

Exit Test

Listening

- A**  Listen to a radio interview with Scott Duran, CEO of the US firm Charters Inc. Take notes and then answer these questions (1–8).

- 1 What type of company is Charters?
- 2 Where is its main location?
- 3 How long has the company been outperforming its rivals?

Scott outlines three main targets. What are they?

- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 What percentage of the company's sales are currently outside the US?
.....
- 8 Where are the company's best prospects for sales in ten years' time?
.....

- B** Listen again and choose the best answer, a, b or c, to these questions (9–15).

- 9 Scott believes it is important for the company to ...
 - a) restructure its organisation.
 - b) increase productivity.
 - c) keep looking for ways to improve.
- 10 Why is dialogue with customers important for Charters?
 - a) To involve them in developing new products.
 - b) To be able to deal more effectively with their problems.
 - c) To improve services.
- 11 What will happen when old plants are closed?
 - a) Many people will be made redundant.
 - b) Most workers will have left before the closures.
 - c) All workers will be transferred to other jobs within the company.
- 12 What reason does Scott give for building plants in Asia?
 - a) Manufacturing in the UK is in decline.
 - b) Production costs are lower in Asia.
 - c) The potential market is enormous.
- 13 How does Scott describe his strategy for expanding into Asia?
 - a) Buy up existing plant.
 - b) Form partnerships with local companies.
 - c) Build new plants and operate them independently.
- 14 Why is it better to send older managers to work in plants overseas?
 - a) Older managers are more highly regarded in Asia.
 - b) Young people don't have the right experience.
 - c) Young people are less motivated.
- 15 Which of these statements best reflects Scott's view of business?
 - a) You get the best leadership by offering high bonuses.
 - b) Success depends on having an ethical approach to management.
 - c) It is important to look to the long term.

Language**A Business idioms**

Three consultants have set up a new partnership together. Below is an extract from a meeting between them. Complete the gaps (16–23) with an appropriate idiom from this list. There are two you do not need.

a long shot
get a toehold
get off the ground
go on a big spending spree
heading down the wrong track
jumping on the bandwagon
kick around
kick off
on the shelf
stick to the point

Consultant 1: We've got excellent skills, but we're still relatively unknown. We need to find some ways to promote ourselves so that we can¹⁶ in the market. I've asked you to come this morning so that we can¹⁷ a few ideas.

Consultant 2: Well, perhaps I can¹⁸ with this: why don't we consider advertising?

Consultant 3: That might work, but the chances are we'd spend a lot of money and not get any business out of it. It's¹⁹.

Consultant 2: But our business will never²⁰ unless we're willing to invest in promoting ourselves. I'm not suggesting we²¹. We could afford some small ads in one of the professional journals, for example.

Consultant 3: The trouble is, there's such a lot of competition out there. I know the demand for consultancy is high at present, but too many other people are²² right now.

Consultant 1: I don't think that's relevant to the present discussion. Can we please²³?

B Multi-word verbs

Complete the sentences below (24–31) with the correct word from the box.

against away into off on out through up

24 If we don't start reining in costs very soon, we're likely to go of business.

25 If we want to maintain growth, we need to tap new sources of revenue.

26 The R&D department has come with some highly innovative ideas.

27 If we go ahead with this product, we're going to come up some stiff competition.

28 An over-complicated ordering system could put many customers

29 There must be a solution we can both agree on: why don't we talk things

30 This project is going nowhere. I think we should give up it.

31 There was a lot of resistance to the idea, so we've now backed from it.

C Collocations

In each of these sentences (32–41), the underlined words have been put in the wrong sentences. Write the correct word for each sentence.

- 32 Things are looking bad – the economy is slowing and we now bridge an enormous challenge to survive.
- 33 There are a number of problems we need to assess: how to increase revenues and balance the books, for example.
- 34 We have a high turnover of staff, and some of our best people are leaving – we need to find ways to recoup them.
- 35 We have to start making a profit if we want to retain our investment in this business.
- 36 One way to cut costs would be to tackle cleaning services.
- 37 We are spending a lot on product development, but it will be some time before it brings in any revenue. How can we raise more funds to repair the gap?
- 38 By failing to deliver the required product, we have greatly upset one of our key customers. It's going to take a lot of effort to pay the damage to that relationship.
- 39 Perhaps it would help if you offered to face compensation to the client for his loss of business.
- 40 You sold your client the wrong product. If you want your customer to be satisfied, you have to implement their needs very carefully.
- 41 Thank you for your recommendations. Now we need to decide how to outsource them.

