè)
him	el, li (a ell)
her	li (a ella)
it	el, la
us	ens (a nosaltres)
you	us (a vosaltres); els (a vostès)
them	els (a ells, a elles)

Examples of the use of the object pronouns:

TAULA 1.9.

Please help me !	'Si us plau, ajuda'm!'
David listens to you	'En David t'escolta' 'En David l'escolta [a vostè].'
This is George. Go with him	'Aquest és en George. Vés amb ell .'
This is Eileen. Tell her the news	'Aquesta és l'Eileen. Dóna-li la notícia.'
Mary is reading this book. Mary is reading it .	'La Mary està llegint aquest llibre. La Mary l'està llegint.'
Please come with us !	'Si us plau, vine amb nosaltres !'
Are they with you ?	'Són (ells/es) amb vosaltres ' 'Són (/ells/es) amb vostès ?'
Speak to them !	'Parla amb ells, elles !'

The following text shows the use of pronouns in a text. The pronouns are **in bold**:

- English: *David* gets up at seven everyday and then **he** has breakfast. At about eight, **he** goes to work with *Mary*, but **he** does not like going with **her** because **she** talks a lot. **They** usually come back home at five...
- Catalan: 'En *David* es lleva a les set cada dia i després (**ell**) esmorza. Cap a les vuit, (**ell**) va a treballar amb *Mary*, but a (**ell**) no li agrada anar amb **ella** perquè (**ella**) parla molt. (**Els**) normalment tornen a casa a les cinc...'

Notes:

In Catalan and Spanish, we normally omit the subject pronoun. In English, we always write or say the subject pronoun. **In English all sentences must have a subject.**

1.1.1 Verb 'to be'

Read the following sentences. These are different forms of the verb 'to be' ('ser' or 'estar') in the **affirmative form**:

- I'm from Toronto
- She's a nurse

For Grammar practice go to section "Self-correcting Exercises".

The table shows the forms of 'to be' (in present):

TAULA 1.10. The verb 'to be' - Present, affirmative

Pronoun	Long form	Short form	Translation
I	am	'm	Jo soc
you	are	're	tu ets , o vostè és
he, she, it	is	's	ell, ella, això és
we	are	're	nosaltres som
you	are	're	vosaltres sou , o vostès són
they	are	're	ells, elles són

Notes:

- **Long forms** (am, is, are) are used for writing.
- **Short forms** ('m, 's, 're) are used in the oral, informal language.

Read the following sentences. Notice that the verb 'to be' is used in its **negative form**:

TAULA 1.11.

My American colleagues aren't so formal	'Els meus companys de feina americans no són tan formals'
He isn't British	'Ell no és Britànic'

The table below shows the conjugation of the verb "to be" in the negative and interrogative form in the present tense.

TAULA 1.12. The present forms of "to be"

	Negative Long form	Short form	Interrogative
I	am not	'm not	am I...?
you	are not	aren't	are you...?
he, she, it	is not	isn't	is he / she / it...?
we	are not	aren't	are we...?
you	are not	aren't	are you...?
they	are not	aren't	are they...?

Examples of the use of the negative form of the verb 'to be' (long/short forms):

TAULA 1.13.

I am not/m not an accountant.	'Jo no soc comptable'
You are not/aren't invited.	'Tu no estàs/vosaltres no esteu convidat-s/da/des'
Barry's Canadian. He is not/isn't English	'En Barry és Canadenc. (Ell) no és anglès.'
Eileen's British. She is not/isn't French	'L'Eileen és Britànica. (Ella) no és francesa.'
It is not/isn't true.	'(Això) no és veritat.'
We are not/aren't from Turkey. We're from Switzerland.	'(Nosaltres) no som de Turquia. (Nosaltres) som de Suïssa.'
They are not/aren't here.	'(Ells/es) no són aquí.'

Examples of questions with the verb 'to be' and short answers:

TAULA 1.14.

Question	Short answer	Translation question	Translation Answer
Am I invited to the party?	Yes, you are / No, you aren't	' Estic (jo) convidat/da a la festa?'	' Sí (estàs convidat/da)' / ' No (no n'estàs)'
Are you from Germany?	Yes, I am / No, I'm not	' Ets/És (tu/vostè) d'Alemanya?'	' Sí (soc d'Alemanya)' / ' No (no en soc)'
Is he an administrative assistant?	Yes, he is / No, he isn't	' És (ell) auxiliar administratiu?'	' Sí (és auxiliar)' / ' No (no n'és)'
Is she the manager?	Yes, she is / No, she isn't	' És (ella) la directora?'	' Sí (és la directora)' / ' No (no l'és)'
Is it your phone?	Yes, it is / No, it isn't	' És (aquest) el teu telèfon?'	' Sí (ho és)' / ' No (no l'és)'
Are we part of the team?	Yes, you are / No, you aren't	' Som (nosaltres) part de l'equip?'	' Sí (en sou)' / ' No (no en sou)'
Are we at the company?	Yes, they are / No, they aren't	' Són (ells/elles) a l'empresa?'	' Sí (hi són)' / ' No (no hi són)'

1.2 Communication: Greetings and introductions

In this section you will learn about greetings and introductions. When greeting or introducing someone, we use different levels of formality. Informal language is used in informal contexts, with people you know well. On the other hand, formal language is used in formal situations. It is very important to use the right level of formality for each situation.

This video shows you how to greet someone before starting a conversation. Rashid comes in and the people in the office greet him, introduce themselves, and tell him their position in the company.



<https://www.youtube.com/embed/gaKgwX6gZXC?controls=1>



Note that new expressions are used to greet Rashid:

- ‘It’s a pleasure to meet you’
- ‘Nice to meet you’
- ‘Glad to meet you’
- ‘A pleasure’

1.2.1 Informal greetings and introductions

When introducing yourself and others in an informal situation, use your first name.



People shake hands when they meet someone or they are being introduced. However, hand shakes normally takes place in more formal, business situations.

Introducing yourself:

- ‘**Hi, I’m Barry**’
- ‘**Hello, I’m Eileen**’
- ‘**My name’s Craig. What’s your name?**’

Introducing others:

- ‘**Barry, this is Craig**’
- ‘**This is my friend Craig**’
- ‘**Barry, this is Eileen. Eileen, this is Craig.**’
- ‘**I’d like you to meet my friend. This is Barry.**’

Responses:

- ‘**Nice to meet you (too)**’
- ‘**How are you?**’
- ‘**How’s it going?**’
- ‘**It’s great to meet you (too).**’

See some examples of basic greeting and replies:

TAULA 1.15.

Greetings	Responses
Hello, Eileen! How are you?	Hi, Barry! I'm fine, thanks!
.....

TAULA 1.15 (continuació)

Greetings	Responses
How are you?	Great, thank you!
How are you doing?	I'm very well, thank you!
How are you?	Not too bad, thanks!
How's it going?	It's going well

1.2.2 Formal greetings and introductions

Formal greetings and introductions When introducing yourself and others in a formal situation, use your first and last name.

Introducing yourself:

- **'Hello. My name is Eileen Taylor.'**
- **'Let me introduce myself. My name is Barry Walton.'**
- **'I don't think we've met. My name is Craig Kumar.'**

Introducing others:

- **'Mr Walton, please, meet Ms Taylor.'**
- **'I'd like you to meet Mr Walton.'**
- **'I'd like to introduce you to Mr Kumar.'**
- **'Ms Taylor, may I introduce you to Mr Walton?'**

Responses:

- **'Nice to meet you (too)'**
- **'How do you do?'**
- **'Pleased to meet you (too)'**
- **'It's a pleasure to meet you.'**

In formal situations we use the titles followed by 'surnames' or 'last names':

- **'Mr'** for men: Mr Walton
- **'Mrs'** for married women: Mrs Galloway

- ‘Miss’ for single women: Ms Taylor
- ‘Ms’ for women if we do not know if they are married: Ms Taylor

See some examples of basic formal greeting and replies:

TAULA 1.16

Greetings	Responses
Good morning	Good morning
Good afternoon	Good afternoon
Good evening	Good evening
How do you do?	Pleased to meet you
How do you do?	I'm doing well
How do you do?	How do you do?

Notes:

- To be particularly respectful, we can use the surname: ‘**Good morning, Ms Taylor**’
- The expression ‘How do you do?’ is very formal and more and more uncommon. It has a similar meaning to ‘Nice to meet you’

When we are introduced to another person, the **social etiquette** demands to ask one or two questions to start a short conversation.

We can ask, for example:

TAULA 1.17.

Have you known each other for long?	‘Fa molt de temps que us coneixeu?’
Is it your first time here?	‘És la primera vegada que ve per aquí?’
Do you like [Barcelona]?	‘T’agrada [Barcelona]?’

1.2.3 Characteristics of oral language

Oral language is spontaneous, when we speak we tend to simplify and we might not even finish our sentences. Apart from that, when speaking, the message usually includes lots of stammering, pauses for effect, body language and other linguistic resources. Besides, pronunciation and intonation are very important in oral messages.

Some of the characteristics of oral language are:

- **Use of short forms:**
 - In profile 1, Barry says: “My **name’s** Barry Walton. **I’m** from Toronto”, and Eileen comments on Barry: “**He’s** very nice”. They used the short forms of the verbs.

- **Use of different resources for interaction purposes:**
 - Some words: “Well”, “Ok”, “Right”, “Certainly”, “Yes”, “Sure”, “No”, “Just a second”, “Sorry”, “I’m afraid ...”.
 - Short answers: ‘Yes, he is’, ‘No, I’m not’, ‘Yes, I do’, ‘No, I don’t’, etc.
 - Expressions to agree or disagree: “So do I”, “Neither do I”, “So am I”, “Yes, I agree with you”, “I’m not of the same opinion”.
 - Sounds or interjections: “Hmmm”, “wow”, “Oh”.
- **Use of idioms and expressions**, especially in informal contexts.
 - In section 1, in Barry and Eileen’s introductions: “*I get on well with my co-workers*”, “*I’m really fond of my job*”.

1.2.4 Formal vs informal conversations

In general, when speaking we tend to be less formal than in writing, although there are also different degrees of formality. The choice of words used in a formal speech or presentation will differ from the words and expressions in an informal conversation with friends.

Compare the following examples:

Formal conversation

Mrs. Marble: Good morning, Mr. Grane.

Mr. Grane: Good day, Madam. How are you?

Mrs. Marble: Very well, thank you.

Mr. Grane: May I introduce you to Miss Berkley?

Mrs. Marble: How do you do?

Miss Berkley: How do you do.

Mr. Grane: Miss Berkley is our new assistant.

Mrs. Marble: Excuse me?

Mr. Grane: I said that Miss Berkley is our new assistant.

Mrs. Marble: Oh, sorry. I can’t hear very well.

Mr. Grane: No problem, Mrs. Marble. It was a pleasure seeing you.

Mrs. Marble: It was a pleasure for me, too. Goodbye.

Informal conversation
Carol: Hi, Bert.
Bert: Hi, Carol. How are you?
Carol: Fine. And you?
Bert: Fine. Carol, this is Melanie.
Carol: Nice to meet you.
Melanie: Nice to meet you, too.
Carol: Have you and Bert known each other for long?
Melanie: Oh, yes, for more than 5 years now.
Carol: Oh, that's great!
Bert: Ok, Carol, we've got to go now. See you!
Carol: Bye!

See the differences between the two conversations:

TAULA 1.18.

Formal conversation	Informal conversation
We use the title (<i>Mr./Ms./Mrs./Miss</i>) and the surname	We use the first name
We use formulas: " <i>How do you do?</i> ": The reply to this question is " <i>How do you do?</i> ". It is used only in formal contexts.	We use simple language: " <i>Hi</i> ", " <i>How are you?</i> ". " <i>Fine, and you?</i> "
Formula to introduce someone: " <i>May I introduce you to Miss Berkley?</i> "	We introduce the person straight: " <i>This is Melanie</i> "

1.2.5 Asking for and giving personal information

In formal situations, it is not common to ask and answer personal questions during a conversation because this is considered too rude, but we may need to do so during a job interview or when we need to fill in a form. In informal situations, however, it is very common to talk about personal things. Here are some common questions and answers which may be useful when asking for and giving personal information:

See a list of countries and nationalities in the annex.

Wh-questions

TAULA 1.19.

What's your name?	My name's (Barry) (<i>formal</i>) / I'm (Barry) (<i>informal</i>)
Where are you from?	I'm (Canadian) / I'm from (Canada) / I'm from (Toronto)
Where do you live?	I live in (Toronto) / I live in (Canada)
What's your phone number?	It's (605 33 33 33)
What's your address?	It's (71 Whitaker Avenue, in Toronto)
What's your job? / What do you do?	I'm (an accountant) / I work as (an accountant)
Where do you work?	I work (in a hospital) / I work (at Sant Pau Hospital)

How old are you?	I'm (32 years old) / I'm (32)
What are your hobbies?	I like (swimming) / My hobby is (swimming)
What do you like doing?	I like (swimming)

Notes:

- In English we give phone numbers by saying each number individually, one by one. When two equal numbers appear consecutively, we use *double* (33, for example, is *double three*). Number '0' is pronounced either *oh* or *zero*.
- The question *what do you do?* is equivalent to *what's your job?*, which is different from: *what are you doing?* (Cat. Què fas? / Què estàs fent?).
- Notice the answer to the question *how old are you?*. We must say: ***I'm*** (30 years old), with the verb 'to be'.
- Remember that in short answers, we must include the corresponding auxiliary or modal verb of the question.

Yes/no questions

TAULA 1.20.

Are you (Barry)?	Yes, I am / Yes, that's right	No, I'm not (my name's Craig)
Are you (Canadian)?	Yes, I am	No, I'm not (I'm French)
Have you got any brothers or sisters?	Yes, (I've got one brother and two sisters)	No, I haven't
Do you work?	Yes, I do (I'm a doctor in a hospital)	No, I don't (I'm unemployed)
Can you spell (the name of the street)?	Yes, it's (w-h-i-t-a-k-e-r)	-
Do you speak (French)?	Yes, I do (a little)	No, I'm afraid I don't
Do you like (sports)?	Yes, (I like them very much)	No, I don't, (I prefer watching television)

1.2.6 Filling in a form

There are times when you might be asked to fill in a form. For example when applying for a passport, or a driving licence, or when joining a library or a club. These are some pieces of advice in order to succeed in filling a form correctly:

- Keep all the information you might need together so you can find your personal details quickly and easily.
- Make a copy of the form so that if you make a mistake you can start again. You can always ask for an extra form to practise on.

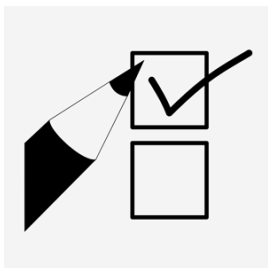


Filling a form. Source: Ken Teegardin (flickr.com)

- Read the form carefully before you write anything.
- You may not need to fill in everything.
- If it does not apply to you leave it blank.
- If there is something on the form you do not understand, read the instructions carefully or ask for help.
- Once you get used to filling in forms they will all become easier!

The following are some words which are often used in forms (see the figura 3.2):

- **First Name, Name, or Forename.**
- **Last Name, Surname or Family Name.**
- **Address:** this is where you live. You might be asked to write it out on separate lines.
- **Title:**
 - **Mr.** is used for all men.
 - **Mrs.** is used for a married woman.
 - **Miss** is used for a single woman.
 - **Ms.** it is used as a generic term for women. It does not distinguish if she is married or single. It is better to use it if you are unsure of her marital status.
- **Date of Birth (DOB):** When you were born.
- **Telephone / Phone:** this is where you can be reached most easily.
- **Occupation:** this is the job you have or the work you do.
- **Country of origin:** this means the country you were born in.
- **Marital Status:** you may have to tick a box to show the one that is right for you.
 - **Married**
 - **Single**
 - **Widowed**
 - **Divorced**
- **Gender or Sex:** your sex or gender is whether you are a man or a woman, or a male or a female.
 - **Male / Man**
 - **Female / Woman**



Ticking a box. Source: Felipe Perucho (thenounproject.com)

FIGURA 1.4. Application Form

Call and Sell

APPLICATION FORM

Please complete this form in block capitals.

First Name: ANDY

Title: MR.

Last Name: REYES

Address: AV. PARAL·LEL, 71, 08015 BARCELONA

Phone No: 606 23 55 87

Please the correct box.

Sex: Male Female

Date of birth: 05/11/1981

Present occupation: SECRETARY

Previous employment: ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Valid driving licence:

Yes No

Source for the icons: João Proença, Ice Jonota (thenounproject.com)

See how to spell words in the annex "Spelling alphabet".

Example of telephone conversation

In the following telephone conversation, Emy is filling a form for Andy Reyes in order to apply for a job in the company Call and Sell:

Emy: Good morning! Call and Sell, Emy speaking. How can I help you?

Andy: Good morning. This is Andy Reyes, I'm calling because I saw a job advert on your website and I would like to apply for it.

Emy: Ok, Mr Reyes. I'll ask you some questions.

Andy: Ok.

Emy: Your first name is Andy and your last name is Reyes. Am I right?

Andy: Yes, you are.

Emy: Could you spell your last name?

Andy: It's R, as in Rome, E as in Echo, Y as in Yankee, E as in Echo, and S as in Sierra.

Emy: Reyes, ok. Now, what's your address?

Andy: It's Av. Paral·lel, 71 08015 Barcelona.

Emy: What's your telephone number?

Andy: It's a Spanish number. It's plus thirty-four, six-oh-six, two-three, double five, eight-seven. (+34 606 23 55 87)

Emy: Ok. When were you born?

Andy: I was born on the fifth of November, nineteen eighty-one.

Emy: Do you have any previous experience?

Andy: I worked as an administrative assistant for five years.

Emy: And what is your current job?

Andy: I work as a secretary.

Emy: All right. And can I have your email, please?

Andy: Yes, it's andyreyes, at, gmail, dot com. (andyreyes@gmail.com)

Emy: And one last question, Mr Reyes. Do you have a driving licence?

Andy: I'm afraid I don't.

Emy: Ok, Mr Reyes, thank you for contacting us. We will get back to you within one week.

Andy: Thank you. Good bye.

Emy: Good bye.

The following table shows the English **interrogative pronouns**:

TAULA 1.21. The interrogative pronouns

English	Catalan	Observations
Who?	Qui?	
Whose?	De qui?	
Whom?	Qui?	Only in formal written texts when the pronoun is the object
What?	Què?	It can be followed by a noun: <i>what year...?</i>
Which?	Quin/a?	It can be followed by a noun: <i>which year...?</i>
When?	Quan?	
Where?	On?	
Why?	Per què?	
How?	Com?	
How much?	Quant?	With uncountable nouns; it can be followed by a noun: <i>how much money...?</i>
How many?	Quants/es?	With countable nouns; it can be followed by a noun: <i>how many people...?</i>
How old?	Quina edat?	
How far?	A quina distància?	
How big?	Quin tamany?	

1.3 Writing: Informal Emails

Emails are usually short. When writing an email, try to keep up to the point and avoid adding too much information. The objective is to get your message across and to get a swift response from the recipient.

Formal emails have a more fixed structure than informal emails. In this section we will focus on the characteristics of informal emails:

- The **subject line** should be brief and relevant, so that the receiver knows what the email is about.
- We start the email with a **greeting**:
 - ‘**Dear** [first name],’
 - ‘**Hi,**’ or ‘**Hi** [first name],’
 - ‘**Hello**,’ or ‘**Hello** [first name],’

Note that the greeting is followed by a comma.

- The **introduction** is the first paragraph of the email. We usually refer to a previous email, ask about the recipient’s health, or mention the reason for writing:
 - ‘**Thanks for your last email**’
 - ‘**I’m writing because...**’
 - ‘**How are you?**’
 - ‘**How’s your family?**’
- The **body** is the most important part of the email, where the information is given. We use a different paragraph for each subject.
- The **conclusion** is the last paragraph. We can ask for the receiver’s feedback, ask them to write back, say goodbye, or send good wishes or love.
 - ‘**Regards,**’
 - ‘**Love,**’
 - ‘**Best wishes,**’
 - ‘**Write soon,**’
- In informal emails we may use short forms, such as **it’s** or **I’m**. However, this will never happen in formal emails.

See some examples of informal emails.

In the first email, Eileen tells Barry that his parcel will be delivered late because of a puncture:

Email 1**Subject:** Package not delivered on time

Hi Barry,

How are you? I'm writing because Craig has just called me. He said that **his** van had a flat tire, so they might not be able to deliver **your** parcel today.

Ms Anne Carter, **his** boss, told him that he should try **his** best and fix his van as soon as possible. She gave him **her** mechanic's phone number to get it fixed. Unfortunately, they said it was impossible to have it ready until late in the afternoon because they were very busy.

I'm sorry about the inconvenience, Barry. I hope you'll get your parcel soon!

Take care,

Eileen

TAULA 1.22. Vocabulary

As soon as possible: tan aviat com sigui possible	Parcel: paquet
Be able to: ser capaç de/poder	Puncture: tenir una punxada (pneumàtic)
Boss: el/la cap	Said: va dir (passat del verb 'say')
Busy: enfeinat/ocupat	Staff: personal (d'una empresa)
Called: va trucar (passat del verb 'call')	Told: va dir (passat del verb 'tell')
Deliver: lliurar/fer entrega	Today: avui
Fix: arreglar/reparar	Try his best: intentar fer-ho el millor possible
Gave: va donar (passat del verb 'give')	Unfortunately: desgraciadament
Hope: esperar (tenir l'esperança de)	Van: furgoneta

In this second email, Barry tells Craig not to worry about the parcel and notifies him that their school is preparing a reception:

Email 2**Subject:** BizWorld reception

Hi Craig,

How are you? I'm writing because Eileen told me you had **a** flat tire. Don't worry about **my** parcel, it's not so urgent.

I'm writing to let you know that Dave called me and said that they are organizing **a** reception at **our** school. The School Principal gave instructions to **her** secretary, and he's planning it. He asked me if we could give a short speech for the school. I'm attaching the pdf he sent to me. Shall we meet and discuss it?

Waiting for your answer!

Barry

TAULA 1.23. Vocabulary

Answer: resposta	Reception: recepció, benvinguda
Asked: va preguntar (passat verb 'ask')	School Principal: director de l'escola
Attach: adjuntar (un arxiu)	Short: breu
Meet: trobar-se, quedar	Wait: esperar

1.4 Grammar reference: Expressing possession

We can express possession in different ways. We can use a special form of the noun called ‘Saxon genitive’ (Cat. Genitiu saxó), the preposition *of*, a possessive adjective or a possessive pronoun.

For instance, in Eileen’s email, we can read this sentence: *She gave him her mechanic’s phone number* (Cat. ‘Ella li va donar el número de telèfon **del** mecànic’).

The Saxon genitive

The Saxon genitive is a special form of the noun. It is used to indicate possession when the possessor refers to a person or a group of persons. We form the Saxon genitive by adding ‘s to the possessor. Examples:

TAULA 1.24

Jane’s brother	‘El germà de la Jane’
The company’s benefits	‘Els beneficis de l’empresa’
The people’s decision	‘La decisió de la gent’
My colleague’s desk	‘La taula del meu company’

When the possessor ends in -s, we only add the apostrophe (’), **without ‘s’**.
Examples:

TAULA 1.25

The companies’ benefits	‘Els beneficis de les empreses’
My colleagues’ desks	‘Les taules dels meus companys’
Mr Landis’ attitude	‘L’actitud del Sr Landis’
Charles’ car	‘El cotxe d’en Charles’

The possessor (with ‘s) comes before the noun: *Jane’s brother* (‘El germà de la Jane’).

Apart from the use of the Saxon genitive with people, we can also use this form with adverbials of time. For example:

TAULA 1.26

Tomorrow’s work	‘La feina de demà ’
Last week’s meeting	‘La reunió de la setmana passada ’
Next year’s conference	‘El congrés de l’any que ve ’

The preposition *of*

We use the preposition *of* (Cat. **de**) when the possessor is a thing. In this case, the order of the words is the same as in Catalan and Spanish. For example:

TAULA 1.27.

The effects of the earthquake	‘Els efectes del terratrèmol’
The siren of the ambulance	‘La sirena de l’ambulància ’
The minutes of the meetings	‘Les actes de les reunions ’
The screen of the computer	‘La pantalla de l’ordinador ’

1.4.1 Possessive adjectives and pronouns

In the previous emails, we can read the following sentences. The words **in bold** are **possessive adjectives**:

TAULA 1.28.

Craig said that his van had a puncture	'En Craig va dir que la seva furgoneta tenia una roda punxada'
The School Principal gave instructions to her secretary	'La directora de l'escola li va donar instruccions al seu secretari'
They are organizing a reception at our school	'Organitzen una recepció a la nostra escola'

Possessive adjectives are placed before a noun. The possessive adjectives tell us whose is the noun indicated. The following table shows the forms of the possessive adjectives:

TAULA 1.29. Possessive adjectives

Singular		Plural	
my	el meu...	our	el nostre...
your	el teu..., el seu... (de vostè)	your	el vostre... el seu... (de vostès)
his	el seu... (d'ell)	their	el seu...(d'ells/es)
her	el seu... (d'ella)		
its	el seu... (per a coses)		

Note:

- The third person pronouns *his*, *her* and *their* are often used instead of the Saxon genitive forms. For example:
 - **Mary's** sister = **her** sister
 - **John's** sister = **his** sister
 - **Mary and John's** sister = **their** sister.

In English, the possessive adjectives agree (concorden) with the possessor and not with the noun, as in Catalan and Spanish. Notice that the possessive adjective remains invariable when the noun changes:

- **My** brother = '**El meu** germà'
- **My** sister = '**La meva** germana'
- **My** brothers = '**Els meus** germans'
- **My** sisters = '**Les meves** germanes'

Here are some examples of the use of the possessive adjectives:

TAULA 1.30.

Here is my passport	'Aquí té el meu passaport'
What is your name?	'Quin és el teu/el seu nom?'
I met Barry and his daughter	'Em vaig trobar en Barry i la seva filla'
This is Ms Eileen Taylor and her secretary	'Aquesta és la Sra. Eileen Taylor i el seu secretari'
I'll send you a copy of the email with its corresponding answer	'Li enviaré una còpia del correu amb la seva corresponent resposta'
We are lucky with our jobs	'Tenim sort amb les nostres feines'
Can you please give me your phone numbers?	'Em podeu donar els vostres números de telèfon si us plau?'
These are my two colleagues and their families	'Aquests són els meus companys i les seves famílies'

On the other hand, the use of the **possessive pronouns** is very similar to the use of the possessive adjectives, but the pronouns are not used before a noun, they replace it. The table shows the forms of the possessive pronouns:

Singular		Plural	
mine	el meu...	ours	el nostre...
yours	el teu..., el seu... (de vostè)	yours	el vostre... el seu... (de vostès)
his	el seu... (d'ell)	theirs	el seu...(d'ells/es)
hers	el seu... (d'ella)		
(its)	el seu... (per a coses)		

Note:

- The third person pronoun *its* is not frequent.
- As in the possessive adjectives, the pronouns agree with the possessor.

Some examples of the use of the possessive pronouns:

TAULA 1.32.

Is this Craig's coat? - No, it's mine	'És aquest l'abric d'en Craig?' - 'No, és el meu '
Is this yours ?	'Això és teu/seu (de vostè)? '
Is this Craig's coat? - Yes, I think it's his	'És aquest l'abric d'en Craig?' - 'Sí, em sembla que és el seu '
Is this Eileen's coat? - Yes, I think it's hers	'És aquest l'abric de l'Eillen?' - 'Sí, em sembla que és el seu '
This project is good, but ours is still better	'Aquest projecte està bé, però el nostre encara està millor'

Yes, I think **yours** is better

'Sí, crec que **el vostre/el seu [de vostès]** és millor'

Was this your idea? - No, it was **theirs**

'Això va ser idea teva?' - 'No, va ser **seva [d'ells/es]**'

See annex 'The english pronouns' for a comparative table of the personal pronouns, the possessive pronouns and the possessive adjectives.

Possessive adjectives and possessive pronouns

There is a close relationship between the possessive adjectives and the possessive pronouns. Compare their forms:

- **Possessive adjectives:** *my, your, his, her, its, our, your, their*
- **Possessive pronouns:** *mine, yours, his, hers, (its), ours, yours, theirs*

The meaning of the possessive adjectives and the possessive pronouns is the same, but the sentence structure is different. We can say:

- This is **my uniform** = 'Aquest és **el meu** uniforme'
- This uniform is **mine** = 'Aquest uniform és **meu**'

2. Workplace setting

Secretaries and administrative assistants work in nearly every industry, although many are employed in schools, hospitals, or government, legal or medical offices. They often work in an office setting, or at reception desks.

Offices differ in size, they can be bigger or smaller, or even tiny, but they all have a few things in common, such as desks, office chairs, computers, printers, filing cabinets, etc.

Secretaries usually keep files in filing cabinets in order to organize them and put the documents that belong together. They use computers most of the time instead of paper. However, papers like letters, reports, or minutes must be printed. The printer still plays an important role, and paper is an essential tool in an office.

TAULA 2.1. Vocabulary

A few: uns quants/es	File: arxiu	Printer: impressora
Always: sempre	Filing cabinet: Arxivador (moble)	Report: informe
Belong together: van junts/es corresponen	In order to: per tal de...	Size: mida
Desk: escriptori	Minute: acta (d'una reunió)	Tiny: petit/minúscul

Connectors are words that link two similar elements in a sentence. See some examples in the text:

- ‘...**although** many are employed...’ = ‘**encara que** molts treballen...’
- ‘...legal **or** medical offices’ = ‘...en oficines jurídiques **o** mèdiques’
- ‘...’, or **even** tiny’ = ‘...’, o **fins i tot** minúscules’
- ‘...**but** there are a few things’ = ‘...**però** hi ha unes quantes coses’
- ‘...**such as** desks...’ = ‘...**així com/tals com** escriptoris...’
- ‘...**in order to** organize...’ = ‘...**per tal d’**organitzar...’
- ‘**Even if** computers...’ = ‘**Encara que/Tot i que** els ordinadors...’

Example of dialogue

Read the following dialogue, where Craig and Samantha compare their offices. Note the use of comparative and superlative forms:

CRAIG: I really like your office. I love the colour of the walls. Yellow is my favourite colour. Your office is **better** than mine!

SAMANTHA: Oh, really? I think yours is a lot nicer.

See a list of connectors at the end of this section. You will find another list of connectors with examples in the annex.

CRAIG: Well, mine is a lot **smaller**. That's why I like yours better.

SAMANTHA: Correct, but yours is independent from the rest. I wish my office was **as private as** yours.

CRAIG: You might feel that yours is **less private** than mine, but it's not true. People often come in with any excuse. I'm sure mine is **busier** than yours.

SAMANTHA: I don't think so. Mine is **louder**, because it's open, there's no door.

CRAIG: Yes, you're right. How long does it take you to get home?

SAMANTHA: It takes me only 15 minutes.

CRAIG: Oh, that's not much. Mine is **farther**.

CRAIG: So, tell me... Which one is **the best** office?

SAMANTHA: Well, mine is not **the tidiest**, or **the quietest** office in the world, but I must admit that mine seems to be **better** than yours.

2.1 Grammar reference: Comparative and superlative sentences

In their conversation, Craig and Samantha make use of comparative and superlative sentence in order to compare their offices. Read the following sections to learn more about comparative and superlative adjectives.

2.1.1 Comparative sentences

See some examples of comparative sentences in the text:

TAULA 2.2.

