

10 Phrasal Verbs for the Office

Task 1- Language

Back up Set up Come up Keep up with Call off

Read the sentences and underline the phrasal verbs, then match them with the definitions below.

1. Something unexpected has come up and I need to cancel our meeting.
 2. Remember to back up your computer files before you install the new version of Windows.
 3. The union will call off the strike when the company agrees to increase the workers' salaries.
 4. Would you ask Jim from the IT department to come and help me set up my new computer?
 5. Technology changes so quickly, I find it hard to keep up.
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- a. To prepare something for use.
 - b. To make a copy of something.
 - c. To cancel something
 - d. To follow or to keep pace.
 - e. To happen unexpectedly

Task 2 - Practice

Complete the gaps with one of the phrasal verbs from Task 1 in the correct tense.

1. I read the Financial Times every morning to _____ the latest news.
 2. Why did Mike _____ the meeting? I thought it was urgent.
 3. Ask Richard to _____ his hard drive on the company's system before he replaces his laptop.
 4. Something urgent has _____, I'll need to postpone my business trip.
 5. Could you help me _____ this new app on my phone?
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Task 3 - Context

Back up Set up Come up Keep up with Call off

Read the dialogue and then replace the underlined expressions with a phrasal verb in the correct tense.

James: I've been following the news about the company's merger on CNN.

Rachel: Yes, it's big news. I had hoped that the CEO was going to give us all the information about the merger at the meeting this afternoon.

However, something happened unexpectedly and the meeting was postponed.

James: Maybe the merger has been cancelled?

Rachel: My manager has asked me to prepare the process for the reorganisation of the department, so I don't think so.

James: Does that mean I should start making copies of all my files?

Rachel: Yes, I think that's a good idea.

Task 4 - Speaking

Answer the following questions.

1. How often do you back up your computer?
2. When was the last time that something urgent came up, and you had to reschedule a meeting?
3. How do you keep up with the latest developments in your industry?
4. Are you technically-minded? Do you enjoy setting up new applications or devices?
5. Have you ever had to call off a holiday or a business trip? What happened?

Task 5 - Language 2

Fill out Run out of Note down Go through Find out

Read the sentences and underline the phrasal verbs, then match them with the definitions below.

1. It took me a long time to fill out the visa application form.
 2. Can you note down the main points of the meeting for me?
 3. Simon is going through a difficult period, his wife has just left him for another man.
 4. We need to find out why our main customer has moved their account?
 5. We have run out of paper, can you call Office Depot and ask them for an urgent delivery?
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- a. To use up a supply of something.
 - b. To write something so you have a record of it.
 - c. To write/complete information.
 - d. To experience something negative.
 - e. To discover or check information.

Task 6 - Practice

Fill out Run out of Note down Go through Find out

Complete the gaps with one of the phrasal verbs in the correct tense.

1. You will need to _____ an application form, if you would like to apply for a job.
2. I can't believe it, we've _____ coffee again! Would you mind going to the supermarket?
3. I'll call the supplier and _____ why the delivery is late.
4. It is important to _____ information during a presentation, in order to remember facts and figures.
5. The company _____ many changes last year, which resulted in 650 job losses.

Task 7 - Context

Read the dialogue and then replace the underlined expressions with a phrasal verb.

Michael: Good afternoon, I'd like to apply for the part-time Researcher job. I'm a student at Brighton University.

Receptionist: OK great! You'll need to go to our website and complete the online application form.

Michael: Actually, I'm experiencing some difficulties with my student accommodation, and I don't have an internet connection at the moment.

Receptionist: Let me check if it's possible to complete a paper version of the form.

Michael: Thank you.

Receptionist: I am very sorry, but we seem to have used up all of the forms. I'll write your information here, and I will fill out the online form for you.

Michael: Thank you so much, you've been very helpful.

Task 8 - Speaking

Answer the following questions.

1. Have you ever filled out a form in English? Was it difficult to complete?
2. Do you note down information during meetings and presentations?
3. Are any of your colleagues going through a difficult time at the moment?
4. What do you do when you run out of office supplies at work?
5. How do you find out information about new products or companies?

Answer Key:

Task 1: 1-e, 2-b, 3-c, 4-a, 5-d

Task 2: 1- keep up with, 2- call off, 3-back up, 4-come up, 5-set up

Task 3: keeping up with, came up, called off, set up, back up

Task 5: 1-c, 2-b, 3-d, 4-e, 5-a

Task 6: 1-fill out, 2-run out of, 3-find out, 4-note down, 5-went through

Task 7: fill out, going through, find out, fill out, run out of, note down