D Prefixes

Choose a word from the box and then add the correct prefix to match each definition below (42–50).

competent	funded	leading	perfect	phrase	relevant
scrupulous	used	verbal			

- 42 Communication without words:
- 43 Not belonging to the matter in hand:
- 44 Likely to make someone believe that something isn't true:
- 45 Not having the necessary skills to do a job:
- 46 Behaving in a dishonest way:
- 47 Explain something again using different words:
- 48 Exploited too much:
- 49 Not completely correct:
- 50 Not provided with enough money:

E Sentence transformation

Rewrite the underlined parts of these sentences (51–57) using the words in brackets.

51 We're hoping to interest a number of sponsors in this project. (get)

.....
.....

52 Before we can answer that question, there are several factors we need to consider. (taken)

.....
.....

53 It took a long time for both parties to agree. (agreement)

.....
.....

54 So in my presentation today, I'd like to update you on progress. (bring)

.....
.....

55 Can we now conclude this discussion? (bring)

.....
.....

56 The consultants recommended cutting back on staff. (made)

.....
.....

57 Would you be able to estimate the cost? (give)

.....
.....

Skills**A Find a suitable word to complete each gap (58–64).**

Dear Sirs

With⁵⁸ to our invoice 4567 for €1,800,⁵⁹
26th July, we write to point out that we have not yet received
any payment from you.

We would like to⁶⁰ you that our payment⁶¹
are 30 days from the date of invoice and that your payment is
now more than 20 days⁶².

We therefore request that you⁶³ this invoice in full as
soon as possible. Unless we receive settlement within the next
ten days, we regret that we will be unable to credit any further
orders to your⁶⁴.

Yours truly

B Write ONE word in each gap to complete these dialogues (65–71) in a polite way.

- 65** **A:** Can I give you a lift to the station?
B: If it's not too
- 66** **A:** Do you think you'll be able to meet the Friday deadline?
B: It's looking, I'm
- 67** **A:** Good morning. My name's Sinead O'Donaghue.
B: Would you mind that?
- 68** **A:** I was wondering what the new management policy.
B: I think it will be effective, given time.
- 69** **A:** It could prove difficult to come within the budget requirement that was established earlier.
B: Let me see if I follow you. You're you're going to go over budget?
- 70** **A:** you were to offer us a five-per-cent discount?
- 71** **B:** We can't do that. But what to two per cent?

Reading

- A** Read the article about employee share ownership. Then answer the questions (72–78) on the next page.

Alternatives to harsh negotiations

by Simon London

Karl Marx was right about one thing: capital and labour are engaged in a seemingly endless struggle over who should get the spoils when things go well and who should take the pain when things turn sour. You can see it in the news as companies ask workers to take deep cuts in pay and pensions. If labour declines to co-operate? Down-sizing, bankruptcy or liquidation looms.

To be sure, companies have to cut costs to regain competitiveness. Investors will not provide capital unless they believe they can earn a decent return. Yet the 'gun to the head' negotiating style adopted by most management teams in these circumstances shows a startling lack of imagination. Playing Marxian Roulette with the workers may result in a lower cost structure, but you have to wonder what it will do to the human side of the enterprise – morale, culture and trust.

There is an alternative. Instead of asking employees to sacrifice future benefits 'or else', offer them a meaningful stake in the business.

The arguments in favour of such equity-for-concessions deals are twofold. First, it is a question of justice. Workers who signed employment contracts many years ago had no idea that the pension promises made by the company were contingent. If these promises are now to be broken, recompense is due.

Second, employee share ownership could become a source of competitive advantage for at least one of these troubled companies. A constructive relationship between labour and capital would make it easier to explore new technology and working practices. It might even increase the value of the company.

Sceptics respond that employee share ownership in the US has been tried many times before and found wanting. Look across the US corporate landscape today and you see few large companies in which workers own a significant stake. Neither is there statistical evidence that this handful has outperformed the rest.