Offices can be bigger or smaller	'Les oficines poden ser més grans o més petites'
Your office is better than mine	'La teva oficina és millor que la meva'

Comparative adjectives and adverbs are used to compare differences between two or more elements. The form of the adjectives and adverbs depends on the number of syllables it has, and its ending:

TAULA 2.3. Comparative forms of superiority (adjectives)

Type of word	Comparative form	Examples	Translation
One-syllable adjectives	-ER	big bigger	gran més gran
Two-syllable adjectives ending in -y	-IER	happy happier	feliç més feliç
Other adjectives	MORE + adj.	intelligent more intelligent	intel·ligent més intel·ligent
Irregular adjectives		good better	bo millor

TAULA 2.3 (continuació)

Type of word	Comparative form	Examples	Translation
		bad worse	dolent pitjor

Note:

If the adjective ends with a **consonant + vowel + consonant**, the final consonant must be doubled before adding the ending. For example: **big > bigger**

TAULA 2.4. Comparative forms of superiority (adverbs)

Type of word	Comparative form	Examples	Translation
Adverbs ending in -ly	MORE + adverb	easily more easily	fàcilment més fàcilment
Other adverbs	-ER	late later	tard més tard
Irregular adverbs		well better badly worse far further	bé millor malament pitjor lluny més lluny

Comparative sentences of superiority

In the comparative sentences of superiority, the two elements of the comparison are separated by the conjunction **than**. Here are some comparative sentences:

TAULA 2.5.

The new speaker is louder than the old one	'L'altaveu nou té el volum més alt que el vell'
Your phone is more expensive than mine	'El teu telèfon és més car que el meu'
Ms Lewis types faster than you do	'La Sra. Lewis escriu (tecleja) més de pressa que tu'
Edinburgh is further than London	'Edimburg és més lluny que Londres'

Comparative sentences of equality

The comparative sentences of equality are used to indicate that two things are on equal terms. We express the comparison of equality like this:

- Affirmative statements: ...**as** + adjective/adverb + **as**...
- Negative statements: ...(not) **so** + adjective/adverb + **as**...

Here are a few examples:

TAULA 2.6.

Mr. Brown is as nice as Mr. Lemond	'El Sr. Brown és tan agradable com el Sr. Lemond'
Working too much is as bad as doing nothing	'Treballar massa és tan dolent com no fer res'

The speech was not so good as I expected	'El discurs no va ser tan bo com jo esperava'
We <i>didn't</i> finish so early as you had promised	'No vam acabar tan d'hora com m'havies promès'

Comparative sentences of inferiority

It is used to say that one thing is less than another. To separate the two terms of the comparison, we use **than**, like in the comparatives of superiority.

We form the comparative sentences of inferiority like this:

The comparative of inferiority is rarely used; we'd rather use the comparative of superiority.

- ...**less** + adjective/adverb + **than** ...

Here are a few examples:

TAULA 2.7.

This programme is less difficult than I thought	'Aquest programa és menys difícil del que em pensava'
With the economical crisis, we are less rich everyday	'Amb la crisi econòmica, cada vegada som menys rics'
I think the new CEO is less empathic than the previous one	'Crec que el nou president és menys intel·ligent que l'anterior'
I would invest in a developed country. It's less risky than investing in developing countries	'Jo invertiria en un país desenvolupat. És menys arriscat que invertir en països en vies de desenvolupament'

2.1.2 Superlative sentences

Superlative sentences are used to compare one thing with all the others. As in the comparative forms of superiority, the adjectives and adverbs take a special form called the *superlative form*. The following tables show the superlative forms of adjectives and adverbs:

TAULA 2.8. Superlative forms (adjectives)

Type of word	Superlative form	Examples	Translation
One-syllable adjectives	THE -EST	big the biggest	gran el més gran
Two-syllable adjectives ending in -y	THE -IEST	happy the happiest	feliç el més feliç
Other adjectives	THE MOST + adjective	intelligent the most intelligent	intel·ligent el més intel·ligent
Irregular adjectives		good the best	bo el millor
		bad the worst	dolent el pitjor

Note:

One-syllable adjectives with a **vowel** + a **consonant** double the consonant when we add the ending -est: *big* > *the biggest*, *thin* > *the thinnest*, *fat* > *the fattest*, *mad* > *the maddest*, *red* > *the reddest*, etc

TAULA 2.9. Superlative forms (adverbs)

Type of word	Superlative form	Examples	Translation
Adverbs ending in -ly	THE MOST + adverb	easily most easily	fàcilment el més fàcilment
Other adverbs	THE -EST	late the latest	tard el més tard
Irregular adverbs		well the best	bé el millor
		badly the worst	malament el pitjor
		far the furthest	lluny el més lluny

Here are some examples of superlative sentences:

TAULA 2.10.

Microsoft is one of the most important companies in the world	'Microsoft és una de les empreses més importants del món'
And Bill Gates is one of the richest people	'I en Bill Gates és una de les persones més riques '
Talking to the manager was the worst thing you could do	'Parlar amb el director és el pitjor que podies fer'
Do it the best you can	'Fes-ho el millor que puguis'
She went the furthest she could go	'Va anar el més lluny que va poder anar'

2.2 Picture description: BizWorld’s office

See the picture of BizWorld’s office, where the administrative work is done. They welcome students, register them, give them information about tuition and courses, organize events, and keep accounts.

FIGURA 2.1. BizWorld’s office



Source: freepick. author:@vectorpocket

Description

The office has three big windows, from where the light comes in. **There are** three desks. At this moment, there are only two people at the office, one is standing in front of the window. He is checking something on his laptop. The other one is sitting at his desk, he is working on his desktop. Both men are wearing a suit. One of them is wearing a red tie. **There is** another desk, but noone is sitting there.

In the foreground, we can see an armchair, but noone is sitting there, either. On the right side of the picture, we can see a man in front of the computer's screen. He has a brown notebook on the table, next to the keyboard, and his mobile phone, too. On the other side of the table **there are** some binders. On his left side, we can see a bookcase with a lot of books.

In the background **there is** an empty chair and a desk with a keyboard and a screen, which is between two speakers. The computer case is on the floor. Above the desk **there are** two bookshelves with a few books. And above them, **there is** the AC. **There is** also a red clock on the wall, between the bookcase and the shelves.

On the left side **there is** a small desk where the man is standing. On the table **there is** a laptop, and beside it, a printer. On the floor **there is** a briefcase.

The working space has a plain style, it is very functional, but **there are** no flowers or paintings on the wall.

Source: freepick. author:@vectorpocket

See the use of the present continuous to describe what the people are doing in the picture:

- 'One **is standing...**'
- 'He **is checking...**'
- 'Both **are wearing...**'
- 'noone **is sitting...**'

TAULA 2.11. Vocabulary

AC: aire condicionat	Empty: buit (adj)	Notebook: llibreta
Armchair: butaca	Event: esdeveniment	Plain: senzill
Binder: carpeta (d'anelles)	In the background: al fons	Screen: pantalla
Bookcase: llibreria (moble)	In the foreground: en primer pla	Speaker: altaveu
Bookshelves: lleixes	Keep accounts: portar la comptabilitat	Stand: estar dret
Briefcase: cartera	Keyboard: teclat	Suit: vestit
Clock: rellotge (de paret)	Laptop: ordinador portàtil	Tie: corbata
Desk: escriptori	Noone: ningú	Tuition: classes

Apart from the furniture, in an office there are always stationery items, such as staplers, pencilholders, hole punch, scissors, etc. See some of these elements present in the picture below:

TAULA 2.12. Vocabulary

1 Clock	2 Chair	3 Phone	4 Waste bin	5 Earphones	6 Screen	7 Keyboard
8 Mouse	9 Calendar	10 Calculator	11 Laptop	12 Computer	13 Hole punch	14 Books
15 Drawer	16 Monitor	17 Paper tray	18 Pencilholder	19 Folder	20 Bookcase	21 Shelf

FIGURA 2.2. Office



Check the name of some of the elements.

2.2.1 Grammar reference: 'There is / There are'

In the description of the office we have used the structure **'There is'** and **'There are'** to express the existence of the different elements we could see. In English, there are two forms: one for the singular and one for the plural, while in Catalan there is only one ('Hi ha').

TAULA 2.13

There is a small desk	'Hi ha un escriptori petit'
There are two bookshelves	'Hi ha dues llibreries'

As you can see, **'There is'** is used for just one element, while **'There are'** is used for more than one element.

Here are all the forms in English:

TAULA 2.14.

Form	Singular	Plural
Affirmative	there is / there's	there are / there're
Negative	there is not / there isn't	there are not / there aren't
Questions	is there?	Are there?

See some more examples:

TAULA 2.15.

Sentence	Translation	Answers
There is someone at the door	'Hi ha algú a la porta'	
There are two people at the door	'Hi ha dues persones a la porta'	
There is not / There isn't any printer	'No hi ha cap impressora'	

TAULA 2.15 (continuació)

Sentence	Translation	Answers
There are not / There aren't many chairs	'No hi ha gaires cadires'	
Is there anyone in the office?	'Hi ha algú a l'oficina?'	Yes, there is someone No, there isn't anyone
Are there any jobs available?	'Hi ha feines disponibles?'	Yes, there are No, there aren't

2.2.2 Grammar reference: Quantifiers

We can express a specific quantity of something by using numbers.

See the examples in the text:

TAULA 2.16

Three big windows	'Tres finestres grans'
Two people	'Dues persones'

Cardinal and ordinal numbers

- The numbers that express quantity are called *cardinal numbers*. For example: *one, two, three, four, five...*

TAULA 2.17.

0 zero				
1 one	2 two	3 three	4 four	5 five
6 six	7 seven	8 eight	9 nine	10 ten
11 eleven	12 twelve	13 thirteen	14 fourteen	15 fifteen
16 sixteen	17 seventeen	18 eighteen	19 nineteen	
20 twenty	30 thirty	40 forty	50 fifty	
60 sixty	70 seventy	80 eighty	90 ninety	
100 one hundred	1,000 one thousand	1,000,000 one million	1,000,000,000 one billion	

- The numbers that express order are called *ordinal numbers*. For example: *first, second, third, fourth, fifth....*

Quantifiers

To express an indeterminate quantity of something, we use the 'quantifiers':

- **No**
- **A/an***, **some**, **any**
- **Little**, **few**, **a little**, **a few**
- **A lot of**, **many**, **much**

* We use 'a' before words that start with a consonant, and 'an' before words that start with a vowel.

The correct use of the English quantifiers depends on the sentence (affirmative, negative or interrogative) and on the type of noun (countable and uncountable).

Countable and uncountable nouns

- **Countable nouns** are nouns that refer to objects that we can count. For example: *day, book, job, car, house, man, company, office, river...*
- **Uncountable nouns** are nouns that express concepts, substances, etc., which we cannot separate into units. For example: *friendship, emotion, music, news, food, water, bread, money, advice, luggage...*

Uncountable nouns have a singular reference. They cannot be counted and do not have plural form:

TAULA 2.18

The water is very clear	'L'aigua és molt clara'
Sugar is sweet	'El sucre és dolç'

We cannot use numbers or the word **a/an** before an uncountable noun. It is wrong to say: ~~A water~~, ~~a sugar~~, ~~a money~~, because 'water', 'sugar', and 'money' are uncountable nouns. See the table below with some examples:

TAULA 2.19.

Wrong	Right
A water	a litre/a bottle of water
three advices	three pieces of advice
one bread	a loaf (Cat. una llesca) of bread

The following table shows the use of the English quantifiers:

TAULA 2.20. The English quantifiers

	Affirmative	Negative	Interrogative
Countable nouns	no, a/an, some a lot of, many few, a few	any many few, a few	any many few, a few
Uncountable nouns	no, some a lot of little, a little	any much little, a little	any much little, a little

Notes:

- ‘**no**’ means **zero** quantity of something. It has a **negative meaning**, but the verb must be in the **affirmative form**. Ex: I *have got no* friends = No tinc amics
- ‘**No**’ is equivalent to the form ‘**not...any**’. Ex: I *have not got any* friends = No tinc amics
- The quantifier **a** is the same word as the indeterminate article. We say **an** before a noun starting with a vowel sound: *an hour, an animal*, etc., but we say: *a unit, a university*, etc. because we pronounce *u* as a consonant (/junit/, /juniversiti/).
- The quantifiers **a lot of** and **many** express a great quantity of something. They have the same meaning, but we generally use **a lot of** in informal situations and **many** in formal situations.

Few, little, a few, a little

These four quantifiers express a small quantity of something, but there is a difference between *few/little* and *a few/a little*:

- **Few** (with countable nouns) and **little** (with uncountable nouns) indicate that the quantity is **too small** to do something. For example: we can't buy a coffee because we have **little** money (Cat. ‘No ens podem comprar un cafè perquè tenim **pocs** diners’).
- **A few** (with countable nouns) and **a little** (with uncountable nouns) indicate that the quantity is small, but it is **enough** (Cat. *suficient*) to do something. For example: we can buy a coffee because we have **a little** money (Cat. ‘Ens podem comprar un cafè perquè tenim **uns quants/prou** diners’).

Here are some examples of the use of quantifiers. The type of noun (countable vs uncountable) is in brackets:

TAULA 2.21.

I've got a very interesting <i>offer</i> (count.)	'Tinc una oferta molt interessant'
There are some <i>people</i> (count.) in the room	'Hi ha algunes persones a la sala'
Have you got any <i>money</i> (uncount.)?	'Tens diners?'
We found no <i>books</i> (count.)	'No vam trobar cap llibre'
We didn't find any <i>books</i> (count.)	'No vam trobar cap llibre'
There's a lot of <i>information</i> (uncount.) in the website	Hi ha molta informació a la web
Mr Larson controls a lot of / many <i>companies</i> (count.)	'El Sr. Larson controla moltes empreses'
We haven't got much <i>time</i> (uncount.)	'No tenim gaire temps'
Are there many <i>people</i> (count.) in the room?	'Hi ha gaire gent a la sala?'
We have few <i>computers</i> (count.) for so many people	'Tenim pocs ordinadors per a tanta gent'

We have a few computers (count.), so we can work	'Tenim uns quants ordinadors, així que podem treballar'
There's little time (uncount.) to finish the work	'Hi ha poc temps per a acabar la feina'
We can finish because we have a little time (uncount.)	'Podem acabar perquè tenim una mica de temps'
There are no books on the shelves. Where are they?	'No hi ha cap llibre a les prestatgeries. On són?'

Example of dialogue

Read the following dialogue. See the structure '*There is / There are*', and some quantifiers **in bold**.

RUTH: 'I think *there is* **no** ink in the printer.'

CRAIG: '*Isn't there?* But I have just printed, so *there must be* **some**. At least, **a little**.'

RUTH: 'As I see it, *there is* **none**. *Are there* **any** ink cartridges left?'

CRAIG: 'I saw **a few** in Ms. Clarence's drawer. Check it.'

RUTH: 'Craig, I have checked it, but *there isn't* **any** cartridge there.'

CRAIG: 'We'll have to order **some**. In fact, it's preferable to buy **a lot of** cartridges at once.'

RUTH: 'Yes, you're right.'

Ruth uses '*I think*' and '*As I see it*' to express her opinion.

2.2.3 Grammar reference: Prepositions of place

Some prepositions of place express *position* and others express *movement*.

The most important prepositions that express position are:

TAULA 2.22.

In	a, dins de	On	a sobre de, damunt de
Next to	al costat de	Above	per damunt de
Under	a sota de	In front of	al davant de
Opposite	davant de	Behind	al darrera
Between	entre	Across	a l'altra banda de

After a preposition...

we can use:

- a noun: *in the garden*
- an object pronoun: *for him*
- a verb in -ing: *without saying anything*

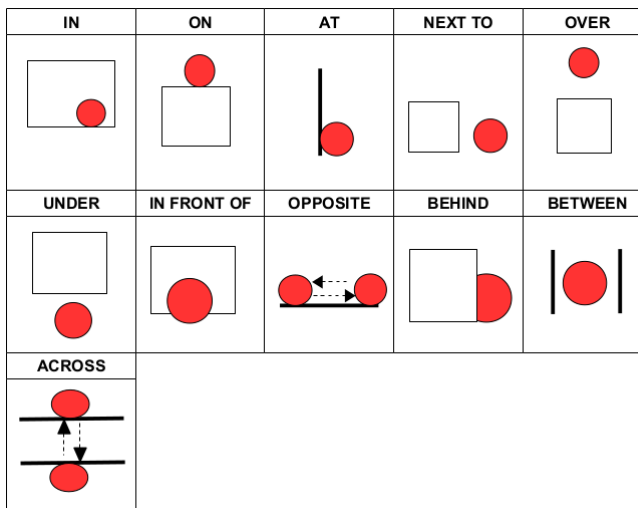
Some common expressions with these prepositions are:

TAULA 2.23.

In London	In England	In the street	
On the corner of	On the wall	On the floor	On the train
At home	At work	At school	At the table

The figura 3.2 shows a graphical representation of the prepositions of place indicating position:

FIGURA 2.3. The prepositions of place (position)



The prepositions that express **movement** are:

TAULA 2.24.

To	a, cap a	Into	cap a dins de
Onto	cap el damunt de	Along	per, al llarg de
From	de, des de	In front of	cap al davant
Behind	cap el darrera	Across	a través de

We use all these prepositions with verbs that indicate movement, for example:

TAULA 2.25

go	anar	drive	conduir
fly	volar	run	córrer
walk	caminar		

Here are some examples:

TAULA 2.26.

I am flying to London	'Estic volant cap a Londres'
He is running into the room	'Entra corrents a l'habitació'
Put the boxes onto the table	'Posa les caixes a sobre la taula'
I am coming from the office	'Vinc de l'oficina'
They are walking behind the house	'Estan caminant cap a darrera de la casa'

But we do not use a preposition with the noun *home*:

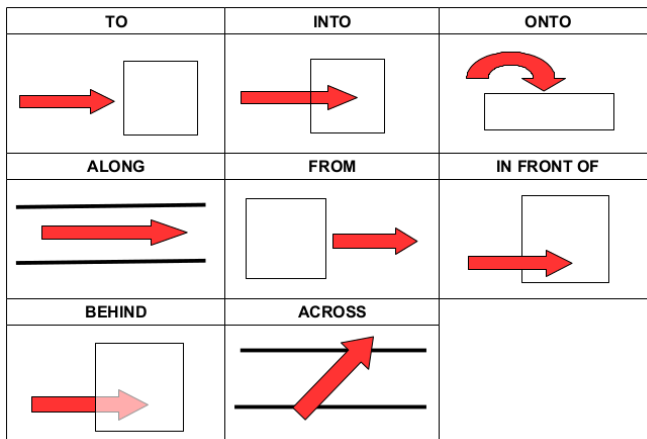
TAULA 2.27.

<i>I am going home</i>	'Vaig cap a casa'
------------------------	-------------------

It is wrong to say: **I am going to home.*

The figura 3.3 represents the prepositions of place that indicate movement:

FIGURA 2.4. The prepositions of place (movement)



Other prepositions

TAULA 2.28.

With	amb	Without	sense	Of	de
For	per a	By	per		

∴

Examples:

TAULA 2.29.

I work with very interesting people	'Treballo amb gent molt interessant'
He left without saying goodbye	'Va marxar sense dir adéu
February is the second month of the year	'El febrer és el segon mes de l'any'
Is this present for me?	'Aquest regal és per a mí?'
The job was finished by Peter	'La feina va ser acabada per en Peter'

2.3 Giving directions

Giving directions means to explain someone the way to a certain place. We can ask for directions with these questions:

TAULA 2.30.

How can I get to...?	'Com puc anar a...?'
Can you tell me the way to...?	'Em pot indicar el camí per anar a...?'

Visitors often have to move around the office, so it is important to learn how to direct them. See the floorplan of BDL Supplies (figura 2.5 i figura 2.6), and read the dialogues below.

FIGURA 2.5. Office floorplan (groundfloor)

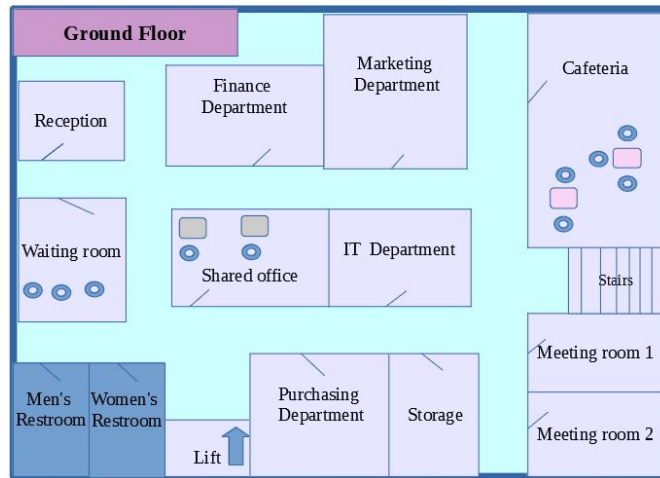
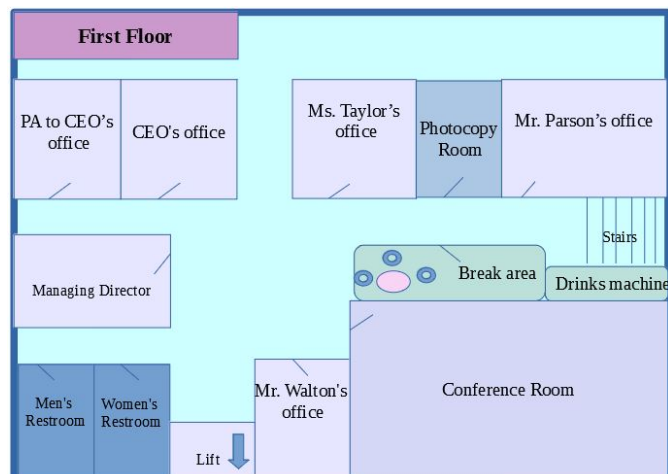


FIGURA 2.6. Office floorplan (firstfloor)



This is the floorplan of BDL Supplies

Examples of dialogues

Read the following dialogues, where Roger Donovan, the receptionist (R), directs visitors (V) to different places in the office:

Visitor 1

V: Excuse me, I have an appointment with the CEO.

R: All right, let me call to see if she's available.

V: Ok, thank you.

R: I spoke to her PA. He said that you should go to his office to collect some documents before seeing Ms. Roberts, who will welcome you in her office in 10 minutes.

V: Ok, thank you. And, where is the PA's office?

R: It's upstairs. **Go straight on** and take the lift, which is next to the women's restroom. Go to the first floor, when you exit the lift, go straight, **past** the manager's office, and **turn left**. The CEO's PA's office is the second office.

V: Thank you.

R: You're welcome.

Visitor 2

V: Good morning. Where can I find the meeting room?

R: There are two meeting rooms. Exit on your left, keep on walking straight, **past** the Finance and the Marketing Departments. At the end of the corridor there is the cafeteria. **Turn right**, and you will see the meeting rooms after the stairs.

V: Thank you.

R: You're welcome.

Visitor 3

V: Excuse me. I need to photocopy these documents. Where is the photocopier?

R: It's **on the first floor**. **Go straight on** and take the lift, which is **next to** the women's restroom. Go to the first floor, when you exit the lift, **go straight**, past the manager's office, and turn right. The photocopy room is **between** Ms. Taylor's and Mr. Parson's offices, right **in front of** the break area.

V: Thank you.

R: You're welcome.

Indicating the location

To give directions, it is sometimes useful to indicate the location of buildings and other reference points. To indicate the location, we must use the appropriate prepositions of place. Here are some useful expressions:

TAULA 2.31.

On the left/right	'A l'esquerra/dreta'
On the corner of Green St. and Oak St.	'A la cantonada de Green St. i Oak St.'
Opposite the park	'Davant del park'
Across the street	'A l'altra banda del carrer'
Between the bookshop and a bank	'Entre la llibreria i un banc'
Around the corner	'Al girar la cantonada'
In Green St.	'A Green St.'
Next to a hotel	'Al costat d'un hotel'

Saying the names of the streets

When we say the name of the street, we do not include the article *the*. It is wrong to say: *Go along the Green St.* or *It is in the Green St.*, but we can use the article when the name is 'Main St.': *Go along the Main St., It is in the Main St.*

The names of the streets (abbreviations)

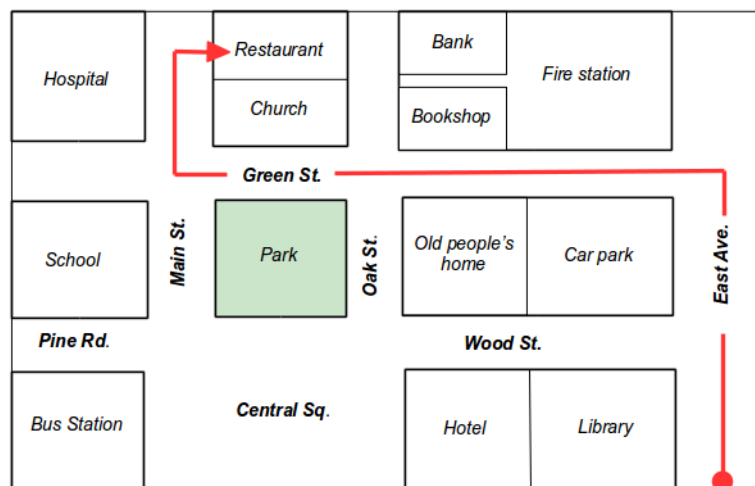
In the written form (for example, in maps and addresses), we may find the following abbreviations:

- St. : street
- Rd. : road
- Sq. : square
- Ave. : avenue
- Blvd. : boulevard

These abbreviations are always placed after the proper name: *Green St.*, *Central Sq.*, etc.

In the following dialogue, one person is giving directions (see map of figura 2.7 for reference):

FIGURA 2.7. Map



Giving directions

Read the following conversation:

A: Excuse me, how can I go to the restaurant?

B: The restaurant? Well, **go along** this street and **turn** second left. That's Green Street. **Go straight ahead**, **cross** Oak Street and then **turn right into** the Main Street. **Go past** a church on the right and the restaurant is right there, **next to** the church.

Directions, direction and address

These three words are sometimes confusing. Here is the difference:

- **Directions** (Cat. orientacions, indicacions): always in plural; a synonym of ‘instructions’ (for example: *I’ll give you directions to do the exam*).
- **Direction** (Cat. direcció): the term refers to a course taken in relation to a reference point (for example: *We’re going in the wrong direction*).
- **Address** (Cat. adreça): the place where a building is located (for example: *my address is 23, Green St.*).

Some verbs commonly used to give directions are:

TAULA 2.32

Walk	caminar
Turn	girar
Take	prendre, agafar
Go along	anar per
Go across	travessar
Go past	passa per davant de

Here are some expressions for giving directions:

TAULA 2.33.

Turn (first/second...) left/right	‘Gira pel (primer/segon...) carrer a l’esquerra/dreta’
Turn left/right at the traffic lights	‘Gira a l’esquerra/dreta quan arribis al semàfor’
Turn left/right into Green St.	‘Gira a l’esquerra/dreta per Green St.’
Go straight ahead/on	‘Ves recte’
Go along this street	‘Ves per aquest carrer’
Go across Green St.	‘Travessa Green St.’
You will go past a bank	‘Passaràs per un banc’
Take the (first/second...) street on the left/right	‘Agafa el (primer/segon...) carrer a l’esquerra/dreta’

The expressions ‘go straight ahead’ and ‘go along’ are often confused:

- **‘Straight ahead’** is an adverb that indicates the direction of the movement: we must not say the name of the street with this expression. It is wrong to say: *Go straight ahead Green St. and turn left*. We must say: *Go straight ahead and turn left*.
- **‘Along’** is a preposition, so we must use a noun. It is wrong to say: *Go along and turn left*. We must say: *Go along Green St. and turn left*.

To give directions, we must be as clear as possible. The sentences must be short and very simple, so do not give long and detailed information. The words and

expressions must be appropriate to the context. The normal pattern is: first, explain the way to the place; next, say the exact location by using the appropriate prepositions and reference points (for example: *opposite a park*). We generally use the imperative form or the modal verb *should* (but not *must*, for the reason explained in the side note in this section). We can combine the imperative with the future form (with *will*): *you will go past a bank, you will see a park*, etc.

A frequent mistake when giving directions is the wrong use of the preposition *until* (Cat. fins a). This is a preposition of time, so it is wrong to say: *until the traffic lights*. We say: *until you come to the traffic lights*.

2.3.1 Writing: Business Letters

Writing is a very common activity. At work, you will probably need to write emails and letters in English, and perhaps instructions or short notes. As in all the skills, the only way of improving your writing is to practise as much as possible.

When you write a text in English, it is very important to consider the following aspects:

- **Clarity:** write short, simple sentences; write different paragraphs and separate them clearly; use connectors and punctuation to link the sentences.
- **Style:** choose the appropriate style (formal or informal), depending on the situation.
- **Accuracy:** use the correct vocabulary, grammar structures and spelling; take your time to correct mistakes.
- **Layout:** use the appropriate layout and conventions used in formal texts, especially in business letters.

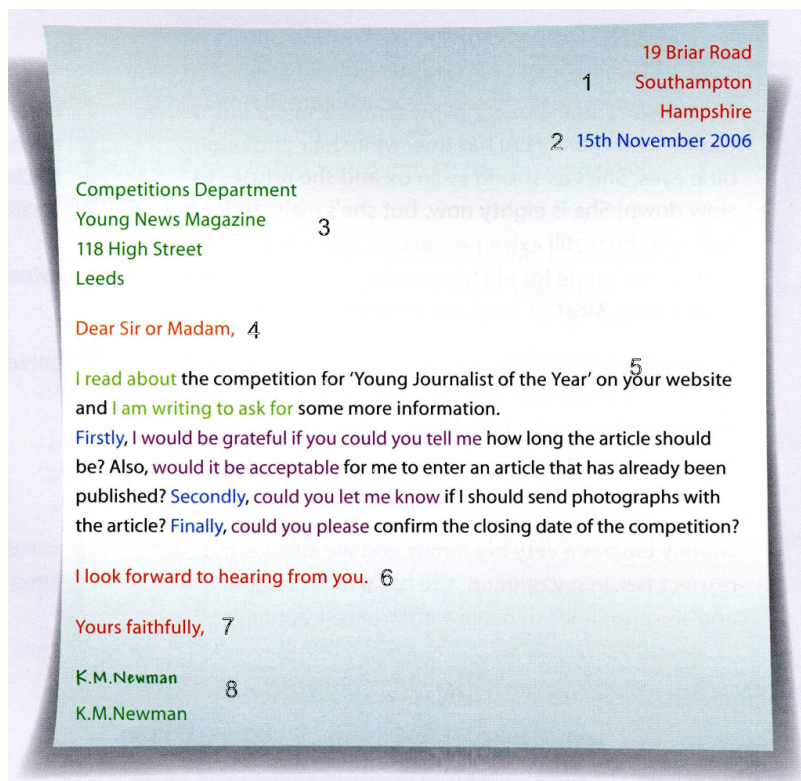
The term *layout* (Cat. distribució, composició) refers to the position of the different elements in a text, normally in letters and emails.

Here is an example of a formal text (figura 2.8). Notice the position and characteristics of the different elements:

1. The sender's address (without the name)
2. The date
3. The receiver's address
4. A standard formal opening phrase
5. The text of the letter: two paragraphs, formal style (*I would be grateful if..., could you...?*), use of connectors (*firstly, secondly, finally*)
6. A standard formal ending
7. A standard formal closing phrase

8. The sender's signature

FIGURA 2.8. Business letter



2.3.2 Connectors and punctuation

Connectors and punctuation are very important elements because they contribute to the accuracy of the text. They bring clarity and coherence, so it is necessary to learn their use. Here is a list of some common english connectors. We include their translation into Catalan and examples of their use:

Expressing addition:

- **and** (Cat. i): I like reading *and* listening to music (Cat. 'M'agrada llegir i escoltar música').
- **or** (Cat. ni) (in negative sentences): I don't like reading *or* listening to music (Cat. 'No m'agrada llegir *ni* escoltar música')
- **also** (Cat. també) (formal): I *also* like reading (Cat. 'A mi *també* m'agrada llegir').
- **too** (Cat. també) (informal): I like reading *too* (Cat. 'A mi *també* m'agrada llegir').

Expressing alternatives:

- **or** (Cat. o): You can go *or* wait a little longer (Cat. ‘Pots marxar *o* esperar-te una estona més’).

