UNIT 9

The Competitive Instinct

In this unit, you will

- read about how human competition has shaped business and culture over time.
- review summarizing a text using nontext elements.
- increase your understanding of the target academic words for this unit.

READING SKILLS Understanding Time Signals

Self-Assessment

Think about how well you know each target word, and check (✓) the appropriate column. I have...

TARGET WORDS	never seen the word before	seen the word but am not sure what it means	seen the word and understand what it means	used the word, but am not sure if correctly	used the word confidently in *either* speaking *or* writing	used the word confidently in *both* speaking *and* writing
AWL						
behalf						
classic						
commence						
commission						
contract						
correspond						
currency						
devote						
flexible						
license						
mechanism						
parallel						
portion						
principle						
qualitative						

Oxford 3000™ keywords

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Before You Read

Read these questions. Discuss your answers in a small group.

1. Do you consider yourself to be a competitive person? Why or why not?
2. Do you think the urge to compete is something people are born with or something they learn from their parents? Why?
3. Does society have an effect on an individual's competitive drive? If so, how? Are some societies more competitive than others? Give examples to support your opinions.

MORE WORDS YOU'LL NEED

instinct: the natural force that causes a person or animal to behave in a certain way without thinking about it.

Read

This article is a timeline that traces the history of competition—personal, professional, and national.

The Competitive Edge: A Timeline of Human Ingenuity

Are you a runner? A soccer player? Have you ever competed in a sport, felt the thrill of the game, or raced for the win? Why is it that our best performances are often those played against our toughest competitors? Ask Liliya Shobukhova (top right) of Russia when she attained her best marathon time. She won't tell you she did it while training alone. She did it while running—and winning—the 2011 Chicago Marathon, her third consecutive win. It's not just physical competition that inspires us. As many of us can testify, competition affects every aspect of life. The following timeline demonstrates that the competitive instinct has been around for a long time and has produced some staggering results.

ANCIENT HISTORY
THE STORIES WE TELL

Before written language developed, oral stories were handed down from one generation to the next. From Greek mythology to the plays of Shakespeare, **classical** literature abounds with tales of rivalry between siblings. Often birth order, gender, and status within the family play into the clashes as siblings determine the best strategy for succeeding over the other. Whether it's for parental approval, wealth, or love, competition between siblings is an age-old story. It's a drama we don't tire of easily.

1206
THE LARGEST EMPIRE

A boy abandoned in the Mongolian grasslands with his mother and siblings later controls the largest empire in history. As a warrior, he conquers the tribes competing for control of Mongolia and brings them under his rule, thereby earning the title "Genghis Khan," which means "ruler of all between the oceans." Now acknowledged as a leader, he **commences**

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a lifelong career of brutal military campaigns. Throughout his reign, Khan commands a network of armies in different regions, all fighting on his **behalf**. He uses songs to communicate plans of attack to a largely illiterate officer group. These rhymes help soldiers remember and execute orders. Even now, stories of this legendary man continue to make the news.

1296
AN ENGINEERING FEAT

In an effort to compete with the beauty of the cathedrals in Pisa and Sienna, the Florentine elite **commission** Arnolfo di Cambio to build a great cathedral. He builds a nave[1] so large, no one is certain how to construct a dome over it. Not until the fourteenth century is the problem solved. This time a competition is held to see who can devise a strategy to complete the dome. Filippo Brunelleschi wins the competition with his ingenious design. He uses a system of interlocking bricks so the structure can support itself. This engineering feat ushers in the Renaissance.[2]

1419
GETTING THERE FIRST

Prince Henry the Navigator of Portugal begins sending regular expeditions to the coast of Africa, eventually reaching the Indian Ocean. Henry's **devotion** to exploration leads to competition between Spain and Portugal. Over the next 150 years, both countries send out Atlantic voyages that bring Europeans to the Americas.

