

Language at work

GRAMMAR REFERENCE

The infinitive form

Form

The infinitive is formed with *to* + base verb (e.g. *to meet*, *to change*, *to save*).

Use

Use the infinitive form of the verb

- after an adjective:
It's important to know the truth.
We're very pleased to meet you.
- to express purpose:
I always check with everyone to make sure they are happy.
To save energy around the offices, we use timers.
- after verbs about plans and decisions:
We intend to change the policy.
They've decided to stop buying from us.

The -ing form

Form

The -ing form is formed with the base verb + *ing* (e.g. *meeting*, *changing*, *saving*).

Use

Use the -ing form of the verb

- after verbs about likes/dislikes:
I like playing sport at the weekends.
We enjoyed meeting you all.
- after a preposition:
I need to work on improving my IT skills.
I look forward to seeing you all next week.

- 1 Complete the sentences with the phrases from the list.

difficult to know sad to see important to be
right to ask afraid to leave nice to see

- 1 It was so _____ you again.
You look so well.
- 2 It's really _____ what we should do next. There isn't an easy solution.
- 3 With staff who aren't working hard enough, it's _____ firm but fair.
- 4 I'm _____ my current job in case I can't get another.
- 5 On behalf of everyone here, we are _____ you go but want to wish you luck in your next job.
- 6 I think you're absolutely _____ for a pay rise. It's long overdue.

- 2 Complete the sentences with the infinitive or -ing form of the verbs in brackets.

- 1 They want _____ (change) to a system of flexitime.
- 2 Would you like _____ (join) us for dinner?
- 3 I really dislike _____ (be) late for anything.
- 4 Do you think he'd be interested in _____ (apply) for this vacancy?
- 5 Thanks very much for _____ (invite) us to look round.
- 6 When do you plan _____ (take) your annual leave this year?
- 7 This team is responsible for _____ (develop) a new product.
- 8 I'd be happy _____ (help) you with this.
- 9 When did you decide _____ (requalify)?
- 10 We look forward to _____ (see) you on the 21st.

- 3 Complete the introduction to a meeting with the infinitive or -ing form of the verbs from the list.

spend arrive interview keep make talk
offer sum up

Hello, everyone, and thank you all for ¹ _____ on time today. I realize you're all busy, so I hope ² _____ this meeting brief. As you know, we have been looking at ways of ³ _____ employees the opportunity to work more flexible hours, and I think we have finally come up with a solution ⁴ _____ sure everyone can achieve a better work-life balance. The process has involved ⁵ _____ a large number of different people in every department and I have to say that I've really enjoyed ⁶ _____ time talking to many of you. Anyway, I'd like ⁷ _____ by presenting the overall feedback and then I plan ⁸ _____ about the main points of our proposal.