

listening script

1.1

Jane OK, Martin. What did you want to speak to me about?

Martin Well, as you're well aware, we have a big staffing problem. We've opened eighteen new branches in the last six months without increasing my staff. Then Tony left us last month ...

Jane Yes, I know. Your department's doing ...

Martin Just a second, Jane. Let me finish what I was going to say. What I mean to say is that my team are feeling overworked and frustrated. You must agree that we're understaffed right now.

Jane We're all under a lot of stress, Martin, and ...

Martin I want this to be perfectly clear. I need two more full-time people. I'm sure you can appreciate that.

Jane I see. Do you have a breakdown for the hours your department has been working?

Martin Yes. I've prepared this report covering the last three months together with my forecast for the next three.

Jane OK. I'll take it up with Peter. I'm afraid I can't promise you anything though. You know what he's like when it comes to employing people.

Martin Yes, I know, but the way I see it we've got no other choice.

1.2

Jane I'm afraid I don't have much good news for you, Martin.

Martin Go on.

Jane I'm afraid that taking on two more people is out of the question for the time being.

Martin But I thought I'd made it clear in my report that ...

Jane Just a second. We do appreciate your situation and we are looking for another person to replace Tony. If only he hadn't left the company like he did.

Martin I wasn't surprised. He was feeling the pressure like everyone else.

Jane But if only he'd stayed on for a couple of months.

Martin I wish he were still with us too. But I need to know when I can expect to get the staff I need.

Jane I'll have to ask you to put up with the situation for the time being. Personally, I wish we could hire more people straight away but Peter says he won't take on anyone until he finishes our strategic planning for next year. You'll have a replacement for Tony soon.

Martin Good. Perhaps we can manage for a couple of months more but my people aren't going to be pleased. They're ...

Jane I'm sorry to interrupt, Martin, but there's really not much point in talking about this any more. You know what Peter's like. You'll have to give him some time.

Martin I wish Peter wouldn't take so long on decisions like this.

Jane Yes, I know, but I can assure you that you will have a replacement for Tony soon.

Martin Good. You know, sometimes I wish I'd never agreed to the targets for this year!

2.1

1

Kasia Our topic for today is 'pharmacy visits'. We're going to look at how you should arrange your day's schedule. Then we'll clarify some ground rules for visits. In addition, we'll examine a few ideas to encourage the pharmacist to buy more items. First, let's think about planning your visiting schedule. Please get into a pair with another person. I want you to tell your partner how many pharmacies you typically visit in a day and how you plan the itinerary.

2

Harry So, as Kasia has just explained, it's important to establish a good rapport with the pharmacist. Why? Well, of course, he - or she - will be the person who makes the decision about how many lines of toothpaste to stock, which window posters to display, and which promotions to run. Right, I need a volunteer. Anyone? Come on, don't be shy. Great, thanks Alex. OK, Alex. You're going to demonstrate how not to do it. I'm the pharmacist. I want you to come into my shop and greet me. But - please do it as badly as possible! Everyone else watch and reflect on what he's doing wrong and how he could improve. You can start now, Alex.

Alex Er ... Hi. Hi there. Er ...

Harry Very good. Or should I say very bad? OK, thanks, Alex. Right. Get into a group of three. First discuss what Alex did wrong - then think about this question: 'What are the things that help to create good rapport?' Make a list. You've got five minutes.

3

Harry And so let me stress - don't just talk about the products. Much more important than what you say is what you show. Do remember that! A top tip is that one good product sample is worth a thousand words. Anyway, now I'll pass you over to Kasia.

Kasia Thanks. Right, so with Harry you've explored how to sell the perfumes and toiletries, but what about medicinal lines? We have to consider how these are different. Also, think about what you need to keep in mind when promoting medicines. Don't forget that sales for these are less predictable than for toiletries. Nor should you ignore the influence of weather, news coverage, and government announcements. Hardly has the Department of Health hinted that a flu epidemic might be on the way than demand for flu remedies can suddenly leap up 500%.

4

Harry Well done, Anisha and Lola. That was an excellent presentation, as were they all. I think that's the last one, isn't it? Right. So before you go, I'd just like to underline the key points we've been looking at today - the six Ps, as we called them. Firstly, whenever you go out in the field be sure to concentrate on being prepared, professional, and punctual. And secondly, know your products, know your promotions, and most importantly, get to know your pharmacist. OK, that's all for today. See you next month!

4.1

1

Stephen Great. We'll move on to a different competency: relationship building. Kathy, over to you.

Kathy George, based on experience, describe a time when you built or strengthened a client relationship for a PR event.

George Well, once, we were promoting sportswear at a regional championship. Participants wore that brand, and we had some of them on local radio. We also had an article in the press.

Kathy You mention your team. What interests us is what you did personally. What was your specific contribution to the outcome?

George Well, it was teamwork. But I organized the newspaper coverage. I'd worked with them before.

Kathy And did the event meet your clients' expectations?

George Oh, they were very pleased.

Kathy We sometimes work with the food industry. How would you find celebrities to endorse, say, a brand of organic food?

George Well, erm ... maybe contact film stars who are environmentally aware?

Kathy OK. And then?

2

Kathy Thank you. Let's turn now to relationship building. Stephen?

Stephen OK. Kirsten, tell us about a time when you built or strengthened your relationship with a client.

Kirsten Well, recently, I was responsible for the PR of an American band touring in Germany. And I worked closely with a national radio DJ. He ran a live interview with the lead singer, and played tracks from their new CD. I'd worked with him before, but this was fantastic exposure!

Stephen How did you decide which media to approach?

Kirsten Well, I figured this DJ would like the music, and I also liked the band! It's about knowing the target audiences.

Stephen Would it be more difficult if you didn't like their music?

Kirsten Maybe, but still a challenge - that's why I love this work. It's about taking initiative, and how to approach a project.

Stephen Was the band satisfied with what you'd done?

Kirsten Oh, yes!

Stephen Your experience is largely in Germany. Our ideal candidate is someone who can build and maintain regular contact with clients and the media. How would that work for you in the UK?

Kirsten I get to know people easily. And some of my contacts work internationally, on English publications.

4.2

Stephen So?

Kathy Well, with George it was difficult to work out what he'd actually done himself. Also, I don't think he has the multi-tasking skills needed.

Stephen You clearly feel Kirsten is the more credible candidate.

Kathy Yes, she talked with real hands-on experience and attention to detail, and an understanding of the problems that occur ...

Stephen But her contact list is German.

Kathy Sure, but she learns fast. She's not yet 30, but she's managed high profile events and has excellent communication skills.

Stephen Hmm, I did like how she talked about her weaknesses, and overcoming them. She certainly has integrity.

5.1

Tamara Come in, Felipe. Have a seat. What can I do for you?

Felipe I wondered if it would be possible to have next Wednesday morning off. I've got a dentist's appointment.

Tamara That shouldn't be a problem. I'm sure we can cover that.

Felipe Thank you.

Tamara Was there anything else?

Felipe Well, Er ... it's a bit difficult to say.

Tamara Go on, Felipe.

Felipe I wanted to ask if I could stop working on the reception team.

Tamara I thought you were getting on rather well there.

Felipe I quite enjoy it but I seem to do everything hopelessly badly.

Tamara What makes you think that?

Felipe When there's a serious problem, I don't really know what to do. Like the lost child running around last week. I think I made things worse. And last night.

Tamara Ah, yes. I heard that there was some trouble. Could you tell me what happened?

Felipe About midnight a whole group came back into the hotel. I think they'd been at a wedding. They were amazingly loud - singing and shouting in the foyer and slamming doors, disturbing everyone. Magda was upstairs, so I was on my own.

Tamara Well, that would have been a problem even for an experienced receptionist.

Felipe I tried to go over politely and ask them to be more considerate. But they just laughed at me.

Tamara Hm. So you tried firmly but tactfully to calm the situation down. That's good.

Felipe But they took no notice of me.

Tamara But, clearly, you did the best you could. Don't worry. These things come with experience. Anyway, you said you were having problems generally with reception work. So, what do you think we can do to help? If you've got any ideas ...

5.2

Tamara Let's go into my office for a moment. Magda, you look like you've got something on your mind.

Magda Yes, erm ... I wanted to talk about Felipe.

Tamara Right. Apparently, he had some problems with a noisy party of guests last night.

Magda That's true. The guests were wandering around quite happily, not causing any trouble and, amazingly, he just started shouting at them. After a few minutes the phones were ringing with

listening script

guests complaining furiously that they'd been woken up by the noise he made. Frankly, he doesn't always deal very courteously with guests.

Tamara Ah, let me just check I've understood properly. It was Felipe's shouting that disturbed everyone, not the noisy guests?

Magda Yes.

Tamara Right. Well, don't worry, it sounds like I need to have another little chat with him. Is there something else you'd like to discuss? You look a little ...

Magda I ... Oh!

Tamara Oh, Magda. What on earth's wrong?

Magda Well ...

Tamara I can't help unless I know what the problem is.

Magda Someone broke into my car this morning.

Tamara Oh, how awful for you! Did they take anything?

Magda My laptop. Stupidly, I left it on the back seat and so it was easy to see.

Tamara How terrible! I'm so sorry to hear that. Was there anything important on it?

Magda Some personal photos, some work. Fortunately, I have backups of all the important files but it was a new computer and I'm just very down about it.

Tamara Oh, dear. You're not the first person this has happened to. Seemingly, there have been a lot of break-ins around here recently. Is there anything I can do to help?

6.1

1

Cheung I've come to see you because I don't think things are really working for me here, so I'm thinking that it'd be best if I could be transferred home.

Greg Whoa! Hold on a minute! Why don't you think things are working? I haven't heard any complaints. In fact, I've heard how hard you've been working.

Cheung That's because I have to. You know I've never worked totally in English before, and it takes me ages to deal with all my emails and go through all the documents. The others are always criticizing me for not being ready on time.

Greg Are you sure they're not joking? You know they all miss deadlines from time to time.

Cheung I don't know. Maybe, I don't think my English is good enough. I'm constantly making mistakes. Maybe it'd really be best if I left.

