

## Business communication

## Narrating past events

### Key expressions

#### Giving an explanation

... due to ...  
It seems that ...  
The reason being that ...  
It came about because of ...

#### Linking the narrative

It wasn't until ... that ...  
Luckily ...  
And/But then ...  
What's more ...  
Despite ...

#### Time expressions

While/When ...  
At first ...  
After that ...  
As time went by ...  
In the end ...

### Encouraging more information

So what did you do?  
What had you done?  
And what did (she) say?  
What happened (next / then /  
after that)?  
That's (understandable).  
Go on. / Oh?  
What was (her) view?  
So how did you ...?

### Summarizing the narrative

That was when ...  
So that was the first  
problem ...  
All in all ...  
It really surprised me (but  
it worked).  
I was extremely disappointed.

**Jorge and Lana are talking about business in Ukraine.  
Put the words in italics in 1-8 in the correct order.**

Jorge I had an interesting time in Ukraine and <sup>1</sup>*the / in / end* \_\_\_\_\_ a deal was done.

Lana Was doing business there different to Greece?

Jorge Yes, very. We had a lot of misunderstanding at first. <sup>2</sup>*it / because / about / came / of* \_\_\_\_\_ our lack of knowledge about negotiating in Ukraine.

Lana So what happened?

Jorge We met our Ukrainian colleagues and expected to get down to business. But it seemed a long time before we even spoke about the negotiation. <sup>3</sup>*that / problem / the / was / first* \_\_\_\_\_.

Lana <sup>4</sup>*so / did / do / you / what* \_\_\_\_\_?

Jorge We made small talk – about our journey, our families and so on. Eventually we spoke about the real business. <sup>5</sup>*seems / it / that*  
\_\_\_\_\_ relationship-building before business is very important to them.

Lana <sup>6</sup>*what / next / happened*  
\_\_\_\_\_?

Jorge The Ukrainian team looked at the deal as a whole. They told us exactly what they required from the contract and <sup>7</sup>*when / that / was / uncomfortable / I / felt / really*.  
\_\_\_\_\_ I mean, we don't negotiate like that here. We do it bit by bit.

Lana And then?

Jorge <sup>8</sup>*time / by / went / as*  
\_\_\_\_\_, we became more aware of each other's culture and how business is done and ...

Jorge continues his story from the previous dialogue.  
Choose the correct words in *italics*.

Jorge <sup>1</sup>*At last / At first* it seemed that the Ukrainians were very direct and abrupt, but this was just their style. <sup>2</sup>*What's most / What's more*, they said 'no' to us quite frequently, which was difficult to get used to. <sup>3</sup>*It wasn't until / It wasn't since* I read up about the Ukrainian negotiating style that I found out they say 'no' about nine times more often than Western negotiators! <sup>4</sup>*In spite / Despite* this we became quite good friends. There were a few times when it was tough and we thought we'd lost the deal. <sup>5</sup>*Luckily / Happily* my colleague knew that hospitality is also very important to business relationships and he invited the Ukrainian team to dinner. The idea was that it would get our relationship back on track. <sup>6</sup>*It really shocked me, but it functioned / It really surprised me, but it worked*. I've certainly learnt from the experience.