Expressing contrast:

- **but** (Cat. però): It’s late, *but* I will wait a little longer (Cat. ‘És tard, *però* ,’esperaré una estona més’).
- **however** (Cat. malgrat tot): It’s late. *However*, I will wait a little longer (Cat. ‘És tard. *Malgrat tot*, m’esperaré una estona més’).
- **although** (Cat. ‘encara que, tot i que’): *Although* it’s late, I will wait a little longer (Cat. ‘*Encara que* sigui tard, m’esperaré una estona més’).
- **on one hand...on the other hand** (Cat. ‘per una banda...per una altra banda’): *On one hand* it is raining. *On the other hand*, it is very cold (Cat. ‘*Per una banda*, està plovent. *Per una altra banda*, fa molt de fred’).

Explaining ideas:

- **in other words** (Cat. amb altres paraules): It’s crystal clear. *In other words*, it is very clear (Cat. ‘Està clar com el cristall. *En altres paraules*, està molt clar’).
- **for example** (Cat. per exemple). There are many things to do. *For example*, bring water and take out the chairs (Cat. ‘Hi ha moltes coses per fer. *Per exemple*, portar aigua i treure les cadires’).

Listing ideas:

- **firstly,...;secondly...** (Cat. en primer lloc,... en segon lloc, ...): *Firstly*, bring water; *secondly*, take out the chairs (Cat. ‘*En primer lloc*, porta aigua; *en segon lloc*, treu les cadires’).
- **and then** (Cat. i aleshores): Bring water *and then* take out the chairs (Cat. ‘Porta aigua *i aleshores*, treu les cadires’).
- **next** (Cat. després): Bring water. *Next*, take out the chairs (Cat. ‘Porta aigua. *Després*, treu les cadires’).
- **finally** (Cat. finalment, per acabar): Bring water, take out the chairs and *finally* check the computer (Cat. ‘Porta aigua, treu les cadires *i finalment* comprova l’ordinador’).

Expressing purpose:

- **to** (Cat. per a, per tal de): Use a dictionary *to* look up the meaning of a word (Cat. ‘Utilitza un diccionari *per a* consultar el significat d’una paraula’).

Expressing the reason:

- **because** (Cat. perquè): I study English *because* it is very important (Cat. ‘Estudio anglès *perquè* és molt important’).
- **because of** (Cat. degut a, a causa de): I study English *because of* its great importance (Cat. ‘Estudio anglès *degut a* la seva gran importància’).

Expressing the result:

- **so** (Cat. així que, per tant): I need money *so* I work extra hours (Cat. ‘Necessito diners *així que* faig hores extremes’).

Summarizing ideas:

- **in conclusion** (Cat. en conclusió): We have no money and we do not work. *In conclusion*, we cannot give you anything (Cat. ‘No tenim diners i no treballem. *En conclusió*, que no et podem donar res’).
- **Summing up** (Cat. resumint). We have no money and we do not work. *Summing up*, we cannot give you anything (Cat. ‘No tenim diners i no treballem. *Resumint*, que no et podem donar res’).

Now see the difference between a text with and without connectors:

Text without connectors

The Internet has some advantages. It is useful to broaden your knowledge and meet new people. It has some disadvantages. Its free access to pages which show violence and crimes. There are people who think that the Internet should be a free space to express ideas. Some people consider that the Internet can be dangerous if it is not controlled. The Internet has both advantages and disadvantages. People must learn to use it for positive aims.

Text with connectors (in bold type)

The Internet has some advantages **because** it is useful to broaden your knowledge and meet new people, **but** it **also** has some disadvantages, **as for example**, its free access to pages which show violence and crimes. **On the one hand**, there are people who think that the Internet should be a free space to express ideas. **On the other hand**, some people consider that the Internet can be dangerous if it is not controlled. **In conclusion**, the Internet has both advantages and disadvantages, **but** people must learn to use it for positive aims.

Punctuation

In writing, it is very important to use the punctuation marks correctly because they contribute to give clarity to the text.

Here are the most important uses of the punctuation marks:

- Do not write a comma (,) between the subject and the verb.
- Write a full stop (.) at the end of a sentence.
- The adverbials and connectors are usually separated from the sentence by a comma. For example: *in the mornings*, *I usually check my mail*.

- Write a colon (:) to introduce a list of items or an explanation. For example: *the continents are: Europe, Asia, Africa, America and Oceania.*
- Write a comma to separate the elements in a list. For example: *I visit customers on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.*
- Use a semi-colon (;) to separate the groups of items in a list. For example: *in computing, we must distinguish between hardware and software. Hardware refers to the material parts of a computer ; software refers to programming and includes operating systems, compilers, editors, etc.*
- Use brackets () to add extra information. For example: *in writing, we must use connectors (also called 'linking words').*
- Write a capital letter at the beginning of a sentence or after a full stop.
- Write a question mark (?) at the end of a sentence. For example: *what's your name ?.*
- Write an exclamation mark (!) at the end of a sentence with the imperative form. For example: *Come in !.*

Capitalization

Capitalization is the use of capital letters (Cat. lletres majúscules). In English, capitalization is sometimes different from Spanish or Catalan.

We use capital letters:

- with the pronoun 'I'
- with adjectives derived from proper names: *English, Londoner, etc.*
- with days of the week and months of the year: *Monday, Tuesday, February, April etc.*
- with names of personal and job titles: *Mr., Miss, Sales Manager, Director, etc.*
- at the beginning of a sentence.

3. Main Departments in a Company

A business or a company is an organization that produces or sells goods or provides a service. The internal structure of a business is the way it is structured to carry out its different activities.

This structure is not the same in every company, it depends on its size and the kind of industry. However, we usually find the Director, the Vice-President, and Corporate Officers, such as the CEO (Chief Executive Officer), or the COO (Chief Operating Officer).

Companies are usually divided into departments (marketing, production, etc.). This leads to lower costs and a greater efficiency. The following are the main departments in a company:

- **Finance or Accounting Department:** They provide a detailed record of the money coming in and going out of the business and prepare accounts as a basis for financial decisions.
- **Human Resources Department:** They deal with the recruitment, training, health and safety and pay negotiations with unions/workers.
- **Production Department:** They make sure that the production plans are met on time and products of the right quality are produced.
- **Purchasing Department:** They buy the raw materials and goods required for production.
- **Sales and marketing Department:** They deal with all aspects of selling to customers; the marketing function carries out marketing research, organises advertising and product promotion.

TAULA 3.1. Vocabulary

Accounting department: departament comptable	Interview: entrevista (N) / entrevistar (V)
Accounting tasks: tasques comptables	Knowledge: coneixement
Advertising: publicitat	Payroll: nòmina
Avoid: evitar	Performance: rendiment
Board: la direcció (equip directiu)	Payroll: nòmina
Chairman: president	Pick up: recollir
Carry out: portar a terme	Post: lloc de treball
CEO (Chief Executive Officer): Director executiu	Production department: departament de producció
COO (Chief Operating Officer): Cap/Director d'operacions	Provide: proporcionar
Customers: clients	Purchasing department: departament de compres
Deal with: tractar amb, encarregar-se de	Qualifications: títols, certificats

Elicit: elicitar	Raw materials: matèries primeres
Employee: empleat, treballador	Record: registre
Eye contact: contacte visual	Research: recerca
Facilities: instal·lacions	Sales and Marketing department: departament de vendes i màrqueting
HR (Human Resources) department: departament de recursos humans	Skills: habilitats
Grow: créixer	To be in charge of: estar al càrrec de
In charge of: encarregat de	To be responsible for: ser responsable de

Samantha

Samantha **works** in the purchasing department of a construction company, Evergreen Builders, which is based in Worcester. Read about her daily routine:

FIGURA 3.1. Samantha Oliver



Source: Unsplash. Alex Avalos

'My name's Samantha Oliver. I **live** in Birmingham, and I **work** for the company Evergreen Builders, which is a Construction company based in Worcester.

My normal commute time is 40 minutes each way with moderate traffic, although I **sometimes use** public transport if the weather is not good.

The train **leaves** at half past seven, so I **normally wake up** at a quarter past six. Then, I **have** a shower, and **finish** my breakfast before seven. I must leave home between five or ten minutes past seven if I **want** to be on time.

I **always arrive** at the office five minutes before, because I **don't like** being late. I **start** work at a quarter to eight.

In the Purchase Department we **procure** goods and services to meet the operational needs of the company. We **monitor** supply chains, and **search** for the lowest prices and the best value.

Apart from that, we **have** other duties, we also **purchase** items such as office supplies or catering services. Furthermore, we **handle** the return of defective goods and the process of refund or replacement. We also **manage** operating inventories.

I **usually work** at the office, although I **sometimes visit** vendors' manufacturing plants or distribution centres to understand their products. In addition, twice a year, I **attend** trade shows in order to learn about new products and vendors.

Deadlines are important to this position, so I **need** to be good at prioritizing tasks to make sure that deadlines are met. I'm in contact with all the departments in the company: 'Does the Sales Department manager **need** a new phone to contact customers?' or 'Do our

workers **have** the materials they need for the week?'. If I **make** any mistake, things **don't work**.

3.1 Grammar: Present simple and present continuous

Read the following sentences in Samantha's daily routine. All of them are in the present simple:

TAULA 3.2.

I live in Birmingham	' Visc a Birmingham'
I work for the company Evergreen Builders	' Treballo a l'empresa Evergreen Builders'
I <i>sometimes</i> use public transport	' <i>A vegades</i> faig servir el transport públic'
The train leaves at half past seven	'El tren marxa a dos quarts de vuit'
We monitor supply chains	' Controlem/Supervisem les cadenes de proveïment'
Does the Sales Department manager need a new phone?	'El cap del departament de vendes necessita un telèfon?'
Things don't work	'Les coses no funcionen '

3.1.1 The present simple

See the forms and uses of the present simple.

TAULA 3.3. Conjugation of the present simple (/work/)

	Affirmative	Negative Long form	Negative Short form	Interrogative
I	work	do not work	don't work	Do I work...?
You	work	do not work	don't work	Do you work...?
He/She/It	works	does not work	doesn't work	Does he work...?
We	work	do not work	don't work	Do we work...?
You	work	do not work	don't work	Do you work...?
They	work	do not work	don't work	Do they work...?

Notice the following:

- The **third person singular** adds **-s** to the base form of the verb.
- The negative is formed with **do not** or **does not** in front of the base form.
- In the interrogative form, the auxiliary **do/does** is placed before the subject.

The main uses of the present simple are:

1) To express **an habitual, regular action**:

TAULA 3.4.

I get up at seven everyday	'Em llevo a les set cada dia'
David lives in London	'En David viu a Londres'
We work in a big company	'(Nosaltres) treballem en una gran empresa'

2) To express **a permanent state**, something that is always true:

TAULA 3.5.

Australia is a very big country	'Austràlia és un país molt gran'
The sun rises in the east	'El sol surt per l'est'
Water boils at 100°C	'L'aigua bull als 100°C'

Adverbs of frequency

The adverbs of frequency express the frequency of an action. They are very common with the present simple because they indicate regular actions. Here is a list of the most important adverbs of frequency:

TAULA 3.6.

Always	Sempre	Usually	Normalment
Often	Sovint	Sometimes	A vegades
Seldom	Gairebé mai	Never	Mai

- The adverbs 'always', 'usually', 'often', 'seldom' and 'never' are placed in the middle of the sentence:

TAULA 3.7.

He always arrives late	Sempre arriba tard
We are often tired in the evening	Sovint estem cansats al vespre

- The adverb ‘sometimes’ is placed at the beginning, at the end or in the middle of the sentence:

TAULA 3.8.

He sometimes calls me
He calls me sometimes
Sometimes he calls me

- The expressions ‘every day’, ‘every week’, etc. are usually placed at the end of the sentence:
 - We meet **every day**
 - I see David **twice a week**

TAULA 3.9.

Every day	Cada dia	Every week	‘Cada setmana’
Once a week	‘Un cop per setmana’		
Twice a week	‘Dos cops per setmana’		
Three times a week	‘Tres cops per setmana’		
From time to time	‘De tant en tant’		

3.1.2 Expressing dates and clock times

There is a great difference in the way we write and say dates and clock times. In addition there is also a difference between British English and American English.

The table shows different **ways of writing a date** in British English and American English:

TAULA 3.10. Writing dates in British and American English

	British English	American English
A	9th June, 2020	June 9th, 2020
B	9 June 2020	June 9, 2020
C	9/6/2020	6/9/2020
D	9/6/20	6/9/20
E	09/06/20	06/09/20

When writing or interpreting a written date, we must be aware of the variety of English. Notice the following:

- For a British person, 9/6/2020 is 9th June 2020; for an American person, it is: 6th September 2020.
- For a British person, 6/9/2020 is 6th September 2020; for an American person, it is: 9th June 2020.

Independently of the format, we must say the dates like this:

- British English: *the ninth of June two thousand and twenty*
- American English: *June (the) ninth two thousand and twenty*

When we say a date, we must use the ordinal numbers (1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, etc.). In American English, we can eliminate the article *the*.

Saying the years in English

Both in British and American English, we can say the years like this:

- 1800: eighteen hundred
- 1906: nineteen hundred and six / nineteen oh six
- 1998: nineteen ninety eight
- 2000: two thousand / twenty hundred
- 2007: two thousand and seven / twenty oh seven
- 2018: two thousand and eighteen / twenty eighteen
- 2020: two thousand and twenty / twenty twenty

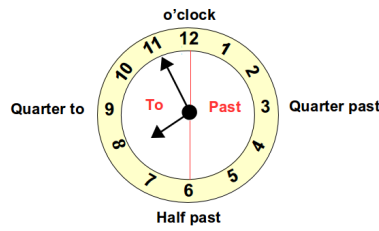
Here are some time expressions with dates. Notice that we use the preposition *in* with months and years and the preposition *on* with complete dates or expressions denoting dates:

- *When did you arrive?* (Cat. ‘Quan vas arribar?’)
- *I arrived in June* (Cat. ‘Vaig arribar el mes de juny’)
- *I arrived in 2007* (Cat. ‘Vaig arribar l’any 2007’)
- *I arrived on 9th June 2007* (Cat. ‘Vaig arribar el 9 de juny de 2007’)
- *I arrived on the 9th* (Cat. ‘Vaig arribar el dia 9’)
- *What’s the date today?* (Cat. ‘A quina data estem avui?’)
- *It’s 9th June* (Cat. ‘És el 9 de juny’)

Clock times

The figura [3.2](#) shows the basic words that we need to tell the time:

FIGURA 3.2. Clock times



Here are some examples of clock times in English:

TAULA 3.11

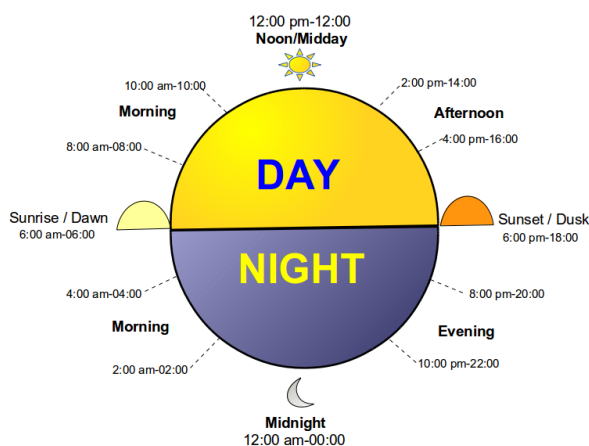
Time	In timetables	Normal use
3:00	three (o'clock)	
3:05	three oh five	five past three
3:12	three twelve	twelve minutes past three
3:15	three fifteen	a quarter past three
3:30	three thirty	half past three
3:40	three forty	twenty to four
3:45	three forty-five	a quarter to four
3:56	three fifty-six	four minutes to four
4:00	four (o'clock)	

Note:

- We use the word **o'clock** (en punt) only on the hour: *three o'clock*.
- For all the times between the hour and the half hour, we use **past**; for all the times between the half hour and the next hour, we use **to**.
- We use the word **quarter** (*quarter past* or *quarter to*). It is wrong to say: *fifteen past* or *fifteen to*.
- We use **Half** *half past* and the previous hour.
- With the multiples of five, we say: *ten past three*. With all the others, we say the word *minutes*: *twelve minutes past three*

The figura 3.3 shows the parts of the day and the times included in each one.

FIGURA 3.3. Parts of the day



Here are some expressions related to clock times. They are placed in a sentence:

TAULA 3.12

What time is it? What's the time?	'Quina hora és?'
It's a quarter past four	'És un quart de cinc'
It's half past seven	'Són dos quarts de set'
What time are you coming?	'A quina hora vindràs?'
I'll come at ten	'Vindré a les deu'
It's three in the morning	'Són les tres de la matinada'

Note:

- With clock times we use the preposition **at**: **at ten o'clock**, **at half past seven**.
- With parts of the day, we use the preposition **in**: **in the morning**, **in the afternoon**.
- Other expressions related to clock times are:

TAULA 3.13

At noon / At midday	Al migdia
At sunset / At dusk	A la posta del sol
At midnight	A mitjanit
At sunrise / At dawn	A la sortida del sol

The 12-hour-system

In English, it is not common to use the 24-hour-system. Instead, they use the 12-hour-system. To distinguish between the morning and the evening, they add:

- *am* (Latin: *ante meridiem*), meaning *in the morning*
- *pm* (Latin: *post meridiem*), meaning *in the afternoon* or *in the evening*

For example, 15:00h is *three pm* or *three in the afternoon* and 03:00h is *three am* or *three in the morning*.

3.2 The present continuous

Read Mr. Thomas Spencer's email in Section 'Evergreen Builders: Purchasing Department' and note the words in bold, in the present continuous:

TAULA 3.14

I am writing	'Escric (estic escrivint)'
we are building	'Estem construint'
you are organizing	'(vostè) està organitzant'

See the different forms of the present continuous in the table below:

TAULA 3.15. Conjugation of the present continuous ('work')

	Affirmative Long form	Affirmative Short form	Negative Long form	Negative Short form	Interrogative
I	am working	'm working	am not working	'm not working	am I working...?
you	are working	're working	are not working	aren't working	are you working...?
he/she/it	is working	's working	is not working	isn't working	is he working...?
we	are working	're working	are not working	aren't working	are we working...?
you	are working	're working	are not working	aren't working	are you working...?
they	are working	're working	are not working	aren't working	are they working...?

The present continuous is composed of two elements: the auxiliary verb *be*, conjugated in the present tense, and the gerund of the verb (*working*).

The main uses of the present continuous are:

1) For an action that is happening at the moment of speaking:

TAULA 3.16.

Look! David is talking to the director	'Mireu! David està parlant amb el director'
I am writing the report now	'Ara estic redactant l'informe'
He is flying to London in this moment	'En aquest moment està volant cap a Londres'

2) For a temporary action, one that is not permanent:

TAULA 3.17.

I am working at night this week	'Aquesta setmana treballo de nit'
She is living with her sister	'(Ella) viu/està vivint amb la seva germana'
My car is in the garage so these days I am taking the bus to come to work	'El meu cotxe és al taller així que aquests dies agafo l'autobús per a venir a treballar'

Adverbs of time

Some adverbs and adverbial expressions of time are frequently used with the present continuous tense. For example:

TAULA 3.18

Now	We are going out now
At the moment	They are watching TV at the moment
This week	This week we are completing the inventory

Verbs that do not take the continuous tenses

Some verbs are never expressed in the continuous tenses. Some of these verbs are:

The gerund (-ing) form

The gerund is an invariable form of the verb. It always ends in -ing. It is mostly used (together with the auxiliary verb *be*) to form the continuous tenses of the verbs.

TAULA 3.19.

Believe	Creure	Love	Estimar
Doubt	Dubtar	Prefer	Preferir
Enjoy	Agradar, gaudir	Remember	Recordar
Hate	odiar, detestar	See	Veure
Have	Tenir	Think	Opinar
Know	Saber	Understand	Entendre
Like	Agradar	Want	Voler

It is wrong to say: *I am liking this film*. We must say: *I like this film*.

But we can use the continuous tenses with two of these verbs when they have a different meaning:

- Have (Cat. prendre): *I am having* breakfast (Cat. 'Eestic prenent l'esmorzar/Eestic esmorzant')
- Think (Cat. pensar): What *are you thinking* about? (Cat. 'En què estàs pensant?')

3.3 Communication: Evergreen Builders. Purchasing Department

In this section we are going to learn about Samantha's day at work. She received an email from the leader of a builder's team, Thomas Spencer, requesting her to place an urgent order for some materials. She replied to the email, and called one of their suppliers, BDL Supplies, to see if they could deliver the materials. Eileen Taylor requested her to send an email with the purchase order.

Example of email

Read Thomas Spencer's email:

Dear Ms. Oliver,

I am writing this email to request some materials that we are going to need for our roofing job next week. Currently, **we are building** the perimeter walls and **we are installing** the beams of the new house.

Next week **we are starting** the roofing jobs, and we need insulating material, and some safety equipment.

I know that these days you are very busy because **you are organizing** the visit to the next tradeshow. However, we need the following material asap.

- 10 Hammer tacker staplers
- 20 Hard hats
- 20 Roof safety harnesses

I apologize for the short notice and I hope that you will do your best to get the material and send it to us. Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

Thomas Spencer

Now, read Samantha's reply:

Hello,

I have received your mail requesting an urgent order for next week. I will do it immediately, although I cannot assure that you will have it on Monday.

As always, I remind you that the provision for material should be done at least two weeks in advance, but I will do my best to place your order asap.

Please, send me a message if you need my assistance.

Best regards,

Samantha Oliver

3.3.1 Speaking on the phone

Speaking on the phone is a very common activity, both in a working environment and in our daily life. We may do so with customers, colleagues or friends, but in all the cases speaking on the phone requires the use of specific words and expressions. A clear pronunciation is very important when speaking on the phone, so it is a good idea to practise the expressions carefully before attempting to make a call or answering the phone. It is also necessary to have good listening skills because in a telephone conversation you cannot see the other person and therefore you will not have the help of the body language.

Example of telephone conversation

Read the following telephone conversation between Samantha Oliver and Eileen Taylor. In the conversation, Samantha calls the company BDL Suppliers to place the urgent order Mr. Thomas Spencer requested her. Ms. Taylor agrees and asks her to send an email with the purchase order.

Receptionist: Good morning, BLD Supplies. How can I help you?

Ms. Oliver: Good morning. This is Samantha Oliver, with Evergreen Builders. May I speak to Ms. Eileen Taylor?

Receptionist: Hold on a minute, please. I'll pass you through.

Ms. Oliver:* Thank you.

Ms. Taylor: Good morning, Eileen Taylor speaking, how can I help you?

Ms. Oliver: Good morning Ms. Taylor. This is Samantha Oliver. I'm calling to place an urgent order for some safety equipment.

Ms. Taylor: All right. What do you need exactly?

Ms. Oliver: I need 10 hammer tacker staplers, 20 hard hats and 20 roof safety harnesses. I need it for next week.

Ms. Taylor: Ok, Ms. Oliver. There is no problem. We have them on stock. Please, send me an email with the purchase order.

Ms. Oliver: Thank you. I will send it right away. When will we receive the order?

Ms. Taylor: The goods will be delivered on Monday morning.

Ms. Oliver: Thank you for your help.

Ms. Taylor: You're welcome. We are always pleased to do business with you.

Here are some common expressions used in telephone conversations. They are divided in categories according to their purpose and they all include an equivalent expression in Catalan.

Answering the telephone:

- *Hello?* (Cat. Digui?)
- *Commercial Department, hello?* (Cat. 'Departament comercial, digui?')
- *Joan Alsina speaking* (Cat. 'Joan Alsina, diguim?')
- *Customer service, can I help you?* (Cat. 'Servei al client, en què el puc ajudar?')

Asking for the other person's identification:

- *Who's calling?* (Cat. 'Qui és?, de part de qui?, qui el truca?')
- *Where are you calling from?* (Cat. 'D'on truca?')
- *May I have your name please* (formal) (Cat. 'Em pot dir el seu nom si us plau?')
- *Is that Mr Peter Bramwell?* (Cat. 'Parlo amb el Sr. Peter Bramwell?')
- *Is that the Commercial Department?* (Cat. 'És el departament comercial?')

Identifying yourself:

- *This is Joan Alsina* (Cat. 'Sóc Joan Alsina')
- *My name's Joan Alsina* (Cat. 'Em dic Joan Alsina')
- *I'm calling from Zara* (Cat. 'Truco de Zara')

Requesting to speak to someone:

- *Can I speak to Mr Peter Bramwell please?* (Cat. 'Puc parlar amb el Sr. Peter Bramwell si us plau?')
- *May I speak to Mr Peter Bramwell please?* (formal) (Cat. 'Podria parlar amb el Sr. Peter Bramwell si us plau?')

- *Is Mr Peter Bramwell there?* (Cat. 'Està el Sr. Peter Bramwell?')
- *I'd like to speak to Mr Peter Bramwell* (Cat. 'Voldria parlar amb el Sr. Peter Bramwell')
- *Could you put me through to Mr Peter Bramwell?* (Cat. 'Em podria passar amb el Sr. Peter Bramwell?')

If Mr Peter Bramwell answers the phone himself, the answer could be:

- *Speaking!* (Cat. 'El mateix, sóc jo mateix')

If someone else answers the phone, see below:

Requesting the other person to wait:

- *One moment please* (Cat. 'Un moment si us plau')
- *Hold on please* (Cat. 'No pengi si us plau')
- *Just a minute* (Cat. 'Un minut')

Connecting with other people:

- *I'll put you through* (Cat. 'Li passo')
- *I'll put you through to Mr Bramwell* (Cat. 'Li passo al Sr. Bramwell')
- *I'll put you through to his office* (Cat. 'Li passo al seu despatx')

Explaining that the other person is not available:

- *I'm afraid Mr Bramwell is not in his office right now* (Cat. 'Em temo que el Sr. Bramwell no és al seu despatx en aquest moment')
- *Mr Bramwell is in a meeting at the moment* (Cat. 'El Sr. Bramwell és a una reunió en aquest moment')
- *I'm afraid the line's busy at the moment* (Cat. 'Està comunicant')

Asking about the reason of the call:

- *What does it concern?* (formal) (Cat. 'De què es tracta')
- *What's it about?* (Cat. 'Sobre què és?')

Offering solutions:

- *Can you call back later?* (Cat. 'Pots trucar més tard?')

- *Could you call back later?* (formal) (Cat. ‘Pot trucar més tard?’)
- *Could I take a message?* (Cat. ‘Vol que li doni algun missatge?’)
- *Would you like to leave a message?* (Cat. ‘Vold deixar-li algun missatge?’)
- *Can I help you in anything?* (Cat. ‘El puc ajudar en alguna cosa?’)
- *Ok, I'll call back later, thanks* (Cat. ‘D’acord, trucaré més tard’)
- *I'll try again, thanks* (Cat. ‘Ho tornaré a intentar, gràcies’)

Leaving a message:

- *Could I leave a message please?* (Cat. ‘Puc deixar un missatge si us plau?’)
- *I'd like to leave a message for Mr Bramwell* (Cat. ‘Voldria deixar un missatge pel Sr. Bramwell’)
- *Could you please tell Mr Bramwell that Joan Alsina called?* (Cat. ‘Li pot dir al Sr. Bramwell que l’ha trucat Joan Alsina si us plau?’)
- *Please tell Mr Bramwell that...* (Cat. ‘Si us plau, digui al Sr Bramwell que...’)

Explaining the reason of the call:

- *I'm calling on behalf of Inés Fernández* (Cat. ‘Truco de part de la Inés Fernández’)
- *I'm calling about...* (Cat. ‘Truco en relació a...’)
- *I'm calling to...* (Cat. ‘Truco per a...’)

Saying goodbye:

- *Well, thanks for your help* (Cat. ‘Bé, gràcies per la teva ajuda’)
- *I'll call you back in a few days* (Cat. ‘Et truco d’aquí uns dies’)
- *Goodbye* (Cat. ‘Adéu’)
- *Bye* (Cat. ‘Adéu’)

Leaving recorded messages

Sometimes we may need to leave a recorded message in an answering machine (Cat. contestador automàtic) or in a voicemail (Cat. bústia de veu). These messages must be as short as possible and they should include at least the following information:

1. The person to whom we address the message
2. Our name
3. The message
4. Closing expressions

Here are two examples of recorded messages:

- *Hello. This is a message for Mr Peter Bramwell. This is Joan Alsina from Zara. I'm calling about an order for 30 male shirts we made two weeks ago. We are still expecting the shirts. Could you please call me back and tell me if there's any problem with the order? Thank you. Good Bye!*
- *Hi. This message is for Eric Smith. I'm calling from a hospital in Barcelona. I'm sorry to inform you that your mother had an accident. It's not serious, but you should come as soon as possible. Could you please call me back at this number? Thank you, good bye!*

3.4 Writing: Characteristics of written language

Unlike the oral language, which makes use of non-verbal language to transmit the message, a written text is what we see. When we speak we can leave some sentences unfinished or change the volume or the tone to express emotions, but we cannot do that in a written text. That is why in a written text, sentences must be complete, they tend to be longer, with subordinate clauses and we use punctuation to organize and structure our writings.

Some of the characteristics of written language are:

- Use of **long forms**:
Example: when introducing the reason for writing: "**I am** writing to inform you...". We use the long form "**I am**" instead of "**I'm**".
- Some grammatical constructions are only used in writing, as are some kinds of vocabulary.
Example: the closing sentence in formal letters: "**We are looking forward to your reply.**"
- Use of a particular layout depending on the type of text (descriptions, reports, business letters, invoices, forms...)

- Organization in paragraphs. It is very important to organize the ideas in different paragraphs and leave a blank space between them.
- Use of connectors and punctuation.
- Use of correct sentence structure. The structure of the sentence is very important in English.
- Use of formal language, except in informal writing (informal emails, notes, etc.)

3.4.1 A formal email: example

You can find useful phrases and formulas used in formal emails in the annexes.

Example of email

Read the email below, where Samantha Oliver places an order for some safety material:

Dear Ms. Taylor,

As we agreed on our phone conversation today, I am writing this email in order to place an urgent order for some safety material. Please, see the purchase order attached.

I really appreciate your effort in providing this material at such short notice. We are expecting the goods to be delivered on Monday morning.

Regarding the payment terms, you will receive the payment 30 days upon receipt of the items, as usual. Please, confirm that everything is correct.