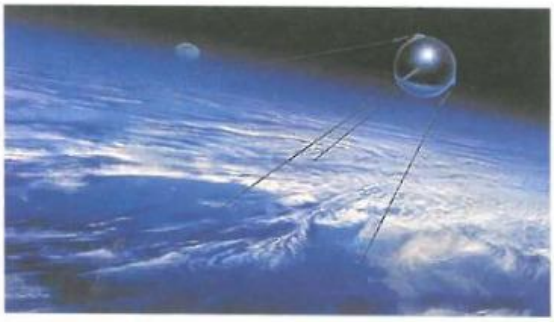
1450
THE PATH TO LITERACY

Starting with the Chinese in the ninth century, who used blocks of wood to imprint characters on paper, printing is used to create **currency** and books. However, it is not until 1450 that the world sees the first book printed using moveable metal type. Soon after Johannes Gutenberg establishes his press in Germany, other European countries want their own. With books becoming widely available, the printing press is credited with an increase in the number of schools, a **corresponding** steep rise in literacy, and consequently the creation of the middle class.

1854
COMPETITION OF MARKETS

In 1854, William Makepeace Thackeray uses the term *capitalism*, meaning "having ownership of capital," in his novel *The Newcomers*. The meaning and term evolve to encapsulate the economic **principles** we associate with it: private ownership of production, goods, and services, and the ability for businesses to compete for profit in free markets. Proponents of the system argue that competition leads to better quality and lower prices. Opponents point to its role in class division and an unequal distribution of wealth.

1957
THE SPACE RACE



Artist's rendering of Sputnik I

The Soviet Union[3] launches Sputnik I, the first satellite. This satellite, about the size of a beach ball, sparks The Space Race between the United States and the Soviet Union. The space programs of the United States and the Soviet Union **parallel** each other in this race to be the first to reach the moon. Billions of dollars in aerospace research are spent by

[1] *nave:* the main interior part of a church, which extends from the entry to the altar
[2] *Renaissance:* a time period in the fourteenth to sixteenth century marked by a renewed interest in ancient Greek and Roman learning and cultural transformation of the times, beginning in Italy and spreading across Europe
[3] *The Soviet Union:* a group of countries that formerly existed as a single political body in eastern Europe and northern Asia, led by Russia and including Ukraine, Lithuania, Kazakhstan, and others

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each. The United States reaches the moon first, in 1969.

1980
THE PERSONAL COMPUTER

Company executives from IBM schedule a visit with Gary Kildall at his company, Digital Research. They want to **license** his operating system in IBM's new personal computer. According to legend, Kildall decides to take a flight on his private plane instead of meeting with IBM, but he doesn't cancel the appointment. The IBM executives come to Digital Research, but Kildall is not there. A young self-starter named Bill Gates reportedly says, "Gary went flying." Gates then offers to let them license his DOS system instead. IBM agrees, and soon Bill Gates and Microsoft are household names. There are several variations on this story, but most report that Kildall did fly his plane that day; however, it was to a previously scheduled meeting with an important customer, not just a trip for fun. The phrase "Gary went flying" stuck though, and has become an industry phrase meaning "a great, lost opportunity."

2004
BUILDINGS THAT SCRAPE THE SKY

Cy Lee designs Taipei 101, a 101-story skyscraper that becomes the world's highest structure, a record previously held for 30 years by the Willis Tower in Chicago. But four years later, the Taipei record is beaten by the Shanghai World Financial Center, and just two years after that by Burj Khalifa in Dubai. However, in 2011, **contracts** are signed for a tower in Saudi Arabia even taller than Burj Khalifa.

Taipei 101 was the world's tallest building for only four years.

2010
TESTING, TESTING . . .

The results of the 2009 PISA (Program for International Student Assessment) are released. The test, a **mechanism** for measuring skills in reading, math, and science, is administered to 15-year-old students in 65 countries. Students in Shanghai, China, outperform the rest of the world. Other countries begin both **qualitative** and quantitative analysis to prove the educational abilities of their students.

2011
GOING GREEN

On October 31, 2011, the United Nations estimates that the world population has reached seven billion. Editorials fill the world's newspapers with solutions to the world's depleting resources as more and more people compete for their **portion** of food, energy, and wealth. Previously, the United Nations had predicted the world wouldn't reach seven billion until 2013. Companies continue to search for viable ways to supply energy to the world's growing population. Only the future will tell what innovations this competition yields.

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Reading Comprehension

Read each sentence below. Choose the best answer to complete the sentence based on Reading 1.

