

# 1B Nice work!

## 1 READING & SPEAKING

a Think about people you know who either absolutely hate or really love their jobs. What do they do? Why do they feel that way? How do you know how they feel?

b *The Guardian* runs a weekly series called *What I'm really thinking*, where people in different jobs or situations reveal their true feelings. Look at the three jobs in the articles. say  
which person said the following, and why.

1 Although it is not my place to judge, I get frustrated sometimes.

2 People assume you're an idiot.

3 Your expressions and bodies reveal far more than you know.

c Read the articles and check. Reading between the lines, do you think on the whole they like or dislike their jobs?

d Read the articles again and answer A, B, or C. Who...?

- 1 ☐ implies that he / she sometimes finds the job boring
- 2 ☐ says people seem to think he / she can't see them
- 3 ☐ feels misjudged by the people he / she comes in contact with
- 4 ☐ has to ask one particular question, to which it is not always easy to get the answer
- 5 ☐ would like the opportunity to give feedback on the people he / she works with
- 6 ☐ notices a physical change in him / herself when he / she is working
- 7 ☐ describes a moment when he / she really loves the job
- 8 ☐ suggests he / she won't be doing the job for much longer
- 9 ☐ tries to empathize with the people he / she speaks to



# What I'm really thinking

## A THE CHECKOUT GIRL

Of course I judge you by your shopping. It's the only diversion I have. The work isn't that intellectually demanding – the till does all the maths – and it does become robotic. Having identical conversations every day quickly gets wearing.

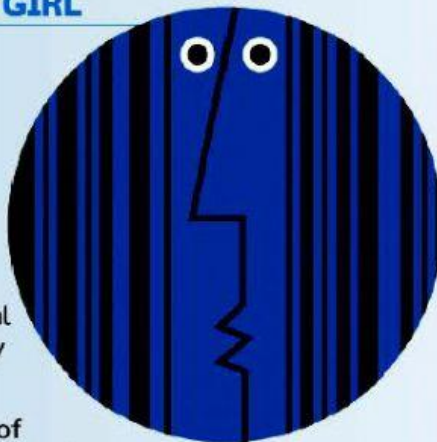
You get to know types of customers. The stressed-out mum, feeding her kids on the way round and thrusting the empty packet at me to scan. The sweet older couple, carefully packing cat food and biscuits into a trolley. The woman in a suit who buys a bottle of own-brand vodka, then puts it in her handbag. Sometimes I like to channel my inner Sherlock. Dark circles, nappies and aspirin? New baby. Rice cakes and spinach? The diet starts tomorrow.

Older women are very polite and chatty, but watching a queue build up as they count out pennies does my head in. Usually I take a deep breath and try to treat them as I would my own grandma. And I don't mind when people have to stay on their phone, but it is rude.

People assume you're an idiot. The fact is, I'm studying for a history degree. But that's irrelevant; neither I nor my colleagues are stupid, and people have no right to look down on us.

## B THE UNIVERSITY LECTURER

I look at the 23 of you in the room – a small group this year – and wonder if you're even aware of me as I teach. Might it be that because you're not talking directly to me, you forget to adjust the expressions on your faces? Or is it that you imagine, in a crowd, you are somehow invisible? Your expressions and bodies reveal far more than you know – sneering, eye-rolling, yawning, you can barely stay awake sometimes.



Your indifference bears no relation to my hours of preparation. The university asks you to comment, anonymously, on the quality of my teaching. I would like the chance to comment on the quality of your listening. When you are really disengaged and disconnected, I see hands reach for phones in bags. You connect, but it's usually to someone outside this room. Sometimes you even pass notes, giggle, and whisper.

Yet I also see you when you laugh at my jokes. When you are concentrating hard, I can almost hear your minds working. Some of you take notes so intensively, fighting to keep up with my words, as if it's life or death if you miss something. I see your faces light up when you want to say something, the eagerness to comment, to take part. You are relaxed, smiling, enjoying the moment of understanding. We connect. Now I see you and you see me.

