

How to brainstorm ideas

In this lesson you will learn how to put forward ideas.

Starter

- 1 Which of the following are the best sources of ideas? Which do you use in your company?

- customers
- group brainstorming sessions
- a suggestions box
- competitors
- consultants
- the boss



Expressions

- 19.1
- 1 Best Bakes is a company which specializes in a range of organic muffins for coffee bars and health-food shops. Listen to an extract from a meeting in which they brainstorm ideas for increasing production. How many different ideas are suggested?
- 19.1
- 2 Listen again. What expressions do the speakers use instead of the sentences below?
- 1 Let's make a note of it and continue.
 - 2 One possibility is to buy a bigger oven.
 - 3 In connection with more room, you know what we could do?
 - 4 But there's the possibility that we won't sell as well as predicted at Greenmarket.
 - 5 Although it might damage our short-term sales, how about narrowing down the range?
 - 6 This may be unusual, but how about outsourcing?
- 19.2
- 3 Best Bakes invests in a second production line and a new oven, but soon hits another problem. Listen to the extract from the next meeting and answer the questions.
- 1 What is their current problem?
 - 2 Which of the solutions would you choose, and why?

Speaking

- 1 Brainstorm one of the following for five minutes with your teacher. Try to use language from Expressions and the Language box.

How to cut costs in my department / company

A new advert for a well-known food product

Improving my pronunciation in English

- 2 How useful is brainstorming in your job? What was the last topic you brainstormed at work? What was the result?

Language box

There are a number of advanced ways of using comparatives, superlatives, and structures with *as ... as*.

To show that something is continually increasing or decreasing, we can use two comparatives joined with *and*:

Customers are complaining **more and more** often.

We're getting **fewer and fewer** enquiries.

The + comparative, the + comparative shows that one event depends on another:

The sooner you finish, **the earlier** you can go home.

We can refer to one amongst a superlative group using *one of* and a plural noun:

It's **one of our cheapest** models.

Hint

Far has two different comparative and superlative forms: **farther, farthest** / **further, furthest**.

Farther and **farthest** are only used to talk about physical distance.

The new factory is farther from the motorway than the old one.

Further and **furthest** are also used to talk about figurative distance.

Which employee has gone the furthest towards meeting their objectives?

4 How were each of the following suggestions introduced in the conversation?

1 use non-organic fruit

2 find another supplier

3 using different fruit

4 be more creative

5 mixing blueberries and raspberries in the same recipe

5 Listen again to check your answers for 4.



Writing

1 Write an answer to the email below. Try to use language from **Expressions** and the **Language box**.

Dear all,

As you know, we have a problem recruiting enough quality trainees to work at our bank branches. We'll have a stand at the Job Fair again this year. Last year, we only got a few visitors and even fewer follow-ups.

So I'm trying to collect ideas on how we could attract more people to our stand and how we could promote ourselves better as an employer.

Please send me any ideas you have, no matter how big, small, or unusual.

Looking forward to hearing them!

Trent

Look

Look at listening scripts 19.1 and 19.2 on page 129. Find more examples of comparative, superlative, and **as ... as** structures.

We use **as + adjective / adverb + as** to show that two things or people are the same:

The new fax prints **as slowly as** the old one.

Not as / so + adjective / adverb + as shows difference:

Their prices aren't **so competitive as** ours.

Nicholas doesn't speak **as confidently as** Linda.

With a singular noun, **a / an** goes between the adjective and the noun:

Cosmin is **as fast a** typist **as** Maia.

Lesson record

3 new words from this lesson

3 useful phrases from this lesson

1

1

2

2

3

3

Things to remember

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