1. According to the section "The Stories We Tell," humans have a long history of telling stories about _____.
   a. physical competition of athletes
   b. the path to literacy
   c. competition between siblings
2. Using rhymes to help soldiers remember and follow through on orders was a strategy _____ used.
   a. Filippo Brunelleschi
   b. Genghis Khan
   c. Prince Henry the Navigator
3. Capitalism is associated with competition because _____.
   a. businesses are allowed to compete
   b. William Makepeace Thackeray used the term
   c. it leads to better quality and lower prices
4. The Space Race refers to _____.
   a. the launch of Sputnik I by the Soviet Union
   b. the Soviet Union and United States' race to reach the moon
   c. the Soviet Union and United States' race to launch a satellite
5. Gary Kildall was _____.
   a. the owner of Digital Research
   b. an IBM executive
   c. a phrase used within the computer industry
6. The _____ held the record for 30 years for being the tallest building in the world.
   a. Taipei 101
   b. Shanghai World Financial Center
   c. Willis Tower
7. The PISA _____.
   a. is a tower planned to go up in Saudi Arabia
   b. measures reading, math, and science skills
   c. is the name of a satellite
8. As the population increases, companies _____.
   a. compete for their portion of resources
   b. predict that newspapers will offer solutions
   c. search for new ways to supply energy

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READING SKILL Understanding Time Signals

LEARN

Although timelines present historical information, they are often written in the present tense. This makes the information seem more interesting and immediate, but it also makes the use of time words very important.

These time words and expressions can be found in this reading:

throughout	soon	starting with	eventually
for...years	over the next	then	previously
later	in (+ year)	even now	after that

APPLY

Look back at the timeline and underline the time expressions.

REVIEW A SKILL **Summarizing a Text Using Nontext Elements** (See p. 69)

When you summarize information, you need to figure out the main ideas of a selection and combine them briefly and clearly. As you complete the activity below, review each section of the timeline and identify the main ideas.

In your notebook, record the dates for each event given in Reading 1. Then summarize each section as briefly as you can and still record the important facts. Use the present tense and include time words as necessary to clarify the sequence of events. Compare your work in a small group.

Vocabulary Activities STEP I: Word Level

A. Read the sentences. Circle the sentence with the same meaning. Use a dictionary to help you.

1. The council **commissioned** the large sculpture.
   a. The council admired the large sculpture.
   b. The council paid for the large sculpture.
   c. The council tore down the large sculpture.
2. The artist **commenced** work the next day.
   a. The artist finished work the next day.
   b. The artist commented on the work the next day.
   c. The artist began work the next day.

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3. The city established a **mechanism** for reporting problems.
   a. The city established a system for reporting problems.
   b. The city established a machine for reporting problems.
   c. The city established a new contract for reporting problems.
4. The two companies signed a **contract.**
   a. The two companies signed an application.
   b. The two companies signed an agreement.
   c. The two companies signed a petition.
5. He acted on his father's **behalf.**
   a. He represented his father.
   b. He helped his father.
   c. He worked for his father.
6. At that school, they evaluate students **qualitatively.**
   a. At that school, they evaluate based on students' percentages.
   b. At that school, they evaluate with a description of students' performance.
   c. At that school, they evaluate students very strictly.

B. Read these excerpts from a text on business. For each excerpt, cross out the one word or phrase in parentheses with a different meaning from the other three choices. Compare your answers with a partner.

1. Patagonia, Inc., an outdoor equipment company in California, differs from the (*traditional / classical / established / innovative*) business model because it focuses on saving the environment rather than increasing profits.
2. Many creative workers come to Patagonia because they are interested in working for a company that values its (*consumers / morals / values / principles*) more than its profits.
3. Patagonia also has (*flexible / demanding / adaptable / changeable*) work hours for its employees, who are encouraged to spend a (*majority / part / portion / segment*) of their workday at the beach when conditions are good for surfing.
4. The company sees professional work and outdoor hobbies not as conflicting demands, but as complementary and (*helpful / equivalent / parallel / similar*) activities.
5. The founder and chairman of Patagonia, Yvon Chouinard, believes that (*devotion / attraction / commitment / dedication*) to recreation encourages innovation in product development.
6. Chouinard believes that the company's success and profitability (*corresponds to / is consistent with / is greater than / is related to*) its devotion to the environment and sustainable business practices.

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C. **Which of these jobs should require a license? Put a check (✓) next to them. Then, discuss your ideas in a small group. Together, decide which three are the most important to license, and share your ideas with the class.**

___ driving a taxi
___ operating a beauty salon
___ selling medicine
___ teaching children
___ building houses
___ practicing law (being a lawyer)
___ taking care of pets
___ selling food to the public

Vocabulary Activities STEP II: Sentence Level

The adjective *qualitative* refers to an evaluation of something based on how good it is or on observations of different qualities. It can also be used to refer to evaluations based on observations rather than measurements.