We are looking forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely,

Samantha Oliver

FIGURA 3.4

Evergreen Builders Tolladine Road Worcester WR5 2DD United Kingdom Tel: +44 19065 123456 soliver@evergreen.co.uk www.evergreen.co.uk		PURCHASE ORDER		
		P.O. NUMBER	DATE	
		22548	21/09/2020	
VENDOR		CUSTOMER		
NAME		NAME		
Eileen Taylor		Samantha Oliver		
COMPANY NAME		COMPANY NAME		
BDL Supplies		Evergreen Builders		
ADDRESS		ADDRESS		
125 Queens Dr		Tolladine Road		
Liverpool L15 8XS		Worcester WR5 2DD		
United Kingdom		United Kingdom		
PHONE		PHONE		
+44 15887 138741		+44 19065 123456		
EMAIL ADDRESS		EMAIL ADDRESS		
etaylor@bdlsupplies.co.uk		soliver@evergreen.co.uk		
Code	Product Description	Unit Price	Amount	
HT123	Hammer tacker staplers	10	149.50	1,495
HH243	Hard hats	20	76.52	1,530.4
SH401	Roof safety harnesses	20	108.75	2,175
Note:		Subtotal (\$)		5,200.40
Payment shall be 30 days upon receipt of the items above.		Discount (%)	12	624.048
		Sales Tax (%)	21	1,092.084
		Shipping & Handling (€)		120
		Total Amount (€)		5,788.436

Company operations

Núria Terradelles Palau

Àngles

Índex

Introduction	5
Learning objectives	7
1 Events	9
1.1 Formal meetings	9
1.1.1 The past simple and the past continuous	11
1.2 Trade fairs	14
1.2.1 Protocol and Social Etiquette	16
1.2.2 Receiving visitors: Small Talk	17
1.2.3 Travel arrangements	19
1.2.4 Making requests	21
1.3 Grammar: The Modal Verbs	23
1.3.1 Modal verbs: can / could	23
1.3.2 Modal verbs: must / should	25
1.3.3 Modal verbs: may / might	28
1.3.4 Modal verbs: will / would	29
1.4 Writing	31
1.4.1 Writing emails	31
1.4.2 Thank you letters	33
2 Money	35
2.1 Banks	35
2.1.1 Online banking	37
2.2 Grammar: The Present Perfect	38
2.2.1 The present perfect simple	38
2.2.2 The present perfect simple and the present perfect continuous	40
2.3 Finance department	42
2.3.1 Accounting	42
2.3.2 Invoices	44
2.3.3 Describing trends	45
3 Innovation	49
3.1 Marketing	49
3.1.1 Community managers	51
3.2 Grammar: Future tenses	51
3.2.1 Future: will	52
3.2.2 Future: 'Be going to'	53
3.2.3 Future: Present simple and Present continuous	54
3.3 Expressing and asking for opinions	56
3.3.1 Asking for opinions	56
3.3.2 Expressing opinions	57
3.3.3 Responding to opinions	58
3.4 Scheduling an appointment	59

3.4.1	Arranging meetings on the phone	59
3.4.2	Arranging meetings by email	60
3.5	Writing a summary	60

Introduction

This unit, “Company operations”, is intended to describe some of the operations which take place in a company, such as placing orders, describing trends, scheduling meetings, etc. You are going to learn vocabulary and expressions used at work, and learn about formal and informal language, write emails, and talk about the past and the future.

In every section there are texts, conversations, grammar reference, emails, and other information. After the texts, there is a table with the new vocabulary. There are conversations and useful vocabulary used in different communicative contexts. The writing section includes explanations and multiple examples, such as emails, or letters. Furthermore, there is a revision of basic grammar rules with examples and exercises. You can revise the grammar and at the same time learn helpful vocabulary used in the administrative field.

In the first section, “**Events**”, you are going to learn about company meetings, events and protocol. You are going to meet some people who attended a food fair in Germany, and read the conversations they have in different situations: introducing themselves, booking a hotel room, at the restaurant, etc. You are going to learn how to make travel arrangements, and how to write an invitation to an event. Also, how to write a thank you letter.

In the second section, “**Money**”, you are going to learn new vocabulary and some facts related to banks and accounting. Besides, you are going to see conversations which could take place in a bank. On the other hand, you can read about the tasks performed in the finance department of a company, and see an invoice and its elements. At the same time, you are going to learn how to describe trends by looking at different types of graphs. In the grammar section you are going to learn about the use of the present perfect simple and the present perfect continuous.

In the third section, “**Innovation**”, there is a text about the future, with predictions on how the world will look like due to technology and artificial intelligence. You are also going to learn about marketing and advertising your products. In the sections related to communication, we are going to learn how to give your opinion, and ask for people’s opinions, too. In addition, you are going to see how to schedule and appointment on the phone, and how to arrange a meeting by email. In the grammar section, we are going to see different ways to talk about the future. Finally, there is an example of a summary of a film, and some tips on how to summarize a text.

All characters appearing in this work are fictitious. They are serving the purpose of showing plausible contexts and situations which students of administrative management might encounter, thus, providing them with helpful vocabulary and resources to use in a real workplace situation.

Each unit has a central theme and it provides information and examples set in business contexts with the aim of giving the students the tools to develop their language skills in their workplace. Furthermore, there are exercises and activities online to practise the contents of the unit.

Learning objectives

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

1. Identify professional and everyday information in an oral discourse in standard language, analysing the global contents of a message and relating it to the corresponding language resources.

- Identify the main idea in a message.
- Identify and follow oral instructions.
- Be conscious of the importance of understanding the main ideas in a message even if you do not understand all the elements that make up the message.
- Recognize the finality of face-to-face and telephone messages, or messages transmitted through other auditory means.
- Get specific information in messages referring to usual aspects of everyday and professional life.
- Place a message in its context.
- Identify the main ideas in a well-structured speech in standard language about well-known aspects and transmitted in the media.

2. Interpret professional information in simple written texts, analysing the message in a comprehensive way.

- Read simple texts in standard language.
- Interpret the general meaning of a message.
- Relate the text to its corresponding context.
- Interpret a message transmitted through different means: post, fax and e-mail, among others.
- Identify the terminology used in a message.
- Interpret technical manuals.

3. Produce well-structured and simple oral messages, taking an active part in professional conversations.

- Describe brief, unexpected events related to your job.
- Identify and use the direct, formal or informal registers in a message.

- Use the appropriate protocol in presentations.
- Make a correct use of the terminology of your job.
- Justify the acceptance or the refusal of a proposal.

4. Produce simple texts in standard language by using the appropriate register in different situations.

- Write short texts referring to everyday and/or professional aspects.
- Use the social conventions in documents.
- Fill in documents referring to your professional field.
- Organize the information in a coherent way.
- Apply the appropriate rules and specific vocabulary when filling in documents.

5. Show the correct attitude and behaviour in different professional situations by using international conventions.

- Define the most distinctive aspects of the customs of English-speaking communities.
- Describe the social conventions of your country.
- Identify the values and beliefs which are characteristic of English-speaking communities.
- Identify the social and professional aspects of your job in all types of oral and written messages.
- Apply the social conventions in English-speaking communities. (...)

1. Events

Companies often use corporate events, such as seminars, conferences or trade shows, to bring people together to develop interpersonal relationships that do not usually happen in an office. Organizing them involves a lot of time for planning, and when attending them there are things that we need to take into account, such as the rules of protocol, social etiquette, the attire, etc.

1.1 Formal meetings

Formal meetings are an essential part of the planning and direction of a company since important decisions about the organisation may be taken. These meetings are held at a specific time, at a defined place (venue) and according to an agreed agenda, which should be sent to the participants at least one week in advance.

FIGURA 1.1. Belinda Jenkins, Pawel Janczak and Céline Thierry at "Anuga Fair" in Cologne



freestockphotos.biz

Formal meetings are typically led by a chairperson, and the discussions and agreements are recorded in what is known as minutes. One example is the AGM. Most companies organize the Annual General Meeting (AGM) for all members of the company. The agenda usually includes the approval of the last AGM, the presentation of the annual accounts for the last financial year, a report from the Management Committee on the organisation's activities during the last year, the election of the Management Committee, and other relevant topics.

See the agenda of a meeting which is taking place at the headquarters of the company 'Building Supplies':

FIGURA 1.2. Meeting Agenda

Building Supplies Meeting Agenda	
Date: 26 March 2021 Location: Av. Paral·lel, 71. Barcelona	
Programme and sessions	
9.00	Opening by Diana Thompson, HR Department.
10.00	Chairman speech
10.30	End of the year report of the company.
13.00	Lunch break
15.00	Presentation on Sales Trends and Forecasting, by the Sales Director.
16.00	Discussion: Expansion into emerging markets by the General Sales Manager.

Eileen Taylor, the secretary, prepared the minute and sent it to Diana Thompson for approval:

Minutes of Meeting

Date: 26 March 2021

Venue: Conference Room

Building Supplies headquarters

1. Diana Thompson, the head of the HR Department **welcomed** the attendants, and **introduced** the programme and sessions.
2. Mr. Robinson **did not attend** the meeting. Diana **explained** that his flight had been delayed.
3. The Chairman **gave** a speech and **thanked** everyone for coming.
4. The accountant **presented** the end of the year report of the company. He **assured** that we **were progressing**. The presentation is attached.
5. **There was** a break time. A catering company **served** the food. A lot of discussions **went on** during the meal.
6. The Sales Director **presented** the sales trends. See the presentation attached.
7. The General Sales Manager **introduced** the discussion of the expansion into emerging markets. Most of the attendants **agreed** with his views, and they **added** new ideas. Some **asked** questions, such as, 'Did the company **trade** with any of those markets before?'. The Manager **answered** all the questions and **decided** to organize teams and develop ideas for the next meeting.

TAULA 1.1. Vocabulary

AGM (Annual General Meeting): <i>Assamblea General Ordinària</i>	Give a speech: <i>fer un discurs o xerrada</i>
Agree: <i>estar d'acord</i>	Headquarters: <i>seu, oficina central</i>
Agreement: <i>acord</i>	HR Department: <i>Departament de recursos humans</i>
Answer: <i>contestar/resposta</i>	Management Committee: <i>Comitè de gestió</i>
At least: <i>com a mínim</i>	Meal: <i>àpat</i>

Attached: <i>adjunt</i>	Minute: <i>acta (d'una reunió)</i>
Attendant: <i>assistent</i>	Report: <i>informe</i>
Chairperson: <i>moderador</i>	Sales trends: <i>tendències de vendes</i>
Delayed: <i>amb retard (avió, tren...)</i>	Team: <i>equip</i>
Emerging markets: <i>mercats nous/emergents</i>	Trade: <i>comerç/comerciar</i>
Flight: <i>vol</i>	To be held: <i>tenir lloc</i>
In advance: <i>amb antelació</i>	Venue: <i>lloc, escenari (on té lloc un esdeveniment)</i>

1.1.1 The past simple and the past continuous

Read the following sentences, which appeared in the minute above. The words in bold are in the **past simple** and **past continuous** tenses:

TAULA 1.2.

Diana Thompson welcomed the attendants	<i>La Diana Thompson va donar la benvinguda als assistents</i>
Mr. Robinson did not attend the meeting	<i>El Sr. Robinson no va assistir a la reunió</i>
The Chairman gave a speech	<i>El President va fer una xerrada</i>
We were progressing very fast	<i>Estàvem avançant/progressant molt depressa</i>
Did the company trade with any of those markets before?	<i>L'empresa va comerciar amb algun d'aquests mercats abans?</i>

The past simple:

- The affirmative form of the past simple of **regular** verbs adds **-ed** to the infinitive (**present** > presented).
- The affirmative form of the past simple of **irregular** verbs is a different word from the infinitive (**go** > **went**).

There are no rules to know which verbs are regular and which are irregular. We need to know the most common irregular verbs.

See annex 'List of irregular verbs' to see the most common irregular verbs in English.

These are the forms of the past simple of a regular verb '**work**':

TAULA 1.3. Conjugation of the past simple of the ****regular**** verb: ****work****

	Affirmative	Negative Long form	Negative Short form	Interrogative
I	worked	did not work	didn't work	Did I work...?
You	worked	did not work	didn't work	Did you work...?
He/She/It	worked	did not work	didn't work	Did he work...?
We	worked	did not work	didn't work	Did we work...?
You	worked	did not work	didn't work	Did you work...?
They	worked	did not work	didn't work	Did they work...?

Here are the forms of an **irregular** verb ‘go’:

TAULA 1.4. Conjugation of the past simple (irregular verb: //go//)

	Affirmative	Negative Long form	Negative Short form	Interrogative
I	went	did not go	didn't go	Did I go...?
You	went	did not go	didn't go	Did you go...?
He/She/It	went	did not go	didn't go	Did he go...?
We	went	did not go	didn't go	Did we go...?
You	went	did not go	didn't go	Did you go...?
They	went	did not go	didn't go	Did they go...?

The past simple is used to express the **past tense** in English. It refers to an event that happened before now and is **always completed**.

See the examples:

TAULA 1.5.

I worked in a factory 20 years ago	<i>Fa 20 anys vaig treballar a una fàbrica</i>
Did you watch the news on TV last night ?	<i>Vas mirar les notícies de la tele ahir a la nit?</i>
Mr Robinson didn't attend the meeting yesterday	<i>Ahir el Sr Robinson no va anar a la reunió</i>
Eileen met Barry at the office two weeks ago	<i>L'Eileen va conèixer en Barry a l'oficina fa dues setmanes</i>
It was very hot last summer , do you remember?	<i>L'estiu passat va fer molta calor, te'n recordes?</i>
We felt happy when he left	<i>Vam estar contents quan ell va marxar</i>

The past continuous:

Here are the forms of the past continuous:

TAULA 1.6. Conjugation of the past continuous **work**

	Affirmative	Negative Long form	Negative Short form	Interrogative
I	was working	was not working	wasn't working	was I working...?
you	were working	were not working	weren't working	were you working...?
he/she/it	was working	was not working	wasn't working	was he working...?
we	were working	were not working	weren't working	were we working...?
you	were working	were not working	weren't working	were you working...?
they	were working	were not working	weren't working	were they working...?

Notes:

- As in the present continuous, the past continuous is composed of two elements: the auxiliary verb *be* (conjugated in the past) + the gerund.
- In the past continuous, we only conjugate the verb *be*. For this reason, there is no difference between regular and irregular verbs (for example: *I was working, I was going*).
- The verb *be* is an irregular verb (*be > was/were*).

We use the past continuous:

We can translate the *past continuous* into Catalan in two ways: *I was working (estava treballant/treballava)*.

1. To express actions that were taking place at a specific moment in the past. At that moment, the action was not finished yet. For example:

TAULA 1.7.

I was sleeping at eleven last night	<i>Ahir a les onze de la nit jo dormia/estava dormint</i>
What were you doing at this time yesterday?	<i>Què feies/estaves fent ahir a aquesta hora?</i>
I wasn't doing anything	<i>No feia/estava fent res</i>

2. To express simultaneous actions in the past (with the connector while [mentre]). For example:

TAULA 1.8.

While I was doing all the work, he was talking on the phone with his friend	<i>Mentre jo estava fent tota la feina, ell estava parlant per telèfon amb el seu amic</i>
They were flying to Paris while I was waiting for them in the office	<i>Els estaven volant a París mentre jo els estava esperant a l'oficina</i>

3. We often use the past continuous in combination with the past simple to express an action that was taking place in the past (in past continuous) when another action took place in that moment (in the past simple). For example:

See Unit 1, section 2 "Grammar: The present simple and the present continuous" for a list of verbs that do not take the continuous forms.

TAULA 1.9.

I met Mr White when I was going out of the building	<i>Em vaig trobar el Sr White quan jo sortia de l'edifici</i>
We were walking down the street when the tree fell down	<i>Estàvem caminant pel carrer quan l'arbre va caure</i>

There are some **adverbs and adverbials** associated to the past tense. We generally say them at the end of the sentence, but we can also place them at the beginning to emphasize the idea. For example:

- We met him at the airport *yesterday*.
- *Yesterday* we met him at the airport.

Adverbs and adverbials of time generally associated to the past tense

Some of the adverbs and time expressions that we can use with the past tenses are:

- **Yesterday** (*Ahir*)
- **The day before yesterday** (*Abans d'ahir*)
- **In the past** (*En el passat*)
- **Before** (*Abans*)
- **At that moment** (*En aquell moment*)
- **One year ago** (*Fa un any*)
- **Then** (*Aleshores*)
- **Last week/month/year** (*La setmana passada, el mes passat, l'any passat*)
- **When I was younger** (*Quan jo era més jove*)

1.2 Trade fairs

Big cities usually have a specific venue to hold fairs and exhibitions. Barcelona, the capital of Catalonia, is known for its enterprising and dynamic nature. The city is open to people and to the world and is an international point of reference both socially and economically. Fairs and conferences take place in Barcelona every year.

One example is the “Mobile World Congress”, which is held in Fira Gran Via, and is a congress on the latest technologies related to mobile communication. Other annual fairs and exhibitions go on in the city, such as “Construmat”, a construction industry fair, and “Saló de l’Ensenyament”, with information about universities, courses and all kind of training for students, etc.

Trade shows or trade fairs are held in large spaces, showcasing the products and services of often hundreds of vendors. Participating in a trade show is a powerful way for companies and organizations to increase their brand’s awareness, and it is also a great way to network and see what is going on in the industry. Companies may also choose to host or sponsor a trade show to reinforce their image as an industry leader among those who attend. However, event planning for trade shows involves negotiating sponsorship rates for booth space, advertising, promotion, etc.

There are hundreds of international fairs taking place every year. See an example of a food trade fair which takes place in Germany:

Anuga Fair

Anuga Fair is held in Cologne. It is a food fair for the retail trade and the food service and catering market. Companies related to food and hotel services summon there to exhibit their products and share their knowledge through the various speeches and workshops. In

the fair there are gala dinners, banquets, and buffets giving different choices of menu each day offering the best and most original food combinations.

FIGURA 1.3. Buffet in the fair



Belinda Jenkins, Pawel Janczak and Céline Thierry are of some of the attendants of the fair this year. These are their business cards:

FIGURA 1.4. Belinda Jenking's Business Card


Belinda Jenkins
Marketing department , Ecotasty Food
Phone: +31 70 3466086
Email: bjenkins@ecotasty.nl
Website: <http://www.ecotasty.nl>
Address: Croeselaan 25, 3521 BJ Utrecht The Netherlands

 @bdjenkings

Belinda Jenkins works for the Marketing department of the company "Ecotasty Food". The company develops organic processed products, they do research on organic farming and organize courses and talks on organic products and cooking.

FIGURA 1.5. Pawel Janczac's Business Card

Pawel Janczac
Entrepreneur , Ekoprod
Phone: +48 22 878 6722
Email: pjanczac@ekoprod.pl
Website: <http://www.ekoprod.pl>
Address: ul. Krakowiaków 12, skr. poczt. 12 02-255 Warsaw, Poland

 @pwljanczac

Pawel Janczak is a Polish entrepreneur who has started a venture. He aims to introduce and spread organic farming in his country, and to raise awareness among farmers. He wants to attend the fair in order to see the current trends in the international market.

FIGURA 1.6. Céline Thierry's Business Card

Céline Thierry
 Agrícolo , Département des ventes
 Phone: +33 0 467 78 6755
 Email: cthierry@agricolo.fr
 Website: http://www.agricolo.fr
 Address: 1 rue des Pertuisanes; 34000 Montpellier, FRANCE

 @celnthierry

Céline Thierry lives in the South of France. Since an early age she has been interested in farming and ecology. In addition, she promotes fair trade in her region. She believes that farmers have to be paid a fair price for their goods.

TAULA 1.10. Vocabulary

Agreement: <i>acord</i>	Organic farming: <i>agricultura ecològica</i>
Aim: <i>objectiu</i>	Raise awareness: <i>despertar la consciència</i>
Approval: <i>Aprovació</i>	Research: <i>recerca</i>
Booth: <i>estand</i>	Retail: <i>al detall (venda)</i>
Business card: <i>tarjeta de visita</i>	Share: <i>compartir</i>
Entrepreneur: <i>emprenedor, empresari</i>	Showcase: <i>exhibir, mostrar</i>
Enterprising: <i>emprenedor</i>	Summon: <i>reunir</i>
Fair price: <i>preu just</i>	Trade fair: <i>fira comercial</i>
Goods: <i>béns</i>	Venture: <i>empresa</i>
Host: <i>acollir</i>	Workshop: <i>taller</i>

1.2.1 Protocol and Social Etiquette

Protocol is very important in a business context. It is necessary to be well trained in business meeting etiquette to ensure that a business meeting is effective. These are some **tips**:

- First of all, a formal invitation has to be sent to the intended guests.
- Attire also matters; wear casual or formal clothes according to the type of meeting. In very formal meetings or official dinners you will have to dress up.
- Do not interrupt while someone is speaking, wait for the designated question period to raise your questions. Take notes, since some of your questions might be answered by the content of the meeting.
- During formal meetings it is quite usual to interchange business cards for future contact. It is advisable to have them prepared and updated for that day. You may have to wear badges with your name and the name of your company. Badges are quite useful in order to identify other participants in the meeting.

- Avoid nervous habits, such as tapping a pen or your fingers on the table, making noises, or showing disapproval with your body language.
- After the meeting, a thank you letter should be sent to all the participants.

When we are introduced to another person, the **social etiquette** demands to ask one or two questions to start a short conversation. We can ask, for example:

TAULA 1.11.

Have you and [Ms. Thompson] known each other for long?	<i>Fa molt de temps que es coneixen, [la Sra. Thompson] i vostè?</i>
Is it your first time here?	<i>És la primera vegada que ve per aquí?</i>
Do you like [Barcelona]?	<i>Li agrada [Barcelona]?</i>

Topics to avoid

In a first meeting, avoid such topics as religion or politics, and do not ask personal questions (marital status, age, salary...).

1.2.2 Receiving visitors: Small Talk

In business settings, such as when receiving visitors, picking someone at the airport or other occasions, it is a good idea to start short conversations after the greetings and introductions. It can help you to start conversations that let you get to know the person that you are doing business with. The topics of these conversations are supposed to be of general interest, nothing too personal. For example a small talk could be about the trip, accommodation, the weather, the native country, and the host country.

TAULA 1.12.

Accommodation: <i>allotjament</i>	Dress up: <i>mudar-se, vestir bé</i>
Advisable: <i>aconsellable</i>	Guest: <i>convidat, hoste</i>
Attire: <i>vestimenta</i>	Marital status: <i>estat civil</i>
Avoid: <i>evitar</i>	Small talk: <i>conversa superficial</i>
Badge: <i>acreditació</i>	Social etiquette: <i>etiqueta, protocol</i>
Casual clothes: <i>roba informal</i>	Trip: <i>viatge</i>
Disapproval: <i>discomformitat</i>	Updated: <i>actualitzat</i>

Meeting people

See three dialogues which took place in different contexts in the “Anuga Fair” held in Cologne this year:

Dialogue 1

Belinda Jenkins: Hello, I'm Belinda Jenkins, I work with “Ecotasty Food”, in The Netherlands.

Céline Thierry: Nice to meet you. I'm Céline Thierry, with “Agrécolo”.

Belinda Jenkins: Where are you from?

Céline Thierry: I'm from France.

Dialogue 2

Pawel Janczac: Good morning, My name's Pawel Janczac. How are you?

Céline Thierry: Nice to meet you, Mr. Janczac, I'm Céline Thierry, with "Agrécolo".

Pawel Janczac: Nice to meet you, Ms. Thierry. You're from France. Aren't you?

Céline Thierry: Yes, I am. And you?

Pawel Janczac: I'm from Poland.

Céline Thierry: What do you do?

Pawel Janczac: I'm an entrepreneur. I'm trying to raise awareness* of organic farming in my country.

Céline Thierry: How interesting! I'm into farming and ecology, too.

(* Raise awareness: *conscienciar*)

Dialogue 3

Céline Thierry: Ms Jenkins, good to see you again! May I introduce you to Mr Janczac?

Belinda Jenkins: How do you do?

Pawel Janczac: How do you do.

Céline Thierry: Mr Janczac is Polish. He's an entrepreneur and he's interested in organic farming.

Belinda Jenkins: Oh, this is my field too. In our company we develop organic processed food and do research on organic farming.

Céline Thierry: So, we are all into organic farming. We have a lot of things to discuss about.

Formal conversations:

Here are two examples of formal conversations. In the first one, George Sullivan meets Sarah Cornwall at an international conference on furniture and design. In the second one, Lucie Bell and George Sullivan greet each other, and he introduces her to Sarah Cornwall.

Conversation 1

George Sullivan: Hello, I'm George Sullivan, I work with GCM Inc.

Sarah Cornwall: Nice to meet you. I'm Sarah Cornwall, with Furniture Design.

George Sullivan: What do you do with Furniture Design?

Sarah Cornwall: I'm the marketing manager.

George Sullivan: Is this your first time at this event?

Sarah Cornwall: Yes, indeed. It is my first time here.

George Sullivan: What do you think about the conference so far?

Sarah Cornwall: I think the conference is worth it. The speakers are really well-prepared, and I'm learning so many marketing strategies.

George Sullivan: I agree, though I wish there were more sessions on online marketing.

Conversation 2

Lucie Bell: Hello, Mr. Sullivan. Welcome to the conference.

George Sullivan: Thank you. Good to see you.

Lucie Bell: Are you enjoying the conference?

George Sullivan: Certainly, I am enjoying it and I have made some contacts, too. Let me introduce you to Sarah Cornwall.

Sarah Cornwall: How do you do?

Lucie Bell: Pleased to meet you.

George Sullivan: She works for Furniture Design.

Lucie Bell: What is your company into?

Sarah Cornwall: We design and produce pieces of furniture. We try to be updated to the latest trends.

1.2.3 Travel arrangements

In some cases, members of a company travel to another country for a formal meeting and they have to stay away for some days. Business tourism can involve individual and small group travel, and destinations can include small to larger meetings, including conventions and conferences, trade fairs, and exhibitions.

Travel arrangements means transportation, accommodation, and other services. In order to plan a business trip, you need to follow some steps. First of all, gather all the information regarding the destination, flight schedule, preference for travelling, and any other special arrangement. Next, make a travelling schedule, book flights, rooms, and pick and drop for the people who are travelling.

Booking a hotel room

See an example of a telephone conversation, where Belinda Jenkins calls a hotel to make a reservation:

Telephone conversation: making a reservation at an hotel

Receptionist: Hello, Central Cologne Hotel. **How may I help you?**

Belinda Jenkins: Good morning, I'd like to book a single room for two nights please.

Receptionist: When for, madam?

Belinda Jenkins: Next Friday, October 9th.

Receptionist: Let me check. Yes, we have one single room available.

Belinda Jenkins: Great. How much is the charge per night?

Receptionist: Eighty euro, madam.

Belinda Jenkins: OK, that's fine.

Receptionist: Can I have your name, please?

Belinda Jenkins: Yes, it's Jenkins. Belinda Jenkins.

Receptionist: Can I have your telephone number, please?

Belinda Jenkins: Yes, it's six-oh-six-double two-five-six-eight-nine (606 22 56 89).

Receptionist: Ok. What time will you be arriving?

Belinda Jenkins: Around 5pm.

Receptionist: Thank you and have a nice day.

At the restaurant

Céline, Pawel and Belinda had a reservation at one of the restaurants in the fair, so they went there, the waiter let them in and took the order. See the menu offered at the restaurant.

FIGURA 1.7. Menu at Anuga's restaurant

Food and Beverages Fair Menu	
Starters	
Mixed Greens Mixed Greens, Blue Cheese, Raisins, Onions, Crispy Bacon, Fried Egg with Dill Blue Cheese Dressing.	
Salmon & Spinach Salad Roasted salmon, Spinach, Fried Potato, Onion, Olives, Poached Egg with Mustard Vinaigrette.	
Main course	
Meatballs Beef and pork meatballs in a Napolitan sauce with red chilli and red onion, served with toasted garlic ciabatta on the side.	
Garlic Marinated Pork Loin Grilled Onions, Natural Pork Au Jus	
Roasted chicken Leg, thigh, breast, wing and coated potato	
Desserts	
Sour cream Cheese cake	
iced pumpkin cakes	
Apple pie	
White chocolate raspberry cheesecake	
Beverages	
Wines (see our specialties)	Still or sparkling water
Smoothies (all flavours)	Fizzy drinks: diet cola, lemonade...
Milkshakes (all flavours)	Fruit juice

Conversation: at the restaurant

Belinda Jenkins: Hello, we have a reservation for three people.

Waiter: Ok, your name, please?

Belinda Jenkins: Belinda Jenkins.

Waiter: Yes, I see. **Would you follow me, please?** I will show you your table.

Belinda Jenkins: What is on the menu?

Waiter: We have a special menu for the fair. Here you are.

Céline Thierry: Thank you.

Waiter: **Can I take your order?**

Céline Thierry: Sure. I would like to start with mixed greens and roasted chicken for the main course.

Pawel Janczac: I'll have the same.

Belinda Jenkins: What's the pork loin like?

Waiter: It is very good.

Belinda Jenkins: Well..., then I'll take a salad to start and pork loin as a second course.

Waiter: How would you like your steak? rare, medium or well done?

Belinda Jenkins: Well done

Waiter: Anything to drink?

Céline Thierry: We'll have red wine.

1.2.4 Making requests

Look at the following examples from the previous conversations:

TAULA 1.13.

How may I help you?	<i>Com el puc ajudar?</i>
Can I have your name, please?	<i>Em podria donar el seu nom, sisplau?</i>
your name, please?	<i>El seu nom, sisplau?</i>
Would you follow me, please?	<i>Em segueixen, sisplau?</i>
Can I take your order?	<i>Puc agafar la comanda?</i>

They are all requests. A **request** is very much like an order or command. In fact, an order is the strongest way of making a request. We make requests with a variety of modal verbs. Their choice depends on the degree of formality.

Read the following requests, with an **increasing degree of formality**:

TAULA 1.14.

1. Close the door!	<i>Tanca la porta!</i>
2. Can you open the window, please?	<i>Pots obrir la finestra, siusplau?</i>
3. Could you pick me up at the airport?	<i>Em podries recollir a l'aeroport, siusplau?</i>
4. Will you switch off the light?	<i>Tancaràs el llum?</i>

5. Would you follow me?	<i>Em segueixen? / Farien el favor de seguir-me?</i>
6. Do you mind changing the ink cartridge?	<i>Et faria res canviar el cartutx de tinta?</i>
7. Would you mind calling Ms. Thompson?	<i>Li faria res trucar la Sra. Thompson?</i>

Notes:

- Sentence 1 is made with the imperative form ‘close!’. This is an order.
- In sentences 2 to 5 we use a modal verb: **can, could, will, and would**.
- The verb **mind**, in sentences 6 and 7, is always followed by a gerund: **changing, calling**.
- Very often, we add the word **please** to soften a request.

The position of *please*: If we use the word *please* to soften our request, we can place it in different positions.

Here are examples with the most common positions of the word *please*:

- *Please, open the window!* or *Open the window, please!*
- *Can you please open the window?* or *Can you open the window please?*

Responding to requests:

There are different ways of responding to requests. Here are some examples:

TAULA 1.15. Accepting the request

‘Could you have a look at this?’	‘ Yes, of course ’
‘Will you go to the post office?’	‘ Ok, no problem ’
‘Can you turn down the volume of your mic?’	‘ Yes, of course (I can) ’ (the modal verb in the reply must be the same as that in the request)
‘Would you mind helping me carry this suitcase?’	‘ Of course I don’t mind ’
‘Could you read the instructions?’	‘ Certainly ’
‘Can I have your telephone number?’	‘ Sure ’
‘Will you receive our visitor?’	‘ Why not? ’

TAULA 1.16. Rejecting the request

‘Could you bring me a coffee?’	‘ I’m sorry, but I can’t ’ (I’m on the phone right now)
‘Do you mind opening the window?’	‘ I’m afraid I can’t ’ (it’s too cold in here)

As when responding to a suggestion or a piece of advice, we should explain why we reject a request by giving some ‘excuse’.

1.3 Grammar: The Modal Verbs

We have learnt different ways to make requests. One of them is by means of a modal verb : ‘**Can** you open the door?’, ‘**Could** you turn down the volume?’.

The **modal verbs** are a special type of verbs in English. They do not express actions, but ideas like ability, obligation and possibility. They are also used to ask for permission, make requests or express the future, for example.

The modal verbs are:

TAULA 1.17.

can	could	must	should
may	might	will	would

The main characteristics of the modal verbs are:

- The modal verbs generally refer to the present or the future time, but they have no tenses like the past tenses, the continuous and perfect tenses, or the infinitive. To express a modal verb in any of these forms, we must use an alternative expression with the same meaning. For example, to express ability in the future, we will not use ‘**can**’, but ‘**will be able to**’: ‘She **will be able to** attend the meeting’.
- The 3rd person singular **does not add an -s**: **he can, she must, he may**, etc. It is wrong to say: *he cans*.
- They form the negative by adding *not* to the verb, as in the verb *be*: **I cannot**, he **must not**, etc. It is wrong to say: *I don’t can, he doesn’t must*.
- They form the interrogative by inverting the order of the subject and the verb: **Can you...?**, **May I...?**, etc. It is wrong to say: *Do you can...?*, *Do I may...?*.
- They must always be accompanied by another verb in the infinitive form: ‘**I can speak** English’ (Sé parlar anglès). The sentence *I can English* makes no sense.

Modal verbs are a subgroup of auxiliary verbs. They are used to express ability, possibility, obligation, to give permission, make requests or suggestions, etc. They are an important part of the English language and are widely used.