Greg Don't be so hard on yourself! Everyone makes mistakes sometimes. Look, I understand it's not easy to move to a new country, but you shouldn't give up so easily. I think you've been coping very well with the workload. OK, you're having some problems in the short term, but you can turn these around quite quickly. You just need to give yourself a bit more time. You've only worked here two months so far.

2

Cheung So, Cheung, how do you feel it's going?

Greg Well, I think I fit in more. I'm feeling a lot more comfortable here now and the work seems to have been getting easier, although I'm still really busy.

Greg I know things have been pretty hectic. So, thanks for all the hard work you've been putting in. I'm also really pleased with the way you've managed to integrate into the team - you're working really well with the others - and with your results. In fact, if you can keep up the good work, and pick up just a little bit more speed, you stand an excellent chance of promotion. Irene Stevens, the manager of the Boston office, is leaving in nine months and you're being considered as her replacement.

Cheung Wow!

Greg I appreciate the fact that you haven't been here long, but I'm sure you wouldn't have any trouble adapting to the new role. You have ten years' experience of auditing in the manufacturing sector plus the right attitude. We're always looking to promote people with your kind of international experience.

Cheung Thanks. I ...

Greg It's a great opportunity for you and we'll be counting on you to make the most of it. I'll do everything I can to help you get the position, but it's up to you to go the extra mile to prove you're ready for it.

7.1

1

Sabine Sabine speaking.

Lisa Sabine, hi. I've had an email from Victor.

Sabine Oh, I see. What does he want now?

Lisa It's just that he's been asked when the orchestra will be arriving in Hong Kong. I was wondering if you'd be able to tell me because I've been told they'd have to organize a bus from the airport.

Sabine Honestly, I'm really unhappy about this. I've been trying to find out for the last week. Victor knows that.

Lisa Well, do you happen to have the flight details yet?

Sabine No, I'm still waiting for an answer from the travel agents.

Lisa OK. Well, when they get in touch with you, do you think you could let the concert promoter in Hong Kong know?

Sabine Yeah. OK.

Lisa Thanks! And perhaps you could copy Victor in to the email. Then he'll know too.

Sabine Yeah, yeah. OK.

2

Dominik Hello?

Lisa Hi, Dominik, it's Lisa.

Dominik Oh, hi, Lisa. What can I do for you?

Lisa Well, it's about Radio Klassik. Victor's asking if a meeting could be set up with them. He's in Montreal at the moment, and says it's rather important.

Dominik Oh, right. The radio. Yeah, it was mentioned last week that we should be pushing that sort of publicity.

Lisa Well, it was suggested it could be next week, or the first week of May. Would you mind giving them a ring?

Dominik Sure. Oh - incidentally - before I do, would you be able to ask Victor if he wants the meeting at the radio studios, or back at the office?

Lisa Oh, OK. I'll get back to you.

Dominik Thanks!

8.1

Katarina Our Hip-Hop Sauce has been a huge seller, so we're planning on developing a new sauce. To build on the success of Hip-Hop we need to fast-track this new sauce onto the shelves by early May. So the time to market is just nine months. Right? This meeting is to inform you about what some of the main parameters are and to agree how we're going to do this. First of all, we're all meeting Tuesday the eleventh next month to brainstorm basic concepts and names. Make sure you plan that in. And up till then, you'll be using the next four weeks to research. Right. Who's going to collect together some classic cookbooks and get a team trawling through them for any good ideas?

Masha I'll take that, Katarina.

Katarina Great. Right, next, we need a team to work in parallel to Masha's group, going round the ethnic food shops and restaurants and bringing back any interesting ingredients they can find.

Peter I can organize that.

Katarina Thanks, Peter. After the initial meeting, we're going to spend a few weeks sorting through all the ideas while our chefs are cooking up some trial sauces. At the end of the month, we'll meet and choose the three front runners. We'll get market research under way as fast as possible on these. Peter, after we've chosen our three, you need to prepare a questionnaire and I'll be working with you on fine-tuning the questions to ask. Will you be able to do that?

Peter Yeah, sure.

Katarina Masha, we'll need some accurate research about who Hip-Hop's customers actually are. First, phone-survey our Sauce Club members. Then put together some focus groups. Finally, get some taste tests done in a few supermarkets. Plan for at least five different stores. Can you get all that done by mid-August at the latest? Is that a realistic deadline?

Masha Well, yes. It's pushing it, but I think it's just possible.

Katarina Now, there are two caveats. Firstly, we can't afford to let these dates slip at all. Secondly, we have no contingency budget.

Masha What?

Peter How will we make sure that everything's going properly?

Katarina There'll be an important waypoint at the end of August when we'll pause and check that everything's on track. That's the update meeting. After that, the final decisions will be taken at the board meeting. That's always held in early September.

Peter September, right.

Katarina Then, if we get the go-ahead, we'll move straight on to the next phase with full R&D alongside technical and marketing planning. Is everyone OK with that?

Masha Er... Yes.

Peter Certainly.

Katarina Right, let's get this show on the road!

9.1

Russ Gustav, hi. It's Russ. Can we speak about the Baltic project?

Gustav Oh, hi. So you got my email?

Russ Yeah. Well, you'll appreciate we have to set budgets in advance and stick to them. I'm afraid I can't possibly up the budget by the amount you've requested. We don't have excess funds. The most I can offer is an extra 10%.

Gustav Uh-huh.

Russ It seems there's a distinct lack of respect for the assignment we've given these guys. Each of the members of the team have to be aware of the budget constraints. There'll have to be a drastic cut in their expenses.

Gustav Right, Er, OK. I'll send them each an email.

Russ And, why is Jan on the project if he can't walk?

Gustav Well, he's the only member of the team who was involved in the Southern Europe upgrade in July - we needed someone with first-hand experience. There are few people around with his level of experience.

Russ Fair enough. And the hotel? Is it five-star?

Gustav Not exactly, I'll contact the manager in Vilnius and see what's she's booked.

Russ Good idea, Gustav. I won't cover every extended hotel telephone call either. We already pay their cellphone bills and they run up those enough as it is. Neither am I prepared to fork out for dinner each day if most meals are €70 per head. If they wish to consume vast amounts of alcohol, then they do so at their own expense. And by the way, we'll need copies of every receipt to support this. And, er, Gustav - I appreciate that we are making a major overhaul of hardware, but the cost of the new PCs seems excessive.

Gustav Well, apparently the guys have been sourcing most of the equipment themselves. They haven't been using the preferred suppliers who offer us a discounted rate.

Russ Please ask them to go through the proper channels in Vilnius.

Gustav Er, will do.

Russ Right, well please send me a revised budget as soon as you can. We have sufficient time to set things straight, and there's no shortage of prior budget plans to help you cost things out. OK, Gustav? Maybe a little more time spent on this for the next project wouldn't a bad thing.

Gustav Yes, Russ. OK. Many thanks.

10.1

Vanessa My variance report shows the sales forecast we prepared last year together with the actual sales figures. These figures are not definite yet but any significant change is highly unlikely.

John Have you got the figures for the cost of sales too? You know you're going over budget there and we may have a problem.

Vanessa Yes, I do. When we approved the budget we thought it was likely that sales of the new range would take off rather slowly, hit a peak in the summer season, and then drop off towards winter. We projected sales of 85,500 and 89,250 pounds for the first and second quarter respectively. The cost of sales was estimated at around 60% of the sales price and budgeted at 51,100 and 53,550 pounds. We seriously underestimated the potential success of the new line. The figures for the same two quarters show sales of 98,000 and 115,640 pounds.

Marie Hm. Why do you think we underestimated by so much?

listening script

Vanessa Because we didn't identify the main client – the young business traveller. The new range is ideal for someone who travels light, especially now with the new regulations on hand luggage.

Marie And reaching our sales target at the end of this month? Are you sure about that?

Vanessa Yes. Our annual sales target was set at \$365,000, and there's every possible chance that we'll reach that figure soon with three more months still to go.

John But we all thought that sales were bound to fall off in the winter season.

Vanessa Yes, but there's every reason to be optimistic. We're quite certain that sales for the final quarter will be over £190,000, amounting to a gross profit of over 187,000. That's £40,000 more than our initial forecast.

John Could I just say something? I've been checking your figures and yes, revenue from sales is much higher than we expected. But the cost of sales is also much higher than we budgeted for. That's bound to happen as a result of the increase in turnover, more materials, and all the other overheads, but I've noticed that operational costs have increased significantly recently. What's that due to and is it likely to continue?

Vanessa I'm afraid it is, in addition to the usual overheads, we're paying overtime to cover for the increased production. Packaging and transportation costs are up as well. There's also a slight chance that the cost of cotton could go up towards the end of the year.

John Vanessa, if your forecast is correct, we might have a problem with financing the cost of sales. The more we sell, the more we face a potential cash flow problem. You're already nearly £70,000 over budget. We might need to set aside some extra capital. We may even have to get a short-term loan from the bank to cover additional operating expenses.

Marie Well, that's a good problem to have actually ...

11.1

Sang-Hyun Well, of course we can only deal with this problem if we know what's behind it. Looking at the traffic report, it seems that the problem could lie with the usability of the website. People are spending a long time browsing, but the conversion rate is very low. What do you think, Jo?

Jo Could it be because people are worried about whether the clothes will fit them or not, so they browse on the website, but prefer to buy actually in the store?

Son-Do But we've got the sizing guide online, and even if they buy the wrong size, they can still return them for free.

Jo You're right, Son-Do, but perhaps that seems like too much inconvenience. Grace, do you agree?

Grace I suppose you could be right. In that case, we need a way of reassuring customers that they're buying the right thing. Even though we've got the sizing guide, not to mention the change view, change colour, video, and zoom in-out features, it seems people are still not completely confident buying online.

Jo I know. What if they could somehow virtually try on the clothes? Would that be possible?

Grace Well, I don't know. Even if it were possible, I think it'd be costly, but we could always investigate.

Sang-Hyun Hold on a minute, Grace! There's no point spending time and money developing new features unless we know that's what's at the root of the problem. We should bear in mind our initial market study showed that people were quite open to online clothes shopping, and that our competitors seem to be doing well with their online sales.

