

## AT A GLANCE

	Classwork – Course Book	Further work
<b>Lesson 1</b> <i>Each lesson (excluding case studies) is about 45 to 60 minutes. This does not include administration and time spent going through homework.</i>	<p><b><u>Starting up</u></b> Students discuss what they think makes a good communicator and talk about different forms of written and spoken communication.</p> <p><b>Vocabulary: Good communicators</b> Students look at vocabulary related to good and bad communicators.</p> <p><b>Listening: Improving communications</b> Students listen to an expert on communications talking about good practice in the area.</p>	<p><b>Test File: Entry test</b></p> <p><b>Practice File</b> Vocabulary (page 4)</p> <p><b>Practice exercises: Vocabulary 1&amp;2</b> (DVD-ROM)</p> <p><b>i-Glossary</b> (DVD-ROM)</p> <p><b>Resource bank: Listening</b> (page 188)</p> <p><b>Practice exercises: Listening</b> (DVD-ROM)</p>
<b>Lesson 2</b>	<p><b>Reading: E-mail: for and against</b> Students read an article about the good and bad aspects of e-mail.</p> <p><b>Language review: Idioms</b> Students do language awareness and practice activities on some common idioms.</p>	<p><b>Text bank</b> (pages 114–117)</p> <p><b>Practice File</b> Language review (page 5)</p> <p><b>Practice Exercises: Language review 1&amp;2</b> (DVD-ROM)</p>
<b>Lesson 3</b>	<p><b><u>Skills: Dealing with communication breakdown</u></b> Students listen to a phone conversation between a customer and a supplier and practise skills involved in dealing with breakdowns in communication.</p>	<p><b>Resource bank: Speaking</b> (page 175)</p> <p><b>Practice File</b> Survival Business English (page 55)</p> <p><b>Practice Exercises: Skills</b> (DVD-ROM)</p>
<b>Lesson 4</b> <i>Each case study is about 1½ to 2 hours</i>	<p><b><u>Case study: The price of success</u></b> A company that makes and sells hi-tech electronic products has internal and external communication problems. Students role-play the firm's directors and accept or reject solutions suggested by consultants.</p>	<p><b>Case study commentary</b> (DVD-ROM)</p> <p><b>Resource bank: Writing</b> (page 204)</p> <p><b>Practice File</b> Writing (page 6)</p>

For a fast route through the unit focusing mainly on speaking skills, just use the underlined sections.

For one-to-one situations, most parts of the unit lend themselves, with minimal adaptation, to use with individual students. Where this is not the case, alternative procedures are given.

## BUSINESS BRIEF

Within companies, communication falls into two main areas. There is the communication of information and technical knowledge needed to do the job at hand. Here, paper-based communication is being replaced by the company **intranet**, with internal company websites only accessible by employees. Some very large companies are appointing **knowledge officers** to exploit the information in a company to the full and facilitate its communication to those who need it. (But in this age of increasingly accessible information, there will no doubt always be the **information hoarders**, employees and managers who find power and pleasure in keeping information for themselves, even if it would be useful to their colleagues.)

There is also what might be called ‘celebration-exhortation’. The internal **company magazine** is the classic **communication channel** here. It may be produced **in-house** by a ‘communications department’ or **out-of-house** by journalists who specialise in this area. It may try to demonstrate how the company is putting its **mission statement** into action: the management may try to change employee behaviour by exhortation and by praising the performance of particular departments and individuals.

Externally, **advertising** has been the most visible form of communication with customers. Usually this is designed to increase product sales, but there is also **institutional advertising** designed to improve **perceptions** of the company as a whole. Companies naturally like to be seen as human and environmentally aware. But the communication between companies and their customers is increasingly becoming two-way, with **customer service centres** designed to gather information, not just complaints, from customers about all aspects of use of a company’s products. Ideally, this information feeds back into product modification and new product design. Additionally some companies are now using social software and micro-blogging sites such as Facebook and Twitter to communicate with their customers. See Unit 10 for more on **customer relationship management**.

Equally, a company must communicate with its investors, and **investor relations** are becoming an important specialised area of **public relations**. Investors want to know how their money is being used and what their prospects are.

Then there is the wider public audience to attend to. **Press conferences** may be called to announce important events such as product launches. **Press releases** may be issued to communicate more routine information. There is also the specialised area of **crisis management** and **damage control** (see Unit 11).