1.3.1 Modal verbs: can / could

The modal verb **can** is used to express:

TAULA 1.18.

1. Present ability	
He can speak German	<i>[Ell] sap parlar alemany/[Ell] parla alemany</i>
2. Certain possibility	
Scotland can be very warm in August	<i>Pot ser que a l'agost faci calor a Escòcia</i>
3. Informal permission	
You can borrow my car if you want	<i>Pots agafar el meu cotxe si vols</i>
I'm sorry, but you can't stay here	<i>Em sap greu, però no pot estar aquí</i>
4. Informal request	
Can you come please?	<i>Pots venir, si us plau?</i>
5. A suggestion	
We can have a coffee	<i>Podem prendre un cafè</i>

Can is a modal verb that only has a present form, though it can be used with future meaning. For example:

- Barry **can't come** tonight. He's ill.

The past or conditional form is **could**.

For all the other tenses and forms, we use '**be able to + infinitive**'. For example:

- Sean **has been able to swim** (*present perfect*) since he was three.
- I **'d like to be able to fly** (*would like*).
- You **'ll be able to practise** (*future*) your German in Berlin.

The modal verb **could** is used to express:

TAULA 1.19.

1. Past ability	
By the time I was five, I could read and write	<i>Quan tenia 5 anys sabia llegir i escriure</i>
In school, Eileen could beat anyone in a race	<i>A l'escola, l'Eileen podia guanyar a qualsevol en una carrera</i>
He studied hard, but couldn't pass the exam	<i>Va estudiar molt però no va poder aprovar</i>
2. Uncertain possibility	
I don't think so, but it could be true	<i>No ho crec, però podria ser veritat</i>
3. Formal permission	
Could I leave early?	<i>Podria marxar aviat/d'hora?</i>
4. Formal/polite request	
Could I please have some water?	<i>Podria veure una mica d'aigua si us plau?</i>
Could you please translate it into Spanish?	<i>Podria traduir això al castellà, si us plau?</i>
5. A suggestion	
We could have a coffee	<i>Podríem prendre un cafè</i>

Note:

When we are talking about a specific situation or when noting a specific achievement, we use **'was/were able to'** and **'managed to'**. For example:

- We **were able to get** a really good price on the car.
- We **managed to get** a really good price on the car.

These are the **conjugations** of *can* and *could*:

TAULA 1.20. Conjugation of 'can'

	Affirmative	Negative Long form	Negative Short form	Interrogative
I	can	cannot*	can't	can I...?
you	can	cannot*	can't	can you...?
he, she, it	can	cannot*	can't	can he / she / it...?
we	can	cannot*	can't	can we...?
you	can	cannot*	can't	can you...?
they	can	cannot*	can't	can they...?

TAULA 1.21. Conjugation of 'could'

	Affirmative	Negative Long form	Negative Short form	Interrogative
I	could	could not	couldn't	could I...?
you	could	could not	couldn't	could you...?
he, she, it	could	could not	couldn't	could he / she / it...?
we	could	could not	couldn't	could we...?
you	could	could not	couldn't	could you...?
they	could	could not	couldn't	could they...?

Cannot

The long form of the negative of *can* is spelt as one word (*cannot*). This form is only used in formal written texts. When speaking, we always say *can't*.

1.3.2 Modal verbs: must / should

The modal verb **must** is used to express:

TAULA 1.22.**1. Obligation**

Passengers **must fasten** their seatbelts

Els passatgers s'han de cordar el cinturó

2. Prohibition

In a non-smoking area you **mustn't smoke**

En zones de no fumadors està prohibit fumar

3. Predictions

You've got a call. That **must be** James

Tens una trucada. Deu ser en James

Strong obligation

Must and **Have to** are both used for strong obligation. **Must** is used for *internal obligations*, whereas ‘Have to’ is used for *external obligations*. However, the meaning of these two form changes in their negative forms. In the negative form, **mustn’t** expresses prohibition, whereas **don’t have to** means lack of necessity.

See the examples (affirmative form):

TAULA 1.23.

It’s so late! I must go	<i>És tan tard! He de marxar</i>
If you travel, you have to carry your passport	<i>Si viatges has de portar el passaport</i>

See the examples (negative form):

TAULA 1.24.

You must not turn off the computer (background work is going on)	<i>No tanquis l’ordinador (està fent tasques en segon pla)</i>
You don’t have to turn off the computer. I’ll do it later.	<i>No cal que apaguis l’ordinador. Ho faré jo després</i>

In the first example turning off the computer is prohibited, whereas in the second example it is not necessary to turn off the computer.

The modal verb **should** is used to express:

TAULA 1.25.

1. Moral obligation	
I should call Ms. Spencer	<i>Hauria de trucar la Sra. Spencer</i>
2. Advice	
You should start your own company	<i>Hauries de muntar la teva pròpia empresa</i>

Obligation and moral obligation

The difference between an *obligation* and a *moral obligation* is not very clear because it often depends of the person’s point of view.

An *obligation* is something that we must do because it is established by the regulations (for example, *we must wear a jacket to go to a formal meal*) or because we think that it is necessary or very important (for example, *you must go if you want to take that flight*).

On the other hand, a *moral obligation* is something which is not obligatory, but we feel that it is important for us or in a given context (for example, *I think I should practise more if I want to improve my oral skills*).

These are the **conjugations** of *must* and *should*:

TAULA 1.26. Conjugation of 'must'

	Affirmative	Negative Long form	Negative Short form	Interrogative
I	must	must not	mustn't	must I...?
you	must	must not	mustn't	must you...?
he, she, it	must	must not	mustn't	must he / she / it...?
we	must	must not	mustn't	must we...?
you	must	must not	mustn't	must you...?
they	must	must not	mustn't	must they...?

TAULA 1.27. Conjugation of 'should'

	Affirmative	Negative Long form	Negative Short form	Interrogative
I	should	should not	shouldn't	should I...?
you	should	should not	shouldn't	should you...?
he, she, it	should	should not	shouldn't	should he / she / it...?
we	should	should not	shouldn't	should we...?
you	should	should not	shouldn't	should you...?
they	should	should not	shouldn't	should they...?

Alternative forms:

The modal verb *must* expresses an obligation in the present. To express an obligation in other tenses, we can use the expression:

- **Have to** ('Haver de')

For example:

TAULA 1.28.

We had to wait for three hours in the rain (passat simple)	<i>Vam haver d'esperar tres hores sota la pluja</i>
You will have to give an explanation (future)	<i>Hauràs de donar una explicació</i>

The verb **should** usually refers to the present (as in: *I should go now*) or to the future (as in: *I should go tomorrow*). To speak about a moral obligation in the past, we can use this expression:

- **Should have** + past participle:

For example:

TAULA 1.29.

I should have called him	<i>L'hauria d'haver trucat</i>
---------------------------------	--------------------------------

1.3.3 Modal verbs: may / might

The modal verb **may** is used to:

TAULA 1.30.

1. Express possibility	
I may watch a movie tonight	<i>Potser miraré una pel·lícula aquest vespre</i>
These tablets may produce side effects	<i>Aquestes pastilles poden tenir efectes secundaris</i>
2. Ask for formal permission	
May I ask you a favour?	<i>Li puc demanar un favor?</i>
May I borrow your pen?	<i>Puc agafar el seu bolígraf?</i>
May I go now?	<i>Puc marxar ara?</i>
3. Give formal permission	
You may sit down now	<i>Ara podeu seure</i>
Students may travel for free	<i>Els estudiants poden viatjar gratuïtament</i>
4. Requests	
May I see your driving license?	<i>Puc veure el seu carnet de conduir?</i>
May I use your phone?	<i>Podria fer servir el seu telèfon?</i>

The modal verb **might** is to:

TAULA 1.31.

1. Express a remote possibility	
Our boss was sick yesterday so the meeting might be postponed	<i>El nostre cap estava malalt ahir, així que pot ser que es postposi la reunió</i>
2. Conditional	
If I enter the contest, I might win	<i>Si entro al concurs, pot ser que guanyi</i>

These are the **conjugations** of *may* and *might*:

TAULA 1.32. Conjugation of 'may'

	Affirmative	Negative Long form	Negative Short form	Interrogative
I	may	may not	-	may I...?
you	may	may not	-	may you...?
he, she, it	may	may not	-	may he / she / it...?
we	may	may not	-	may we...?
you	may	may not	-	may you...?
they	may	may not	-	may they...?

TAULA 1.33. Conjugation of 'might'

	Affirmative	Negative Long form	Negative Short form	Interrogative
I	might	might not	-	might I...?
you	might	might not	-	might you...?
he, she, it	might	might not	-	might he / she / it...?
we	might	might not	-	might we...?
you	might	might not	-	might you...?
they	might	might not	-	might they...?

When expressing possibility, **may** and **might** can normally be interchanged without a significant difference in meaning. However, '**might**' often implies a smaller chance of something happening.

TAULA 1.34. Degree of possibility

Modal	Possibility
Must	95-100%
May	50-80%
Might	20-40%
Can't	0%

Alternative forms:

When we express a possibility with *may* or *might*, we always refer to future possibilities. To speak of possibilities in the past, we can use these forms:

- **May have** + past participle: It *may have* rained (*És possible que hagi plogut / Pot haver plogut*).
- **Might have** + past participle: He *might have* gone (*Podria ser que hagués marxat / Podria haver marxat*).

Other ways of expressing possibility are:

- with the expression **be possible that** + clause: It *is possible that* it rains tonight (*És possible que plogui aquesta nit*).
- with the adverb **probably** and the future tense: It *will* probably rain tonight (*Probablement plourà aquesta nit*).

1.3.4 Modal verbs: will / would

The modal verb **will** is used to:

TAULA 1.35.

1. Refer to the future

The shop **will close down** next week

La botiga tancarà la setmana que ve

2. Make requests

Will you help me please?

M'ajudaras si us plau?

The modal verb **would** is used to:

TAULA 1.36.

1. As a conditional (hypothetical) form

I **would go** if I had time

Jo hi aniria si tingués temps

2. Make formal requests

Would you please send me the application?

Em podria enviar la sol·licitud si us plau?

3. Make invitations(with like)

Would you like a coffee?

Voldria prendre un cafè?

These are the conjugations of *will* and *would*:

TAULA 1.37. Conjugation of 'will'

	Affirmative	Negative Long form	Negative Short form	Interrogative
I	will	will not	won't*	will I...?
you	will	will not	won't*	will you...?
he, she, it	will	will not	won't*	will he / she / it...?
we	will	will not	won't*	will we...?
you	will	will not	won't*	will you...?
they	will	will not	won't*	will they...?

Won't

Notice that the short form of the negative is *won't*. This form is used in speech and informal written texts.

TAULA 1.38. Conjugation of 'would'

	Affirmative	Negative Long form	Negative Short form	Interrogative
I	would	would not	wouldn't	would I...?
you	would	would not	wouldn't	would you...?
he, she, it	would	would not	wouldn't	would he / she / it...?
we	would	would not	wouldn't	would we...?
you	would	would not	wouldn't	would you...?
they	would	would not	wouldn't	would they...?

Alternative forms:

The modal verbs *will* and *would* have no alternative forms.

See Unit 3, section 1.1. "Grammar" to see another way of expressing the future.

1.4 Writing

In this section we will describe the characteristics of written language and we will focus our attention on business emails.

Unlike the oral language, which makes use of non-verbal language to transmit the message, a written text is what we see. When we speak we can leave some sentences unfinished or change the volume or the tone to express emotions, but we cannot do that in a written text. That is why in a written text, sentences must be complete, they tend to be longer, with subordinate clauses and we use punctuation to organize and structure our writings.

Some of the **characteristics of written language** are:

- Use of long forms:

Example: when introducing the reason for writing: “*I am writing to inform you...*”. We use the long form “*I am*” instead of “*I’m*”.

- Some grammatical constructions are only used in writing, as are some kinds of vocabulary.

Example: the closing sentence in formal letters: “*We are looking forward to your reply.*”

- Use of a particular layout depending on the type of text (descriptions, reports, business letters, invoices, forms...)

Example: business letters have a very fixed layout. See the structure of the business email samples below.

- Organization in paragraphs. It is very important to organize the ideas in different paragraphs and leave a blank space between them.
- Use of connectors and punctuation. See the previous *Section 2.3.2 Writing: connectors and punctuation*.
- Use of correct sentence structure. The structure of the sentence is very important in English. See *Unit 3, Section Grammar: sentence structure*.
- Use of formal language, except in informal writing (informal emails, notes, etc.) See the annex *Formal/informal language*.

1.4.1 Writing emails

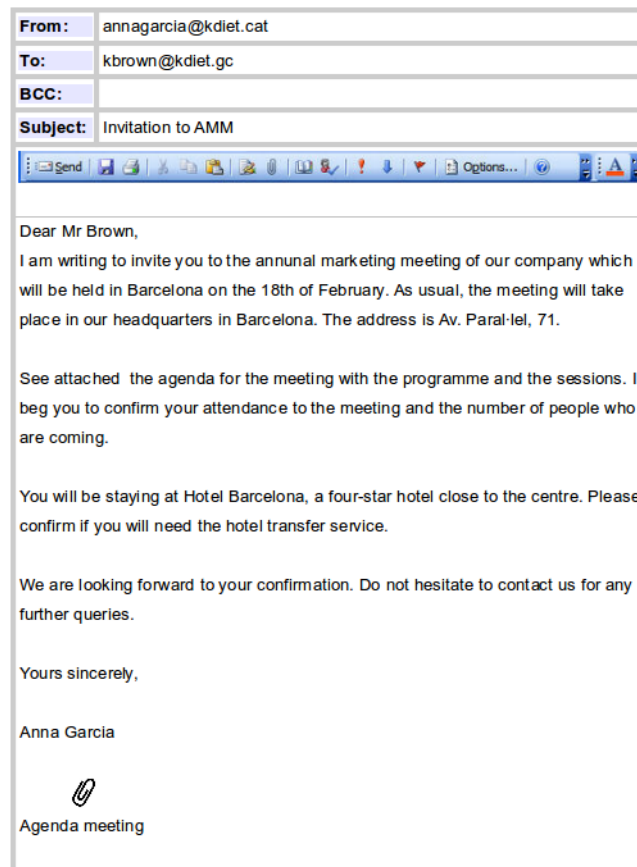
Emails are usually short. When writing an email, try to keep up to the point and avoid adding too much information. The objective is to get your message across and to get a swift response from the recipient.

Parts of an email

Emails have a particular layout determined by our email service provider.

See the different parts of an email in the next image:

FIGURA 1.8. Parts of an email



In general, these are the parts of an email:

1. **Sender:** In this box there is your email address. In the example, it is the box “**From**”.
2. **Recipient:** In this box, write the email address of the recipient. In the example, it is the box “**To**”.
3. **Subject line:** You should write a short description of the content of the email so that when the recipient opens the mailbox, they know what it is about. In the example, “**Subject**”: *Invitation to AMM*.
4. **Greeting:** We can simply write “*Hello,*” or “*Hello Mr/Ms...*”, or more formal “*Dear Mr/Ms...*”. In formal emails we write the surname of the recipient, not the first name.
5. **Body:** You have to organize the contents of the email into different paragraphs.
6. In the first one you have to state the purpose for writing. You should also provide a reference or context. For example: “*This is with reference to your*”

mail dated...". In the sample email: "*I am writing to invite you to...*". We state the reason and the date and venue of the event.

7. In the next paragraphs, we have to add the information we need to provide, and organize the ideas in different paragraphs:
 - In the sample, in the second paragraph, the recipient is informed about the attachment and asked for confirmation of attendance, and in the third paragraph, the recipient is informed about the accommodation.
 - Finally, we ask the recipient for feedback or to take a particular action. In the sample: "*We are looking forward to your confirmation.*"
8. **Closing:** A standard formula to close an email or a business letter is "*Yours sincerely*", but we can use others, such as "*Best regards*", or "*Thank you and regards*".
9. **Attachments:** You can attach files to your email, but you should notify it in the email. In the sample: "*See attached the agenda of the meeting*".
10. **Signature:** You should provide your name, position and contact details.

1.4.2 Thank you letters

After a business meeting, it is quite common to send a thank you letter. This type of letters should include the following information:

1. **First paragraph:** Thank the interviewer for taking the time to meet you.
2. **Second paragraph:** Restate your interest in the company/school/organization. Mention something you learned from the meeting or comment on something important that you discussed.
3. **Third paragraph:** Thank the interviewer for their time and consideration. If it is the case, you can close with a suggestion for further action.

See the following sample:

Agriécolo

1, rue des Pertuisanes

34000 Montpellier

France

Montpellier, 21 October, 2016

Ms Lena Schöeder

Wilhelm-Leuschner Strasse 31

60329 Cologne

Germany

Dear Ms Schöeder,

I am writing this letter to appreciate your invitation to the Anuga Fair held in Cologne last week.

I have heard nothing but praise from all who attended the fair. The exhibitions were very interesting and the food was delicious. The presenters were well prepared and the sessions were well attended. You did a good job organizing the workshops and selecting the topics.

Furthermore, it was very profitable, since we had the opportunity of meeting other companies and have interesting discussions, which might lead to further cooperation with them.

Congratulations on both a successful and a memorable fair. Thank you for your invitation.

We look forward to attending the next fair next year.

Yours sincerely,

Céline Thierry

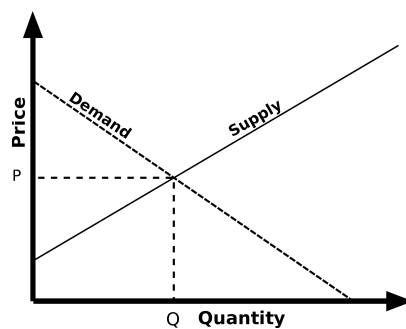
Sales department

2. Money

Different countries have different currencies. The EU has a common currency, the euro, except for some countries like UK, where £ pounds are used. The exchange rate between different currencies changes every day, according to market fluctuation. This can change the cost of living and the price of goods. The price of goods or services, called market price, depends on the supply and the demand of these products; if the demand is constant, and there is a decline of supply it results in a rise of its market price and vice versa.

The next diagram depicts how supply and demand determine the market price:

FIGURA 2.1. Supply and demand curves



Source: wikipedia

All this is part of an economic system in which banks play a crucial role. They accept deposits and they use the funds to create loans, empowering people to buy houses, to start businesses or to send their children to school.

2.1 Banks

Banks might give an interest on some types of accounts or deposits individuals or companies have. People have their savings accounts, and they can withdraw money from the ATM in order to pay their bills, the school fees, or to go on holidays. The money they spend depends on their own budget, if they overspend they might become broke!

Another way to pay for a purchase is to issue a bank check. But sometimes the money you have in the account might not be enough to afford, for example to buy a house. In this case, the bank gives you a mortgage, which is a loan they give you so that you can acquire your house and you keep paying the money back in different instalments, which means that you will be making payments at successive fixed times.

Read the following conversations. The first is a telephone conversation and the second takes place at the bank.

In this telephone conversation, a customer wants to pay a bill for the acquisition of some products. Her first intention is to pay through credit card, but the assistant offers her an alternative.

Telephone conversation (I)

Assistant: Your bill amounts to 350 euros.

Customer: Do you accept credit cards? How can I pay?

Assistant: I am sorry, we don't take credit card numbers on phone for security purposes. I can send you an email with an online form that leads to a secure payment page.

Customer: Won't that take too long?

Assistant: Well, I can also mark it for cash on delivery and you can pay in cash to the delivery boy.

Customer: That's a good option. When will he deliver?

Assistant: You will get this product within 2 days. Please keep the cash ready.

Customer: Sure. No problems.

This conversation takes place in the bank. A customer has tried to use the ATM machine to make some transactions, but unfortunately it does not work. Subsequently she enters the bank to see what is wrong.



Money withdrawing from an ATM (Automated Teller Machine). Source: Tax Credits (flickr.com)

Telephone conversation (II)

Customer: Good morning.

Bank clerk: Good morning madam. How can I help you?

Customer: I'm having a problem with the ATM.

Bank clerk: What seems to be the problem?

Customer: I have been denied access to my account.

Bank clerk: Are you sure you entered the right pin number?

Customer: Yes, I'm sure, and I followed all the instructions carefully.

Bank clerk: Ok, let me see. I will try to access your account from my computer. First, I need to enter some information about your account.

Customer: Certainly.

Bank clerk: Saving or checking account?

Customer: Checking account.

Bank clerk: What's your name?

Customer: My name is Lidia Walter.

Bank clerk: Do you have your account number?

Customer: Yes, it is 123354645645

Bank Clerk: Let me see, there is nothing wrong with your account. I will check the ATM status on my terminal.

Customer: Ok, thank you.

Bank Clerk: I'm afraid the ATM is not working. What kind of transactions would you like to make?

Customer: I'd like to deposit a check and withdraw 200 euros, please.

Bank clerk: Here you are.

Customer: Thank you.

Bank clerk: You are welcome, madam. Please, accept our apologies for the inconvenience we caused you.


Customer: No problem. Have a nice day.

2.1.1 Online banking

Most banks offer the possibility of performing banking transactions through the Internet. The banks provide a username, passwords and security codes to prevent fraud. Customers can pay their bills or check their account balances.

See the following online bank statement:

FIGURA 2.2. Bank statement

 FIRST BANK OF WIKI 1425 JAMES ST, PO BOX 4000 VICTORIA BC V8X 3X4 1-800-555-5555		CHEQUING ACCOUNT STATEMENT Page : 1 of 1			
JOHN JONES 1643 DUNDAS ST W APT 27 TORONTO ON M6K 1V2		Statement period 2003-10-09 to 2003-11-08	Account No. 00005- 123-456-7		
Date	Description	Ref.	Withdrawals	Deposits	Balance
2003-10-08	Previous balance				0.55
2003-10-14	Payroll Deposit - HOTEL			694.81	695.36
2003-10-14	Web Bill Payment - MASTERCARD	9685	200.00		495.36
2003-10-16	ATM Withdrawal - INTERAC	3990	21.25		474.11
2003-10-16	Fees - Interac		1.50		472.61
2003-10-20	Interac Purchase - ELECTRONICS	1975	2.99		469.62
2003-10-21	Web Bill Payment - AMEX	3314	300.00		169.62
2003-10-22	ATM Withdrawal - FIRST BANK	0064	100.00		69.62
2003-10-23	Interac Purchase - SUPERMARKET	1559	29.08		40.54
2003-10-24	Interac Refund - ELECTRONICS	1975		2.99	43.53
2003-10-27	Telephone Bill Payment - VISA	2475	6.77		36.76
2003-10-28	Payroll Deposit - HOTEL			694.81	731.57
2003-10-30	Web Funds Transfer - From SAVINGS	2620		50.00	781.57
2003-11-03	Pre-Auth. Payment - INSURANCE		33.55		748.02
2003-11-03	Cheque No. - 409		100.00		648.02
2003-11-06	Mortgage Payment		710.49		-62.47
2003-11-07	Fees - Overdraft		5.00		-67.47
2003-11-08	Fees - Monthly		5.00		-72.47
*** Totals ***			1,515.63	1,442.61	

TAULA 2.1. Vocabulary

Account (n): *compte*

Checking account (n): *compte corrent*

Amounts (v): *ascendre (a una quantitat)*

Customer (n): *client*

Apologies (n): *disculpes*

Deliver (v): *fer lliurament/lliurar*

ATM (n): *caixer automàtic*

Deposit a check (v): *ingressar un txe*

Bill (n): <i>factura</i>	Savings account (n): <i>compte d'estalvi</i>
Cash (n): <i>efectiu</i>	Secure (adj): <i>segur</i>
Cash on delivery (n): <i>contra reemborsament</i>	Withdraw (money) (v): <i>treure (diners)</i>

2.2 Grammar: The Present Perfect

Read the following sentences:

1. The bank **sent** us the details of our transactions for the month of January.
2. Mr. Okonko **didn't have** enough money in his account, so the bank **didn't honour** his cheques.
3. Ms. Wealthy **has just deposited** 12,000 dollars into her bank account.
4. The Finance department **has not received** the payment **yet**.
5. **Have you settled** all your debts?
6. We **have been chasing** late payments.
7. There **hasn't been** any response from our creditors **since** last May.
8. We **have been investing** in infrastructures **for** years.

The verb tense in sentences 1 and 2 is the **past simple**, they refer to a time in the past. The verb tense in sentences 3, 4, 5 and 7 is the **present perfect**, they also refer to the past, but have a connection to the present. The verb tense in sentences 6 and 8 is the **present perfect continuous**, which describes how long you have been doing something that you started in the past and still continue now.

As you can see, the present perfect tenses are composed of two elements: the auxiliary verb **have** and the past participle form of the verb, with the ending-**ed** for regular verbs. You will have to check the list of irregular verbs for to know the past participle of irregular verbs.

2.2.1 The present perfect simple

These are the forms of the present perfect simple of a regular verb (“to work”):

TAULA 2.2. Conjugation of the present perfect simple (regular verb)

	Affirmative Long form	Affirmative Short form	Negative Long form	Negative Short form	Interrogative
I	have worked	've worked	have not worked	haven't worked	Have I worked...?

TAULA 2.2 (continuació)

	Affirmative Long form	Affirmative Short form	Negative Long form	Negative Short form	Interrogative
You	have worked	've worked	have not worked	haven't worked	Have you worked...?
He/She/It	has worked	's worked	has not worked	hasn't worked	Has he worked...?
We	have worked	've worked	have not worked	haven't worked	Have we worked...?
You	have worked	've worked	have not worked	haven't worked	Have you worked...?
They	have worked	've worked	have not worked	haven't worked	Have they worked...?

Here are the forms of the present perfect simple of an irregular verb (“to eat”):

TAULA 2.3. Conjugation of the present perfect simple (irregular verb)

	Affirmative Long form	Affirmative Short form	Negative Long form	Negative Short form	Interrogative
I	have eaten	've eaten	have not eaten	haven't eaten	Have I eaten...?
You	have eaten	've eaten	have not eaten	haven't eaten	Have you eaten...?
He/She/It	has eaten	's eaten	has not eaten	hasn't eaten	Has he eaten...?
We	have eaten	've eaten	have not eaten	haven't eaten	Have we eaten...?
You	have eaten	've eaten	have not eaten	haven't eaten	Have you eaten...?
They	have eaten	've eaten	have not eaten	haven't eaten	Have they eaten...?

The present perfect simple is used:

TAULA 2.4.

1. To express an action that started in the past and continues in the present	
I have worked for this bank since I left university	<i>He treballat en aquest banc des que vaig acabar a la universitat</i>
He has been on the phone for one hour	<i>Fa una hora que parla per telèfon</i>
2. To express a recently finished action whose consequences still continue in the present	
Sean is in hospital because he has broken his leg	<i>En Sean és a l'hospital perquè s'ha trencat una cama</i>
I have bought a car	<i>M'he comprat un cotxe</i>
3. To express a finished action in an indeterminate past, used for experiences and accomplishments	
Have you ever worked in a foreign country?	<i>Has treballat alguna vegada a l'estranger?</i>
I have never applied for a mortgage	<i>No he demanat mai una hipoteca</i>
I have been to Canada many times	<i>He estat al Canadà moltes vegades</i>

Prepositions and adverbials used with the present perfect

Prepositions **For** and **since**:

- **For** + period of time: for two hours, for one month, for ten years, for a long time
- **Since** + point in time: since three o'clock, since yesterday, since I was 10, since 2010

Adverbials of time commonly used with the present perfect:

TAULA 2.5.

This week we have taken important steps to protect consumers	<i>Aquesta setmana hem fet passos importants per protegir els consumidors</i>
Tania has never called the emergency services	<i>La Tània no ha trucat mai als serveis d'emergència</i>
Maria has just called (*)	<i>La Maria acaba de trucar</i>
Have you already withdrawn the money from the ATM?	<i>Ja has tret els diners del banc?</i>
Has David ever invested in shares?	<i>En David ha invertit mai en accions?</i>
My order hasn't arrived yet (*)	<i>La meva comanda encara no ha arribat</i>

(*) Some of these adverbs need an explanation:

- **Just** is used to say that the action has finished very recently. It means 'acabar de' + verb. Examples:
 - I have just met Mr Bramwell (*M'acabo de trobar el Sr. Bramwell*).
 - He has just gone (*Acaba de marxar*).
- **Yet** is only used in questions and negative sentences. We usually place it at the end of the sentence. Examples:
 - Have you started the course yet? (*Has començat ja el curs?*)
 - We haven't met Mr Bramwell yet (*Encara no hem conegut el Sr. Bramwell*).

2.2.2 The present perfect simple and the present perfect continuous

The **present perfect continuous** is composed of three elements: the auxiliary verb *have* + the past participle of *be* (*been*) + the gerund of the verb.

The table shows the forms of the present perfect continuous of the verb *to work*:

TAULA 2.6. Conjugation of the present perfect simple (irregular verb)

	Affirmative Long form	Affirmative Short form	Negative Long form	Negative Short form	Interrogative
I	have been working	've been working	have not been working	haven't been working	Have I been working...?
You	have been working	've been working	have not been working	haven't been working	Have you been working...?
He/She/It	has been working	's been working	has not been working	hasn't been working	Has he been working...?
We	have been working	've been working	have not been working	haven't been working	Have we been working...?
You	have been working	've been working	have not been working	haven't been working	Have you been working...?
They	have been working	've been working	have not been working	haven't been working	Have they been working...?

The present perfect continuous is used in the same cases as the present perfect simple, but sometimes there is a difference in the emphasis on the continuation of the action.

1) The following sentences have the same meaning:

- I have worked in this company for 20 years
- I have been working in this company for 20 years
- (*Porto 20 anys treballant en aquesta empresa*)

But we can only use the present perfect simple in:

- I have been a worker in this company since 1998 (*He estat treballador d'aquesta empresa des de l'any 1998*).

It is wrong to say: *I have been being a worker in this company since 1998*. Remember that there are some verbs that are not used in the continuous forms.

2) In the following sentences, the difference is in the emphasis on the duration of the action:

- The street is wet because it has rained all night (*El carrer és moll perquè ha plogut tota la nit*).
- The street is wet because it has been raining all night (*El carrer és moll perquè ha estat plovent tota la nit*).

With the present perfect simple, we explain what has happened to explain why the street is wet, the action is finished and it has given a certain result. In the present perfect continuous, we emphasize the duration, not the action itself. With the present perfect continuous, the idea is that it has been raining all night and it is still raining at present.

2.3 Finance department

The Finance department is responsible for the money coming into and going out of the business. This includes employe wages, petty cash, paying suppliers and receiving money from customers.

They manage cash-flows in an efficient manner, negotiate with vendors and suppliers, and do the book keeping.

In this section, we are going to learn about some of the duties of the Finance department, for example:

- Some details about accounting and bookkeeping
- Collocations related to business terms
- The parts of an invoice
- How to describe business trends and stats

2.3.1 Accounting

Accounting is one of the key functions for almost any business; it may be handled by a bookkeeper and accountant at small firms or by finance departments with dozens of employees at larger companies. Companies use financial statements to control their performance. Typically, they are the balance sheet, the income statement and the cash flow statement.

The balance sheet reports a company's financial position based on its assets, liabilities, and equity at a single moment in time. A standard company balance sheet has three parts: assets, liabilities, and ownership equity. Assets are all the things the business owns. This will include property, tools, cars, desks, chairs, machinery, and so on.

Liabilities are the company's legal debts or obligations that arise during the course of business operations. They include loans, accounts payable, mortgages, deferred revenues and accrued expenses. For example, the outstanding money that a company owes to its suppliers would be considered a liability. Current liabilities are debts payable within one year, while long-term liabilities are debts payable over a longer period.

The account form consists of two columns displaying assets on the left column of the report and liabilities and equity on the right column. They are also called debits and credits. The debit accounts are displayed on the left and credit accounts are on the right. It is called a balance sheet because the two sides balance out. That is, a company has to pay for all the things it has (assets) by either borrowing money (liabilities) or getting it from shareholders (shareholders' equity).