Son-Do Sang-Hyun's right. Let's not get carried away. You can see from this report that users are spending ages on the different pages, and when people do buy something it often takes a long time for them to move through the order process. I'd say we could have a problem with the technology. It could be that the average user's operating system can't adequately support the website. It's all very well having a high-tech website with lots of flash and video images, but unless people can navigate it quickly, they're not going to bother to order.

Sang-Hyun There could be something in that. So, now we really need to speak to IT to find out how we can investigate this.

12.1

Luis So, Gilliam, we've just got time for a quick tour of the brewery before we meet the management team.

Gilliam Fine by me, Luis. I'm really only here to catch up on what's been going on since my last visit.

Luis Well there's no need to see the new bottling line – you saw that on your last visit.

Gilliam Yeah, how's it going?

Luis Fine, we're now working two shifts. The real test will come in the summer when we'll be working three shifts a day, seven days a week.

Gilliam Hmm. Could you show me the new training rooms first? Staff training was one of the top priorities in my last report.

Luis No problem. I can also show you what steps we've taken in the area of communications. So far we're very pleased with the progress we've been making in both areas.

Gilliam I'm glad to hear that. Training and communications are key areas we should all be working on.

Luis Pedro Muñoz, our new personnel manager, will be coming to the meeting later on and he'll be bringing you up to date on all that.

Gilliam Good. I don't think I know him, do I?

Luis No. He started working for us just after your last visit.

Gilliam Will we have time to see the new reactor as well?

Luis Yes, of course.

Gilliam Fine. Head office have asked me to give it a special mention in my report. Is it working to full capacity now?

Luis Almost. It's been in operation for about four months now but we're beginning to see considerable savings in energy costs.

Gilliam But has it helped reduce the problem with waste disposal? You were having real problems with that the last time I came here. That's why we approved the budget.

Luis Well, Gilliam, you'll be pleased to learn that it's not only solved the problem but that we'll be making money from it in the near future!

Gilliam Now that is interesting.

12.2

Luis So this is the new reactor. We were having big problems with the disposal of the waste that we filter out of the beer. Until recently we were giving it away to local farmers.

Gilliam Yes, I know. Waste disposal's a big problem.

Luis Then four months ago we installed this reactor.

Gilliam So how's it going?

Luis Well, it's now working twenty-four hours a day. It dries the waste which we plan to sell as an organic fertilizer.

Gilliam Yes, congratulations, Luis.

Luis Thanks. However one development that you might be unaware of is that we're now using the heat produced in the process to obtain hot water for cleaning operations. So we're hardly wasting any water ... and we're saving money there too.

Gilliam What about your energy costs?

Luis We'll be saving about €10,000 a month by this time next year. That means that the new reactor will be paying for itself in three years' time.

Gilliam Great news!

Luis Yes, I have a full dossier for you to take away.

Gilliam Great. It all looks very promising. I really am most impressed. You've certainly accomplished a lot since my last visit.

Luis Thank you. I think we've succeeded in making everything work a lot more efficiently. Well ... let's go – they'll be waiting for us.

15.1

Mark Have a look at the next slide. As you can see from the table on the right, we currently have around 650 car rental outlets in 24 countries – that total includes both national companies and franchised operations. As the following slide shows, the best part of 400 of these outlets are in the United States. You can also see that there are just short of 30 offices in Canada and almost all the rest, that's 226, are in Western Europe with a little over three-quarters of our European offices in the UK ... er ... at the last count that was 179 offices. Now, I want you to look carefully at this second chart, which compares those numbers with the previous year. Worldwide, the number of outlets has fallen by just under 13.5%. In Greece, for example, we've lost roughly a quarter of our 24 franchisees, and the number looks like rising. Let me draw your attention to the seventh and eighth columns. It's only in Serbia and Bulgaria that the picture is healthier, with our first 20 or so outlets in each country. I'll leave that slide on the screen for a minute so that you can study it. The question is: what can we do about it?

15.2

Mark So why have car rental numbers dropped?

Well, the simple answer is that our internet presence has consistently let us down. The graph here – no, sorry, not that slide, bear with me, ah yes, here we are – the Y axis of this graph shows the number of hits on our main brand website in the UK. The X axis shows the last 12 months. And what does this show? Well, I'm sure you've noticed ... fewer than 10,000 hits in March. That's

about 7,000 down from the same month the year before. And from that we had only, I reckon, in the region of 600 direct sales. This slide shows a web search I entered last week for the key words "discount car hire France". Where do you think GoFar comes in the listings? Well ... notice that we don't even feature on this front page – of roughly twenty websites. And even worse, we aren't on page two either. The dedicated customer will finally discover us somewhere around entry thirty-five. No wonder our potential customers never find us. So I ask you ... is that good enough?

16.1

Jomo So, I hope that you'll agree that this retail and leisure park development is nothing short of sensational and exactly what Kimberley needs. Right, now I'd be very happy to answer any questions you may have. Yes. At the back. The lady in blue.

Woman 1 Exactly how many shops will there be?

Jomo Yes, thank you. I really wanted to clarify that. There'll be space for three anchor stores – well-known chains or department stores – alongside seventy-eight smaller outlets of various sizes. In the third row. Yes, you sir.

Man 1 You mentioned a food court. Will this just be fast food?

Jomo Well, I wish I could answer that right now, but actually I'm not sure. It depends very much on who chooses to rent the space. Sorry! OK. The lady in the front row.

Woman 2 You're building this wholly unnecessary centre when what Kimberley really needs is affordable housing.

Jomo Mmm. Yes. Thank you. Er. Of course, I have to disagree with your calling this 'unnecessary'. We firmly believe that this development is crucial to the future of this town. OK. The man in the middle with the blue jacket. No, two seats to the left of you, sir.

Man 2 What exactly will ...

Woman 2 You haven't answered my question! Kimberley needs homes – not shops.

Jomo Well as I tried to make clear earlier ...

Woman 2 The only thing you think about is profit – us residents are worth next to nothing in your eyes!

Jomo If you'd just let me finish. As I tried to make clear earlier – we do firmly believe that this is a positive development for the town. It will help to raise the economic situation of the whole region, attracting in turn new jobs and new housing. Er, maybe I can return to this matter later on. Sir, you were going to ask?

Man 2 What exactly will this cost local residents in terms of taxation?

Jomo Er, we don't expect there to be any significant costs to local residents as most of this is financed from the government's regeneration grant for priority locations. If you're interested in looking into this, sir, we've put all the figures on the project website. Yes, let's hear from the young man putting his hand up – over there – on the aisle.

Man 3 Do you live in Kimberley?

Jomo Ah. Very good question. No, I don't – but I'd certainly consider moving here once this development's been built! Madam?

Woman 3 You said it'll be a beautiful building. I think it's an eyesore.

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- Jomo** Well, what exactly do you mean by 'eyesore'? I'd say it's nothing of the kind. This is a bold and dramatic building that will give character to the whole town centre. The architect has been nothing if not adventurous. But you're entitled to your opinion, of course. I firmly believe that future visitors will travel here just to see our extraordinary Diamond Tower. Now, let's hear from one of the schoolchildren here on the left.
- Child** Is it true that you aren't installing solar panels to power the lighting?
- Jomo** Well, that's a good question and, yes, you're right to a degree – but perhaps the more important issue is ...

17.1

1

- George** We've received this from the dean. I'll just read it. We regret to inform you that, due to budget restrictions, departmental funding will not be increased in the coming year. Kristina, tell us more.
- Roman** Outrageous! Especially when Hispanic Studies have another 5% increase this year. I knew I was in the wrong department. English is a world language, you know!
- George** Yes, Roman, we know. Oh, Alex. You made it!
- Alex** Yes, I was trying to find a security card for the main entrance – they're closing at five today, and ...
- George** Right. Kristina, please?
- Kristina** Oh, OK. Well ... I'm not sure how much you already know, but ... we really can't go on working like this. The budget restrictions mean rethinking our whole approach to the departmental finances. So we've been looking into possible grants, and so far I've found an EU project. To give you an idea, the aim is to link up with other European universities on specific projects, and then apply for grants for development and co-operation. Er ... I hope I'm not going over ground that someone else has covered before.
- George** No, go on.

- Kristina** Well, it's not a new EU policy. I regret not applying for a grant last year, actually. Er ... What was I saying? Oh, yes. The advantage is that it will help raise our profile abroad. So, to do this, there's some information that needs collating. First, I need to know what contacts you have at universities abroad. And second, I'd like to put together a list of our areas of expertise, and match them with those of researchers in other countries. Then we can start applying!
- Roman** And how many university partnerships should we come up with?
- Kristina** Offhand, I can't remember. But I think it's at least three. Anyway, I don't think there's anything else I can add at the moment. I'm afraid I haven't actually got the sheets ready for filling in with details of your contacts. Er ... I'll leave them in Eva's office on Monday. OK?

George Great. Thanks, Kristina!

2

- George** Alex, perhaps now's a good moment to mention the thesis business.
- Alex** Oh, if there's time. Yes, I've got some information somewhere here about it ... Ah, here we are. It's just a small thing really. I meant to send an email round. Anyway, I'm sure you know

that we've been forbidden to use the regular university printing facilities for our students' theses as they don't allow copying in large quantities. But I wanted to say that the new copyshop in town have offered to copy and bind theses at 10% off as long as they're delivered before their deadline. I need to get back to them, but what do you think?

George It sounds like a good arrangement to me. But couldn't we try 12 ... or even 15% off?

Alex Hmm, unlikely, but I'll ask. The deadline is mid-April. So tell students to take their theses there by March the thirty-first to be on the safe side. And I'd advise you to let students know sooner rather than later. That's about it, really ... Oh no, look at the time, it's gone five o'clock!

18.1

1

Paul Well, thank you all for coming but I'm afraid we're already running behind schedule. So, do you mind if we make a start right away? I'd appreciate it if we could keep to the agenda as closely as possible. Agreed? OK. Carlos? Can you outline the production schedule for this month? Could I ask you to keep it short, say fifteen minutes?

Carlos Thanks Paul, I don't think I'll need that long.