Whatever a company does, it has an **image**, so it should try to influence (some would say ‘manipulate’) the moulding of this image. This is one reason why the **communications industry**, in all its forms, is a multibillion-dollar business.

### Read on

Paul Argenti: *Corporate Communication*, McGrawHill, 2009 edition

Joep Cornelissen: *Corporate Communication: A Guide to Theory and Practice*, Sage, 2008

John Doorley and Helio Fred Garcia: *Reputation Management: The Key to Successful Public Relations and Corporate Communication*, Routledge, 2010

Donald Hislop: *Knowledge Management in Organizations*, OUP, 2009

Thomas J Lauria: *Investor Relations: The Art and Philosophy of Effective Corporate Communications*, Lulu, 2008

## LESSON NOTES

## Warmer

- Divide the board into areas and write one or two words in each area, like this:

drums	painting
pigeon post	
newspapers	language
radio	sign language

- Get the students, in pairs, to list all the forms of communication they can think of by adding to each group. Elicit their responses and complete the table on the board, perhaps to produce something like this:

drums	painting
pigeon post	sculpture
smoke signals	music
semaphore	
Morse code	
telephone	
newspapers	language
radio	sign language
television	body language
Internet	dance
interactive television	

- Invite comments and encourage discussion. (The students may come up with other responses, or organise them in other ways, but it doesn't matter.)

## Overview

- Tell the students that they will be looking at communication, especially in the context of organisations.
- Ask the students to look at the Overview section on page 6. Tell them a little about the things on the list, using the table on page 8 of this book as a guide. Tell them which points you will be covering in the current lesson and in later lessons.

## Quotation

- Write the quotation quickly on the board.
- Tell the students that it's from Ernest Hemingway, the famous American novelist. Ask if anyone has read his novels, e.g. *A Farewell to Arms*, *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, *The Old Man and the Sea*.
- Ask the students to discuss, in pairs, whether they think they listen enough when others are speaking.
- In a whole-group discussion afterwards, ask pairs for their opinions.

## Starting up

These questions introduce the theme of communication and provide an opportunity for some speaking practice.

## A

- Discuss the question in small groups or with the whole class. Rather than doing this in the abstract, take some well-known figures from television, politics, etc. and ask students what makes them good communicators (or not). Be tactful when discussing political figures. Students might mention body language, speaking style, ease that people have in identifying with them, etc. You could discuss what makes for charisma, the way that some people have a powerful attractive quality as communicators and leaders that makes people admire them and want to follow them.

## B

- Ask the students, still in their groups, to choose the three most important criteria in the context of: a) native speakers and b) non-native speakers of a language. (The emphasis on grammatical accuracy will probably be different for a) and b).)
- Discuss answers with the whole class.

## C

- Discuss the question with the whole class and write their ideas on the board. You may need to prompt them to think about such things as use of jargon, formality/informality, tone of voice, etc.

## D

- Ask students to discuss the first question in pairs.
- Elicit feedback. Get students to give reasons for their preferences. (This will allow you to see who likes giving presentations and it will also give students the opportunity to talk about texting, e-mail, use of social networking sites such as Facebook, etc.)
- Ask the whole class to brainstorm question 2: the problems that can occur with the different forms of communication – a vast area ranging, for example, from the pitfalls of oral negotiations where each side has different interpretations of the outcome, to the

damage caused by indiscreet e-mails. Again, list their ideas on the board. (A topical issue that they might mention is the lack of privacy on social networking sites: for example, possible employers might have access to potentially damaging information.)

- Ask students to discuss, in pairs, how these problems can be solved.
- Elicit feedback.
- If you are doing this lesson at the beginning of a course and you have not done a needs analysis, this exercise forms a good basis for one. Agree with the students which communication forms are most important for them or need most practice. Note down what they say and refer to these notes regularly while you are planning and doing the rest of the course, so as to modify activities, emphasis of the course, etc.

### One-to-one

This forms a good basis for a needs analysis, if you haven't already done one. It may give you ideas for role play of specific activities to complement those in the Course Book, based on your student's particular work situation.

## Vocabulary: Good communicators

Students look at vocabulary typically used to describe good and bad communicators.