*A **qualitative** study of employee satisfaction found that 75 percent of workers feel less loyalty to their companies now than they did ten years ago.*

Note, the opposite of qualitative is *quantitative*, referring to evaluations using numbers and statistics.

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D. **Decide whether each item in the chart is a qualitative or quantitative evaluation. Explain your answers.**

	Qualitative	Quantitative
1. 98% of customers that use products from the German software company SAP also use Microsoft Office.		*The percentage shows that this is purely a quantitative evaluation.*
2. Cirque de Soleil's success is due to its unique combination of circus and theater.		
3. 14% of new business is in new markets, which generates 61% of profits.		
4. Heavy equipment seller Caterpillar saw its profits increase by 38%.		
5. People see the grocery store Whole Foods as representative of a healthy, eco-friendly lifestyle.		

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E. Read this story about business in China. Then, go back and restate each of the sentences in your notebook using the words in parentheses. Do not change the meanings of the sentences.

1. Traditionally, recent graduates face the problem of a difficult job search, but that was not Carmen Tan's problem. (*classic*)

   The classic problem for recent graduates is a difficult job search, but that was not Carmen Tan's problem.

2. Tan agreed to work for a particular major international company, although she could have begun her career with almost any company in China. (*contract; commenced*)
3. Companies doing business in China are so desperate to find well-trained employees that they offer many incentives, such as allowing employees to work the hours they want to and helping them get professional certification. (*flexible; licenses*)
4. Companies don't offer these benefits because they believe that workers should be well treated. (*principle*)
5. Rather, they hope that employees will reward them by being loyal and staying with the company for a long time. (*devotion*)
6. Companies in China have developed procedures through which younger workers often rise more quickly into leadership positions than young people on similar tracks in the West. (*mechanisms; parallel*)
7. These companies also offer different amounts of money as a reward for work of appropriate value. For example, they might award an employee 100 U.S. dollars to take the family out for dinner after completing a project. (*corresponding; currency*)
8. The success of Tan's new employer in attracting and keeping employees is partly due to the benefits it offers that can't be quantified. The company works hard to make employees feel recognized and appreciated. (*portion; qualitative*)

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Before You Read

Read these questions. Discuss your answers in a small group.

1. Think about products that you have used since you were a child. Do you have a favorite soft drink or cereal? Why do you buy these particular brands?
2. Now think about the companies that make those products. What do you know about the company? Why do you like their products?
3. What do you think is the best-selling brand or company in today's market? Why do you think other people like it?

Read

This online article gives a brief account of the rise of brand names in the marketplace.

Building a Competitive Brand

What's your next purchase going to be? Think. Did you think of a product, such as a new teapot or sweater? Or did you just think of a company name? Maybe you are planning on getting the next Apple iPhone or taking a quick shopping trip to your favorite store. Perhaps you really like the company that makes the product. In fact, maybe you choose what you are going to buy based on the brand name. If your response was more in line with the latter, your answer confirms what businesses already know: they are selling brands, not products.

The history of business goes hand in hand with the history of marketing. If you have something to sell, you need to make people aware of it. As more businesses begin to sell the same product, competition for customers for that product increases. Whether it's another restaurant, type of shoe, or lemonade stand, you need to market your product and position it so people know why they should buy it instead of another. Corporate logos can be traced back to the 1880s when businesses attached a personality to their product. However, many point to the introduction of television in the 1950s and 60s as the beginning of modern advertising. Suddenly, businesses had a captive audience to market to. With a small selection of TV channels available, businesses could reach large audiences. For instance, in the United States, more than 50 percent of the population might be watching The Ed Sullivan Show on a given night. Company logos reached iconic status during the 50s and 60s. Think of the red and white Coke label or the competing Pepsi symbol. Both soft drink companies have created images that have become so well known, they are part of our print literacy.

The 1980s and 1990s brought another revolutionary change to product competition and marketing. Cable and satellite TV

Some brands, like Coke, span generations.