See the translation of some words from the text:

TAULA 2.7. Vocabulary

Account balance: <i>saldo en compte</i>	Income statement: <i>estat d'ingressos</i>
Accountant: <i>comptable</i>	Income tax: <i>impost sobre la renda</i>
Accounting: <i>comptabilitat</i>	Installments: <i>a terminis</i>
Account: <i>compte bancari</i>	Insurance: <i>assegurança</i>
Accrued expenses: <i>despeses acumulades</i>	Issue a bank check: <i>emitir un txeç bancari</i>
Actually: <i>en realitat</i>	Landline: <i>línea fixe de telèfon</i>
Afford: <i>permetre's</i>	Liabilities: <i>passius</i>
Amount: <i>quantitat</i>	Loan: <i>crèdit</i>
Assets: <i>actius</i>	Long-term: <i>llarg termini</i>
At least: <i>com a mínim</i>	Machinery: <i>maquinària</i>
ATM (Automated Teller Machine): <i>caixer automàtic</i>	Managing director: <i>director general</i>
Average family: <i>família mitja</i>	Market price: <i>preu del mercat</i>
Balance out: <i>quadrar</i>	Meals: <i>àpats</i>
Balance sheet: <i>full de balanç</i>	Mobile phone bills: <i>factures de telèfon mòbil</i>
Bank statement: <i>extracte bancari</i>	Mortgage: <i>hipoteca</i>
Be aware: <i>ser conscient (de)</i>	National insurance: <i>seguretat social</i>
Become broke: <i>arruïnar-se</i>	Non-essential expenditure: <i>despeses no bàsiques</i>
Bookkeeper: <i>comptable</i>	On average: <i>de mitjana</i>
Borrow money: <i>demanar diners</i>	Outstanding money: <i>diners pendents</i>
Budget: <i>pressupost</i>	Over: <i>més de...</i>
Car insurance: <i>assegurança del cotxe</i>	Overspend: <i>gastar més del compte</i>
Cash flow statement: <i>estat dels fluxos de caixa</i>	(To) Owe: <i>deure</i>
Clothing: <i>roba</i>	(To) own: <i>pertànyer</i>
Commute to work: <i>anar i tornar a la feina amb algun tipus de transport</i>	Password: <i>contrasenya</i>
Consolidate one's debts: <i>consolidar els deutes</i>	Pounds: <i>lliures esterlines</i>
Cost of living: <i>cost de la vida</i>	Prevent fraud: <i>evitar el frau</i>
Council tax: <i>taxa municipal</i>	Property: <i>propietat(s)</i>
Currency: <i>moneda, divisa</i>	(To) Provide: <i>proporcionar</i>
Customer: <i>client</i>	Purchase: <i>compra</i>
Deferred revenues: <i>ingressos diferits</i>	Report: <i>informe</i>
Deposit: <i>dipòsit</i>	Savings account: <i>compte d'estalvis</i>
Display: <i>mostrar</i>	School fees: <i>taxes escolars</i>
Disposable income: <i>renta disponible</i>	Security code: <i>codi de seguretat</i>
Earn: <i>guanyar (diners)</i>	Shareholder: <i>accionista</i>
Employee: <i>empleat, treballador</i>	Slightly: <i>lleugerament</i>
Equity: <i>net patrimonial</i>	Supplier: <i>proveïdor</i>
Essential expenditure: <i>despeses bàsiques</i>	Supply and demand: <i>oferta i demanda</i>
EU (European Union): <i>UE (Unió Europea)</i>	Survey: <i>estudi</i>

Exchange rate: <i>tipus de canvi</i>	Take into account: <i>tenir en compte</i>
Figure: <i>xifra</i>	Total figure: <i>xifre/quantitat total</i>
Funds: <i>fons</i>	Up to: <i>fins a...</i>
Goods: <i>béns</i>	Username: <i>nom d'usuari</i>
Gross income: <i>ingressos bruts</i>	Utilities: <i>serveis públics</i>
Home insurance: <i>assegurança de la llar</i>	Withdraw money: <i>treure diners</i>

There are some collocations from the text:

TAULA 2.8.

Bank statement	<i>extracte bancari</i>
Crucial role	<i>paper crucial</i>
Cost of living	<i>cost de la vida</i>
Essential expenditure	<i>despeses bàsiques</i>
Exchange rate	<i>tipus de canvi</i>
Market fluctuation	<i>fluctuació del mercat</i>
Supply and demand	<i>oferta i demanda</i>

“**Collocations**” are words that go together or form a fixed relationship. See some examples of collocations related to economic terms.


2.3.2 Invoices

An invoice is a document that a supplier sends to a customer detailing the cost of products or services supplied and requesting payment. All invoices should **include five components**:

- An invoice number
- A date
- Business contact information
- Descriptions of goods and services
- Payment terms

See an example of an invoice:

FIGURA 2.3. Invoice Office Supplies

 Stationery Store Av. Paral·lel, 71 08014 Barcelona Tel: +34 93 111 111 stationerystore@sstore.cat		Invoice number:	
Bill to: First Bank 1425 James St, PO BOX 4000 VICTORIA BC V8X 3X4		Date	12/4/2021
		Payment terms:	Net30
Item	Quantity	Rate	Amount
Ring binders	130	€ 2.5	325.00 €
Envelopes	900	€ 0.25	225.00 €
Paper for printer	60	€ 10	600.00 €
Notes: Delivery date: 19/4/2021 Terms: 30 days from delivery		Subtotal	1150.00 €
		Discount	10%
		Tax	21%
		Total	1252.35 €

Invoice template

You can find an invoice template, in this link:



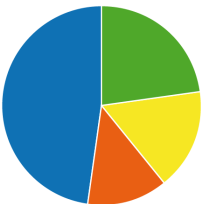
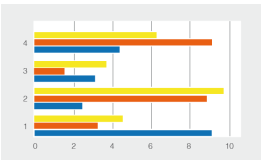
[Invoice Template](#)



2.3.3 Describing trends

In the English-speaking business world you may have to discuss the information on graphs. See different types of graphs in the table below.

TAULA 2.9. Types of graphs

Graph	Description
	A pie chart is a special chart which uses “pie slices” to show relative sizes of data. Pie charts are generally used to show percentage or proportional data.
	A bar graph or bar chart is a graphical display of data using bars of different heights.

TAULA 2.9 (continuació)

Graph	Description
	<p>A line chart or line graph is a type of chart which displays information as a series of data points called 'markers' connected by straight line segments. It depicts changes over a period of time, showing data and trends.</p>

How to describe trends:

There are four basic trends: upward movement, downward movement, no movement or change in direction. Read the following statements describing some of these movements:

Upward movements

- Sales of music equipment **went up** in 1995 and continued to **rise steadily** until 1996.
- There was a **sharp increase** in raw materials prices.
- The number of temporary contracts has **increased dramatically**.
- Prices of basic commodities have **gone up** over the past months.
- As the costs of energy and raw materials **skyrocket**, everybody is talking about 'going green'.
- The profits **soared** and the industry **flourished** like never before.
- There was a **dramatic rise** in sales in the last term.
- The successful business's profits continue to **grow**.

Downward movements

- The sudden **collapse** in share prices has surprised everyone.
- The economy is in a **downswing**.
- The ratio for wheat is forecast to **plummet** to 20% this year.
- In the future, the rate of mortality is expected to **decrease**.
- The objective is to **reduce** costs.
- The recession is over and unemployment is **declining**.

In these examples we have used verbs and nouns to describe upward and downward trends. See some more in the table below:

TAULA 2.10. Verbs and nouns describing trends

Upward movement		Downward movement	
Verbs	Nouns	Verbs	Nouns
be/go up	(an) upswing	collapse	(a) collapse
boom	(a) boom	cut	(a) cut
expand	(an) expansion	decline	(a) decline
grow	(a) growth	decrease	(a) decrease
increase	(an) increase	drop (off)	(a) drop
		

TAULA 2.10 (continuació)

Upward movement Verbs	Nouns	Downward movement Verbs	Nouns
jump	(a) jump	fall (off)	(a) fall
peak	(a) peak	go down	(a) downswing
progress	(a) progression	plummet/plunge	(a) plunge
rise	(a) rise	reduce	(a) reduction
skyrocket	(a) jump	slump	(a) slump

To describe graphs which depict no movement, we can use verbs such as:

- **keep** or **remain stable**
- **hold** or **stay constant**
- **stabilize**
- Nouns such as: **stability** or **balance**

TAULA 2.11.

Food prices have stabilized recently	<i>Els preus dels aliments s'han estabilitzat recentment</i>
Inflation will remain stable or even drop slightly	<i>La inflació romandrà estable o fins i tot caurà lleugerament</i>

Expressions to indicate changes of direction are:

- **level off**
- **flatten out**
- **stop falling/rising**
- **change**
- **stand at**
- **start rising**

TAULA 2.12.

The volume of export will start rising after the construction of the new harbour	<i>El volum d'exportació començarà a augmentar després de la construcció del nou port</i>
Stocks leveled off after early losses	<i>Les existències es van anivellar després de les pèrdues inicials</i>

3. Innovation

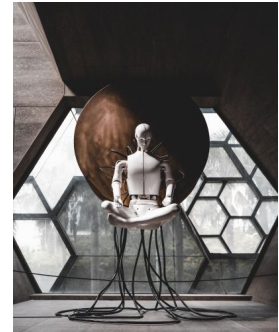
Innovation highly depends on many factors, such as demography, political and economic changes, technological advances and demands from new generations. Some people believe that time **will come** where technology **will be** so advanced that it **will make** machines smarter than humans and that time may be closer than we realize. According to various surveys, robots and software **might replace** traditional jobs, which **will become** redundant.

While robots **will be handling** most of the tasks and responding to the needs of guests at a hotel in any language, humans **will be** only monitoring security cameras to supervise whether everything is working properly.

This loss of jobs **might result** in an income gap between the rich and the poor, as many people **will end up** unemployed, while highly qualified professionals **will increase** their wealth. Some might start their own business if they are able to identify the markets needs. That is the case of Lena Ahmatova, who started an online shopping site, which has been very successful. She explains her experience:

If you want to start a business, you have to spot a need which is not met in the market. That need might be a product, such as a car, a phone, a drone, or even software, or a service. If, for example, **you are going to start** a childcare business, **you'll have to do** research, know your competitors, and the area of influence. In my case, I was looking at very unique products to sell, I was highly motivated, so I went for it. With online business, the feedback from your customers is vital, and not only those that rate you high. Negative feedback **is going to help** you improve and follow the trends.

As Lena pointed out, market research is of paramount importance in order to develop your ideas, but once you have set up your business, you will have to market your product and you will need your customers' feedback.



Robots and artificial intelligence will be part of our lives in a few years time. Source: Unsplash, Yuyeung-lau.



Lena Ahmatova. Source: Unsplash, priscilla-du-preez.

TAULA 3.1. Vocabulary

Customer: <i>client</i>	Monitor: <i>controlar, monitoritzar</i>
Handle: <i>tractar, gestionar</i>	Point out: <i>assenyalar</i>
Improve: <i>millorar</i>	Spot a need: <i>detectar una necessitat</i>
Income gap: <i>bretxa salarial</i>	Successful: <i>que té èxit</i>
Loss: <i>pèrdua</i>	Unemployed: <i>aturat (sense feina)</i>

3.1 Marketing

Marketing is about communicating the value of a product, service or brand to customers or consumers for the purpose of promoting or selling it. The oldest, simplest and most natural form of marketing is 'word of mouth' (WOM)

marketing, in which consumers share their experiences of a product, service or brand in their communications with others.

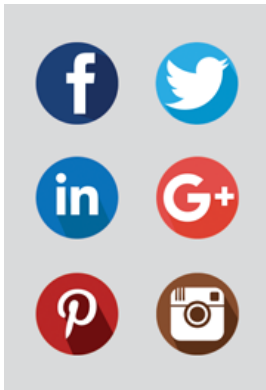
The main purpose of marketing is to increase product sales and therefore the profits of the company.

Marketing techniques include choosing target markets through market analysis and market segmentation, as well as understanding consumer behaviour and advertising a product's value to the customer.

Digital Marketing consists in using digital channels to promote or market products and services to consumers and businesses. The key objective is to promote brands, build preference and increase sales through various digital marketing techniques which use the Internet as a promotional medium.

Social media is a tool that allows people to create, share or exchange information, interests, photos and videos in virtual communities and networks. Social media fosters communication. People communicate with their families and friends, share experiences, look for a job or advertise themselves through different social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, Pinterest, etc.

Each social network has its own personality and requires a different strategic approach for a business to be successful on it. See some examples:



Most websites nowadays include a set of the so called social buttons to allow users easily share the contents on the social networks. Source: Niccolò Agnoletti

- **Twitter** has millions of active users that send millions of tweets per day, so it has a lot of marketing potential. Brands can create their business accounts in order to get in contact with Twitter users, who **will prefer** to buy from brands they know and they trust. Twitter marketing services help raise brand awareness by connecting current users with potential customers. People who follow a brand on twitter are more likely to visit that company's website.
- **LinkedIn** is the social platform where professionals go to connect and network. It offers businesses a chance to establish themselves as experts in their industry by sharing content, joining group discussions, and connecting with other professionals. In addition, businesses can post job applications on this website to expand and add new talent.
- **Facebook** has adapted to the marketplace and created new ways to connect with users. Most businesses have a Facebook account. Facebook is an opportunity for businesses to connect with their followers, engage new ones, and gain feedback for future projects.
- Businessess use **Instagram** to reach new customers and engage existing ones, by creating their own business account and posting regularly. It is essential to interact with the followers. Therefore, if they leave a comment on your post, take the time to thank them. It is advisable to incorporate ways to get the followers interact with the posts.
- **Youtube** is a large video sharing network, it gives businesses the opportunity to advertise themselves. It is a great place to do influencer marketing if you want to sell products that require an explanation or tutorial. Influencer marketing creates brand awareness.

Social media is contributing to success and growth in businesses. Companies can get information about their audience and they can as well assess their competitors.

3.1.1 Community managers

With digital media, consumers have access to information any time and any place they want it. Consumers use multiple channels and a variety of digital devices. They are no longer influenced by just what you say about your brand. In fact, consumers are more likely to be influenced by what others say about your brand, and they can easily find the information online, either through blogs, forums, or social media.

Customer interaction is dynamic, so it makes it hard for companies to manage digital marketing. Community managers play this role, they are the face of the company. They are responsible for all communications, they create engaging text, image and video content for social media accounts, and respond to comments and customer queries. Furthermore, they work on new ways to engage the digital community, they will participate in discussions, finding new customers and interacting with the current ones.



Most people use mobile devices such as smartphones to interact with other users in social networks.
Source: Unsplash, Marvin Meyer.

TAULA 3.2. Vocabulary

Account: <i>compte</i>	Network: <i>(fer) xarxa</i>
Application: <i>sol·licitud</i>	No longer: <i>ja no</i>
Approach: <i>enfocament, mètode</i>	Play a role (of): <i>fer el paper de</i>
Behaviour: <i>comportament</i>	Success: <i>éxit</i>
Engaging: <i>que crida l'atenció</i>	Target market: <i>mercat de destí</i>
Growth: <i>creixement</i>	Tool: <i>eina</i>
Join: <i>afegir-se</i>	Trust: <i>confiar</i>
Main: <i>principal</i>	Word of mouth (WOM): <i>(el) boca-orella</i>

3.2 Grammar: Future tenses

Read the following sentences from the previous texts:

1. Technology **will make** machines smarter than humans.
2. The loss of jobs **might result** in an income gap between the rich and the poor.
3. Highly qualified professionals **will increase** their wealth.
4. You **are going to start** a childcare business.
5. Negative feedback **is going to help** you.

All these sentences refer to the future, but not all of them use the same structure:

- Sentences **1** and **3** are **predictions**, and they use the structure: *subj. + will + infinitive*
- Sentence **2** expresses **possibility**. We have already seen this structure in section 1, 'might' is a modal verb.
- Sentences **4** and **5** use the structure: *Subj + be going to + infinitive*. In sentence 4, we are referring to a **plan** or an **intention** of doing something. Sentence **5** is a **prediction based on evidence**.

Let's have a look at different ways of talking about the future:

3.2.1 Future: will

The following table shows the forms and uses of the future with *will* (with the verb "to work").

TAULA 3.3. Conjugation of the future with 'will'

	Affirmative Long form	Affirmative Short form	Negative Long form	Negative Short form	Interrogative
I	will work	'll work	will not work	won't work	Will I work...?
You	will work	'll work	will not work	won't work	Will you work...?
He/She/It	will work	'll work	will not work	won't work	Will he work...?
We	will work	'll work	will not work	won't work	Will we work...?
You	will work	'll work	will not work	won't work	Will you work...?
They	will work	'll work	will not work	won't work	Will they work...?

Will has different uses:

TAULA 3.4.

1. Will for predictions/opinions about the future	
The offices will close down	<i>Els despatxos tancaran</i>
Twitter users will prefer brands they trust	<i>Els usuaris de Twitter s'estimaran més les marques en què confien</i>
Jobs will become redundant	<i>Les feines esdevindran innecessàries</i>
I think that I will talk to Mr Harris	<i>Em sembla que parlaré amb el Sr Harris</i>
I'm sure that you will get well very soon	<i>Estic segur que et recuperaràs molt aviat</i>
2. Will for future actions which do not depend on our will	
It will rain all the week	<i>Plourà tota la setmana</i>
I will be 65 next year	<i>L'any que ve faré 65 anys</i>

TAULA 3.5.

3. Will for spontaneous decisions	
The photocopier ran out of ink! I'll change the ink cartridge	<i>La fotocopiadora s'ha quedat sense tinta. Canviaré el cartutx</i>
4. Will to make requests, offers and promises	
Will you please help me with my suitcase?	<i>M'ajudes amb la maleta?</i>
I promise I won't help you again	<i>Et juro que no et tornaré a ajudar</i>
5. Will in conditional sentences	
If you write a good CV, you will find a job	<i>Si redactes un bon currículum, trobaràs una feina</i>
If you learn English, you will have more opportunities	<i>Si aprens anglès, tindràs més oportunitats</i>

The following expressions are often used to make **predictions**:

- **I think that...** I will stay at the office until late
- **I'm sure that...** new jobs will be created
- **I'm convinced that...** everything will get better
- **I believe that...:** we will soon see the results of the measures taken.
- **I guess that...** Ms. Chen won't attend the meeting.

3.2.2 Future: 'Be going to'

Here are the forms of the future with *be going to* (with the verb "to work"):

TAULA 3.6. Conjugation of the future with 'be going to'

	Affirmative Long form	Affirmative Short form	Negative Long form	Negative Short form	Interrogative
I	am going to work	'm going to work	am not going to work	'm not going to work	am I going to work...?
you	are going to work	're going to work	are not going to work	aren't going to work	are you going to work...?
he/she/it	is going to work	's going to work	is not going to work	isn't going to work	is he going to work...?
we	are going to work	're going to work	are not going to work	aren't going to work	are we going to work...?
you	are going to work	're going to work	are not going to work	aren't going to work	are you going to work...?
they	are going to work	're going to work	are not going to work	aren't going to work	are they going to work...?

Be going to is used:

TAULA 3.7.

1. 'Be going to' for plans and intentions

Is Mary going to apply for the job?	<i>La Mary sol·licitarà (té la intenció de sol·licitar) la feina?</i>
I'm going to watch the match on TV	<i>Miraré (tinc la intenció de mirar) el partit a la televisió</i>
Anne is going to buy a new computer	<i>L'Anne comprarà (té la intenció de comprar) un ordinador nou</i>

2. 'Be going to' for predictions based on evidence

You're working too much. You are going to fall ill	<i>Treballes massa. Et posaràs malalt</i>
---	---

With the verb *go*, we usually say: *I'm going to work* instead of *I'm going to go to work*.

3.2.3 Future: Present simple and Present continuous

Sometimes, we can express plans and intentions with the **present continuous** tense. In this case, the context must clearly indicate that we are speaking about the future. For example:

TAULA 3.8.

I am attending an international fair next year	<i>L'any que ve aniré a una fira internacional</i>
He is working until 11 tonight	<i>Aquesta nit treballa fins a les 11</i>
We must go. We are taking a bus in three minutes	<i>Hem de marxar. D'aquí a tres minuts agafem un autobús</i>

When we speak of events in timetables, schedules, etc., we can use the **present simple** to speak about future events. Again, it is necessary to include a time adverbial referring to the future. For example:

TAULA 3.9.

My train leaves at four	<i>El meu tren surt a les quatre</i>
--------------------------------	--------------------------------------

Read the following conversations, where different verb tenses are used to refer to the future:

A: Hurry up, James! The train **leaves** at 10!

B: I'm trying my best. **Will you carry** your suitcase?

A: Of course, **I will**

- In the first sentence, the present simple is used to refer to the train timetable.

- The second one is a request, and the third, a response to the request.

A: When **are you leaving**?

B: I'm **flying** to Chicago tomorrow.

A: And when **are you coming back**?

B: I don't know yet. I **might take** an early flight the next day.

- In these sentences the **present continuous** is used to talk about plans at a particular time in the future.
- In the last sentence the modal 'might' is used to express possibility.

A: Oh, no! The paper again! I need to print these documents!

B: Don't worry! I'll **add** paper to the paper tray.

- In this conversation 'I'll' (will) is used for a spontaneous decision.

A: Do you know if **they are going to open** that restaurant?

B: Not yet, they were looking for a cook.

- In the question, 'be going to' is used to ask about someone's plans or intentions.

Some **adverbs and time expressions** that we normally use with the future tenses are:

- **Tomorrow**
- **The day after tomorrow**
- **Next week/month/year**
- **In the future**
- **Tonight**
- **This evening**
- **One day**

We can place these adverbs and adverbials at the end or at the beginning of the sentence, so we can say:

- I will tell you **tomorrow**
- **Tomorrow** I will tell you.

When we place the adverb at the beginning, we emphasize the time; when we place it at the end, we emphasize the action.

3.3 Expressing and asking for opinions

In our daily lives and in our working environments, asking for and expressing opinions is a very common activity. During a conversation, we express or listen to opinions most of the time.

Read the following conversation, where some people give their opinions about the future of artificial intelligence, and whether it will cause an increase of unemployment. Note the expressions in **bold**:

Melissa: **Do you think** machines will take our jobs?

David: **I believe** there are things in our life that we do that cannot be automated. My job cannot be done by a robot.

Melissa: **You're right**, a robot cannot be a psychologist. However, I might lose my job in some years.

David: **I don't agree with you**. How can robots drive a taxi?

Melissa: **I see from where you are coming**, but currently machines are making cars, and, **as I see it**, they will soon be capable of driving them!

David: No way! It can't be! **Do you feel** people will take a taxi without a driver?

Melissa: Of course they will. According to a famous car manufacturer, driverless cars will be available in the market in less than a decade.

When we listen to an opinion, we can do two things: we can agree with that opinion ('I agree' or 'I see your point' or we can disagree ('I disagree'). Opinions are so common that it is necessary to learn how to ask other people about their opinions, how to express them ourselves and how to respond to them.

3.3.1 Asking for opinions

The most common ways of asking for other people's opinions are:

- General opinions: **What do you think of...?**
- Specific opinion: **Do you think (that)*...?**

(*) When we speak, we normally omit the word *that*.

Here are some examples of questions asking for opinions:

TAULA 3.10.

What do you think of the new iPhone?

Què et sembla el nou iPhone?

What do you think of the company's policy?

Què en penses de la política de l'empresa?

When we speak in informal situations, we can also ask for other people's opinions with a *question tag*. For example:

TAULA 3.11.

The new iPhone is too expensive, isn't it?	<i>El nou iPhone és massa car, no et sembla?</i>
---	--

3.3.2 Expressing opinions

When we speak, people will generally understand when we are expressing an opinion and when we are stating a fact. However, sometimes it is necessary to make sure that the other person understands that we are expressing an opinion. To do this, we can use different expressions:

- **I think** (that)...
- **In my opinion**, ...
- **From my point of view**,...
- **As I see it**,...
- **In my view**,...
- **As far as I am concerned**,...

We can also show that we are expressing a strong opinion. For this, we can say:

- **I believe** (that)...
- **I'm sure** (that)...
- **I'm convinced** (that)...

The word *that* is very often omitted in speech.

Here are some examples of opinions:

TAULA 3.12.

In my opinion , your boss is too demanding	<i>Jo crec que el teu cap és massa exigent</i>
I believe we must go on strike right now	<i>Crec que hem de fer vaga ara mateix</i>
From my point of view , this restaurant is excellent	<i>Des del meu punt de vista, aquest restaurant és excel·lent</i>
I'm sure Anne is the best candidate	<i>De ben segur que l'Anne és la millor candidata</i>
I'm convinced that you will like the idea	<i>Estic convençuda que li agradarà la idea</i>

To express negative opinions, we simply say the statement in the negative. For example:

TAULA 3.13.

I think we shouldn't go on strike	<i>Penso que no hauríem de fer vaga</i>
In my opinion , your boss is not too demanding	<i>Jo crec que el teu cap no és massa exigent</i>

With the expressions *I think...* and *I believe...*, we can also express the verbs in negative and the statement in affirmative, like this:

TAULA 3.14.

I don't think Bert is a serious candidate	<i>Em sembla que en Bert no és un candidat seriós</i>
I don't believe robots will steal our jobs	<i>No crec que els robots ens prenguin la feina</i>
Neither do I	<i>Ni jo tampoc</i>

3.3.3 Responding to opinions

During a conversation, we will probably have to respond to other people's opinions. When this happens, we can agree or disagree with the other person. To agree or disagree, we can use these expressions:

Expressions used to agree:

- **I agree** (with you)
- **Yes, I think so**
- **Yes, that's right**
- **So do I**

Expressions used to disagree:

- **I don't agree** (with you)
- **I disagree** (with you)
- **No, I don't think so**
- **Neither do I***
- **I understand what you're saying, but...**

(*) We use *Neither do I* when replying to a negative sentence, such as:

Please notice that in English we must say: *I agree*, *I don't agree* and *I disagree*. It is wrong to say: ~~*I am agree*~~, ~~*I am not agree*~~ and ~~*I am disagree*~~.

- A) 'I don't like robots'.
- B) 'Neither do I'.

When we disagree with somebody's opinions, it is proper social etiquette to express your own opinion on the subject. For example:

TAULA 3.15.

Things are getting worse, aren't they?	<i>Les coses van pitjor, no et sembla?</i>
Well, I don't see it that way. You're too pessimistic	<i>Bé, jo no ho veig així. Ets massa pessimista</i>

Another way (informal) of responding to an opinion is by saying *yes* or *no* and then adding the subject pronoun and the auxiliary verb or modal of the statement. It is like answering a 'yes/no question'. Here are some examples:

TAULA 3.16.

'This car is too expensive' 'Yes, it is'	<i>'Aquest cotxe és massa car'. 'Sí, si que ho és'</i>
'He speaks too low' 'Yes, he does'	<i>'Parla molt baixet'. 'Doncs sí'</i>
'We were in Japan last year' 'No, we weren't'	<i>'L'any passat érem al Japó'. 'No, no hi érem'</i>

3.4 Scheduling an appointment

Read the following conversation:

Secretary: Mr. Turner is on the line, madam. She'd like to attend a meeting in Milan next Friday. Is that all right with you?

Victoria: Could you check my diary? Am I free on Friday next week?

Secretary: Yes, madam. Friday is fine.

Victoria: Then tell him I'll be there at 11h.

3.4.1 Arranging meetings on the phone

Scheduling appointments is part of an administrative assistant's job. You might have to make appointments with business partners, or customers on the phone. See the following expressions:

TAULA 3.17.

Suggestions	Reponses
I'd like to arrange an appointment	Ok, that's fine
Are you free next week?	I'm afraid I'm busy on Thursdays
What about Friday?	I can't make it on Friday, I'm afraid



Setting up a meeting is a common business communication.

TAULA 3.17 (continuació)

Suggestions	Reponses
Can we meet on Tuesday?	Tuesday is good for me
Let's say 12 o'clock?	I'll see you at 12 o'clock then
Which day would suit you best?	Any time on Monday or Tuesday would be ok
Let me just check my schedule	Ok
Would Wednesday morning be convenient?	I'm afraid I won't be able to meet on Wednesday
Shall we say 11 o'clock?	That works for me. Let's meet next Wednesday at 11
Could you make it a bit later?	No problem. Is 11.30 ok with you?

3.4.2 Arranging meetings by email

Sometimes, instead of arranging a meeting on the phone, we might send an email. Let's look at the example:

To: dchambers@Orsena.co.uk

Subject: Request to set up a meeting

Dear Ms. Chambers,

My name is Hellen Patterson, and I work for the company Beautylish. I am writing to schedule a meeting to show you our new range of products.

I would like to meet next week, if that works for you.

Please let me know when and where you would prefer to meet. I look forward to speaking to you in person.

Sincerely,

Donna Johnson

3.5 Writing a summary

Writing a summary means to express the most important ideas of a text in a few words. A summary often means to change the words and sentences of the original text, but sometimes you can simply cut down the text by eliminating all the superfluous information and keep only the main ideas. From the point of view of learning, writing a summary is an excellent means of practising your writing and reading skills.

To write a summary, you must follow these **instructions**:

- Include only the main ideas.
- Do not include superfluous information. This includes: examples, words and sentences to reinforce the main point, repetitions of the main idea to

give emphasis, etc.

- Try to use more simple sentences and your own words as much as possible. Where it says: *I was astonished to hear that you had resigned your post* you could say, for example: *I was surprised to know about your resignation.*
- Do not change the information of the original text. You must say the same, but in fewer sentences.
- Do not express your own opinion in a summary or add information that is not in the original text.

Writing a summary requires some practice and some knowledge of the basic vocabulary and syntactical structures of the language, in this case, of the English language. Here are **some tips** for writing a good summary:

- First of all, read the whole text to have a general idea of the contents.
- Write down what you remember of the text without looking at it.
- Read the text again and underline or highlight the main ideas: see if they coincide with the ideas that you have written down.
- Write down the summary carefully. When possible, choose more simple sentences; you can also use the same sentences, but make sure that you eliminate all the unnecessary information.
- Read your summary. If you think that it is still too long, cut out all the unnecessary details or try to change the sentences for more simple ones. A summary should be as short as possible without losing any important information.

Here is an example of a text and its summary:

The Island (text)

In recent years, we have seen significant developments in cloning. Sheep, cows, cats and, more recently, dogs that have been cloned in the name of scientific progress. One of the potential use of cloning is to 'grow' replacement organs for people who are ill in human clones. It is this subject that is portrayed in a new film released this week in the USA called 'The Island'.

The film features Ewan McGregor and Scarlett Johansson and it raises awareness of this highly controversial moral issue. However, in spite of excellent performances from both main actors and spectacular special effects, the film received a disappointing reaction from American audiences. It is possible that the subject is too difficult and that some audiences prefer thrillers without the moral dilemmas. The film opens in the UK next week and it will be interesting to see how the British audiences react.

The Island (summary)

The new film 'The Island', which deals with the controversial subject of cloning people, has not been received well in the USA. Although the acting and effects are very good, some audiences may have been disappointed by the moral message of the film.

Careers

Núria Terradellas Palau

Àngles

Índex

Introduction	5
Learning objectives	7
1 Customer Service	9
1.1 Online Customer Service	9
1.2 Communication: A Negative Experience	10
1.3 Grammar reference: Conditional sentences	11
1.3.1 Zero conditional	12
1.3.2 First conditional	12
1.3.3 Second conditional	13
1.3.4 Third conditional	14
1.3.5 Handling complaints	15
1.3.6 Complaint letters	17
2 Human Resources Department	21
2.1 The Hiring Process	21
2.1.1 Grammar: Passive sentences	23
2.2 Job Search	25
2.2.1 Writing a curriculum vitae	26
2.2.2 Writing a cover letter	28
2.2.3 Preparing your job interview	31
3 Working abroad	35
3.1 Grammar reference: Relative Clauses	37
3.1.1 The relative pronouns	38
3.1.2 Types of relative clauses	39
3.2 Communication: Making Suggestions and Giving Advice	40
3.2.1 Making suggestions	40
3.2.2 Responding to suggestions	42
3.2.3 Giving advice	42
3.2.4 Responding to advice	43
3.3 Inquiry Letters	44
3.3.1 Case study	45

Introduction

In previous units we have seen different departments of a company. In this unit, “Careers”, we will describe two other departments: the Customer Service and the Human Resources Departments. In the two last sections we will learn how to advertise a job post, and how to apply for a job. You are going to learn vocabulary and expressions used at work, and in work search, write emails, express conditions, and use the passive voice and the relative pronouns.