### A – B

- Work on pronunciation of the words, without going into meanings at this stage. Get individual students to repeat the difficult ones after you, paying particular attention to stress: *arTICulate*, etc.
- Put the students in threes and get them to put words into groups: the good and the bad, and then into the more specific groups in Exercise B. If available, get each three to consult a good general dictionary, such as the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*.

### Exercise A

Good: articulate, responsive, coherent, sensitive, eloquent, extrovert, succinct, fluent, persuasive, focused

Bad: hesitant, inhibited, reserved, rambling, vague

### Exercise B

- 1 succinct
- 2 inhibited/reserved
- 3 rambling
- 4 articulate
- 5 coherent
- 6 persuasive
- 7 extrovert
- 8 responsive

### C – D CD1.1

- Get the students, in pairs, to read the talk and fill in the blanks. Play the recording for them to check their answers.

- 2 interrupt
- 3 clarify
- 4 confuse
- 5 explain
- 6 digress
- 7 ramble
- 8 engage

### E

- Explicit examples of good communicators, either from pairs or the whole class. Prompt the students by mentioning different occupations: politicians, actors, news presenters, advertisers, etc.

 i-Glossary

## Listening: Improving communications

Alastair Dryburgh is an expert on communication. He talks about:

- four key points about communication
- whether companies are communicating better with customers than before
- one example of bad communication

### A – B CD1.2

- Get the students to look at question A and listen once or twice to the first part of the interview, depending on their level. Elicit the answer.
- Get the students to look at the question in B and play the recording again. Elicit the four points.

### Exercise A

No, he doesn't. He thinks it can make communication both better and worse.

### Exercise B

- 1 People have limited attention, so communicate as succinctly as possible.
- 2 Recognise that communication is about meaning, so don't dump lots of data on people.
- 3 It's as much about listening as it is about telling things.
- 4 If communication is going to be effective, there's got to be some sort of emotional connection in it.

### C CD1.3

- Play the second part of the interview two or three times and get students to answer the question.

Amazon communicates well because you always know where you are – you get confirmation when you order something and further confirmation when the item is sent. They also make suggestions for things you might like to buy, based on what you've bought in the past or on what other people have bought.

### D CD1.4

- Get students to look at the questions. Play the third part of the interview once or twice and get students to answer the questions.

The company has introduced a computerised voicemail system that is very frustrating for the user: it is very difficult to speak to a real person, the options don't correspond to the callers' problems and the caller ends up going round in circles or hanging up. The company should simplify the system and make it easier to get through to a real person.

### E

- Ask the students to work in pairs to find good and bad examples of companies as communicators.
- Then discuss the findings of the pairs with the whole class.



Students can watch the interview with Alastair Dryburgh on the DVD-ROM.



Resource bank: Listening (page 188)

## Reading: E-mail: for and against

This article is about the advantages and disadvantages of e-mail.

### A – B

- Get your students to discuss the questions in pairs. Discuss the findings with the whole group and ask the students about their personal experiences of using e-mail, particularly for communication within their company or institution.

### C

- Get the students to look through the possible headlines and choose the best. Ask them to look through the article quickly, not in detail, and decide on the best title for the article.
- With the whole class, check that they have chosen title 3: 'A quiet word beats sending e-mail'.

### D

- Get students to read the whole article in more detail in pairs. Go round the class and assist where necessary.
- With the whole class, list the advantages and disadvantages. Do this at a good pace.

Advantages: productivity increase; effective transmitter of documents and data; forces sender to think through arguments carefully and express themselves logically; allows swift replies to lots of different questions when time is short; don't have to allow for journey times or travel costs, unreliable postage or engaged phones/voicemail; economical for keeping in touch with distant contacts; available 24 hours a day; good for pitching discreetly and directly to someone powerful.

Disadvantages: business best done face to face or on the phone; recipient of e-mail doesn't hear tone of voice or see facial expressions; sender can't modify e-mail half way through to avoid causing offence; can't tell the mood of the e-mailer; easy to send an irritable response when angry; the e-mail is a more permanent form of communication; easier to be tough, get away with weak excuses, make things up or say no; less human; too much spam/junk; a distraction, e.g. in meetings.

### E

- Do this as a quick-fire whole-class activity with the whole class.

