

**8** Practice scanning for words that do not refer to the topic of the text. Underline the word in each list that does not relate to the same topic as the other three.

- 1 contest employment manufacturer labour
- 2 communication aspect announcement broadcast
- 3 advance evolution progress provision
- 4 economy routine competition cost
- 5 global rights worldwide universal

**9** Read the following text. Questions 1–4 are taken from a multiple-choice task that asks you to complete a sentence. You must choose ONE correct alternative out of FOUR.

- 1 Equal gender rights
  - A are the result of globalization.
  - B have been influenced by communication technology.
  - C are one of the causes of new approaches to work.
  - D have affected the global economy.
- 2 Workers in India work
  - A in call centres.
  - B longer hours than they did in the past.
  - C standard office hours from 9–5.
  - D for lower salaries than workers in other countries.
- 3 Communication technology has
  - A improved working conditions in the office.
  - B eliminated the need for business meetings.
  - C expanded the boundaries of the workplace.
  - D increased the cost of business trips.
- 4 Flexible working hours
  - A are the result of women's dual roles.
  - B have reduced the number of working mothers.
  - C were introduced in 2003.
  - D are a legal right for all employees.

**A** Over the past 30 years, both employer and employee attitudes to work and working patterns have been shifting. For many forward-looking companies, the office is no longer perceived as an indispensable base for work and business, and the effectiveness of the traditional 9–5 working day is increasingly being challenged.

**B** Three factors that have affected attitudes towards the working day and the ways in which workers interact with each other are: the globalization of the economy, widespread developments in communication technology and the expansion of equal opportunities for women.

**C** As a result of the globalized economy, there is intense competition for trade and service provision throughout the world. More than ever, workers in both developed and developing nations are recognizing the inevitable changes in their working environment, as they come into direct competition with each other for employment

opportunities. An example of this is the growth of call centres in countries such as India, where technology is advanced, but the cost of labour comparatively cheap. Employees in these centres, working unsocial hours, routinely provide telephone support to callers in time zones far from their own. The growth of these 'timeless workplaces' has been made possible by other factors affecting perceptions of the office, the evolution of online communication software and the proliferation of wireless and mobile networks across the globe.

**D** One of the more obvious consequences of these technological advances is that businesses in distant countries can discuss and complete deals over the Internet, through online conferencing software, without the need for international travel. Additionally, as these conferences can be held not only in the office but anywhere – at home, in a coffee shop or in an airport – the concept of the office as a unique centre for work has been brought into question.



**E** Whilst the global economy and technological advances can account for some of the changing perceptions of the workplace, another contributing factor, is social innovation, particularly with regard to equal rights for women. Although large numbers of women have been employed in business and industry over the last century, they have also continued to be responsible for childcare and running the home. For this reason, they have traditionally worked

part-time and have often needed to adapt their working hours to the demands of the family. To support this working pattern, a new law was passed in the UK in 2003, giving women with young children the right to request flexible working hours. Since then, further changes in equal rights legislation, allowing both men and women with families to apply for flexitime, have encouraged a widespread revision of attitudes to the workplace.

**10** Look at the reading passage again. Questions 1–4 are taken from a different type of multiple-choice task. In this type of question, you must choose TWO correct alternatives out of FIVE.

Before you answer:

- a** Read the question.
- b** Find the paragraph in the reading passage that refers to the topic of the question.
- c** Read the alternatives.
- d** Delete any alternatives that are not possible.
- e** Choose the TWO correct alternatives.

- 1** What do innovative employers think about modern working styles?
  - A** Working patterns are 30 years out of date.
  - B** Workers' opinions about employers have changed recently.
  - C** The workplace has become less important as a centre of operations.
  - D** The office is an essential part of their business.
  - E** The standard eight-hour day is not as beneficial as it used to be.
- 2** Why do employees have to compete for work internationally?
  - A** Opportunities for work have decreased in developing countries.
  - B** Technological advances and low wages have made some countries more competitive than others.
  - C** The worldwide economic climate has affected the labour market.
  - D** People in India are prepared to work long hours in call centres.
  - E** Wireless networks have extended throughout the world.

- 3** How have developments in technology affected the workplace?
  - A** They have expanded the boundaries of the office.
  - B** The office has become more important as a place to meet clients.
  - C** Personal meetings have become more significant.
  - D** People have the option to work from different locations.
  - E** They have encouraged international travel.
- 4** How has legislation in Britain supported families?
  - A** It has reduced working hours for parents.
  - B** It has given parents the right to ask for flexitime.
  - C** It has given women the right to work part-time.
  - D** It allows fathers to spend more time with their children.
  - E** It has made women work fewer hours.



## Reading Passage 2

You should spend 20 minutes on questions 1–12, which are based on Reading Passage 2.