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increased the number of channels and programs available to people. The large audiences became fragmented. Businesses could only count on events like the World Cup for a guaranteed mass viewing audience. Marketing became even more essential. The over hundred-year rivalry between Coke and Pepsi heated up. Businesses competed for consumers by attaching more and more famous names to their product. TV ads became savvy, funny, interesting. Audiences began to look forward to commercial breaks during huge events like the Super Bowl or World Cup as part of the entertainment.

But businesses also begin to recognize something else: branding is more than **licensing** a logo, more than a good laugh in a thirty-second TV spot. It's about establishing a real relationship with the consumer and establishing a reputation. Why is it that the world consumes more than a billion Cokes each day? Coke has been able to enter foreign markets and compete with local products. Part of this is due to the company's ability to advertise locally. In cities in South Africa, for example, a relatively new market for Coke, nearly every store has a Coke sign. The other part of this equation is not *how the company advertises*, but *what the company does*. Coke sponsors sports events, economic development, scholarships, and other education projects. It's establishing itself in South Africa as a business with a conscience and a company that lends a helping hand.

In the 1990s, Nike, a sporting goods and clothing company, learned the importance of competing with a conscience when people found out that their products were being manufactured in sweatshops.[1] Consumers were angry. They didn't want to buy from a company that supported child labor and unhealthy work conditions. Since then, Nike has had to invest a lot of money in rebuilding its reputation.

And rebranding a company takes a lot of money. Just ask Apple, a leader in computer, phone, and music technology. During the late 1980s and 1990s, Apple increased its advertising budget from 15 million to 100 million U.S. dollars. As a consequence, Apple became the biggest computer company in the world. Apple changed its logo and message. It built an advertising campaign centered on people. Marc Gobe, author of *Emotional Branding*, described Apple this way to *Wired* magazine: "It's like having a good friend. That's what's interesting about this brand. Somewhere they have created this really humanistic, beyond-business relationship with users and created a cult-like relationship with their brand. It's a big tribe, everyone is one of them. You're part of the brand." Like Apple, other companies recognize the bond that people form with certain brands. For instance, the Swedish furniture company IKEA produces the most widely read catalog in the world. This company has become a big hit in Europe and Africa, where the blue and yellow IKEA logo represents modern furniture design at an affordable cost. The Korean electronics company Samsung has also recognized the importance of establishing a quality brand. In the early 2000s, it invested money in its product design and saw results in consumer approval. In this case it's **qualitative,** not quantitative, analysis that helps businesses determine the consumers' regard for the brand. Essentially, it's how the consumer feels about the brand that sets the price a product will sell for. Naomi Klein, author of the book *No Logo*, best summarizes the phenomenon of branding: "Brands conjure a feeling." They have an identity, and people define themselves through these brands.

As media and technology progress into the twenty-first century, with audiences now streaming movies and shows online, it's not just **flexibility** that companies need to respond to via the changing media. To stay competitive, companies need to recognize the deep emotion that people have over brands, and they need the innovation to inspire it.

[1] *sweatshops:* a term for workplaces, usually factories, that employ people for long hours for low pay; often associated with unhealthy working conditions and employing children illegally

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Reading Comprehension

Mark each statement as *T* (true) or *F* (false) according to the information in Reading 2. Then correct each false statement on the line below it.

___1. Companies realize they are selling products, not brands.

_____

___2. Corporate logos can be traced back to the 1960s.

_____

___3. When the number of TV channels available was low, advertising power was great.

_____

___4. In the 1980s and 1990s, it became more difficult for businesses to reach large audiences.

_____

___5. Branding means licensing a logo.

_____

___6. In order to sell its product, Coke sponsors educational projects.

_____

___7. Nike and Apple have both invested a lot of money in remaking their brand.

_____

___8. Samsung invested money into the quality design of its furniture.

_____

READING SKILL Understanding Time Signals

APPLY

Read the article on pages 138–139 again. As you read, take notes in timeline form in your notebook. Choose a date that corresponds to the major events discussed. Then summarize each section, recording only the important information. Use the narrative present and include time words as necessary. Compare your work in a small group.

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Vocabulary Activities STEP I: Word Level

A. **Read this passage about competition. Complete the sentences with target words from the box.**

commence	correspond	mechanism	parallels
commissions	devote	on behalf of	principle

Competition is a basic part of the human experience and shows up in many aspects of life. The drive to make a goal and win the game has (1)_____ in the drive to make money and succeed at business or make good grades and be the top student in class. When employees or students are offered competitive rewards, a battle may (2)_____ that is not unlike the battle on the soccer field.