- 1 face to face
- 2 causing offence
- 3 get away with
- 4 make things up
- 5 keeping in touch with
- 6 pitching to someone


### F

- Get students to work in pairs. Go round and assist where necessary.

- 1 keeping in touch with
- 2 get away with
- 3 making things up
- 4 face to face
- 5 pitching
- 6 causing offence

### G

- Get the students to discuss answers to the questions in pairs or threes for a few minutes and then to report back to the class. Deal with question 2 tactfully, for example, if you are dealing with people from different workplaces.

 Text bank (pages 114–117)

## Language review: Idioms

In this section, the students look at different idioms. (Students usually love them.)

### A – B

- Explain what an idiom is (an expression with a meaning that can be difficult to guess from the meanings of its separate words) and ask the students if they have any favourite idioms in English.
- Get the students to complete the exercise in pairs. Go round the class and assist where necessary, and then discuss the answers with the whole class.

#### Exercise A

a) nutshell b) point c) grapevine d) picture  
e) stick f) wavelength g) tail h) purposes  
i) bush j) mouth k) wall l) loop

#### Exercise B

1 g 2 f 3 a 4 e 5 l 6 d 7 b  
8 c 9 j 10 k 11 l 12 h

### C

- Do as a quick-fire activity, discussing the answers with the whole class.

1 get straight to the point 2 on the same wavelength 3 put you in the picture 4 talking at cross-purposes 5 beating about the bush 6 hear (or heard) on the grapevine 7 put it in a nutshell 8 got the wrong end of the stick 9 can't make head nor tail of it 10 talking to a brick wall 11 from the horse's mouth 12 keep me in the loop

### D

- Ask the students, in simultaneous pairs, to take turns asking and answering the questions. Go round and assist where necessary.
- Bring the class to order. Get different individual pairs to repeat their exchanges for the whole class.
- Emphasise the fact that idioms have to be word-perfect (explain this expression) otherwise they can sound ridiculous. Work on expressions that have been causing problems, getting students to say the right thing.

## Skills: Dealing with communication breakdown

In this section, the students discuss the kind of communication problems that can occur on the phone, and listen to two different versions of the same conversation.

### A

- Get the students, in pairs, to brainstorm possible expressions for each situation, then to report to and discuss with the whole group. Draw their attention to the 'Useful language' box at the bottom of the page, which has expressions for all seven situations.

### Suggested answers

- a Could you slow down, please?  
Could you speak up, please?  
Could you speak a little louder, please?
- b Could you hold on a minute, please?
- c Sorry, what exactly does ... mean?  
Sorry, I don't know what ... means.
- d Could you spell that for me, please?
- e Could you give me a little more information, please?  
Could you give me some more details, please?  
Could you expand on that, please? (more formal)
- f Sorry, I can't hear you. Could you call me back, please?  
Sorry, it's a bad line. I can't hear you.
- g Let's see if I've got this right.  
Let me check if I've got this right.  
Could I just confirm what you've told me?

### B CD1.5

Play the recording once and get the students to identify the problems the speakers have (all of them).

### C CD1.6

- Play the recording once or twice and get the students, in pairs, to make notes on why this second conversation is better.
- Elicit feedback from the whole class.

- He asks Klebermann to hold on while he gets a pen.
- He says that he didn't understand what Klebermann said. He asks him to slow down.
- He asks for more information.
- He confirms what he has heard: *Let me check that.*
- He asks Klebermann to spell the name of the company.
- He checks the number of lasers that are required.
- Klebermann confirms the quantity of lasers that are required.
- He asks Klebermann to explain the meaning of *roll-out*.
- He mentions that the line is bad and that he can't hear Klebermann very well.
- He asks for more information.
- Klebermann suggests calling back, as he can't hear Koichi well.

### D CD1.6

- Before students listen again, get them to work in pairs and try to predict (or remember) the missing words.
- Play recording again. Stop at points where students can complete the gaps.



1 hold on a second 2 didn't catch that; slow down  
 3 check; Got 4 spell that for 5 did you say  
 6 does; mean 7 a bad line; speak up 8 call you back

**E**

- Read out each of the extracts in turn and ask the students to match them with the points in Exercise A.