- A** For years, employers have been aware of employee engagement\* and retention issues in their workplaces. These organizations have engagement policies that typically address engagement for the organization under one policy, without any differentiation for the generations of employees. As the millennial generation (also commonly known as Gen-Y and includes births from 1982–2000) grows in the workforce and *baby boomers*\* retire, managers and human resources professionals will need to develop new engagement models that take into account the generational differences between baby boomers and millennials. In this article, I will highlight some of the characteristics that differentiate millennials from other generations and explain why employee engagement should be *top of mind* for managers.
- B** Baby boomers are currently the largest generation of active workers. Research has shown that boomers identify their strengths as organizational memory\*, optimism and their willingness to work long hours. This generation grew up working in organizations with large corporate hierarchies, rather than flat management structures and teamwork-based job roles.
- C** Millennials have a drastically different outlook on what they expect from their employment experience. Millennials are well educated, skilled in technology, very self-confident, able to multi-task and have plenty of energy. They have high expectations for themselves, and prefer to work in teams, rather than as individuals. Millennials seek challenges, yet work-life balance is of utmost importance to them. They do, however, realize that their need for social interaction, immediate results in their work and desire for speedy advancement may be seen as weaknesses by older colleagues.
- D** The millennial generation is the largest age group to emerge since the baby boom generation, and as this group grows into a significant proportion of the workforce over the next 20 years, employers will need to make major adjustments in their engagement models. Motivating, engaging and retaining people will never cease as managerial priorities, but employers will have to carefully consider what strategies they will use to cultivate and retain valuable millennial employees now and into the future.
- E** Millennials are creating a change in how work gets done, as they work more in teams and use more technology. Their social mindset, however, is also a significant factor. As Leigh Buchanon writes in *Meet the Millennials*, 'One of the characteristics of millennials, besides the fact that they are masters of digital communication, is that they are primed to do well by doing good. Almost 70 percent say that giving back and being civically engaged are their highest priorities.'



**F** Coupled with the socially minded millennial comes their desire to be creative. Millennials have grown up in a time where information has become available instantly. Through a Google or Wikipedia search, answers to even quite complicated questions can be found. As such, millennials have developed into a group that wants to work on new and tough problems, and ones that require creative solutions. In a 2009 article by Tamara Erickson, a millennial who had been struggling in her role, she admitted to peers that, 'I guess I just expected that I would get to act on more of my ideas, and that the higher-ups here would have figured out by now that the model's changing' (*Gen-Y in the Workforce*, Tamara Erickson, Harvard Business Review, February 2009).

**G** The millennial employee is interested in feedback on his or her performance. But traditional semi-annual reviews are too infrequent for millennials. They want to know that they've done a good job, and they want to know now. A 2008 article in *Nonprofit World* provides readers with a checklist on the topic of providing millennial feedback. The list includes: give them checklists, offer plenty of help, reward them for innovating and taking appropriate risks, engage them with frequent feedback, provide them with mentors, create a collegial and team-oriented culture, etc. Feedback must also be given in such a way that millennials are receptive.

\* **engagement** – motivation and involvement (management term)

\* **baby boomers** – people born between 1946 and 1964

\* **organizational memory** – understanding of how the structures and systems of a company have developed over time

#### Questions 1–5

*Reading Passage 2 has seven paragraphs labelled A–G. Which paragraph contains the following information? Write the correct letter A–G on your answer sheet.*

**NB** You may use any letter more than once.

- 1 how to advise and motivate the younger generation
- 2 the professional characteristics of Gen-Y
- 3 Gen-Y attitudes to baby boomers
- 4 a professional profile of baby boomers
- 5 millennials and social responsibility

Questions 6–10

Complete the sentences with information from Reading Passage 2. Select **ONE** correct alternative.

- 6 Until recently, employers have
- A tried to motivate all employees in the same way.
  - B created new policies to motivate Gen-Y employees.
  - C implemented innovative engagement policies for baby boomers.
  - D recognized the difference between millennials and the older generation.
- 7 People born between 1946 and 1964 are
- A less productive than other generations.
  - B harder working than younger people.
  - C used to working within highly structured businesses.
  - D used to working in teams.
- 8 Gen-Y and baby boomers are seen to be different because Gen-Y employees
- A like to work individually.
  - B prefer to work on several projects at the same time.
  - C expect rapid promotion.
  - D work long hours.
- 9 The majority of Gen-Y workers
- A have accepted traditional ways of working.
  - B think that contributing to society is very important.
  - C find digital technology challenging.
  - D prefer to communicate online.
- 10 Gen-Y employees
- A want occasional feedback on their performance.
  - B are satisfied with checklists.
  - C prefer to work in a collaborative environment.
  - D do not need very much support.

Questions 11–12

Answer the questions with information from Reading Passage 2. Select **TWO** correct alternatives.

- 11 Why does management need to change its approach to employee retention?
- A Gen-Y employees will soon represent the majority of workers.
  - B Baby boomers have never needed motivating.
  - C Gen-Y employees do not expect to work hard.
  - D Millennials are more demanding of their employers than baby boomers.
  - E Gen-Y workers are not satisfied with traditional organizational styles.
- 12 In what ways can employers motivate Gen-Y employees?
- A Keep feedback to a minimum.
  - B Give them the opportunity to implement their ideas.
  - C Ask them to complete review forms.
  - D Encourage them to work in rigidly structured organizations.
  - E Give them challenging issues to resolve.