

Working with words

1 Someone is talking about their colleagues. Match the adjectives from the list to statements 1–8.

*conventional creative determined impulsive
indecisive methodical outgoing thoughtful*

- 1 First Su Li said she was going to apply for the job; then she said she would stay where she was; then she had second thoughts. So I don't know what she's planning. _____
- 2 Tony isn't exactly boring, but he always wears a suit and tie. He wants to get married and have two children, work from nine to five and retire at 65. _____
- 3 Everyone loves Bob – he's always in a good mood, and he likes chatting to new people and making friends. _____
- 4 I asked Bill what he was doing at the weekend and he said 'nothing'. Then, on the way home, he decided to go skiing. So he went to the airport, got a ticket and off he went! _____
- 5 The thing about Jane is that when she's made her mind up, nothing will stop her. So, if she says she wants to become Sales Director, then that's what she'll be. _____
- 6 I couldn't find the mistake in the figures, so I asked Arturo to look. He started at the beginning, read every sheet, and finally worked out what the problem was. _____
- 7 She'll be a great art editor – she's very talented. She's a musician *and* a painter. She's got good fashion sense and she's always full of bright ideas. _____
- 8 If you ask Jonas something, he doesn't suggest a solution straightaway. He goes away and considers it quietly, but when he does come up with an answer, it's usually right. _____

2 Choose the correct words in *italics*.

- 1 I need to show this to my line manager to get a different *perspective* / *attitude* on the project.
- 2 Let's not reject anything – we need to *think* / *consider* all the options and then make a choice.
- 3 I need time to *balance* / *weigh up* the information and work out what to do.
- 4 It's hard when you have to decide *about* / *between* two extremely good candidates.
- 5 In business you have to be rational and logical. It's no good *relying* / *trusting* on feelings.
- 6 You're very experienced and you should have more *assurance* / *confidence* in your own judgement.
- 7 If I don't have enough information, I usually *wait* / *delay* my decision until I've done more research.

Business communication

1 Put the words in 1–7 in the correct order.

1 white / black / here / they're / in / and

2 think / be / it / to / crazy / I / would ...

3 me / should / if / we / ask / you ...

4 us / detail / you / please / could / some / give ?

5 Clare / to / let's / what / on / has / hear / hang / say

6 right / says / is / John / what

7 facts / look / the / if / we / at / we'll / see ...

2 Abigail, John and Bettina are discussing language training at their company. Complete their discussion with the phrases from the list.

*let's draw up some action points in other words
I don't want to spend too long I don't think we
what you're getting at is it'll mean we
as far as I'm concerned that's my view
what's your position today, I'd like to
I'm not convinced the fact is*

A 1 _____ discuss the three offers for Spanish training. John, 2 _____ on this?

J 3 _____ there are two very fair offers and one that looks quite expensive.

B 4 _____ should only consider price. 5 _____ the more expensive course includes all materials plus holding the training here.

A So 6 _____ the more expensive option also includes more?

B Exactly.

J 7 _____ We don't know the quality of these courses – have we received any recommendations?

A The more expensive course is offered by an established institute, but the cheaper options have good marketing.

B But if we take an all-inclusive package, 8 _____ won't have any unforeseen costs.

J True, but we should meet with the three companies first. 9 _____.

B 10 _____ we need to discuss the offers in detail with the language provider before a decision is made?

J Yes. 11 _____ on what we've discussed so far.

A OK, but 12 _____ on this point. We have other items still to discuss.

GRAMMAR REFERENCE

Countable nouns

- 1 A countable noun (e.g. *chair, cat*) can be singular or plural: *a chair, three cats*
- 2 Single countable nouns have a singular verb.
My office is in Manhattan.
- 3 Plural countable nouns have a plural verb.
The managers are unhappy about the new proposal.
- 4 Some nouns are always plural (e.g. *scissors, clothes*).
The scissors are on Jamie's desk.

Uncountable nouns

An uncountable noun (e.g. *advice, equipment*) has a singular verb and has no plural form.

Your advice was very useful.

Countable and uncountable nouns

- 1 Some nouns can be both countable and uncountable, but there is a change in meaning.
coffee – the drink or the crop
two coffees – two cups of coffee
time – minutes and hours passing
four times – four occasions
- 2 Additional words can also be used to refer to parts of a whole: *a piece of information, an item of furniture*

Expressions of quantity

- 1 To talk about something in general, use a plural countable noun and no quantifier.
Computers are getting cheaper all the time.
or an uncountable noun and no quantifier.
Cash is less secure than a cheque.
- 2 When talking about quantities, use the following quantifiers with these classes of nouns:
singular, countable: *a, an, the, one* (You must have a quantifier of some kind.)
plural, countable: *how many, (too) many, (not) many, more/fewer, (a) few, very few* and numbers (1, 2, 3)
uncountable: *how much, (too/not) much, more/less, (a) little, very little*
uncountable or plural countable nouns: *lots of, plenty of, masses of, most, most of the, some, some of the, all of the, all my, (not) enough, hardly any, (not) any, no, none of the*

Language at work

1 Complete the table with matching pairs of countable and uncountable nouns.

traffic correspondence training furniture
hotel room equipment ~~ear~~ letter money
accommodation software time table euro
photocopier lesson week computer program

countable	uncountable
car	traffic

2 Choose the correct verb forms in *italics*.

- 1 The equipment you need for the presentation *is / are* at Reception.
- 2 The people I met at the conference *was / were* very friendly.
- 3 The sales statistics *don't / doesn't* show a rise in demand for the product.
- 4 Could you turn on the TV? The news *is / are* going to be on soon?
- 5 Progress at the site *has / have* been very slow recently.
- 6 My clothes *isn't / aren't* smart enough for the interview.
- 7 When I *was / was* in the UK, the weather *was / were* very varied.
- 8 The new software *is / are* being developed in-house.

3 Choose the correct words in *italics*.

- 1 I need *many / more* time to make a decision.
- 2 She's managed to get *a / some* job with an insurance company.
- 3 There *is very little / are very few* information about this on the website.
- 4 I had *too much / too many* emails to reply to before the end of the day.
- 5 I think there are *very little / very few* people who understand the theory fully.
- 6 I'm sure we can find you *a / some* suitable accommodation.
- 7 If we agree to that clause, we'll have *very little / very few* room for manoeuvre.
- 8 Would you like *morning paper / a morning paper* delivered with your breakfast?