## C THE 999 OPERATOR

The hardest part of my job is also the simplest – getting the address. Often when someone calls, they go blank. Or in the case of a road accident, they don't know exactly where they are. But the most important element is the address, because that's what brings the ambulance. I have to ask for it twice, which infuriates people.

It still surprises me to hear my voice during a call. It changes, becoming deeper, almost authoritative. I have to take control of the situation. I suppose that's why I wear a uniform. I have a script, but I refuse to be a robot; hearing people at their most vulnerable makes me add to it. When the caller is hysterical, telling them, 'I'm going to help you' and 'I know you're frightened' calms them down. But it breaks my heart when they're in pain or their loved one is dying; I have to take a 'stress break' after harrowing calls.

Although it is not my place to judge, I get frustrated sometimes. The man who rang because his toothpaste was burning his mouth; the mother whose baby was afraid of a fly. Don't they realize they're taking up precious time when a life-or-death situation may be needing help? But the moment I call them time-wasters is the moment I should quit my job.





- f Look at some extracts from other *What I'm really thinking* articles. Match them to the jobs in the list. What do they imply that the people (sometimes) feel about their jobs?

beauty counter manager ☐ dentist ☐ driving instructor ☐  
IT support worker ☐ pizza delivery man ☐ taxi driver ☐

- 1 Sometimes what I do is painful, and I'm not a sadist.
- 2 I don't expect to chat, but sometimes my cab becomes a mobile confessional.
- 3 Men are risk-takers. They go too fast and don't like being told what to do.
- 4 I'd like some respect – people who answer the door while they're on the phone really bug me, as do the ones who take ages to find the money.
- 5 It's a cliché, but 'Have you turned it on and off again?' is the first thing that comes to my mind every single time someone calls.
- 6 I work in an industry that convinces people to part with their cash in pursuit of a perfection that does not exist. I am betraying my sisterhood.

- c Complete sentences 1–5 with words or phrases from the list. Then write five sentences for your partner to complete with the other five words.

apply for be fired be laid off clock off  
perks quit rewarding skills tedious unpaid

- 1 Can we leave whenever we like or do we have to \_\_\_\_\_ at a certain time?
- 2 Nursing is often described as a \_\_\_\_\_ job, even though it may be badly paid.
- 3 The company has decided that around 20% of its workforce will have to \_\_\_\_\_ until the economic situation improves.
- 4 The only \_\_\_\_\_ required for this post are a good level of English and the ability to drive.
- 5 If you are prepared to do \_\_\_\_\_ work, there are several voluntary organizations that are looking for people.

## 2 COLLOCATIONS

- a Complete the text with the words in the list.

career clocking experience for full job management  
permanent positions qualifications unpaid

### What I'm really thinking – THE INTERN

I've just started my third internship. At the end of it, I will have been **working** <sup>1</sup>**unpaid** for a year. It feels as though I'm not in control of my own life, that I'm helpless. <sup>2</sup>**Academic** \_\_\_\_\_ and <sup>3</sup>**work** \_\_\_\_\_ are almost irrelevant when you're competing against people who have years of experience, many of whom are taking a step down the <sup>4</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ **ladder**. I'm not choosy – I've spent time in a children's charity, <sup>5</sup>**events** \_\_\_\_\_, a press office – but they haven't got me a <sup>6</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ **contract**. It's demoralizing. And exhausting – <sup>7</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ **hunting** is a <sup>8</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ **time occupation**. After <sup>9</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ **off**, most people can be free for the night. For the intern, it's time to go home and look for work. I have no idea how many <sup>10</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ I've <sup>11</sup>**applied** \_\_\_\_\_ since graduating, but it's more than 100.

## 1 ADJECTIVES DESCRIBING A JOB

- a Match sentences 1–6 with A–F.