2

- Susan** ... I'm pleased to say that much of the work is now finished. Much will depend on the spare parts arriving from Italy on time, but I'm quite confident.
- Paul** Good. Thank you, Susan. I'm amazed that you managed to do so much in so little time. Now, could we move on to the next point? The quarterly report, Dave?
- Dave** Yes, thanks, Paul. Before I show you the figures, I'd like to spend some time discussing the question of payment terms that we're currently offering clients.
- Paul** Dave, I don't want us to get off the point. Can we keep to the agenda? We still have a lot to get through today. Perhaps we could deal with that during other business?
- Dave** Well, it won't take us much time but I'd appreciate it if you could give me at least ten minutes.
- Paul** Fine. Let's leave it until the end.

3

- Enrique** So, if we finished at three fifteen on Friday afternoons in the summer, that would work out to the correct number of annual hours.
- Paul** Did you have any objections to your plan?
- Enrique** Not many. I think everyone will go for it in the end.
- Paul** Good. I don't think there's much more to say about summer working hours. I think we all seem to go along with your proposal. So, I think that more or less covers everything. Thank you all for coming ...
- Dave** Just a second, Paul. Sorry about this but I thought we agreed to let me have ten minutes to discuss the payment terms during other business?
- Paul** Well, we're running a bit late, Dave. What does everyone else feel about this? How much longer can we all stay? Is another ten minutes OK with everyone?

Susan Yes.

Enrique OK.

Dave Thanks. I appreciate that.

4

Paul I don't think there's much point in discussing this much longer. I think we all accept much of what you have to say about the present terms of payment.

Dave I'm glad to hear that. At the moment, many of our clients don't pay us until after 150 days.

Enrique 150 days? That many?

Dave Yes. That's the problem. So, do we offer sixty, ninety, or 120 days?

Paul 120 days? I don't think we should offer as many as that. But sixty? Many clients wouldn't like it. Anyway, I really think we should leave it there. We can't take a decision on it here and now. I'd prefer to leave it for our next meeting.

Dave But that doesn't give me much time to get back to our salespeople. If we're going to change anything, they really need to know ...

Paul OK. OK. I'm afraid there's not much we can decide right now. Perhaps you and I can speak about this later.

Dave Yes, OK.

19.1

Doug Have we considered running a second shift?

Ursula Well, yes, Doug, but then we'd have to employ a lot more staff.

Kate Not if we staffed it ourselves.

Ursula What?! Run the business during the day and bake at night? How long could we keep that up for?

Doug Let's just write it down and keep going. The greater the number of options we have, the better.

Alan We could look at making the process itself quicker rather than running it for longer.

Kate Oh, how about automating the packing? In the long term it might be cheaper because we'd need fewer or even no packers.

Alan One thing we could do is buy a bigger oven.

Ursula Or a second oven. Actually, you can get vertical ovens that have greater capacity than the older models, but take up less room.

Alan Talking of more room, you know what we could do? Move to a whole new production facility.

Ursula But there's always the prospect that we won't sell as well as predicted at Greenmarket and won't get another contract.

Alan Unlikely. More and more people are getting into organic food, so the market's getting larger and larger.

Kate I've got an idea. Although it could conceivably damage our short-term sales, how about narrowing down the range? If we only produced in one size, we wouldn't spend time switching tins and settings, and that's one of the biggest time-wasters.

Doug Or keep the range as is and install a second production line - that wouldn't be so big an investment as a new factory.

Alan This may sound a bit off the wall, but how about outsourcing part of the process - we mix, someone else bakes?

19.2

Kate Why don't we just use non-organic fruit?

Ursula That's hardly in keeping with our policy is it, Kate?

Doug Then we've just got to find another supplier.

Alan We haven't had much luck so far. I've contacted some producers and they're out as well, because of the bad harvest. The only other producers we could use are even further away than our present ones and that means we'll have further transport costs.

Doug Has anyone considered using different kinds of fruit instead? Don't you think we ought to be more creative - how about raspberries or cranberries?

Alan Interesting, but you know that blueberry is always the best-seller.

Kate Just thinking outside the box for a second, how about mixing blueberries and raspberries in the same recipe?

Doug No ...

Alan I don't think that would be as popular as blueberry on its own.

Doug Going back to Kate's idea. It might be workable, you know. As the majority of our ingredients will still be organic, we could keep the organic label, but have 'ninety percent organic' or something written in the small print.

Ursula I don't think it's a good idea to make a compromise like that with one of our most popular products.

20.1

Nicolas So, point six on the agenda. To discontinue film processing and developing services. I think figure three on page seven of Philippe's report says it all. Revenue from digital photography sales is steadily increasing and digital is clearly our biggest money maker. Internet services have more than tripled but in the same period income from film cameras and processing has fallen by over 80%. Philippe?

Philippe Thanks. We really only have three alternatives. One: do nothing. Two: concentrate our film services in a few branches, perhaps only in capital cities. Or three: pull out entirely from film and concentrate exclusively on digital services. In many ways, it's almost a foregone conclusion. I believe it's pretty obvious what we have to do.

Nicolas Thank you, Philippe. Your report sums the situation up very clearly. Comments? Kyra?

20.2

Kyra Well, I tend to agree with Philippe's second proposal. But continue with the sale of single-use cameras, at least through our main branches. You have to bear in mind that there are still many people who don't use digital cameras.

Nicolas True, Charles?

Charles Yes, I agree but only sell the cameras. The kind of people who buy them don't care where they get their film developed, they just go to the cheapest place. As far as I'm concerned the sooner we get out of film the better. The advantages far outweigh the disadvantages.

Nicolas OK. I knew we'd all share the same views about the future of film. I propose that we adopt Philippe's second proposal and only offer film processing services from one central branch in

listening script

each country. The key question to answer now is how to go about introducing the change.

20.3

Nicolas So, to bring this point to a close. We agreed that the most logical course of action is for all branches to offer these services until the end of January. From then onwards film processing will be limited to the main branch in each capital. All film processing equipment will be removed from the branches before the end of May. We've also agreed to invest an additional one and a half million euros in internet services. Is that all?

Philippe Remember that we all felt that we had to continue to sell single-use film cameras. They're still quite popular. Especially with the elderly.

Nicolas Thanks, Philippe. So, in conclusion, we pull out from film services almost immediately in most branches. Do we need to take a vote on this? All those in favour? ... Good, that's unanimous. I'll draft a memo to branch managers and let them know our decision. Now, the next point on the agenda is ...

21.1

1

Marie Bernard, I just wanted to check how you're getting on with your tasks re the green office project.

Bernard Mm, we could be held up by the solar panel suppliers. They said they're too busy and ten days isn't enough time for them to make the proposal.

Marie Well, it sounds like long enough to miss your know the committee's meeting on the 21st. I'd chase them up if I were you or we'll never get this project off the ground.

Bernard OK, I will, but actually, I'm afraid there could be another hitch - you know how nice the surroundings of the building are - some people are worried they'll be spoilt by the panels.

Marie What? But the panels will be on the roof, won't they?

2

Marie Rita, hi there. I'm phoning about the green office project. Are you on track to finish the survey by the next meeting?

Rita Yes, I think so - I've got lots of useful information already.

Marie Really? Well done!

Rita Yeah, for example, half the department lives in the countryside, twenty to forty kilometres away, and forty kilometres is a bit far to bike to work every day, unfortunately. But the suburbs are home to the other half, so they have more options.

Marie Interesting, so you'll be ready on time then?

Rita Sure, I'll finish the survey and have it written up in no time.

3

Marie I was just following up on the green office project, Louis. Have you managed to make the arrangements for the recycling?

Louis Well, we're on the case but the team's a bit busy at the moment so we haven't got too far. It's a shame the government doesn't facilitate more recycling, then we wouldn't have to. Anyway, don't worry. We'll have come up with something by the time of the meeting.

Marie OK, good, and what about the stationery supplier?

Louis Yes, I've already got a couple of proposals, but they don't look very cheap. I'm afraid our usual spend of 1,200 euros isn't going to cover it, but I'll look into it and I'll report back in full at the meeting.

22.1

1

Gordon How's life in our New York office then?

Sharon Oh, great.

Gordon How are you finding all the travelling? I mean you fly back every month, don't you?

Sharon Yes, tiring, but I'm getting used to it.

Gordon Like the job, do you?

Sharon Yes, I suppose I'll soon be used to working in New York but I miss working with everybody here in Pittsburgh.

Gordon I'll tell them that on Monday. You're missed too! Come and visit us the next time you're downtown.

Sharon Yes, I will.

2

Gordon Excuse me but I didn't catch your name before, I'm Gordon Evans.

José Pleased to meet you. My name's José Iturriz.

Gordon You're not with Axen, are you?

José No, but we do a lot of business with them in Spain. What about you?

Gordon I'm in information systems, with Harper and Harper.

José Oh, yes?

3

Gordon I think we've met before, haven't we?

Nicolas Yes, I believe we have.

Gordon Didn't you use to work for Axen?

Nicolas I still do but I'm not at head office any more.

Gordon Where are you now?

Nicolas I'm based in LA, just outside of Santa Monica.

Gordon Lucky you! I'm sorry but I'm trying to remember your name. It's Nicolas ... Carlsson, isn't it?

Nicolas That's right! You've got a good memory. But I'm afraid I don't recall yours.

Gordon Gordon Evans, from Harper and Harper.

Nicolas Ah yes! It's good to see you again, Mr Harper.

Gordon Actually, the name's Evans, Gordon Evans. Harper and Harper's the company.

4

Gordon And thank you for delivering those components so quickly.

Tom We were just glad to help you out. You're one of our major customers, after all.

Gordon But what brings you here? You don't work with Axen, do you?

Tom No. But I'm an old friend of one of the managers. Nice offices, aren't they?

Gordon Yes, they've done a great job with the construction.

Tom Oh, it's not a new building, is it?

Gordon No, I think it used to be an old warehouse.

Tom Really? Oh! Would you excuse me for a second? I've just seen someone.

Gordon Yes, of course. Perhaps we can meet up later? At lunch?

Tom Sure, I'd like that. Save me a place at your table, will you?

Gordon OK. See you later!

