

Read the text below. Think of the possible answers:

1. What might have made the company to change to the new IT software system?
What problems might a company run into?
2. What are the reasons for the difficulties that PCR is experiencing with its Malaysian client?

Background

Frustrating time for PCR

PCR is a medium-sized company based in Germany. It produces software solutions for banks and has acquired a new client – a large, well-established bank in Malaysia. Since finalizing contracts well over a year ago, very little progress appears to have been made. Employees working on the project at PCR are frustrated because everything is taking so long and 'cut over' (the transfer from the old system to the new system) has been postponed for the fifth time. There seems to be reluctance

from the Malaysian bank to take on the new system. Constant changes are being made to suit the customer – something that PCR normally works on once the system is up and running, so users can input their problems. Training has taken place on an ad hoc basis and hasn't run very smoothly – it has often been decided on at the last minute so PCR doesn't have much time to prepare. Communication has been unpredictable and difficult, and critical decisions haven't been made.

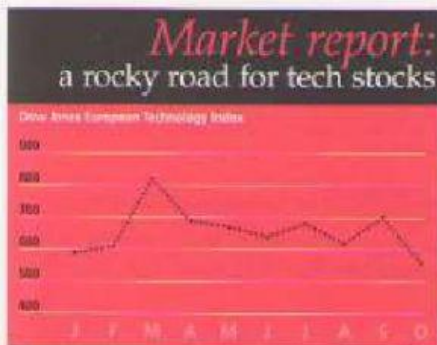
Imagine you were asked to report to the board of directors about the consequences of such problems. Work out a possible solution.

Exercise 5 A



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Look at the graph and read the passage about technology stocks. Complete the text by putting the verbs in brackets into the correct form of the past simple or present perfect.



European investors (1) have watched (watch) US stock markets nervously over the last few months. The problems with US technology and telecoms stocks (2) (begin) last March, and since then share prices at companies like Intel, Apple and Dell (3) (crash). Over the summer all these giants (4) (announce) lower than expected profits, and investors fear that demand for PCs in the highly developed US market (5) (peak). Now it's the turn of European stocks. On Monday stocks in companies like Germany's SAP and Finland's Nokia (6) (fall) sharply. SAP (7) (be) down 3% in Frankfurt, and Nokia (8) (drop) 7% in Helsinki.

But there was some good news for investors yesterday. Yahoo!

(9) (release) figures which showed that in the last quarter revenues (10) (rise) to \$295 million, up from \$115 million a year earlier. Yahoo! relies on online advertising for most of its income, and this year it (11) (gain) significant market share in Europe and (12) (manage) to achieve the position of top Web-navigation company.

Analysts believe that the market (13) (not/hit) the bottom yet. Earlier this year investors (14) (buy) any Internet stocks that were available, creating a stock market bubble. Now it's just the opposite. Investors (15) (become) so nervous that they are selling everything, even if the company is sound and the stock looks cheap.

Prepare the similar report on modern trends/challenges and trends on agri market. Use present perfect and past simple.

Working with words

Complete these sentences with a word from each list.

return financial
business start-up
gap network
venture

investment capital
market contacts
backing capitalist
plan

- 1 In a competitive business, you can only succeed if you see a new _____ in the _____.
- 2 I think you'll need about €50,000 as _____ _____ to launch your new company.
- 3 If you look at our _____ _____, you'll see it contains our financial estimates.
- 4 I'd rather borrow the money from my parents than have to share the profits with a _____.
- 5 If I lend you €30,000 to set up the business, what do you expect will be the _____ on my _____?
- 6 A business angel could give you some extra _____ _____ until you start making a profit.
- 7 We made use of our large _____ of _____ and found people who could help us.

Choose the correct answer from the words in *italics*.

- 8 This project is *totally* / *extremely* risky. Be careful!
- 9 My new member of staff is *totally* / *hugely* useless.
- 10 You've been *incredibly* / *completely* helpful. Thanks a lot.
- 11 Their plan is *extremely* / *absolutely* ridiculous.
- 12 This system is *really* / *absolutely* complex.

Working with words

Write the missing first syllable of the verbs in these sentences.

- 1 Opponents tend to ____sist change whenever possible.
- 2 Expect that people will ____act differently to the plans.
- 3 Staff want to know how this will ____fect them.
- 4 If you can't ____cept the change, you ought to leave.
- 5 Don't ____pose everything. Some ideas might be good.
- 6 I find it hard to ____dapt to all this new technology.

Choose the correct answer from the words in *italics*.

- 7 They ran *into* / *out* / *with* a few problems last year but the consultant's report helped to solve them.
- 8 My company regularly puts *off* / *on* / *out* training courses for its staff. There's something every week.
- 9 It's my job to deal *with* / *for* / *of* customer queries and sometimes they are complaints.
- 10 At first I was worried by the plans to mix the two departments but it has all worked *off* / *into* / *out* well.
- 11 We brought this policy *in* / *on* / *into* five months ago. There was resistance at first but now everyone's happy.
- 12 We'll be taking *out* / *with* / *on* new clients in the spring, hopefully, if the expansion continues.
- 13 Personally, I'm in favour *about* / *on* / *of* this strategy.
- 14 How keen are you *on* / *towards* / *of* the car-sharing plan?
- 15 It isn't surprising that so many of them are resistant *of* / *to* / *on* the cuts. It will mean longer hours with less money.

Match 7–11 to a–e.

- 7 Are you aware ... —
8 Do I need to inform ... —
9 Are you familiar ... —
10 Have you found that they aren't very sensitive ... —
11 What aren't you used ... —
- a them about how they should greet each other?
b to eating?
c to the way other cultures behave?
d of the importance of small talk with people from the UK?
e with their attitude to time?

Business communication skills

Complete these sentences with the words / phrases from the list.

Go	Luckily	That's	Despite	All in	That
It came	While				

- 12 _____ all, it turned out well.

- 13 _____ about because of cultural differences.
14 _____, I'd read that being on time is important in this country.
15 _____ arriving on time, we still didn't start the meeting for fifteen minutes.
16 _____ we were talking, he looked uncomfortable with the topic of politics.
17 _____ on, I'm listening.
18 _____ understandable.
19 _____ was when I was aware we had a problem.