1 b 2 a 3 g 4 d 5 g 6 c 7 e 8 f

**F**

- Go through the expressions in the Useful language box, practising stress and intonation in particular.
- Get the students to role-play the situation in simultaneous pairs sitting back-to-back, using expressions from the Useful language box. Circulate and monitor.
- When the students have finished, praise strong points and mention one or two things that students should pay particular attention to. Then get 'public' performances from one or two individual pairs in front of the whole group.
- There are more situations like this to role-play in the Resource bank, on page 175 of this book.

➡ Resource bank: Speaking (page 175)

## CASE STUDY

### The price of success

In this case study, the students look at the communication problems at a manufacturer and distributor of hi-tech electronic products and make suggestions for improvements.

- Divide the class into three groups of students. Get one group to read the Background section silently, another the 'A product defect' section and the third group the 'Lawrence Discount Stores' section.
- Circulate and answer any queries.
- Quickly put the headings in the left-hand column of the table below on the board and elicit information from the group so as to complete the column on the right. Do this at a brisk pace.

Company	W. C. Hooper Inc. (WCH)
Activity	Manufacturer and distributor of hi-tech electronic products
Based in	Seattle
CEO	William Hooper
Key problem	Internal and external communication problems impacting on performance
Product defect, and key related issues	Cell phone became very hot and about to explode Customer service dept. sent replacement phone, but did not inform Marketing or R&D Phone withdrawn after a number of similar complaints
Lawrence Discount Stores	Richard Lawrence one of WCH's best and oldest customers Lawrence told Hooper he would probably order 5,000 EX-120s, executive toys (teach this expression). Hopper informed Regional Sales Manager (RSM) by phone When Lawrence ordered 5 weeks later, sales manager said it was out of stock. Lawrence complained to Hooper that his order was not given priority. RSM said he was waiting for confirmation.

- Make sure the students understand the situation by getting individual students to expand orally on different parts of the table, using complete sentences.

- At this point, get students to close their books and say what they think the most pressing communications problems are at WCH and what the solutions might be.
- Hopefully they will anticipate the communications problems in the panel at the top of page 13 in the Course Book. Get students to open their books again and run through the points there quickly.
- Point out that these issues are the ones that Betty Friedman, WCH's new Communications Director, has asked the consultants, Ward Associates, to look at.

#### CD1.7, 1.8

- Establish that the students are going to hear Hooper's reactions to the consultants' recommendations.
- Tell them they will have to make notes about Hooper's attitude to a) weekly reports, b) appointing a new account manager and c) dealing with defective products – write these up on the left hand side of a new table on the board.
- Play recording 1.7, pausing for the students to make notes after each point.
- Check answers with the whole class.

Weekly reports	Information overload (teach this expression)
Appointment of a new account manager	Will add to costs Customers like personal approach Wouldn't like to deal with new person
Dealing with defective products	Customer services to inform other depts. if someone complains – too bureaucratic, too time-consuming


- Explain that the students are going to hear one of WCH's sales reps talking to the company's head of communications.
- This time they will just have to give an oral account of the key idea.
- Play recording 1.8 once or twice and then check answer with the whole class.

The sales rep agrees with her CEO that paperwork is a waste of time that could be better spent on personal contact with clients.

#### Task

- Explain that in the task the students work in small groups as directors of WCH to discuss the consultants' recommendations. Underline the fact that students will also have to bring their own ideas on improving communications.



- Divide the class into groups of three or four. Appoint a spokesperson in each group who will report to the whole class after the activity.
  - Get students to begin the task. Go round the class and assist where necessary.
  - Circulate and monitor, noting strong and less strong language areas.
  - Bring the class to order when the discussion is over in most of the groups.
  - Get members from each group to summarise the discussion with the board's reactions to recommendations and the original ideas that they came up with.
  - Praise the strong points that you heard in the small group discussions and talk about areas for improvement, getting relevant students to reformulate what they said with the corrections you suggested.
-  Students can watch the case study commentary on the DVD-ROM.

### Writing

- The students write an e-mail from the communications director at WCH to the head of Ward Associates, with a summary of the decisions taken by the board. (These should be the decisions they came to in their own groups.)

➡ Writing file: Course Book, page 127

➡ Resource bank: Writing (page 204)

### One-to-one

Go through the activities as outlined above. In the task, you could take the roles of different directors with different points of view, while your student sticks to just one role.