Tom See you!

5

Gordon Hello, Deborah! You're looking well.

Deborah Hello, Gordon. I was hoping you'd be here. How are things?

Gordon Fine, job's going well, family's fine. How's Rome treating you?

Deborah Oh, sometimes I think I'm almost Italian now.

Gordon Well, why don't you come and work for us back in Pittsburgh?

Deborah Thanks for the offer but I'm very happy where I am. The kids are used to life in Italy.

Gordon Hmm. It is getting a bit crowded here, isn't it?

Deborah It certainly is. Let's try and find somewhere quiet to sit down.

Gordon I'll take your drink for you.

Deborah Thanks.

Gordon You know - I'm trying to work out how long it's been since we last saw each other.

Deborah I think it was last September in Philadelphia, wasn't it?

Gordon Yes, it could have been then. Well, Deborah, what have you been up to?

23.1

Declan The new trainee looks a bit nervous, doesn't he?

Roberto Yeah, but he seems nice enough. I feel sorry for him. I know how it feels to start a new job. In fact, I'll never forget my first day working in a cocktail bar!

Linda How come?

Roberto Well, I'd got a student job working in a local bar and was quite nervous and, to cut a long story short, I threw a drink over the owner's son!

Declan You must be joking! Why on earth did you do that?

Roberto Of course, I didn't do it on purpose. The bar manager had just shown me how to mix a drink. The owner was sitting at the end of the bar and my first customer was his son, and I carefully poured my first drink for him. And then, I don't know how I managed it, but somehow as I was handing it to him, it slipped out of my hand and went straight over him - the whole drink! I felt like a right idiot.

Linda What did he do?

Roberto Actually, he was really nice about it - just towelled himself off! But needless to say the owner didn't look very impressed.

Linda No wonder! That reminds me of my first day working at the prosecution service - but it's far too embarrassing to tell.

Roberto Go on, Linda, you've started now.

Linda OK, but just remember it was a long time ago! So, I'd been looking for a job that would get me into the legal industry for ages and eventually I got a job as a clerk at the court. I was really nervous on my first day and wanted to make a good impression. Anyway, I'd been given files full of witness statements which I had

to take into the court. When I was walking in, someone collided with me and I literally fell into the courtroom, dropping the files as I went.

Declan Oh no! What a nightmare!

Linda It wasn't my fault they bumped into me! But that wasn't the worst of it - the documents flew all over the place and got so muddled up that the court case had to be adjourned!

Roberto How embarrassing!

Linda I know. Imagine how I felt! And little did I know that it was only going to get worse!

Roberto Why? What happened next?

Linda Well, because it was easier to prepare the documents again than to put them back in order, all the documents had to be shredded, and while I was shredding them the shredder overheated and caught fire - probably because I'd put too many in at once!

Declan, Roberto Ha, ha! Oh, no!

Linda Then, to top it all, the fumes set the fire alarm off and the fire service came out! It was so humiliating.

Roberto Oh dear, it really wasn't your day, was it?

24.1

1

Stephanie How many guests are we expecting?

Richard Well, quite a few, and there'll be more at the dinner afterwards.

Stephanie If any of the cast come, that is.

Richard Of course they will! At least, they've been invited. Ah, the sponsor's arrived. I'll bring him over. George! Please do come in. Thank you so much for joining us. I'm delighted you could make it this evening!

George My pleasure! And this is a terrific venue. I love the glass ceiling!

Richard We're very fortunate to be able to use the embassy for the occasion. George, I'd like you to meet Stephanie Abbott. Stephanie is new to the festival this year, and looks after the festival's marketing. And this is George Potter from La Fontaine Champagne, the festival's key sponsor.

George Actually, I think we've met, haven't we?

Stephanie Yes, briefly, a few months back. I'm so pleased you could come to the opening night.

George It's a great pleasure to be involved in the festival. We sponsor at least four or five different cultural events every year, and this is, I think, our third film festival in three years?

Richard Indeed!

George For film, we just sponsor this one festival. The other events are dance, music, and some theatre pieces too.

Richard Without a sponsor of your calibre, a festival such as this wouldn't happen. It's an honour to have such a successful partnership.

George Well ... I incidentally, how's the festival selling?

Stephanie Tonight's sold out, and there are only a few tickets left for the showings on Sunday. But otherwise ...

George That's excellent. And tonight's film, how did it go down in Paris?

Stephanie It opened a month ago to rave reviews. We're hoping it might even be up for best foreign film at the next Oscars.

George Fantastic! And is the director of tonight's film here?

listening script

Stephanie Didier Ouvrieu? Yes, he'll be here at the dinner. And we've invited some of the cast, so there might even be a chance to meet some of the stars. Only Richard knows exactly who's coming to the dinner ...

2

Richard George, how did you enjoy the film?

George Very much. The product placement worked well too – you couldn't miss it.

Richard Not! At least there was plenty of champagne throughout! Ah, George, you haven't met Didier Ouvrieu, the director. Let me introduce you: Didier, I'd like to introduce you to George Potter. George is from La Fontaine, our key sponsor, and, as you know, one of the film's original financiers in France. George is based in the London offices.

Didier Good evening. Thank you for coming.

George Delighted to meet you. I've heard the film is already a great success in France.

Didier Yes, absolutely. And, it's just the first in a series of three films I'm making. It's done well everywhere. Even in the US, and it's only distributed there in art-house cinemas.

Richard Right, well, um, perhaps we could ... Ladies and gentlemen, it's my very great pleasure to have you all here this evening. I'd like to extend a warm welcome to members of the cast and crew, and especially to the film's director, Didier Ouvrieu. But in particular, I'd like to express my heartfelt thanks to our sponsor, La Fontaine, without whom it would be impossible to put on this festival at all. A toast ... to the sponsor ... La Fontaine!

25.1

1

A Between you and me, I don't think she'll be around for long.

B How come?

A Well, don't tell anybody I told you, but she told Ann in accounts, who told Erica, who told me, that she's trying for a baby.

2

A I'm really worried, you know.

B Why? What's up?

A Haven't you heard? Mark hinted to me that we're going to be taken over by Unifinancio, and he suggested that we ought to start looking for a new job, because there'll probably be some downsizing.

25.2

1

A Did you hear about Juan and Christa's argument the other day?

B No, what happened? I thought they got on well.

A So did I, until then! But Christa accused Juan of stealing one of her clients and of course Juan lost his temper. He denied everything and tried to explain that the client had phoned when Christa was on holiday so he'd just been trying to help. But Christa refused to listen and threatened to make an official complaint if it happened again!

2

A So, Ruth confirmed that Mike's going to be in charge of the new project.

B Yeah, you know why, don't you?

A Hard work and dedication?

B Yeah, right! You know I saw him leave with Ruth the other night? And they were looking pretty chatty. And Jo mentioned she'd seen them in a restaurant together a couple of weeks before, so something must be going on.

A No way!

3

A Apparently, they're getting rid of Sarah.

B Are they?

A I think so. I'm not really surprised. She was always complaining when she had to work overtime. I warned her that it wouldn't go down too well with the new management.

B I know. She even refused point blank to stay a couple of times, despite the fact that Pete practically begged her to stay and offered her time off in lieu.

4

A Have you heard about Tony's trip to Italy?

B No, go on.

A Well, the boss wasn't very pleased with his expenses claim! Tony was definitely living the *dolce vita* – the best hotel, restaurants, not to mention bars!

B Really? I've heard he's a bit of a party animal!

A I know, but after Tony's last trip the boss had warned him about his expenses. Tony apologized, but of course, he still blamed it all on the client, saying they'd chosen the most expensive restaurants and bars.

25.3

A Firstly, well done on last week's training programme! However, there was one problem. Apparently you arrived late for the training session three times.

B That's not true! I was there at nine on the dot the first morning, but the trainees were waiting in a different room. It's not my fault they told me the wrong seminar room.

A OK, and what about the other times?

B Well, it's true that I was late the next morning, but only a bit, and that was because I couldn't get into the offices as there was no one on reception, and on the Wednesday I was stuck on the metro because there was an accident.

A OK ... but don't let it happen again.

B Don't worry. It won't.

26.1

Helen Excuse me! Could I just have your attention for a second? I'd like to say a few words before we all begin our dinner this evening. I'll try to be as brief as I can. On behalf of the company, I'd like to congratulate you all for the excellent results of a very busy and very successful summer season. Thank you everyone for all the work that you've put in over these last three months. Now if I could just digress for a moment. Some of you might have read a little book, a best-seller in its day, called *Moments of Truth* by Jan Carlzon. These 'Moments of Truth' are the moments when a client has a problem which a company employee manages to solve efficiently, quickly, and in a friendly, personal manner. According to Carlzon, the success of any company is due to the sum of these moments. This evening, if I may, I'd like to give you one outstanding example of one of our 'Moments of Truth'. Please bear with me for a short while. In July this summer a group of ...

26.2

Helen ... in July this summer a group of twenty-four holidaymakers were about to leave for their holidays in Mallorca. They should have taken off from Heathrow on the Sunday afternoon but the airline contacted our Brighton office on the Saturday morning to say that the flight was overbooked and that our group wouldn't be able to leave until late the following evening. Deborah Jeffries, our local agent in Brighton - where is she? Hi, Deborah, Well, as I was saying, Deborah worked all of Saturday to solve the problem. She managed to book them onto another flight at almost the same time which must have been very difficult at such short notice. Deborah not only notified every single client but she gave up her Sunday to meet the group at the airport, hand over their new tickets personally, and then accompany them to the gate to make sure that everything went smoothly. She could simply have told them that they were going to lose one day of their holidays. Another company might have closed their office at one o'clock and let the clients solve the problem for themselves. Deborah didn't have to go to be with them at the airport but she did. I'm convinced that every client must have really appreciated her service. I'm sure you all agree with me on that. Thanks to Deborah what could have been a minor disaster was avoided and they were able to enjoy their holiday to the full. Deborah, on behalf of the company, I'd like you to accept this little gift as a token of our gratitude. So, to bring my speech to an end. Thank you all once again for the outstanding work this summer. At Arrow Holidays we don't just sell holidays - we go out of our way to look after our clients. Thank you everyone for being so patient and attentive. Could you all raise your glasses please? I'd like to end by proposing a toast. I wish you every success for the future. To everyone at Arrow Holidays! The best travel agency in the business!

