

- Think about pros and cons (positive and negative factors) of working for these companies:

a) **Work environment** (friendly / unfriendly; culture of work; to feel under pressure / to feel independent in decisions; types of tasks; ways of managing people)
b) **Pay** (high / low; a system of bonuses; extra benefits)
c) **Promotion opportunities** (it is easy / hard to get a promotion; big / small ambitions)
d) **Job security** (secure / insecure; stable / unstable)

- Which of these companies would YOU like to work for? Why?

1 a family owned company
2 a multinational company
3 your own company (be self-employed)

A **Complete the sentences below with words and phrases from the box.**

share price	workforce	profit	~~turnover~~
subsidiary	market share	head office	

1 The amount of money a company receives from sales in a particular period is called its ...*turnover*... .
2 The money a company makes after taking away its costs is its ..... .
3 A company which is more than 50% owned by a parent company is called a ..... .
4 The employees in a particular country or business are called the ..... .
5 The percentage of sales a company has in a particular market is its ..... .
6 The main building or location of a large organisation is its ..... .
7 The cost of a company's shares is its ..... .

LIVEWORKSHEETS

B **Complete the extract from a company report with appropriate words or phrases from the box in Exercise A.**

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

I am pleased to say the company has continued its excellent performance. We are changing, growing and doing well at a difficult time for the industry. ....Turnover....[1] was €57.2 million, an increase of 15% on last year, and .....[2] rose by 5% to €6.4 million.

We are a highly competitive business. We have increased our .....[3] to 20%. Consequently our .....[4] has risen and is now at an all-time high of €9.6.

Increased production and strong demand have had a positive effect on our cash flow, so we are able to finance a number of new projects. We have successfully moved to our new .....[5] in central London. We are now planning to start full production at the recently opened Spanish .....[6] in October.

Finally, thanks once again to our loyal and dedicated .....[7]. Our employees will always be our most valuable asset.

C **Complete the chart below with the information from the box.**

Peugeot	Benetton	container ship operator	American Express
French	Japanese	Italian	drug and chemical maker	drinks supplier

Company	Main activity	Nationality
Cisco Systems	Internet equipment supplier	American
	Car manufacturer	
Bacardi Martini		Spanish
	Travel and financial services provider	American
Bayer		German
	Clothing manufacturer	
Sony	Electronic goods maker	
AP Møller-Maersk		Danish

Discuss: What type of the company does _____ belong to? What's the nationality of _____? What does _____ do?

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Listening
A successful company



▲ Peter Jelkeby

A **Work in small groups. Agree on the three most important factors from those listed below that can make a company successful.**

- focusing on how to increase market share
- having a strong company culture
- having user-friendly packaging
- having good designers who also understand production
- responding to the needs of the workforce
- starting with a simple business idea that is easy to understand

B 3.1 **Peter Jelkeby, IKEA's UK Deputy Country Manager, talks about four factors that make IKEA a successful company. Listen and number the four factors in Exercise A in the order in which he mentions them.**

C 3.2 **Listen to the second part of the interview and complete these notes.**

IKEA manages to stay ahead of the competition by:

- .....[1] the market and the customer .....[2]
- understanding how the .....[3] are acting
- being not only about products, but also about .....[4] to people's needs

D 3.3 **Listen to the final part and decide which of the following was the interviewer's question.**

1 What new projects are you currently involved in?
2 How can you keep up your performance at such a difficult time for the economy?
3 What are the things a successful international business must do?
4 Where are you planning to expand in the next five years?

LIVEWORKSHEETS

3.1 (I = Interviewer, PJ = Peter Jelkeby)

I What are the factors that make IKEA such a highly successful company?

PJ I think for IKEA, it starts with a very simple, straightforward business idea that is easy to understand, easy to work with, both for customers as well as co-workers actually. Added to that, we have a strong culture in the company that links this together. I think that's one of the big reasons for us being successful worldwide.
We have designers who are not only good on designing good-looking products, they understand production, they're working closely with our trading offices around the world, they're going into suppliers, developing with suppliers products in the production line. Then, from there on, it's about the packaging, how we transport, flat packages, how we bring it into the store, easy to put on the shelf; and then of course, for the customer, easy to bring home.

3.2 (I = Interviewer, PJ = Peter Jelkeby)

I How do you stay ahead of the competition in your business?

PJ That again is linked to understanding the market, the customer needs, the trends about that, how people live; of course, also understanding how the competitors are acting, what is going on in the market, price developments, new ways of meeting the customer and being aware of the, the trends and how we tackle that. But I think by the end of the day, I think IKEA, we are not only about products, we are about offering solutions to people's needs and understand that actually we can be very smart and make it practical and not only again good-looking furniture.

3.3 (PJ = Peter Jelkeby)

PJ I think again, er, stay true to yourself; er, be aware of the market you enter into, but still build on your strengths; don't complicate it, in that sense, but still find this kind of combination of, er, we are IKEA in this case, and this is the local market. Where is the differences, what do we need to adjust and adopt; what do we need to understand? And then, er, have an offer that fits that.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

READING

As you read, make a note of the key information about your company.

Toyota	Microsoft
• produces what customers really want.	• gives a lot of money to charity.....
•	• .....
•	• .....

Customer service

by Rod Newing

The main factor for the success of Toyota, the number-one company for customer service, is not only its customer focus, but also its products. Toyota provides the products that customers most want to buy, and designs models that meet people's changing priorities. In particular, it has responded to the industry trend by providing smaller, more environmentally friendly cars, such as the Prius, a hybrid car with both petrol and electric engines.

However, Toyota's after-sales service too is very much appreciated. 'They do everything to make clients satisfied,' says one respondent.



Toyota's reward for its world-beating customer service is not just to be the world's most profitable carmaker. It is on course to become the world's biggest producer.

Three very different computer companies fill the second, third and fourth slots – Dell, IBM and Microsoft. IBM and Dell are nominated for being customer-focused, while Microsoft scored more highly on products.

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Commitment to communities

by Alison Maitland



Microsoft scores most highly in the eyes of chief executives for demonstrating commitment to, and investment in, communities.

Among the reasons they give are the work of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the company's 'respect for local community needs' and the large sums it spends on sponsorship.

'Bill Gates' contributions to charity have dramatically changed the image of Microsoft,' says one CEO.

Toyota, in second place, has 'a commitment to train local suppliers and employees,' says another respondent. Another says the autos company contributes to the protection of the environment.

Third is Coca-Cola, which 'provides a lot of employment' and 'adapts to the culture of every country'. BP and McDonald's take fourth and fifth place, and GE comes sixth.

The next generation of respected companies, says one CEO, will be those that develop environmental technology and medical treatments for global use and that contribute to world peace and safety.

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