For many people, competition is an end in itself, and the drive to compete doesn't necessarily (3)_____ to the importance of the desired goal. The (4)_____ that controls competition in the human brain works just as well with sports and business as it does with things that are essential to survival. The urge is so strong that governments have had to create (5)_____ to oversee mergers and prevent monopolies.

However, no matter how strong a human's desire to compete is, competition obviously doesn't tell the whole story. Our emotional bonds with others often result in *altruism*, or actions that benefit others more than oneself. Some individuals (6)_____ their whole lives to improving work conditions, for example. Others fight injustice (7)_____ those who cannot speak for themselves. This altruistic (8)_____ helps balance the competitive instinct and drive people toward cooperation.

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The word *commission* has two meanings. In one meaning, the verb means "to ask someone to do a piece of work." It can refer to a work of art, a study, or a special project of any sort. A *commission* is the result.

*They **commissioned** a study to gather evidence on how computer usage affects arm muscles.*

*She received the **commission** to paint the CEO's portrait.*

A *commission* can also refer to a group of people who are given official responsibility to regulate or investigate something. A *commissioner* is the leader of a commission.

*The Competition **Commission** is a British governmental organization that monitors British companies to make sure they are competing fairly.*

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B. With a partner, look at these commissions and discuss them. What might each commission regulate or investigate? Is a commission necessary to regulate these areas? Why or why not?

1. Commission on Human Rights
2. Parks and Recreation Commission
3. International Trade Commission
4. Commission on Ocean Policy
5. Atomic Energy Commission
6. Fish and Wildlife Commission

The word *currency* usually refers to different types of money. It can also refer to anything that is acting as a mechanism for exchange, or to anything that has abstract value in a certain situation.

*You can trade euros for yen at the **currency** exchange.*	(type of money)
*In the Internet world, information is the most valuable **currency**.*	(something of value)
*Managers resisted the new hiring policy at first, but it has gained **currency** lately. Now, they agree it's the best system.*	(abstract value)

CORPUS

C. In what situations might these things be used as currency? Use your imagination and think of one or two situations for each. Discuss your ideas in a small group.

1. information
2. airplane tickets
3. a car
4. the ability to speak another language
5. silence
6. a cell phone

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Vocabulary Activities STEP II: Sentence Level

D. Read the story about sports and management. Then, go back and restate each of the sentences in your notebook using the words in parentheses as indicated. Do not change the meanings of the sentences.

1. Theories of business management are being applied to other areas with great success. (*principles*)

   Principles of business management are being successfully applied to other areas.

2. The coach of one soccer team had been following a traditional model of team leadership by making his best players into team captains. Unfortunately, their leadership ability did not equal their sports skills. (*classic, correspond*)
3. The coach, Sasho Cirovski, saw similarities between what he needed and his brother Vancho's work in human resources. He decided to begin the next practice with a survey that Vancho used for organizational development. (*parallels, commence*)
4. The survey asked team members to associate descriptive characteristics with individuals on the team, for example, by identifying those who helped them increase their commitment to the team. (*qualitative, devotion*)
5. Based on the results of the survey, Coach Cirovski discovered that a player he had not seen as a leader, Scott Buete, had the respect of the team. Cirovski decided that he should be more adaptable in his selection of team leaders. He made an agreement with Buete that he would become a third team captain. (*flexible, contract*)
6. For the remaining part of the season, the team played much better. It seemed that Cirovski had finally found the right system for choosing a leader. (*portion, mechanism*)

Devotion refers to commitment, love, or dedication. If people are *devoted* to something, they are committed to it. If they are *devoted* to someone, that usually means that they love that person.

*A good soccer player should be **devoted** to her team.*

To *devote time to* or *devote money to* something is another way of saying *spend time on* or *spend money on* something.

*A good player **devotes** a lot of time and energy to practice.*

CORPUS

E. In your notebook, restate these sentences to include *devote*. Use each form at least once in your sentences. Compare your sentences with a partner.

1. Businesses used to expect a strong commitment from their employees.

   Businesses used to expect devotion to the company from their employees.

2. Nowadays, employees are rarely so attached to their company that they stay longer than a few years.
3. Many employees leave companies because they are expected to spend a lot of time on work-related projects.

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