All to Arrow Holidays!

27.1

Bob How nice to see you again, Mrs Lau. We met at the Los Angeles conference, I think. Did you have a good journey?

Mrs Lau Yes. Thank you. No problems.

Bob And you must be Mr Hsiao. Very pleased to meet you at last. We've written each other enough emails, haven't we? Well, seeing as we're right by the desk, we might as well start our tour here! Oh, have you signed in? Good. And could you just clip the badges on, please? You'll need them to open the red security doors between the main corridor and the warehouse. So you've already met Mandy. I really don't know what we'd do without her. She's a real asset. (How do you do? How do you do?) Oh, Mandy - do you have any of those small red folders that we produced last year for any visitors that came to see the offices?

Mandy No, sorry Bob, None left.

Bob Oh, well. Straight through here is the main office I share with Nestor who's in charge of fulfilling web orders. They've become our major growth area. We can come back here later to see if he's turned up. Please don't look at my messy desk! And there's a door at the back directly through to the storage area ... after you, Mrs Lau. Be careful, please. Can I ask you to put these on? Health and safety regulations, you know.

Mr Hsiao How long has Boogie-Woogie Babies been here?

Bob We moved to these premises in 2005. We needed a much larger warehouse with easy loading and unloading access, and integrated office facilities. And as you can see, our stock has kept growing. So we might need another move soon. I'm sure you've already noticed the baby buggies, car seats, and travel cots over there near the goods inward dock. All from Guilin Enterprises, of course. We're very proud of our exclusive distribution rights for all our excellent baby products. In fact, the storage area is divided into two main parts: A and B. We have all the big items here in A ... and through these double doors - no, push hard - in storage area B are the smaller items: baby sunshades, cot toys, rain covers, and so on. The goods outward dock is just over here. And, can I introduce Johannes, the warehouse manager? (How do you do? How do you do?) He's the man who single-handedly keeps the company running. Now, do you have an idea of where you are? If we went down that short corridor, we'd get back to Reception. But, first, let's come over here. That's the room where we keep the computer server and then through here is the break room - there's a kettle there - and luckily it's got an outside door that opens onto the car park so you can get a breath of fresh air when you need it. Oh, by the way - if you need the toilet, it's just over here. Well, I think we've seen everything now - except for Marketing. Let's go back and see if Mary's in her office.

28.1

1
Smith Casting Smith Casting?

Alison Hello. I'm calling from Canners. I understand you specialize in accents? I was wondering if you could help.

Smith Casting Uh-huh?

Alison Well, I'm looking for a native Czech speaker. I'm having a bit of trouble finding one!

Smith Casting Sorry. We've worked with British actors only for the last year now. Try Casting International. Ask for Grace.

Alison OK. Thanks.

2

Grace Hello?

Alison Hello, Grace?

Grace Yes.

Alison I got your number from Smith Casting.

Grace Yes, and ...

Alison Sorry - but if you could just bear with me ... I'm not sure if you're the right person, but I'm trying to get hold of someone with a Czech accent.

Grace Well, once in a while we have Europeans on our books, and we do have Czechs every so often. Tomas has been here since March.

Alison Well, I was actually looking for a female actor.

Grace Oh, there's Jana, but she doesn't work here any longer. Or Katarina ... she's Slovak. That's close enough, isn't it?

Alison Actually, no.

Grace Well, unless you can wait ...

Alison We start filming in two weeks. Could you advise me where else I could call?

listening script

Grace Try the drama academy on the Strand. In the meantime, I'll ask around. Leave me your number.

Alison OK, Thanks!

3

The Strand The Strand. Hello?

Alison Hello! I'm calling from Cannors. One of the agencies suggested I phone you. I was hoping you might be able to help.

The Strand Maybe!

Alison We're looking for a Czech actress. I've tried three agencies so far, but no one as yet has been able to help. I've rarely found it so hard. Am I right in thinking you train European actors?

The Strand Indeed. And we invariably have someone from central Europe. They don't need visas any more. You're after a Czech speaker?

Alison Yes, with good English, but native Czech.

The Strand Well, Tania's great, but she's currently away. Is it urgent?

Alison Well, I've got until next week, but I have to get the interviews done by Friday. Will she be back in time?

The Strand She's back on Wednesday.

Alison Oh, great! Thanks.

29.1

David OK, Let's get down to business. Before we move on to the main agenda, could I ask everyone briefly to introduce themselves, please? I'm David in Dallas and I'm hosting this conference.

Manu Good afternoon, everyone. This is Manu in Mumbai.

Marisa And I'm Marisa from the Hamburg office. Good afternoon.

Brad Hello from a very rainy Detroit. I'm Brad and it's good morning from me!

David OK, This is David again. The usual reminder: please remember to say your name whenever you start speaking. Can I just check if there are any technical problems?

Manu No.

Marisa Everything's fine.

Brad None here.

David Good. And - whatever happens, please don't put this call on hold. We really don't want to hear your handset playing the same song twenty times before you realize what's going on. Manu, during the call, I'd like you to keep a note of any topics that have been raised but not fully discussed or answered. Remind us of these whenever it's appropriate.

Manu No problem.

David Right. Let's start with item one on the agenda ...

29.2

David Right. Let's start with item one on the agenda - and it's an important one. We're considering bidding for the GoldBook contract for nationwide catalogue distribution over 600 grams in Poland. This could be a major win for us and a significant challenge, as our Polish coverage is currently less than 30%. I'm looking for ideas to make this tender both realistic and competitive, however many demands this makes on us. OK, who'd like to kick the discussion off?

Manu This is Manu. This presumably requires a significant increase in the number of sorting and distribution centres?

David David. Yes, but whoever wins the contract will have to significantly scale up their operation. So we're not necessarily at a disadvantage on this point.

Brad Am I right - that if we get this, our Polish operation would become the largest private mail delivery service?

Marisa No, that's not right. Sorry.

David That's not actually correct ...

Marisa Sorry ... We're talking over each other.

David Go ahead, Marisa.

Marisa Our two main competitors would still be carrying more mail than us. But it would place us in a much more competitive position to steal a bigger share of the domestic mail market. With regulations only recently being relaxed there, it's all very ripe for growth.

David Sorry, Marisa. I couldn't catch all of that. You seem to have a very bad line there. Could you leave the call and dial in again, please?

Marisa OK. I'll be right back.

Brad Brad here. I have a feeling that however we approach this bid, we can't win.

Manu Why on earth not?

David Whatever do you mean, Brad?

Brad Well, When the CEO or whoever looks at our current coverage, he's not going to conclude that we're ready to do this tomorrow. Do you know how big Poland is? Whatever date we had to start this, we wouldn't be ready.

David I think you're being overly pessimistic.

Brad Well, whatever ...

Marisa Hello. I'm back.

David That sounds better. So, Marisa. What do you think?

Marisa Sorry, I heard the end of that conversation but I couldn't tell who was speaking.

David Let's go over it again.

30.1

Frank Hi, George. It's Frank here. I'm using Sandra's car this week and I can't get his satnav to work. It happens to be rather different from my own.

George You're not in a tunnel, are you?

Frank No - as it happens, I'm on a motorway, just leaving Frankfurt.

George Mmm. That's odd. Well, I suggest you do a system reset. That sometimes clears problems. Can you see the button on the far left? It's got a red circle on it.

Frank Yes. Got that.

George And on the top of the machine there's a long silver bar. Press both of those at the same time - and hold them down for about five seconds. It'll beep and the system will reboot.

Frank OK. Thanks. I'll try that.

30.2

Mandy Kim, can I ask what you're doing?

Kim I'm scanning the business card she just handed me into my PDA.

Mandy Oh, I didn't have any idea you could do that. Can you show me how it works?

Kim Go to the Contacts page. Now find the 'Options' menu, select 'Images', and then click the third tick box that says 'Enable scanner'.

Mandy OK. And then?

Kim Well, you're all set up. Now whenever you enter a new contact, there's a new button on screen that says 'Scan card'. Here, try it with this card.

Mandy Right.

Kim Place the card on the table. Roll the front edge of the PDA smoothly over the card. And the card should appear on screen.

Mandy Yes! Da-da! There it is. Mmm, what a weird name this person has!

Kim Hey! That happens to be a colleague of mine!

Mandy Oh!

30.3

Vic Hello? IT? Is that Paul?

Paul Vic? You back in town?

Vic No – as it happens. I'm in Slovenia. Paul, I need your help. I can't get this new laptop to work.

Paul Don't panic. These things happen!

Vic This is the first time I've used it. It's Robert's old one.

Paul Well, bring it in when you get back.

Vic Yes, but I need it now! Whatever happens, I have to access my products list!

Paul Tell me what you see after you turn it on.

Vic It just doesn't let me do anything!

Paul Sorry, Vic. If you want me to help, you need to tell me exactly what happens. Now, I want you to restart and read out any messages you see.

Vic OK ... It's restarting now. Ah, here's the problem. I click Robert's name ... and now it says 'You do not have permission to perform this operation'.

Paul Ah, right. That's not a big problem. Click 'Cancel'. Now, instead of selecting Robert's name from the list, choose the 'Administrator' button.

Vic Ah, yes – that works – it's starting. Thanks!

Paul You're welcome. By the way, whatever happened to Robert?

Vic You won't believe this. He only happened to bump into the director last month and got invited to work in Houston for a year!

Paul Lucky guy!

Vic Yeah!

36.1

Samantha Let's talk about team working. How would you achieve a good working atmosphere in a multinational team, Beatrix?

Beatrix The first task is to make sure that everyone knows what was expected from them. In that sense I think I'm quite a communicative type of person. I'm highly motivated and very goal-oriented. I like to think the way I work is totally focused on reaching objectives. If my team is getting the results then I can be a very enthusiastic leader. I feel quite strongly that a good leader should be very demanding. But I'm also realistic – the perfect atmosphere probably doesn't exist.

Samantha Yes, but what about multinational teams?