In every section there are texts, conversations, grammar reference, emails, and other information. After the texts, there is a table with the new vocabulary. There are conversations and useful vocabulary used in different communicative contexts. The writing section includes explanations and multiple examples, such as emails, or letters. Furthermore, there is a revision of basic grammar rules with examples and exercises. You can revise the grammar and at the same time learn helpful vocabulary used in the administrative field.

In the first section, “**Customer Service**”, you are going to learn how to deal with customers on the phone. You are going to meet Julia Barrows, who works for the Customer Service Department of a company. You are going to read about the experience David went through during his holidays. You are going to learn how to express conditions, and the different types of conditional sentences. Finally you are going to learn how to write a complaint letter.

In the second section, “**Human Resources Department**”, you are going to learn about recruiting, both from the employer and the employee perspective. You are going to meet Diana Thompson, who works for the Human Resources Department of a company. She describes her job and gives some tips to those who are in charge of recruiting. In the second half, you are going to see the process of job search from the applicant’s point of view. There are tips on how to write a CV and a cover letter, and how to do a job interview. You will see the case of Guinadell, who wants to apply for a job, and goes through the whole process of job searching. In the grammar section you are going to learn how to write passive sentences.

The third section, “**Working abroad**”, may be useful for all those who are planning to look for new experiences in their lives. The text gives some good advice to all those who have decided to look for a job in another country or simply to go and live abroad. In the forum, three people who are travelling to Australia post their messages on the forum in order to meet new friends there. In the vocabulary section you will see the translation of some words which appear in the text. In the “Writing” section you will see the characteristics of a letter of inquiry, some tips and useful phrases to write this type of letter, and finally a case study with a sample letter. In the “Communication” section you are going to learn how to make suggestions and give advice. In the grammar section you are going to learn how to write relative sentences.

All characters appearing in this work are fictitious. They are serving the purpose of showing plausible contexts and situations which students of administrative management might encounter, thus, providing them with helpful vocabulary and resources to use in a real workplace situation.

Each unit has a central theme and it provides information and examples set in business contexts with the aim of giving the students the tools to develop their language skills in their workplace. Furthermore, there are exercises and activities online to practise the contents of the unit.

Learning objectives

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

1. Identify professional and everyday information in an oral discourse in standard language, analysing the global contents of a message and relating it to the corresponding language resources.

- Identify the main idea in a message.
- Identify and follow oral instructions.
- Be conscious of the importance of understanding the main ideas in a message even if you do not understand all the elements that make up the message.
- Recognize the finality of face-to-face and telephone messages, or messages transmitted through other auditory means.
- Get specific information in messages referring to usual aspects of everyday and professional life.
- Place a message in its context.
- Identify the main ideas in a well-structured speech in standard language about well-known aspects and transmitted in the media.

2. Interpret professional information in simple written texts, analysing the message in a comprehensive way.

- Read simple texts in standard language.
- Interpret the general meaning of a message.
- Relate the text to its corresponding context.
- Interpret a message transmitted through different means: post, fax and e-mail, among others.
- Identify the terminology used in a message.
- Interpret technical manuals.

3. Produce well-structured and simple oral messages, taking an active part in professional conversations.

- Describe brief, unexpected events related to your job.
- Identify and use the direct, formal or informal registers in a message.

- Use the appropriate protocol in presentations.
- Make a correct use of the terminology of your job.
- Justify the acceptance or the refusal of a proposal.

4. Produce simple texts in standard language by using the appropriate register in different situations.

- Write short texts referring to everyday and/or professional aspects.
- Use the social conventions in documents.
- Fill in documents referring to your professional field.
- Organize the information in a coherent way.
- Apply the appropriate rules and specific vocabulary when filling in documents.

5. Show the correct attitude and behaviour in different professional situations by using international conventions.

- Define the most distinctive aspects of the customs of English-speaking communities.
- Describe the social conventions of your country.
- Identify the values and beliefs which are characteristic of English-speaking communities.
- Identify the social and professional aspects of your job in all types of oral and written messages.
- Apply the social conventions in English-speaking communities. (...)

1. Customer Service

The customer service department in a company provides product and service information and resolves product and service problems. Customer's satisfaction should be one of the main goals of every company. That is the reason why the professional image on customer service is of paramount importance.

Julia Barrows

Julia Barrows, manager of the customer service department of "Fan World" and a real enthusiast of her job, commented: "Our goal is to make customers fall in love with our business".

We interviewed her at her desk, where she spends most of her time. She said that she had been working there since two thousand and eight (2008) and she confessed that she would not change her position at all. She is concerned about her customers' needs and takes their complaints as the path to improvement and success.

Her advice to customer service agents is to always care about customers, and to anticipate any needs they might have.

A good customer service representative should be able to attract potential customers by answering product and service questions, as well as to provide information about other products and services.

The job duties of the customer service department are various. They may have to open customer accounts or maintain customer records by updating account information. In addition, they deal with and help resolve any customer complaints, or product or service problems, determine the cause of the problem and finally select and explain the best solution to solve it, following up to ensure the resolution.

Anyone that works face-to-face with customers should have good communication skills and should know how to handle problems. Unfortunately, it is not always like this, and we often encounter situations in which the customer service is rather poor. For example, when reaching a checkout in the supermarket the cashier might refuse to serve you as he is "just closing the aisle", or, as it often happens, when phoning a call center you get lost in an endless loop of voicemail recordings.

1.1 Online Customer Service

The web has changed the way customers interact with product or service providers as it allows them to be in contact 24 hours a day. Customers can ask questions and obtain an instant solution to their problems. The quality of the information counts, since customers are generally busy and would like to spend the least time in solving issues. This explains the effort that companies are making to keep their websites updated, and to work on offering an immediate response to their customers. The



The presence of a cashier often indicates that the aisle is open.
Source: Paulien Osse (flickr.com).

competition is high, so companies have to concentrate their effort in making their customers satisfied, and specially, loyal.

But how can companies tackle this issue? The figure of “Community managers” is the key. They are in charge of the surveillance of the web, they nurture online communities, monitor and respond to customer conversations in real time and use social channels to spot issues and apply measures to correct them.

Alice Moore

Alice Moore is a community manager. This is what she wrote about her job:

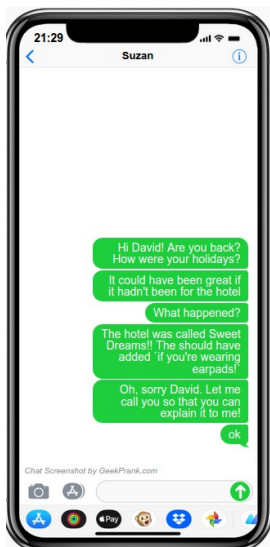
“Nowadays, social media brings a whole new significance to customer satisfaction. Customers can share their experience with others through the use of community forums or other social networks such as Facebook or Twitter. A community manager creates and makes the company’s presence grow on the web through blogs and social media. This position was made for me, I’m a passionate of what I do.”

See the translation of some words from the text:

TAULA 1.1. Vocabulary

Advice: <i>consell</i>	Goal: <i>objectiu</i>
Aisle: <i>passadís</i>	Handle: <i>atendre, donar resposta</i>
Cashier: <i>caixer</i>	Improvement: <i>millora</i>
Complaint: <i>queixa</i>	Loop: <i>bucle</i>
Customer service: <i>atenció al client</i>	Path: <i>camí</i>
Deal with: <i>tractar, ocupar-se de</i>	Share: <i>compartir</i>
Fall in love: <i>enamorar-se</i>	Social media: <i>xarxes socials</i>
Fan: <i>ventilador</i>	Success: <i>èxit</i>
Follow up: <i>fer el seguiment</i>	Update: <i>actualitzar</i>

- **“to be concerned about”**: to be worried about something
- **“...the least time...”**: the smallest time.
- **“rather poor”**: quite poor.



Whatsapp messages. David complains about the bad service he had at the Hotel Sweet Dreams.

1.2 Communication: A Negative Experience

Read the whatsapp messages and the phone conversation, where Suzan asks David about his holidays:

(The phone rings)

David: Hello, Suzan

Suzan: Hi, David. I'm really sorry to hear that you had problems with the hotel. What happened?

David: Everything went wrong from the start. When we arrived they said that they had overbooking, even if we had booked the room one month in advance. They told us that if

we wanted to stay, they **could offer** us a room above the kitchen. James was very upset, and he said that **we would leave if they did not give** us the room as planned.

Suzan: So, what did you do?

David: Well, we discussed the issue with James. I told him: 'look, James. This is the only hotel around here, and it's high season. **If we don't accept** the offer, we **won't find** any other place to stay. **If we cannot stay**, we **will have to leave**, and **if we leave**, our holidays **will be over**.' James wasn't convinced, but in the end we accepted the offer.

Suzan: You're right. You **wouldn't have found** another room **unless you had driven** a long way.

David: It might have been better! Then, James was behind me, feeding our dog Minnie. He asked for a plate to give her some water, but the receptionist pretended not to hear him and picked up a call without apologizing, and kept us waiting for 5 min. It was a customer who was complaining because he didn't like the room that he was given because it was too close to the lift. When he hang the phone, another incoming call, a client who asked for the best restaurant in town where they could taste the traditional cuisine of the area. Can you believe that?

Suzan: Oh, that was rude, picking up calls and keeping you waiting!

David: Exactly, they have a very poor customer service. Well, our room was right above the kitchen. We could hear the noise of the silverware. The worst of all were the arguments between the cooks and the waiters! Furthermore, every now and then there was someone smoking outside, so we had to keep the window closed and could not stay in the terrace. This was the first night. The following day, there were some minor works in the hotel. So, they woke us up at 8, and we could not sleep anymore. Because of the works, there was no water. We read that they usually organize a party for the couples who are celebrating their honeymoon, but the swimming pool closed because there was no water. So you see how it was. **If we had stayed** here, we **would have enjoyed** our holidays more.

Suzan: Oh, I'm sorry. You must write to them and complain. **If I were** them, I **would give** you a refund or I **would offer** you a free stay at the hotel.

1.3 Grammar reference: Conditional sentences

Read he following sentences from the conversation above:

TAULA 1.2.

If we don't accept the offer, we won't find any other place to stay	<i>Si no acceptem l'oferta no trobarem enlloc on quedar-nos</i>
if we leave , our holidays will be over	<i>Si marxem s'hauran acabat les nostres vacances</i>
If I were them, I would give you a refund	<i>Si jo fos ells, us tornaria els diners</i>

These are conditional sentences, which describe a conditional situation, or a result that depends on an event occurring first. We can see how they all start with the word '**If**', though it is not the case of all conditional sentences.

There are four main types of conditional sentences according to the degree of likelihood of the result:

- **Zero-conditional:** Extremely likely to happen.
 - ‘If they **make noise**, customers **get angry**’
- **First conditional:** The result is not certain, but very likely.
 - ‘If he **does not offer** a room, we **will file** a complaint.’
- **Second conditional:** It describes hypothetical situations, it is very unlikely that a condition will be fulfilled.
 - ‘We told them that we **would leave** if they **did not give** us the room as planned.’
- **Third conditional:** It refers to an impossible condition because the situation has already occurred and it cannot be changed.
 - ‘If we **had stayed**, we **would have had** more fun.’

1.3.1 Zero conditional

We use the zero conditional for situations in which one thing always causes another, the result is certain.

The structure of the first conditional sentences is the following:

If + Subj + Verb present simple, Subj + Verb Present simple

TAULA 1.3.

If the clock strikes midnight, it is a new day	<i>Si el rellotge marca les 12, és un nou dia</i>
If I watch the news, I get stressed	<i>Si miro les notícies m'estresso</i>

1.3.2 First conditional

We use the first conditional for real conditions. This means that, in the speaker's opinion, the situation will probably happen.

The structure of the first conditional sentences is the following:

If + Subj + Present simple, Subj + will/might + Verb (base form)

Here are some examples of first conditional sentences:

TAULA 1.4.

If you don't save your files, you will lose all your work	<i>Si no guardes als arxius, perdràs tota la feina</i>
If the weather is nice, we will have a barbecue	<i>Si fa bon temps farem una barbacoa</i>

Notes:

- We can change the order of the main clause and the conditional clause without any change in the meaning, but we must write a comma if we put the conditional clause in the first place:

TAULA 1.5.

If I'm invited , I will attend the wedding	<i>Si em conviden aniré al casament</i>
I will attend the wedding if I'm invited	<i>Aniré al casament si em conviden</i>

- Apart from 'will', we can use other modal verbs in the main clause of the first conditional sentences.

TAULA 1.6.

If you can do it, I will be very grateful	<i>Si ho pots fer, t'estaré molt agraït</i>
If he is angry, you should calm him down	<i>Si està enfadat, l'hauries de calmar</i>
If you practise a lot, you may speak English fluently	<i>Si practiques molt és possible que parlis anglès amb fluïdesa</i>

- In the main clause, we can also use the imperative form:

TAULA 1.7.

If you have problems, please tell me	<i>Si tens algun problema, digues-m'ho</i>
---	--

1.3.3 Second conditional

We use the second conditional to refer to unreal or hypothetical situations, or about conditions that are impossible to be fulfilled. For example: **'if I were you...'**, **'if I were younger...'**, **'if I were a dog...'**, etc.

The structure of the second conditional sentences is the following:

If + Subj + past simple, Subj + would/could + Verb (base form)

Here are some examples of second conditional sentences:

TAULA 1.8.

If I had enough time, I would go out more	<i>Si tingués prou temps, sortiria més</i>
If I were you, I would be more polite to customers	<i>Si jo fos tu, seria més amable amb els clients</i>

Notes:

- In the second conditional clauses, the form of the verb ‘to be’ is ‘**were**’ for all persons (**if I were you ...**). The form ‘was’ is not generally accepted, except in the informal spoken language, where it is possible to say: *If I was you ...*. In most situations, however, the form is ‘were’.
- Apart from the verb in the past simple and the modal verb ‘would’, we can use some modal verbs, but they must refer to the past when the modal verb has time distinction:

TAULA 1.9.

If I had enough time, I could go out more	<i>Si tingués prou temps, podria sortir més</i>
--	---

1.3.4 Third conditional

We use the third conditional to refer to an impossible condition, since it occurred in the past and cannot be changed. If, hypothetically, that condition were true, then the described outcome would be likely.

The structure of the third conditional sentences is the following:

If+ Subj + past perfect, Subj + would/could have + verb

Here are some examples of second conditional sentences:

TAULA 1.10.

If I had known you were in trouble, I would have helped you	<i>Si hagués sabut que tenies problemes t'hagués ajudat</i>
We wouldn't have bought the house if we had seen the broken pipes	<i>No haguéssim comprat la casa si haguéssim vist que les canonades estaven fetes malbé</i>
If he had arrived five minutes earlier, he would have seen the whole show	<i>Si hagués arribat cinc minuts abans, hagués pogut veure tota l'actuació</i>

Other conjunctions

As we have seen, the most common conditional conjunction is ‘if’, but other conjunctions can introduce conditional sentences. For example: when, unless, assuming, as long as, even if, provided...

TAULA 1.11.

As long as I am capable, I will ride my bike to work	<i>Només si m'és possible aniré amb bicicleta a la feina</i>
You can get a yellow dress assuming there is one on sale	<i>Podràs comprar-te un vestit groc suposant que n'hi hagi un en venda</i>
Even if he loses his job, he will still have a job in education	<i>Tot i que perdi la feina, en tindrà una en educació</i>
Unless you have purchased the tickets, you won't be able to attend the show	<i>Si no és que has comprat els tiquets, no podràs anar a l'actuació</i>
I will go to the centre with you provided you apologize	<i>Aniré al centre amb tu si em demanes perdó</i>

1.3.5 Handling complaints

Communicating effectively with the public is a skill needed in a customer service post. Specially when handling complaints, customers might be overexcited, angry and ready to start a fight. The attitude of an agent should always be the one of listening attentively and trying to calm down the person who is in front of them.

Complaints may be dealt with face-to-face, they can be handled over the phone, by mail, or electronically.

When dealing with customers face-to-face, agents must be aware of the importance of body language. It is a powerful form of communication, they can be saying all the right things but convey the exact opposite with their body language. Making eye contact with a customer and nodding occasionally will show that the agent is listening and understanding the problem.

There are some rules to follow when dealing with complaints. If your are face-to-face with the customer, you have to listen to the complaint carefully, without interrupting, and wait until the person has finished completely. Then, you should apologize, summarize or repeat the complain and explain what action will be taken to solve the problem.

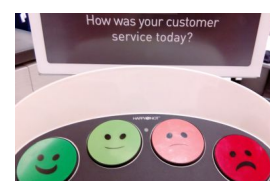
Companies should set up a customer complaints procedure and ensure that the members of the customer service team know what they can offer. In addition, experts advice companies to follow up the complaint with a phone call or a letter of apology. Finally, they had better ensure that they permanently fix the problem and let the customer know what they have done.

These are some useful tips to handle complaints with confidence:

- **Listen and empathize:** You might not agree, it might not be your fault personally, but the customers need to tell their story. It is very important that the person hearing the complaint listens and shows empathy for the customer's situation. Listen to what the customers have to say without interrupting them, make some sympathetic noises and try some of these phrases:



Sometimes body language might express our mood or feelings without even being aware of it. Source: Gideon (flickr.com).



Customer satisfaction surveys help businesses retain customers and attract new ones.

- *I see your point / I understand.*
 - *I can appreciate that.*
 - *Thank you for pointing that out.*
 - *Thank you for letting us know.*
-
- **Make sure that you understand everything:** Summarize what the customer has just explained. A good way to calm down a customer is to show you really understand their problem. Ask the necessary questions: who? what? how? when?
-
- *What seems to be the problem?*
 - *What happened exactly?*
 - *How did it happen?*
-
- In order to let a customer know that you understand what they are saying is to **repeat back the key points:**
-
- *“Just to make sure I understand, you were promised/you said...”*
-
- **Apologize and accept responsibility:** Angry customers need to be calmed down. Avoid phrases like “sorry”, “it’s not my fault” or “there must be a misunderstanding”, as they are never going to improve the situation. Instead, you can say:
-
- *“I’m sorry for any inconvenience this may have caused.”*
 - *“I’m / we’re terribly sorry about that.”*
 - *“Please accept my/our apologies.”*
-
- **Promise to take action:** Customers need to see that you are prepared to fix the problem and want to hear what you are going to do about it. They would like to hear phrases such as:
-
- *How can we make this right for you?*
 - *What would you like us to do to resolve this?*
 - *We would be happy to exchange this or would you prefer a refund?*
 - *I can mail that right away or would you prefer it by special courier?*
-
- To promise action you can use phrases like:



Sometimes customer attention can be daunting, however empathizing with customers is essential. Source: star5112 (flickr.com).

- *I'll let my manager know how you feel, and let's see if we can find a solution.*
- *I'm going to see how we can make this better for you.*

See the conversation between James Archer, the Customer Service agent of Best PC, and Mary Uttley, who purchased a computer at one of Best PC stores:

Mary Uttley: Good morning. I purchased a computer from your store three weeks ago and I'm having a lot of problems. I'm not satisfied with its performance.

James Archer: What seems to be the problem?

Mary Uttley: I'm having problems with my Internet connection.

James Archer: Did you read the instructions that came with the computer?

Mary Uttley: Yes, I did. I read the troubleshooting section, but it was no help.

James Archer: What happened exactly?

Mary Uttley: Well, the Internet connection doesn't work. I think the Wi-Fi is not functioning.

James Archer: How were you using the computer when you tried to connect to the Internet?

Mary Uttley: I was trying to connect to the Internet! What kind of question is that?! I launched the browser and a message appeared that there was no service.

James Archer: I understand you're upset, sir. I'm just trying to understand the problem. I'm sorry for the inconvenience this has caused. How can we make this right for you?

Mary Uttley: I'd like a refund.

James Archer: I'm afraid it's not our policy to refund the money. We can check the settings and get it back to you immediately or if you prefer it, you can get a replacement.

Mary Uttley: OK, that will work for me.

James Archer: Is there anything else I need to know about this that I haven't thought to ask?

Mary Uttley: No, I'd just like to be able to use my computer to connect to the Internet.

James Archer: We'll do our best to get your computer working as soon as possible.



The troubleshooting section helps the user sort out any problems or malfunctioning of the product by themselves. Source: Inga Munsinger Cotton (flickr.com).

1.3.6 Complaint letters

People write complaint letters if they are dissatisfied with a company's product or service. If you have to write a complaint letter or email, all you need to do is clearly state the facts and politely request a resolution.

1. Address your letter to the customer service department. Try to find out the name of the customer service manager or director and address your letter to them personally. Begin your letter with *Dear Mr, Mrs, Miss* or *Ms* followed by their surname. If you cannot find the name of the customer service manager, simply write *Dear Sir or Madam*.

2. Quickly get to the point of your letter. The first line of your letter should clearly address why you are writing the letter and what your exact complaint is. Give as many pertinent facts as possible, including the date, time and location where you made the purchase or received the service, along with any relevant serial or model numbers. For example, your opening sentence could be: *I am writing to complain about a faulty hair dryer that I purchased from your company on the 7th of April at your local store on First Street, Barcelona.*
3. State specifically what outcome or remedy will satisfy you. If you want a replacement, a refund, a repair, or some other form of compensation, state this clearly in your second paragraph.
4. Attach copies of supporting documents. These may include receipts, guarantees, copies of checks you sent and, if appropriate, photos or videos. All documentation should be included with your letter.
5. Give them a time limit to resolve the matter.
6. Sign off the letter with *Yours sincerely*, if you know the name of the person you are writing to, or *Yours faithfully* if you referred to them as *Sir* or *Madam*. Avoid informal closings such as “Best,” or “Yours truly.”

See a sample letter based on the following situation. On the 29th of March, Ben Blacksmith placed an order for a MyPhone Android 4.5 tablet (model number XXX456). When he received it, he noticed that it was faulty: the Wi-Fi did not connect, the SD card was not recognised and the screen was cracked. He wrote a complaint letter to the company asking for a replacement or a refund.



Cracked screen. Receiving a faulty device may lead us to write a complaint letter or email. Source: Patrick Hoesly (flickr.com).

Sample complaint letter

BCN Phones

Av. Paral·lel, 71

08004 Barcelona

Spain

April 7th, 2016

Harold Green

New Devices co.

Königstr., 35

70173 Stuttgart

Germany

Dear Mr Green,

Ref: 4548

On the 29th of March I placed an order for a (model number XXX456) MyPhone Android 4.5 TABLET. I have discovered that the tablet has the following problem: the Wi-Fi does not connect, My SD card is not recognised, and the screen is cracked.

I think this is a breach of contract and I am entitled to have the phone repaired or replaced and I would request that you confirm that you will do this within the next 14 days.

I also require you to confirm whether you will arrange for the item to be collected or will reimburse me for the cost of returning it.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Ben Blacksmith

2. Human Resources Department

The Human Resources Department is the division of a company focused on activities related to employees. These activities normally include recruiting and hiring of new employees, orientation and training of current employees, employee benefits (health, medical and life insurance), and retention. Furthermore, they act as intermediaries in dispute resolution. It is the job of the human resources department to handle all employees' complaints against other workers at the company.

Another function of this department is risk management, including workers' compensation or safety inspection. They are also in charge of payroll administration, dealing with sick leaves and vacation time.

2.1 The Hiring Process

With so many people looking for a job, finding people to work for a company might seem very easy. However, finding and recruiting the best quality candidates is not an easy task. This is one of the jobs of the Human Resources Department (HR), they recruit the best people for the organization.

Large companies usually have a formal hiring process which involves different steps. First, the decision is made whether recruitment is necessary, then the job description is prepared. The needs of the organization should be described in the job advertisement. In general, a job announcement should include: a brief description of the organisation, a description of the position, the duties and responsibilities, the qualifications required for the post, the salary and benefits attached to the post, the application deadline, the start date and a request for references. Once the description is prepared, plans are made on how and when this will be advertised.

After receiving the applications, candidates are usually invited for interviews and selection tests. Psychometric tests help to assess an individual's character and abilities, and they are often used to ensure that a candidate is suitable for a specific role. The most frequent kinds of psychometric tests measure cognitive abilities, e.g. numerical and verbal reasoning tests. In addition, many test batteries evaluate personality traits and decision making, e.g. personality questionnaires and Situational Judgement Tests (SJT).

See the translation of some words from the text:

TAULA 2.1. Vocabulary

Application deadline: *termini de sol·licitud*

Need: *necessitat*



Employees access door. Source: Unsplash - Olivier Collet.

Assess: <i>avaluar</i>	Outstanding: <i>remarcable</i>
Available: <i>disponible</i>	Payroll: <i>nòmina</i>
Cognitive ability: <i>habilitat cognitiva</i>	Personality trait: <i>tret personal</i>
Complaint: <i>queixa</i>	Psychometric test: <i>test psicomètric</i>
Current: <i>actual</i>	Recruit: <i>contractar</i>
Duties: <i>deures</i>	Reduce: <i>reduir</i>
Employee: <i>treballador, empleat</i>	Request references: <i>demanar referències</i>
Health: <i>salut</i>	Retain: <i>retenir</i>
Hire: <i>contractar, llogar</i>	Reward: <i>recompensar</i>
Human Resources: <i>recursos humans</i>	Risk management: <i>gestió de riscos</i>
Investment: <i>inversió</i>	Role: <i>paper, funció</i>
Job advertisement: <i>anunci de feina</i>	Sick leave: <i>baixa (de la feina)</i>
Job-seeker: <i>persona que busca feina</i>	Suitable: <i>adequat</i>
Life insurance: <i>assegurança de vida</i>	Vacation time: <i>període vacacional</i>
Look for: <i>buscar</i>	Wider range: <i>gamma més àmplia</i>

Diana Thompson works for the Human Resources Department of “New Creations”. She gives us some details about her job:

Diana Thompson



“My job consists of getting the best candidate for the different posts of the company. It means that I need to have a good knowledge of every department of the company, the members that compose them, and the tasks performed in each of them.

When I interview someone, I always have my notebook with me. Taking notes is vital, specially when the number of people you interview grows. Things that we look at are the body language; non-verbal language gives you more information about the person who is in front of you than you might expect. I may, for example, write, “Seemed most enthusiastic about this job” or “Avoided eye contact at this point; seemed nervous.” However, it could represent a 60% of the analysis. Of course, qualifications and skills will help you to make the final decision.

I would advise an interviewer to strike a balance between active note-taking and active listening. While taking good notes is important, so is maintaining eye contact and engaging in a conversation that will elicit the information you need to learn.

Interviewing potential candidates is one of my tasks, but apart from this, I make all the arrangements for receiving visitors, I plan their picking up, the reception, the agenda of the meeting, I take them around the company, show them the facilities and do presentations.

I know that in some small companies, human resources clerks are also in charge of issuing the employees’ payrolls, and some other accounting tasks, but this is not my case. I must say I love my job.”

2.1.1 Grammar: Passive sentences

Read the following passive sentences:

TAULA 2.2.

The employees' payrolls have been issued	<i>S'han emès les nòmines dels empleats</i>
The visitors will be shown the facilities	<i>Se'ls mostraran les instal·lacions als convidats</i>
Conflicts at work are dealt with by the HR manager	<i>Els conflictes de la feina són tractats pel director de recursos humans</i>

Passive voice occurs when the person or thing performing the action in a sentence is the object rather than the subject. Compare these two sentences:

- Active sentence: Diana organized the welcoming party
- Passive sentence: The welcoming party was organized by Diana

Structure of passive sentences

Let's see the structure of the passive sentences. Here is our example:

- The welcoming party was organized by Diana

The basic elements are three:

1. The **subject**: *The welcoming party...* is the object of the active sentence. In the passive sentences, the subject **receives** the action of the verb.
2. The **verb**: *...was organized...* The passive form of the verb is composed of two elements: BE (in the appropriate verb tense) + PAST PARTICIPLE (invariable).
3. The **agent**: *...by Mary*: the agent is the person who does the action of the verb. It is introduced by the preposition *by*. It can often be omitted.

Like the *past simple*, the *past participle* of the regular verbs ends in *-ed*. For the irregular verbs, see the forms in a list of irregular verbs.

Negative and interrogative passive sentences

To express a passive sentence in the negative or the interrogative, we use the verb 'be':

- **Negative**: The welcoming party **was not** organized by Diana - *La festa de benvinguda no va ser organitzada per la Diana*
- **Interrogative**: **Was** the welcoming party **organized** by Mary? - *La festa de benvinguda va ser organitzada per la Diana?*

Use of the passive voice

We use the passive voice in these cases:

- When we don't know who did the action or when it is obvious:

TAULA 2.3.

English is required to work in an international team	Per a treballar en un equip internacional, es requereix l'anglès
The fire has not been extinguished yet	<i>El foc encara no s'ha apagat</i>
English is spoken in many countries	<i>L'anglès es parla a molts països</i>

- When we want to give more importance to the action than to the person who did the action:

TAULA 2.4.

The company was founded in 2002	<i>L'empresa es va fundar/va ser fundada l'any 2002</i>
The victim was taken to hospital	<i>La víctima va ser portada a l'hospital</i>

Changing from an active sentence to a passive sentence

The change from the active voice to the passive voice will help you understand the differences between these two types of sentences. Here is an example to illustrate the changes:

FIGURA 2.1. Changes from the active to the passive voice

Active voice:

MARY **ORGANIZED** **THE PARTY** **LAST YEAR**
 Subject verb direct object Adverb of time

Passive voice:

THE PARTY **WAS ORGANIZED** **BY MARY** **LAST YEAR**
 Subject verb direct object Adverb of time

Notice the following:

1. The *subject* in the active sentence becomes the *agent* in the passive sentence.
2. The *direct object* in the active sentence becomes the *subject* in the passive sentence.
3. The verb changes from the *active voice* to the *passive voice*.

Notes:

- When the subject of the active sentence has an impersonal meaning like *people, someone/somebody* or *no one/nobody*, we do not usually express the agent in the passive voice.
- When the subject of the active sentence is a subject pronoun (*I, you, he, etc.*), the agent corresponds to the object pronoun: *by me, by you, by him, etc.*

The table shows the passive voice of some common tenses of an irregular verb (*do*, in the 3rd person singular):

TAULA 2.5. The verb tenses in the passive voice (verb: do)

Verb tense	Active voice	Passive voice
Present simple	does	is done
Present continuous	is doing	is being done
Past simple	did	was done
Past continuous	was doing	was being done
Present perfect	has done	has been done
Future	will do	will be done
Infinitive	(to) do	(to) be done

Passive sentences with two objects

Some sentences have an indirect object and a direct object. When this happens, the two objects can become the subject of the passive sentence. For example:

- Active: Mary asked **me** (= indirect object) **two questions** (= direct object)
- Passive: I was asked two questions by Mary
- Passive: Two questions were asked to me by Mary

2.2 Job Search

When looking for a job, it is essential to write a good curriculum vitae (or CV). The CV is called *resumé* (with the graphical accent) in American English. As part of the job searching procedure, it will also be necessary to write a cover letter, which usually accompanies the CV. Both the CV and the cover letter say a lot of things about the writer, so in order to cause a good impression on your potential employer, it is necessary to be very accurate and follow the conventions of this type of texts.

The final and most important stage in the job search is the interview, where you must show your oral skills and control your body language. The job interviews are

often carried out in English, even if you are applying for a job in your own country, because a knowledge of English is one of the most important skills for many jobs.