- 1 **C** My job as a divorce lawyer is very **challenging** /tʃælɪndʒɪŋ/.
- 2 **I** I'm a checkout assistant in a supermarket. I really enjoy my job, but it can be a bit **monotonous** /mə'nɒtənəs/ and **repetitive** /rɪ'petətɪv/.
- 3 **I** I'm a primary school teacher. I find working with young children very **rewarding** /rɪ'wɔːdɪŋ/.
- 4 **I** I work in a small graphic design company and my job's really **motivating** /'mɒtɪveɪtɪŋ/.
- 5 **B** Being a surgeon is very **demanding** /dɪ'mændɪŋ/.
- 6 **I** I work at an accounting firm. My job is incredibly **tedious** /'tɪdiəs/.

- A I have to do exactly the same thing every day.
- B It makes me happy because it's useful and important.
- C It tests my abilities in a way that keeps me interested.
- D It's very high pressure and you have to work long hours.
- E It's really boring and it makes me feel impatient all the time.
- F The kind of work I do and the people I work with make me want to work harder (do better).



### 3 THE SAME OR DIFFERENT?

a Look at the pairs of words or phrases. Write **S** if they have the same or a very similar meaning and **D** if they are different.

1	colleagues	co-workers	<b>S</b>
2	quit (a job)	resign	
3	staff	workforce	
4	be laid off	be made redundant	
5	be out of work	be off work	
6	be sacked	be fired	
7	get promoted	get a rise	
8	skills	qualifications	
9	hire sb	employ sb	
10	perks	benefits	

### 2 VOCABULARY work

a Circle the correct word.

- My company offers considerable benefits to the colleagues / co-workers / staff.
- It's so *repetitive* / *challenging* / *rewarding* when you see your students really start to improve.
- My girlfriend's job is quite *rewarding* / *demanding* / *tedious*, so she gets very stressed.
- I'm hoping to get a *rise* / *promoted* / *raised* to Head of Department by the end of the year.
- He wants to *quit* / *employ* / *resign* a new assistant to deal with his mail.
- Over 2,000 workers will be *fired* / *made redundant* / *sacked* when the car factory closes down.
- Working on a production line can be *challenging* / *motivating* / *monotonous* because you do the same thing all day every day.
- My husband is *off work* / *out of work* / *laid off* with a bad back at the moment.
- I'm really jealous of my sister because she gets so many *skills* / *qualifications* / *perks* in her job.

b Match the words in **A** to the words in **B** and complete the sentences below.

**A** academic   apply for   career   clocking  
events   full   job   permanent   work

**B** contract   experience   hunting   ladder  
management   off   a position   qualifications   time

- The company is offering work experience to students in their final year of school.
- Looking after small children is a \_\_\_\_\_ occupation.
- I've spent six months \_\_\_\_\_, but I'm still out of work.
- She never went to university so she doesn't have many \_\_\_\_\_.
- He's very ambitious, so he's hoping to climb the \_\_\_\_\_ as quickly as possible.
- If you're good at organizing parties, you could work in \_\_\_\_\_.
- I'm hoping they'll give me a \_\_\_\_\_ when I finish my three-month trial period.
- She cleared her desk and locked the drawers before \_\_\_\_\_.

### 3 GRAMMAR discourse markers (1): linkers

a Cross out the linker that is NOT possible in the sentences.

- We set off at dawn ~~owing to~~ / *in order to* / *so as to* avoid the rush-hour traffic.
- Laila's mother-in-law was a very difficult woman. *However* / *Nevertheless* / *Consequently* Laila couldn't help liking her.
- In spite of* / *Even though* / *Despite* being the better player, Richard lost the match.
- Sales figures have fallen drastically *due to* / *because* / *owing to* the recession.
- The workers covered the furniture with sheets *so as not to* / *not to* / *in order not to* splash it with paint.
- After his accident, my brother sold his car *as* / *since* / *due to* he couldn't afford the insurance.
- We accept full responsibility for the error and *nevertheless* / *consequently* / *therefore* wish to offer you a full refund.
- I agreed to help *although* / *in case* / *even though* I didn't feel like it.

Write a full paragraph about your working possibilities once you finish your teaching career. You must use at least one connector of each of the 4 types explained on page 141 of the book. The more connectors you use the better.