Beatrix I must admit I'm not so experienced when it comes to dealing with mixed nationalities but I don't think my approach would be all that different, not if you're dealing with professionals. I think good communications would be my main priority.

Samantha Could you describe a recent situation in which you convinced a group to do something?

Beatrix Just a second ... Yes, a few months ago I was able to convince a group of rather conservative European bankers that they should be more proactive in their work. They were trying to sell new banking services with very traditional methods. Initially, I found it difficult and was a little frustrated but I'm very determined and can be quite persuasive when I have to be.

37.1

Ricardo Now you know that we're currently buying over one million euros a year of your products – more than half of that in golf equipment. That must make us the biggest clients you have in Spain.

Tom Yes, one of the biggest at least.

Ricardo I think we need to review our present agreement. When we drew up the existing agreement we never expected sales to be so high. I'd like to have more than the present 90-day payment period.

Tom Hm. How long are you thinking of?

Ricardo It's more a problem with equipment rather than with clothing. So how does this sound? Supposing we offered to pay in 60 days for clothing, would you be willing to go as far as 120 on equipment?

Tom That's an interesting compromise, 120 for equipment and 60 for clothing? Yes, I think we could accept that but with one condition. As long as you agree to maintain your present level of orders, I mean, provided sales exceed one million a year.

Ricardo There's no problem there. Good. Now the second thing I want to talk about concerns delivery times. There've been too many delays recently.

Tom Yes, and I do apologize but you appreciate that most of the equipment is made in China now. The goods arrive in the UK, and the individual orders have to be prepared and sent out. It all takes time.

Ricardo Yes, but put yourself in my position. Our agreement states a 60-day delivery period but it's often much more than that. We propose cutting that to 40.

Tom No, I'm sorry but I couldn't commit myself to anything less than 60. I'll do everything I can to respect the 60-day period but ...

Ricardo Just a second. I thought you'd say that, so I have another proposal which I think could be a win-win solution for both of us.

Tom Yes? What's that?

Ricardo Suppose you had the equipment shipped to me direct from the manufacturer? It would save you a lot of work and it should help to speed up deliveries. Would that be feasible?

Tom But you're talking one full container for each delivery at least. I don't think it would be possible. Not unless you agreed to placing larger orders at regular intervals.

Ricardo If it were necessary we could probably place three or four big orders a year. Would that help?

Tom Yes, definitely. It might even work out cheaper for you. I'd have to speak to our suppliers in China first. Could we leave this pending for a couple of weeks?

listening script

Ricardo Yes, I don't mind waiting a little, providing we solve the delivery problem. We can draft the new agreement next month. Now there's something else I'd like to discuss as well. At present I'm the sole agent for the Madrid area. Well, I'd like to propose ...

38.1

Magda It looks like a good model, but I have my reservations about how it will work here. As far as I know, AustriBank wasn't a well-known brand in Austria, whereas here PZ Bank's a household name. I'm concerned that by rebranding we risk losing customers.

Alejandro Well, as you know, keeping the old brand isn't really an option. Unifinancio want to create a strong global brand identity. But what we can do is look at how we go about the process and Austria has been chosen as the benchmark because they've done it so successfully.

Magda And how did they manage it?

Alejandro What they excelled at was organizing everything quickly and this was down to the fact that they set up a very strong project committee before anything else. Once the project committee was established, they co-ordinated the rest of the procedure very tightly.

Magda Well, naturally we can set up a project committee in the same way, but I'm still concerned about how the timescale will work here. According to best practice, the name in the branches should be changed as soon as the second phase of the media campaign is under way. We think our customers and target customers will need more time to get used to the new identity before we change the name.

Alejandro I can understand your concern, but that's why we have a very strong media campaign. This was the other key to Austria's success. They used a mixture of channels: multi-media plus sponsorship of the Vienna Summer Festival. When people have seen the name on TV, in the newspaper, on billboards, on the internet, etc., it won't come as a surprise in their local branch. And don't forget that for existing customers this is all after they received the letter telling them about the new ownership last year - although of course not everyone will have paid attention to it.

38.2

Magda To what extent should best practice inform our media planning?

Alejandro As the market research showed very high awareness of the Unifinancio brand in Austria after the campaign, we'd like to see the same media mix and timetable. Naturally, to maintain consistency the campaign message and look should be the same, but you'll need to translate content and possibly adapt it to the local market.

Magda Looking at the schedule here I think we'll need to modify it to be ready by the time of the Warsaw Summer Festival which will be our sponsored event.

38.3

Magda I foresee the changing of the logo as being problematic as it seems we have to change it several times.

Alejandro As you know the logo should have included 'Member of Unifinancio' in smaller print since the takeover in June. The size of that part of the logo in relation to PZ Bank's logo should increase as you move through the campaign until the final stage when 'Unifinancio' will become the only name on the logo. In Austria the logo changed four times while rebranding was in process. But this only applies to the media campaign. The logo on documentation doesn't need to change until the final stage, after the computer system has been overhauled.

39.1

Morten What really impressed me was the way they could programme their production schedule. Despite their size, they're incredibly flexible. The other big advantage they offer is a guaranteed shipment within fifteen days of any order.

Sheila Only fifteen days? Did you mention the number of components we might order?

Morten Yes. That was the first thing they wanted to know.

Sheila How do they feel about small orders?

Morten The main drawback is that they obviously prefer to work with large orders. They wouldn't commit themselves to guaranteed delivery dates for small orders.

Sheila What did they say about prices?

Morten They weren't very forthcoming. Their pricing policy is based on long-term relationships with their clients. Short-term conditions, especially for small orders are quite expensive. What they really want is to be our sole supplier, but in spite of their assurance I wouldn't be happy with that. We shouldn't put all our eggs in one basket.

Sheila Of course not. The most logical thing to do is place a few initial orders and then work out a long-term agreement later.

Morten Exactly. That's just what I told them.

Sheila How did they take that?

Morten I think they accept that, as a first step, it's only common sense. I mean it's quite clear that they're very interested in working with us.

Sheila What about using only our trademark on the components?

Morten We did discuss that at length. They insisted on using their trademark as well.

Sheila How do you feel about that?

Morten Even though I'd prefer to use only ours, I don't think it'd be a major problem. It would depend on how prominent it was on the equipment.

Sheila What are your feelings about Sonjarg?

Morten Although it was a good trip overall, I still have some reservations. I couldn't help thinking that we should approach other suppliers. At least before we commit ourselves.

Sheila You sound a bit worried about something.

Morten Yes. What worries me is the fact that they're also supplying two of our leading competitors. I don't know if that's a problem or not. I certainly wouldn't like any information to get into the wrong hands, if you see what I mean.

Sheila Hmm. Exactly.

Morten But on the whole I think Sonjarg could be an excellent supplier for us but, as I've mentioned, we have to sort out one or two things before going ahead.

Sheila Good, when can I expect your written report?

Morten Oh, you'll have that on Monday. I need to check some figures first.

42.1

- 1 He'll be in after three.
- 2 I saw a good opportunity.
- 3 Could you do it now, please?
- 4 She visited China and India.
- 5 Should we go out now?
- 6 Can you see all the figures clearly?

42.2

- 1 She's owner and manager of the firm.
- 2 Tell me your opinion of the report.
- 3 I'm waiting for a new offer.
- 4 Could you show a visitor around?
- 5 I'll have to buy some new accounting software.

42.3

- 1 Do you recall that small problem with the file labels? What are you going to do about it?
- 2 Do you recall that small problem with the file labels? What are you going to do about it?

42.4

- 1 Did you have a look at this?
- 2 So could you tell me his name again?
- 3 We went there last week.
- 4 Do you want to get a sandwich?
- 5 What will you do next, Tim?
- 6 Give me a moment. It's in my handbag.

42.5

- A Could you tell me where to go for the meeting?
B Second floor. We're a bit late!
A Do you know when it was supposed to start?
B Not sure. Ten, I think.
A What's the time now?
B No idea. Quarter past, maybe. So what are you going to do? Are you going to go in late?
A Perhaps not. Fancy a coffee?

43.1

- Woman Oh, hi ... you're Jerry, aren't you?
Jerry Er, yes. Hello.
Woman Well, you're looking great. You had a good trip?
Jerry Not bad, but I had to wait ages for a taxi at the airport.
Woman Not but it's not far to get here from Manchester, is it?
Jerry Well, I've been in Moscow, actually. I left at 4 a.m. this morning.
Woman Oh, really? What did you think of Moscow?
Jerry Well. Difficult to tell really. It was a very short visit.
Woman Is it expensive these days?
Jerry Yes, it is. Er ... Well, I must ...
Woman Oh, right. You're going to the plenary talk? It's in the main hall, I think.

43.2

- 1
A Did I tell you? I'm going to Rome to a conference.
B Rome? Lucky you!
2
A I'd rather you give the documents to him personally.
B Would you? OK. I'll go after lunch.

3

- A John won't be in today. He's got flu.
B Has he? And Sam's off work too.

4

- A They've finally sent the contract.
B Excellent. I'll sign it immediately.

43.3

- 1a We may have to postpone the advertising campaign.
1b We may have to postpone the advertising campaign.
2a A Are you coming for lunch with us?
B Yes, I think so.
2b A Are you coming for lunch with us?
B Yes, I think so.
3a They could be here at five.
3b They could be here at five.

44.1

- 1 He's a new clerk.
He's a new clerk.
- 2 I'll just get a glass of water.
I'll just get a glass of water.
- 3 I can't do that advertisement.
I can't do that advertisement.
- 4 The mall's too hot.
The mall's too hot.
- 5 Is the garage on route 63?
Is the garage on route 63?
- 6 What's the address of the leisure park?
What's the address of the leisure park?