2.2.1 Writing a curriculum vitae

Curriculum vitae vs. resumé

The term *curriculum vitae* (or CV) is mostly used in BrE whereas AmE prefers the term *resumé* (spelt with the graphical accent).

You have probably learned that we must not judge people on first impressions. However, when an employer looks at a curriculum vitae (CV), he does precisely that: to judge a person on the first impression produced by the CV, without even knowing the candidate personally.

This is the reason why you should be very careful when you write a CV. It must convince the employer that you are the appropriate candidate for the job. With hundreds of other CVs waiting for an opportunity, the most important thing is that your own CV attracts the employer's attention. However, to attract the employer's attention does not mean to write your CV in a variety of colours and/or spectacular font types. This will only distract the reader from the important information. Instead, you should use a conventional format and organize your information clearly.

There are many different models, but the basic elements of all the CVs are:

- **Contact information:** your name and surnames should be prominent (usually centered and in bold type). Add your telephone number, your address and your e-mail address.
- **Work experience:** your relevant job experience should be listed chronologically, starting with your most recent job. For each job, you should mention the company and your job position.
- **Skills:** this section summarizes your personal skills and relevant achievements for the job. Here you should include your language and computer skills.
- **Education:** you must list your degrees, the school where you obtained them and the years you were in that school in reverse chronological order.

You may also include any additional information that you think is important for the job (for example, courses you have attended). Except for the contact information, you must include the title of each section, in bold type or capital letters.

Here is a list of things that **should not** appear in a CV:

- **Errors:** making grammatical and/or spelling mistakes in a CV is the worst thing that can happen to a candidate for a job. The employer will immediately relate the mistakes to the candidate's carelessness and he/she will be obviously discarded.
- **Salary:** do not include your current salary or that which you expect to earn. Salary negotiations usually take place during the interview.

- **Irrelevant information:** you should only include the information that is relevant for the job and that can benefit your interests. For example, do not include an average mark in a course if it is not a good one or hobbies that have nothing to do with the job.

If you have little or no work experience, you can list your school and social activities and link them to the job you are applying for.

Here is an example:

Curriculum Vitae

Name and surnames: Guinadell Soler Tor

Address: Av. Paral·lel s/n 08004 Barcelona

Telephone Number: 666 222 333

Objective:

To work in a position that will allow me to use my work experience in the administration field.

Experience:

- **Administrative assistant.** February-August 2017, FOB Creations, Barcelona (7-months to cover maternity leave):
 - Composing correspondence and other materials
 - Drafting, proofreading, editing and reformatting reports
 - Coordinating meetings and events
 - Handling multiple routine assignments
- **Front desk administrator.** January 2014-September 2016, Despico, St Joan Despí:
 - Answering multi-line telephone system; transfer calls, take messages, and assist customers
 - Greeting incoming visitors
 - Processing sales orders and invoices, shipping labels, and assisting with order fulfilment
- **Customer Service representative.** June 2012-November 2013, Linen SL, Barcelona:
 - Handling customer service support calls and emails related to orders
 - Answering and handling all inquiries
 - Answering multi-line phones and supporting the management team
 - Following up of customers who submitted complaints

Education:

- Certificate of Secondary Education (CSE) at "Institut Emperador Carles", Barcelona, 2009
- Diploma of Technician in Administrative Management, at "Institut Obert de Catalunya" (IOC), (distance learning), 2011

Skills:

- Social media and website management skills

- Outstanding communication and interpersonal skills
- Comfortable working in a fast paced environment
- Self-motivated, punctual, and well organized
- Driving license and reliable vehicle

TAULA 2.6. Vocabulary

Achieve: <i>aconseguir</i>	Hint: <i>consell, pista</i>
Applicant (job): <i>persona que sol·licita (una feina)</i>	Internship: <i>(fer) pràctiques</i>
Apply for (a job): <i>sol·licitar (una feina)</i>	Interview: <i>entrevista</i>
Attach: <i>adjuntar</i>	Invoice: <i>factura</i>
Complaint: <i>queixa</i>	Maternity leave: <i>baixa de maternitat</i>
Drafting: <i>redactar esborranys</i>	Order: <i>comanda</i>
Draw a search action plan: <i>dissenyar un pla d'acció de recerca</i>	Outstanding: <i>destacat</i>
Driving license: <i>permís de conduir</i>	Qualifications: <i>títols, certificats</i>
Evidence: <i>prova</i>	Report: <i>informe</i>
Front desk administrator: <i>repcionista</i>	Shipping label: <i>tarjeta d'enviament</i>
Greet: <i>donar la benvinguda, saludar</i>	Skills: <i>habilitats</i>
Handle: <i>gestionar</i>	Suit (to one's needs): <i>adaptar-se (a les necessitats)</i>
Highlight: <i>remarcar</i>	Team: <i>equip</i>

2.2.2 Writing a cover letter

A CV should always go with a cover letter. A cover letter is a formal letter where you explain why you are the ideal candidate for the job. Cover letters have no special format. They follow standards applied to all the other formal letters.

In a cover letter, you should include the most relevant aspects of your experience and education for the post. To do that, select the aspects from the CV that can contribute to raise the company's interest in your application. Make the reason you are writing clear and highlight your more remarkable achievements. Focus on those skills that make you a good candidate for the position. Pick up the top qualities the employer is requesting for in the job advert and then revise your CV to make sure they are included there.

Do some research into the company or the organization. Include information about them and tell them what attracts you to the company. Finally, revise your letter, make sure that it has the correct layout with no typing or spelling mistakes.

Here are some useful expressions which you can use in a cover letter:

- I am writing to you in response to your advertisement for the post of...

- As you can see from my enclosed CV, my experience and qualifications match this position's requirements
- I would like to point out that...
- I look forward to an opportunity to speak with you in person
- You will see from my CV that I have worked in...
- I have worked in the ... industry for over XX years
- During..., I improved (extended, etc.) my knowledge of...

Equivalence between the academic degrees in the Spanish and the British school systems

The Spanish and the British academic degrees belong to different school systems. Therefore, it is not possible to make a literal translation of your degrees. We must find the equivalent degree in the foreign school system.

The following table shows the equivalence between the Spanish and the British academic degrees.

TAULA 2.7. Academic degrees

Spanish school system	British school system
<i>Educació Primària / Educació General Bàsica (EGB)</i>	Primary Education
<i>Educació Secundària Obligatoria (ESO) / Batxillerat Unificat Polivalent (BUP)</i>	General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE)
<i>Batxillerat / Curs d'Orientació Universitària (COU)</i>	General Certificate of Education (GCE)
<i>Cicle Formatiu de Grau Mitjà (CFGM) / Formació Professional de Primer Grau (FPI)</i>	Vocational Education and Training (VET)
<i>Cicle Formatiu de Grau Superior (CFGS) / Formació Professional de Segon Grau (FPII)</i>	Certificate of Higher Education (HNC)
<i>Diplomatura (3 anys)</i>	Bachelor's Degree (B)
<i>Llicenciatura / Grau</i>	University Degree
<i>Enginyeria Tècnica</i>	Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE)
<i>Enginyeria Superior</i>	Engineer's Degree / Engineer Diploma (DI)
<i>Postgrau (de 30 a 60 crèdits ECTS)</i>	Graduate Certificate (PGCert)
<i>Màster (de 60 a 120 crèdits ECTS)</i>	Master's Degree (M)
<i>Doctorat</i>	Doctorate (PhD)

You can use a general term to describe the vocational studies (VET). For example:

- Business Administration and Finance - *Administració i finances*
- Secretarial Studies - *Secretariat / Assistència a la direcció*
- Sales Management and Commercial Spaces - *Gestió de vendes i espais comercials*
- International Trade - *Comerç Internacional*

Case study

The company G&A has published a job advert (ref. 078) on the website FindyourJob.co.uk. Guinadell (see her CV above) decided to apply for the job. She has prepared her curriculum and cover letter and is going to send it to the company. She has been looking for information on the web, and has seen that Mr Gordon Graham is the head of the Human Resources (HR) department.

Job advert

Personal Assistant (PA)

Salary: £2,000

Location: Liverpool

Date Posted: 14 Apr-2021

Description post:

We are currently recruiting for an experienced PA/Business Support Officer for a busy department in Liverpool. This is a temporary position to start asap* on an ongoing basis.

Responsibilities: Diary management, arranging meetings and prioritising workloads. To provide high calibre secretarial services in the drafting and production of business letters, reports, agendas, papers, minutes, spread sheets and presentations.

* asap: as soon as possible

Add to My Shortlist

This is Guinadell's cover letter:

15 Buttermarket Street

Warrington WA1 2NH

15 April 2021

Mr. Gordon Graham

G&A

Anfield Road

Liverpool, L4 0TH

Dear Mr. Graham,

I am writing in reference to the job advert (ref. 078) posted on the website Findyourjob.co.uk on 14 April. I would like to apply for the position of Personal Assistant in your company. As you can see from my CV, I have experience in similar posts, providing secretarial services in various companies.

Currently, I am studying a Masters degree on Business Management in order to broaden my knowledge of this field. I believe that I am perfectly qualified for the post and I that have the knowledge and skills required.

I would be grateful if you could consider my application, and I would welcome the opportunity of an interview.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours sincerely,

Guinadell Soler

2.2.3 Preparing your job interview

If the employer has considered your CV, he/she will call you for the job interview. This is the time when you meet the employer so he/she can find out more things about you. The interview may take place in a face to face meeting or online via Skype or any other videoconference program. In any case, the interviewer will ask you about your experience and qualifications, and you will also need to show your skills for the job.

Here are some tips to help you before going to a job interview.

1. Prepare your answers in advance. Think about the questions they employers frequently ask in a job interview and prepare your answers in advance.

Some frequent questions in job interviews

These are commonly-asked questions in job interviews:

- What can you say about yourself?
- Why do you think you are good for this job?
- What are your weaknesses?
- Why do you want to work in our company?
- What salary do you expect to earn?
- What are your motivations?
- What makes a good team, according to you?
- Have you got any questions?

2. Make some research. Before going to the interview, look at the potential employer's website and check the company's details. Having the information will help you in the interview.

3. Have a good appearance. First impressions are very important, so make sure that you wear smart clothes and have a nice appearance.

4. Be ready. Try to get to the interview with plenty of time. If you get late, you will be doubly stressed and, besides, it will cause a very bad impression. Make sure that you have everything that you need: notebook, pen and a copy of your CV.

5. Show your good character. Although you will probably feel nervous, try to smile all the time. This will help you feel more relaxed and will give a good impression. Make sure that you look your interviewer directly in the eye, and concentrate on what he/she is saying.

6. Ask questions. Do not tell the interviewer that you do not have any questions. You should prepare some questions in advance and be ready to ask them if they tell you so.



Job interview. Source: Unsplash - tim gouw.

Questions that you may ask in a job interview

Here are some questions that you may safely ask in a job interview:

- Why do you need to fulfill this position?
- What are the objectives of this position?
- How do you expect to meet the objectives?
- What can I expect from you in terms of development and support?
- What do you do to create a good atmosphere at work?
- Are there any plans for expansion?
- What does the company expect from the employees?

7. Take notes. Taking notes will give the impression that you are paying attention and that you are very interested in what the interviewer is saying.

The job interview is one of the significant factors in hiring, which will help the employer to determine if the candidate's qualifications, experience, workplace preferences, and salary needs are congruent with the position and the organization.

Before going for a job interview, candidates should prepare for it. First, they should conduct a research about the company or organization and read the job description thoroughly. They should also locate the place for the interview and plan the trip to reach there on time. They should dress properly, and feel confident. Previously, they should review common interview questions and prepare responses. See an example below:

Read the information about Guinadell, and the job interview below:

Guinadell's information

Guinadell is 29 years old and lives in Barcelona. She is responsible and hardworking. She always studies hard and likes facing challenges. She is good at computers and adapts to new software easily, though she hates data loss. She considers that her bad side is that she is too talkative and she likes to gossip. In the future she would like to become an efficient PA in a big company. Her plans are to study for a Masters degree on Business Management. She plans to finish her degree and apply for a job as PA. She does not like travelling far to go to work, but she can adapt if the job meets her expectations. She wants to work with friendly people. She likes to work alone because she works harder. Her hobby is rockclimbing. She expects a salary between 1500 and 2500 pounds per month. She is willing to work extra hours if there is the need. She can handle stress very well. She has experience with very tight schedules.

Job Interview

Mr Graham: Tell me about yourself.

Guinadell: My name's Guinadell, I'm 29 years old and I'm from Barcelona. I'm a responsible and a hardworking person.

Mr Graham: What are your strengths? Best skills?

Guinadell: Well, I always study hard and I like facing challenges. I'm good at computers, and I adapt to new software easily.

Mr Graham: What is your major weakness?

Guinadell: Maybe I'm a bit too talkative, and I like gossiping, but I always try to stop it.

Mr Graham: What are your career goals? Future plans?

Guinadell: My goals?... I would like to become an efficient PA in a big company. I'm planning to study for a Masters degree on Business Management. As soon as I finish my degree I will apply for a job as PA.

Mr Graham: What things are most important to you in a work situation?

Guinadell: I prefer not to travel far to go to work, and I like to work with friendly people.

Mr Graham: If you had a choice, would you prefer to work alone or as part of a team? Why?

Guinadell: If I had the choice, I would prefer to work alone because I work harder.

Mr Graham: What are your hobbies?

Guinadell: I love rockclimbing.

Mr Graham: What salary are you expecting?

Guinadell: I would like to earn between 1500 and 2500 pounds per month.

Mr Graham: You may have to face stressful situations. Can you handle it? Do you have any similar experience?

Guinadell: I can handle stress very well. I have experience with very tight schedules.

Mr Graham: If you had a deadline approaching, and you didn't have time to meet it, what would you do?

Guinadell: If I didn't have time to meet the deadline, I would work extra hours.

3. Working abroad

Society has changed a lot over the last few years. The world is globalized and we have become global citizens. More and more people decide to move to other countries permanently or temporarily. Working abroad offers opportunities for cross-cultural experience, personal development, expanding your knowledge of a foreign language, and preparing you for a future in a global society.

Travelling is a rewarding experience for everyone and it can be a great opportunity to build up your career.

The best time for this experience is as a student. Students often take a gap year in order to study or work abroad. They can choose among different options, they might take a course in another country, participate in volunteering programmes, go for an internship, or look for a job abroad. It is not easy, and it is necessary to do a lot of research, evaluate several factors, such as fees, costs, and visa, and making your own arrangements.

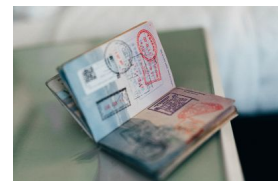
A visa is an official stamp in your passport, **which** authorizes you to travel, work or study in that country for a specified length of time. It is not necessary in Europe for European citizens, but in other countries a work permit visa is required for foreign workers.

Some student work exchange programs may legally assist students in obtaining a short-term work permit visa. Unpaid internships and volunteer positions may or may not require a work permit, depending on the host country's regulations.

What does it mean to volunteer? Volunteering is generally considered an altruistic activity **where** an individual or group provides services for no financial gain. An increasingly popular form of volunteering among young people, particularly gap year students and graduates, is to travel to communities in the developing world to work on projects with local organizations. In general volunteering has positive benefits for the volunteer as well as for the person or community served.

Generally, an internship consists of an exchange of services for experience between the student and an organization. Students can also use an internship to determine if they have an interest in a particular career, create a network of contacts or gain school credit. Some interns find permanent, paid employment with the organizations **for which** they worked. This can be a significant benefit to the employer as experienced interns often need little or no training when they begin regular employment.

Internships exist in a wide variety of industries and settings. It may be paid, unpaid, or partially paid (in the form of a stipend). Stipends are typically a fixed amount of money **which** is paid out on a regular basis. Internships may be part-time or full-time. They usually last between 1 and 4 months, but it can vary.



In order to travel to some countries you need to get a visa. Source: Unsplash-convertkit.

Many reasons may be considered to take a work experience abroad, as an adventure, as a chance to gain knowledge of another culture and of yourself, as an inexpensive way to improve a foreign language, or as an opportunity to build up your career.

This question was posted on a forum on an internet site:

“What are your reasons to want an international internship or to live and work abroad?”



Forum to share experiences in Australia. Source: Unsplash - damaris-isenschmid.

Hi,

My name is Anna, I'm from Barcelona and I'm planning to travel around Australia for one year with a working holiday visa. I want to go there in June, **when** I finish my final year at high school. The main reason **why** I chose Australia is because I want to improve my English, but also to visit the country and meet new people.

I would like to meet other people, **who** want to do the same thing and to maybe meet up in Australia and discover some places together. If you want to meet, contact me.

Hi Anna,

I'm planning on leaving for Australia around July. Do you have an idea on **where** you're starting and about your itinerary? Meeting would be good as I'm travelling alone too!

Contact me if you want to chat. You can follow me on Facebook.

See you, James

Hello guys!

I'll be in Australia for an internship programme at a company **that** is based in Melbourne. My aim is to develop my professional skills and improve my level of English.

I would love to find some other travellers **whose** interests are similar to mine. I would like to have some adventures, go on road trips, camping, etc. I want to get to know people before I go, hopefully find a group of people and set up a group chat and then meet out there to go on some awesome adventures!

Hope to hear from you soon!

Benedict

See the translation of some words from the text:

TAULA 3.1. Vocabulary

Abroad: <i>a l'estranger</i>	Length of time: <i>període de temps</i>
Aim: <i>objectiu</i>	Main reason: <i>raó principal</i>
Build up your career: <i>desenvolupar la teva vida professional</i>	On a regular basis: <i>de manera regular</i>
Chance: <i>oportunitat</i>	Regulations: <i>normes, reglaments</i>
Citizen: <i>ciutadà</i>	Research: <i>recerca</i>
Do research: <i>fer recerca</i>	Rewarding: <i>gratificant, enriquidor</i>
Fees: <i>costos, quotes</i>	Road trip: <i>viatge per carretera</i>
Foreign language: <i>llengua estrangera</i>	Short-term: <i>curt termini</i>
Gain: <i>guany</i>	Stamp: <i>segell</i>
Gap year: <i>any sabàtic</i>	Stipend: <i>estipendi, sou</i>

Internship: *programa de pràctiques*

Visa: *visat*

Knowledge: *coneixement*

Work permit: *permís de treball*

3.1 Grammar reference: Relative Clauses

Read the following sentences from the text. The words in bold are **relative pronouns**:

TAULA 3.2.

A visa is an official stamp in your passport, which authorizes you to travel	<i>Un visat és un segell oficial del passaport que t'autoritza per viatjar</i>
It is considered an altruistic activity where an individual or group provides services for no gain	<i>Es considera una activitat altruïsta on una persona o un grup proporciona serveis sense guanyar-hi res</i>
...with the organizations for which they worked	<i>...amb les organitzacions per les quals treballaven</i>
...in June, when I finish my final year at high school	<i>...al juny, quan acabi l'últim any a secundària</i>
...an idea on where you're starting	<i>...una idea d'on començaràs</i>

We use the relative sentences to give additional information about something or someone without starting another sentence. They are introduced by a relative pronoun, which are used to connect sentences or phrases. They refer to what is called the *antecedent* and it usually appears immediately before the relative clause. Here are some examples of relative sentences (the relative pronouns are in **bold**):

TAULA 3.3.

I haven't sent the mail that I wrote in the morning	<i>No he enviat el mail que he escrit aquest matí</i>
The restaurant where we met is no longer there	<i>El restaurant on ens vam conèixer ja no hi és</i>
Where's the person who was waiting for me?	<i>On és la persona que m'estava esperant?</i>
A job interview is the moment in which you can explain your skills	<i>L'entrevista és el moment en el qual pots explicar les teves habilitats</i>

Now let's see the elements of a relative sentence. The following sentence will serve as an example:

We need a person who speaks English and German.

- The main clause: *We need a person...*
- The relative clause: *...who speaks English and German.*
- The relative pronoun: *...who...*

3.1.1 The relative pronouns

The relative pronouns depend both on the noun it refers to (the antecedent) and on its function in the relative clause. Here is a list of the relative pronouns and their use:

TAULA 3.4. The relative pronouns

Relative pronoun	It is used when...
That	the antecedent is a person or thing and it is the subject or an object of the relative clause
Who	the antecedent is a person and it is the subject of the relative clause
Whom	the antecedent is a person and it is an object of the relative clause
Which	the antecedent is a thing and it is the subject or an object of the relative clause
Whose	the antecedent is a person or a thing and it has the function of a possessive adjective
Where	the antecedent is a thing denoting a place and it is an adverbial of place in the relative sentence
When	the antecedent is a thing denoting time and it is an adverbial of time in the relative sentence
Why	the antecedent is the word <i>reason</i> and the relative sentence explains the reason of the main clause

As you can see, all the relative pronouns (except *that*) are the same as the interrogative pronouns.

You should know the following things about the relative pronouns:

1. The pronoun **that** can be used instead of **who** or **which**. It is mostly used in the spoken language.
2. **Whom** is only used in the formal written language. In speech, we normally say **that** or **who**.
3. **Which** can have a preposition (**in which**, **for which**, **about which**, etc.).
4. As **whose** has the function of a possessive adjective, it must go before a noun.
5. The antecedent **reason** is often omitted from the main clause: *This is (the reason) why I didn't go*

Omission of the relative pronoun

In speech, we often omit the relative pronouns *that*, *whom* (*who* in informal style) and *which*, but only when they are the object of the relative clause. For example:

- *This is the book that I bought* or *This is the book I bought*
- *Sarah is the girl whom I called last night* or *Sarah is the girl I called last night*
- *The video which we recorded has been lost* or *The video we recorded has been lost*

However, we cannot omit the relative pronoun in these sentences because it is the subject of the relative clause:

- *That's the book that became so famous last season*
- *Sarah is the girl who called last night*
- *Here's the video which explains how to deal with conflicts at work*

3.1.2 Types of relative clauses

- **Defining relative clauses.** Give us essential information that we need in order to understand what or who is being referred to. In spoken language we often use the relative pronoun **'that'** instead of **'who'**, **'whom'** or **'which'**.

TAULA 3.5.

The people who live next door are the Mayles	<i>La gent que viu a la porta del costat son els Mayles</i>
That was the summer when we travelled to Austràlia	<i>Aquest va ser l'estiu en què vam anar a Austràlia</i>
They're the people that want to buy our house	<i>Són la gent que volen comprar la nostra casa</i>

- **Non-defining relative clauses.** They only add some extra information about the noun. It is mostly used in the written language, always between commas (or in brackets). With non-defining relative clauses we cannot use the pronoun **'that'**. Here are some examples:

TAULA 3.6.

Derek, who has no experience, made many mistakes	<i>En Derek, que no té experiència, va fer moltes errades</i>
Merlbourne, where I grew up, is my favourite city	<i>Merlbourne, on vaig créixer, és la meva ciutat preferida</i>

3.2 Communication: Making Suggestions and Giving Advice

In this section, we are going to study three common communicative situations: suggestions and advice. Suggestions and advice are very similar and we can generally use them in the same situations. The speaker can be included in a suggestion (*we*), for example, when you suggest doing something with other people; however, a piece of advice is always addressed to a second person (*you*). A request is a little different. In a request you ask other people to take specific actions.

We may need to use these three communicative tools in our daily and working lives because they are very common, so we should learn when and especially how to use them.

3.2.1 Making suggestions

There are different ways of making suggestions. They are all valid, but sometimes we may need to use a specific one rather than another. Here is a list of the verbs and expressions used to make suggestions, with their corresponding syntactical structures:

Suggest: This verb has three different syntactical structures:

SUGGEST + VERB -ING:

- I suggest speaking in English - *Suggereixo parlar en anglès*

SUGGEST + THAT-CLAUSE:

- I suggest that we speak in English - *Suggereixo que parlem en anglès*

SUGGEST + NOUN:

- I suggest a Japanese restaurant - *Suggereixo un restaurant japonès*

Suggest with indirect object

If you want to indicate the person whom the suggestion is addressed, you must use the structure **to + object pronoun** or the **that-clause**, and not the object pronoun. For example:

- I suggest a Japanese restaurant **to you**.
(Incorrect: *I suggest you a Japanese restaurant*)
- I suggest **that you** speak in English.
(Incorrect: *I suggest you to speak in English*)

Recommend. We can use this verb in four ways:

RECOMMEND + VERB -ING:

- The doctors recommend walking one hour every day - *Els metges recomanen caminar una hora cada dia*

RECOMMEND + INDIRECT OBJECT + TO + INFINITIVE:

- I recommend you to go home - *Et recomano que vagis a casa*

RECOMMEND + THAT-CLAUSE:

- I recommend that you speak English - *Et recomano que parlis en anglès*

RECOMMEND + NOUN:

- She recommended a private teacher - *Ella va recomanar un professor particular*

LET'S + VERB (base form):

- Let's travel to Australia! - *Anem cap a Austràlia!*

The form *let's* (= let us) is always written in the contracted form. It is used informally to make a suggestion the includes the speaker + one or more people.

WHAT ABOUT + VERB -ING...?:

- What about taking an English course? - *Què tal si fem un curs d'anglès?*

WHY DON'T YOU/WE + VERB (base form)...?:

- Why don't we post a proposal on the forum? - *Per què no publiquem una proposta al fòrum?*

YOU/WE CAN + VERB (base form):

- You can travel by bus - *Pots viatjar en autobús*

YOU/WE COULD + VERB (base form):

- You could rent an apartment - *Podries llogar un apartament*

3.2.2 Responding to suggestions

We can respond to suggestions in different ways, which usually depend on whether we agree or disagree with the suggestion.

I'm afraid ...

If we disagree with a suggestion, we should use this expression. It is used to soften the negative idea and show that you are not angry.

The following table shows different ways of responding to a suggestion.

TAULA 3.7. Responding to suggestions

To agree	To disagree
Yes, we could do that	I'm afraid it's not a good idea
Yes, that's a good idea	I'm afraid we can't do that
Ok, let's do that	I'd rather not
Yes, why not?	No, we can't do that, I'm afraid
Ok, that's great!	No, we shouldn't do that

When you disagree with a suggestion...

the social etiquette requires to explain the reason of your disagreement:

- **A:** Why don't we go to a restaurant?
- **B:** No, we can't do that. *We have no time and no money.*

3.2.3 Giving advice

As when making suggestions, we can give other people advice with a variety of verbs and expressions.

Note:

The noun 'advice' is uncountable in English. This means that it has no plural form and we cannot use the indeterminate article 'an' or the numeral 'one'. It's wrong to say: *I'll give you an advice.* We must say: *I'll give you advice, I'll give you some advice or I'll give you a piece of advice.*

There is a difference in spelling between the noun (advice) (Cat. consell) and the verb (advise) (Cat. aconsellar). The pronunciation is also different: -c- sounds like /s/ and -s- sounds like /z/.

The verb "advise". There are two different syntactical structures with this verb:

ADVISE + GERUND:

- He advised getting up earlier - *Va aconsellar llevar-se més d'hora*

ADVISE + INDIRECT OBJECT + TO + INFINITIVE

- I advise you to see your teacher - *T'aconsello que vagis a veure al teu professor*

Should. The modal verb ‘should’ is the most common way of giving advice in English. The correct structure is:

SHOULD + INFINITIVE (without ‘to’):

- You should work hard - *Hauries de treballar molt*
- You should save money - *Hauries d'estalviar diners*
- He should go back to school - *Ell hauria de tornar a estudiar*

When we use ‘should’ to give advice, it is very common to add: ***I think (that) ...***:

- I think that you should work hard - *Crec que hauries de treballar molt*

Had better. The expression ‘had better’ is used when we want to give advice in a stronger way. The structure of this type of sentence is:

HAD BETTER (NOT) + INFINITIVE:

- You had better apply for a student’s visa - *És millor que sol·licitis un visat d’estudiant*
- We had better go - *Val més que marxem*
- He had better speak up - *Millor que parli*

This expression is mostly used in informal spoken English, where ‘had’ is often contracted or is omitted:

- *You’d better work harder* or *You better work harder*
- *We’d better go* or *We better go*

‘If I were you, ...’. This is a second conditional clause, so the correct structure is:

IF I WERE YOU, + I + WOULD + INFINITIVE

- If I were you, I wouldn’t leave it for the last minute - *Si jo fos tu, no ho deixaria per l’últim moment*
- If I were you, I would save money - *Jo, en el teu lloc, estalviaria diners*

3.2.4 Responding to advice

When responding to advice, we can decide to take the advice or we can reject it. In both cases, it is customary to thank the other person for his/her advice. If we

decide to reject it, we should add some type of ‘excuse’. Here is a short list of possible ways of responding to advice:

TAULA 3.8. Respon-
ding to advice

To accept	To reject
Thank you, I'll do that	I'd rather not do that. Thanks anyway
Good idea! Thank you	Thank you. but I'm afraid I can't do that
Excellent! Thanks for your advice	Oh, no. That's not possible, I'm afraid

Here is an example of how to reject a piece of advice appropriately:

- **A:** *If you want to improve your English, you should go to England.*
- **B:** *Thank you, but I'm afraid I can't do that. Going to England is too expensive for me right now.*

3.3 Inquiry Letters

An **inquiry letter** is a letter written to request information about something: when you want some information from a hotel about room availability, a request for a brochure, or whether you want to ask a school of English about prices. An inquiry should always be brief and straight to the point.

A standard inquiry letter has three paragraphs. The first paragraph indicates the reason for writing, such as information about a product, a course or any other request. The second paragraph explains the writer's reasons for the request; you can explain why you chose to contact them and how the requested information would benefit you. The final paragraph should tie the letter together with an expression of gratitude for the reader's time and help. The letter typically concludes with a closing requesting for a quick answer and a greeting, such as “Sincerely,” followed by the writer's name and signature.

These are useful phrases you can use if you write an inquiry letter:

- “With reference to your advertisement in...,”
- “Regarding your advertisement in...,”
- “Further to your last email...”
- “Please send me...”
- “I would be grateful if you could tell me...”
- “I am writing to enquire whether...”
- “Would (Could) you please send me ...”
- “I would especially like to know...”
- “Could you also...”

The term ‘Inquiry’ is the same as ‘Enquiry’. The former is more commonly used in U.S. and the latter one is more common in U.K.

- “I would also like to know...”
- “Could you tell me whether...”

Closing:

- “Yours faithfully,” (very formal, only used when we do not know the name of the addressee)
- “Yours sincerely” or “Sincerely yours” or “Sincerely” (this is a standard closing)

3.3.1 Case study

Jordi López wants to improve his computer skills and he is looking for a course. He sees an advert (see below) in a newspaper and he decides to write and ask for information.

Computer technology

If you would like to study computer science on a course that has been specially designed to meet your personal needs and interests, then contact Ms Jenkins of the IT Learning School giving the following details:

- Motivation for studying Computer Science
- Strengths and weaknesses in the field
- Preferred start date and length of course

We will contact you once we have received your details in order to arrange a study programme for you.

Finally a course designed to meet your real needs!

This is the letter of inquiry which Jordi sent to the school:

Jordi López

Av. Paral·lel, 71

Barcelona

10 April 2016

Ms Jenkins

IT Learning School

24 Lloyd Street

M2 5ND Manchester

Dear Ms Jenkins,

I am writing with regard to your advert published in today's newspaper for a computer science course. I would like to apply for one of your courses, as I need to improve my computing skills for my job prospects.

I have an average computer literacy level I can use basic software programs, word processors, databases and spreadsheets, but I would like to be more proficient in all these applications for my future job. I would also like to start data analysis and learn Multimedia Systems, though I do not have much knowledge about it.

I am free during the month of July. I would appreciate it if you can send me your availability for these dates, and whether it is possible to design a course according to my needs.

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

Jordi López

If we look at the layout, first you have to write your address (right or left, but on top), then the date, and the name and address of the addressee. Start the letter with an opening greeting: "Dear Sir or Madam" if you do not know the name of the addressee, or "Dear Mr (surname)" for men, and "Dear Ms (surname)" for women.