Not surprising, say economists. They point to any number of reasons why employee ownership will not work. For example, since every employee shareholder shares in the financial upside of a company's success, there is a strong incentive to let others do the work. Then there is the problem of how to deal with new employees. If newcomers are granted stock when they are hired, old-timers will see their stake in the enterprise gradually diluted. If newcomers are excluded from stock ownership, a two-tier system results.

There is also the very real issue of investment risk. Do employees really want the great majority of their personal financial assets tied up in the company on which they already depend for wages? The complex truth is that all forms of corporate ownership have strengths and weaknesses. The trick is designing a system of governance that compensates for the shortcomings.

FINANCIAL TIMES

- 72 What, according to the article, do many companies do when faced with economic problems?
- a) Raise more capital from investors.
 - b) Cut back senior managers' benefits.
 - c) Force workers to accept lower salaries.
 - d) Find other ways to make savings.
- 73 What is the negotiating style management teams often use with their workers when times are bad?
- a) creative
 - b) sympathetic
 - c) coercive
 - d) collaborative
- 74 Why does the author criticise this method of negotiating?
- a) It is not effective.
 - b) It does not help to cut costs.
 - c) It does not lead to a long-term solution.
 - d) It could lead to low motivation and poor employee relations.
- 75 The author gives two reasons to support the idea of offering workers a stake in the business. (*Tick them.*)
- a) Workers would be less likely to strike.
 - b) It would improve morale.
 - c) It is fair to compensate for any reduction in benefits.
 - d) It would attract high-quality people to work in the company.
 - e) The company as a whole would benefit.
 - f) Experience has proved that it is effective.
- 76 Large US companies where employees own a lot of shares are ...
- a) uncommon.
 - b) numerous.
 - c) more successful than other companies.
 - d) facing financial difficulties.
- 77 The article mentions disadvantages of employee share ownership. (*Tick all correct answers.*)
- a) Employees prefer not to be tied too closely to the company.
 - b) Employees could become lazy.
 - c) It doesn't work if people change jobs frequently.
 - d) It is difficult to decide how to allocate shares fairly.
 - e) Workers don't like owning shares.
 - f) Employees could lose out financially.
- 78 The author's opinion of employee share ownership is:
- a) there are ways to overcome the problems.
 - b) the problems outweigh the benefits.
 - c) it is too complicated to be sure.
 - d) it is undoubtedly the best way forward.

Writing

You represent a firm of market research consultants which is proposing to carry out research into mobile phone use in Africa for a mobile phone producer (the client company). Look at the informal notes below and draw up the first part of a proposal in three paragraphs, with subheadings as shown. You do not need to specify details such as costs and deadlines for the work. You should write 200–250 words.

Background

Growing mobile use in Africa.

- Reasons:*
- 1) limited phone networks (many have no access to landlines);
 - 2) more local businesses in some areas;
 - 3) more people with income to buy phones.

Client requests analysis of each country → develop strategic marketing plan

Aims

- Client needs:*
- clear understanding of African market + factors influencing demand;
 - forecast for next 5 years;
 - which countries most important? – compile database for each.

Methods

Collect quantitative + qualitative data – establish current patterns, future trends. Use several different analysis techniques → draw up profile of existing users, how they use phones. Provide basis for strategic model – help client develop marketing plans, target potential users.

Speaking

You are going to have a speaking test that will last about 20 minutes. There will be two parts:

- Part A:** You will prepare a short (five-minute) presentation, give the presentation and then answer questions about it.
- Part B:** You will role-play a networking situation at a conference.

Part A

Choose one of the topics below (1–3) and prepare a short presentation. You should begin with a suitable introduction, divide the main information into about three main parts and end with a conclusion. You have 15 minutes to prepare ideas and make notes.

- 1 You have been asked to present your company to a group of potential customers. Provide a short background to the company, as well as describing its activities, products or services. Say what the benefits of doing business with your company would be.
- 2 Imagine you work in a sales team. Choose a product or service that you are familiar with and prepare a presentation to a potential customer. You should provide a clear description, as well as emphasising the benefits of the product to the customer.
- 3 You have been asked to prepare a talk for a group of people who are coming to work in a company in your country. Brief them on the culture and typical work patterns of your country. You may choose to aim your talk at a particular nationality.

Part B

Imagine you are at a conference waiting for a talk about management styles to begin. You decide to strike up conversation with the person sitting next to you. Think of a topic you can introduce to get the conversation going and try to maintain the flow for about five minutes.