44.2

1

- Paul Do you have the address file?
Ellie No, I don't. Did you ask Mylene?
Paul No. Didn't she just go to the first floor?
Ellie She'll be back in a half hour. What's the problem?
Paul I need to get a building permit for that new billboard at the truck stop. I know it's on North Street but I'm trying to find the zip code.
Ellie Isn't it on the bulletin board - over there by the elevator?
Paul No, I checked already. What should I do?
Ellie Don't worry. I'll look it up for you.
Paul Thanks.
Ellie By the way, I've finally gotten an answer about the meeting schedule.
Paul Don't tell me, it's on the weekend!
Ellie Yes. In Jim's apartment. I have the notice here. Come take a look.
Paul That's great! We already work Monday through Friday! Isn't that enough?
Ellie Obviously not. Could you write Jim and tell him you're coming?
Paul I will, sure. What time is it? Mmm. Five after ten. I have to go.
2
Paul Have you got the address file?
Ellie No, I haven't. Have you asked Mylene?
Paul No. Hasn't she just gone to the ground floor?
Ellie She'll be back in half an hour. What's the problem?

listening script

Paul I need to get planning permission for that new hoarding of the transport cafe. I know it's in North Street but I'm trying to find the post code.

Ellie Isn't it on the noticeboard – over there by the lift?

Paul No, I've already checked. What shall I do?

Ellie Don't worry, I'll look it up for you.

Paul Thanks.

Ellie By the way, I've finally got an answer about the meeting schedule.

Paul Don't tell me, it's at the weekend!

Ellie Yes. In Tim's flat. I've got the notice here. Come and have a look.

Paul That's great! We already work Monday to Friday! Isn't that enough?

Ellie Obviously not. Could you write to Tim to tell him you're coming?

Paul Of course I will. What's the time? Mmm. Five past ten. I have to go.

44.3

- 1 He sure had a bold proposal for the new center. I guess he's just about right on most of those points there.
- 2 I'm not so sure about that. I was thinking that there was an awful lot of nonsense he was throwing around in there. Do we really need this centre?
- 3 I agreed with many of the radical ideas and I thought he was very interesting and entertaining.
- 4 Totally over the top. That was the most ridiculous speech I've been forced to sit through in years. He clearly did not understand how the research department develops our food dyes.
- 5 I wonder how he reached that extraordinary conclusion. I thought it made no sense at all.
- 6 They are all very important matters and I'm extremely pleased that someone has finally managed to make some firm proposals on them.
- 7 I have to admit I put my pen down on the chair and closed my eyes. I really needed that sleep! It wasn't really relevant to me.
- 8 In our subsidiary we have many of the same priorities that the speaker outlined in the talk. I thought he was very clear and focused.
- 9 What's this all about? He just talks and talks but it's all about an imaginary situation. Management will never agree to a new centre to develop dyes and colourings. Never.
- 10 I thought he had some interesting points. It is true that there have been a lot of problems with the development of our latest artificial food colourings.

Listening bank 01

Presenter It fell like a bit of a bad joke – I went to the doctor's for a routine check-up and she told me I was obese. Great, I thought. Apparently, that makes me one of 300 million people worldwide and part of the obesity epidemic. They're such horrible terms: 'obese' and 'obesity'. They suggest something that I don't think I am. I'm thirty-five years old, just under six feet tall, and ninety-odd kilograms in weight. My body is relatively proportionate – admittedly there's a little bit of a paunch, but I always thought that was bad posture rather than a real beer belly. Anyway, rather than sit around, I thought I'd try to find out a little more about it ... I've come to see Dr Gronholm at the offices of the World Health

Organization over here in Geneva, Switzerland, to get the facts about obesity. Doctor, firstly how do we define it – obesity?

Dr Gronholm Well, in medical terms, obesity is when your Body Mass Index, or BMI, is thirty or over.

Presenter Thirty or over, I see, and er ... how do I work out my BMI?

Dr Gronholm We can all keep an eye on our BMI – it's a simple calculation. Divide your weight by the square of your height.

Presenter So my weight ... ninety-two kilos divided by ... equals 30.01! What's the verdict?

Dr Gronholm 30.01? So yes ... yes, you are obese. Just.

Presenter Hmm. So it seems ... and what problems does obesity actually cause?

Dr Gronholm Well, first and foremost, obesity has severe effects on people's health. Erm ... it's thought to contribute to er high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and insulin resistance. It can lead to breathing problems, skin problems, and even erm infertility. But most worrying is that there's evidence to suggest that obesity can speed up the onset of certain types of cancers.

Presenter That's some list! Is this just a western problem or a global problem?

Dr Gronholm Well, one billion people worldwide are overweight. The problem ranges across all areas, for example in the UAE, the UK, Croatia, and your own USA more than 20% of males are officially obese. But in er ... China, Denmark, Japan, and France the figure is below 10%.

Presenter So ... there's no real pattern?

Dr Gronholm No, the French case is interesting. The French have a diet richer in saturated fat than the Americans, but their obesity rate is one of the lowest in Europe. Many reasons have been put forward for this.

Presenter For example?

Dr Gronholm Well, the French themselves point to the power of red wine. Other research has centred around the portion sizes in restaurants, the amount of snacking that goes on, and the speed people eat.

Presenter The speed?

Dr Gronholm Yes, if you eat slower, you get a chance to stop eating when you've had enough. If you eat too quickly, you don't notice you're full.

Presenter And the French are famous, I think, for taking a long time over their meals. What about other countries?

Dr Gronholm Well, it's in developing countries where obesity is rising the fastest. In Brazil for example, there've been concerns at the rising obesity rates.

Presenter Really? I always think of Brazilians as very athletic, sort of a 'sporty' people.

Dr Gronholm Well yes, but a recent report suggested that obesity was on the increase ... with one in ten adults being obese.

Presenter Wow! What's causing this rise?

Dr Gronholm Well, the Brazilians are renowned for having a sweet tooth – their *cafezinho* coffee is a national custom and seems to be more sugar than liquid. But I think the real reason for the increase in developing countries is the increasing urbanization.

Presenter More people moving to the cities, right. How's that affecting people's weight?

Dr Gronholm Well, again looking at Brazil, from 1940 to 2000, Brazil's population went from being

80% rural and 20% urban to 80% urban and 20% rural. This has resulted in a marked decrease in physical activity. Poverty can also cause obesity. erm ... people on limited income usually can't afford to buy healthy foods. Fruit and vegetables are often more expensive than beans, potatoes, and pasta.

Presenter So more food and less movement?

Dr Gronholm Yes, across the developing and developed world, society is becoming more sedentary. You know, people sitting around. Both in the workplace and at home people spend more time in front of the TV and computer screens rather than outside exercising.

Presenter I've now come up to the fourth floor to meet Professor Newsom. Professor, what exactly do you do?

Prof Newsom Well, up here we're studying the financial cost of obesity.

Presenter The financial cost?

Prof Newsom Yes, you see health problems er, cause problems in other areas that people don't necessarily think of. In the USA alone last year it's thought that over 93 million dollars were spent on the direct medical cost of obesity.

Presenter Hm. You mean treating ill health caused by obesity?

Prof Newsom Yes, everything from joint replacement ops, stomach reduction surgery, and so on. But there are other consequences too. For example, productivity loss due to absenteeism caused by obesity-related illness - in the UK over 18 million work days are lost annually this way.

Presenter 18 million??

Prof Newsom Yes and that figure is even higher in the USA. Er there are other costs too, for example, the bigger we are the more gas we need to power cars and planes.

Presenter So obesity can have an environmental effect?

Prof Newsom Exactly.

Presenter So we looked at some possible reasons for this obesity epidemic, but recently researchers have suggested that obesity might be contagious. My next stop is dietician Mary Wilson. I asked her what she thought. Mary, is obesity really catching?

Mary Wilson Well, 'contagious' isn't exactly the right word. But recent research does suggest that having an overweight friend or family member can lead to overeating.

Presenter You mean a sort of sympathy effect?

Mary Wilson Yes, that's one theory. The other being that if one person's having a second helping, then it's seen as OK for everyone to do so. So overeating becomes socially acceptable.

Presenter And I suppose if the people around you are getting bigger then it's sort of acceptable for you to put on weight too?

Mary Wilson Right. But these aren't really confirmed findings yet. There seems to be a whole range of reasons why obesity rates are growing and it'd be foolish to just blame one thing.

Presenter So, Mary, I've been told I'm obese. How can I tackle it?

Mary Wilson I'm afraid there's no miracle cure. But ... you can address the issues. First, you need to make sure you have a balanced diet - try to cut down on fatty, processed foods and have more fresh foods. Second, try to exercise more.

Presenter So ... I need to get down the gym, right?

Mary Wilson No, not necessarily, you can do a lot of simple things to get more exercise. Walking is the best exercise. So if you can find a way to walk more, you can quite quickly begin to see the benefits.

Presenter Just walking?

Mary Wilson You need to do it regularly and walk at a brisk pace, but yes, walking's a great form of exercise. I advise people to park one block away or get off the bus one stop away from their office. That extra bit of exercise is often all it needs.

Presenter Well, after finding out about the threat to my health and just how easy it is to address the problems, I've decided I'll try to lose a little bit of weight right now. I'm off for a walk.

Listening bank 02

Presenter Who can forget the date? December the 26th, 2004. An earthquake in the Indian Ocean triggered a series of devastating tsunamis along the coasts of South and South-east Asia, including parts of Indonesia, Sri Lanka, and Thailand. The final estimate compiled by the United Nations put the number of dead or missing at close to 230,000 people. And for those that survived - towns, communities, homes, jobs, and lives ... all in ruins. Relief efforts began quickly and, of course, continue to this day. Many people are still trying to help in many different ways. Today, we're going to look at just how one approach has helped - that of sport. Sport plays a major part in many people's lives, but how can it help rebuild communities when disaster strikes? Joining me is Michael Nilsen from the United Nations Development Programme. Michael, what part has sport played in the redevelopment of the areas hit by the Asian Tsunami in 2004?

Michael Nilsen Sport has played a massive role in helping to rebuild the affected areas.

Presenter Right from the start?

Michael Nilsen Yes, to start with there were the fund-raising events that took place across the world. In rugby union a Northern Hemisphere team played a Southern Hemisphere one in London, and in Barcelona 40,000 people watched a team of some of the greatest footballers in the world play a European team. There were also two cricket matches in Australia and London, where an Asian team took on a Rest-of-the-world side. These high-profile matches kept the disaster in people's minds and helped raise millions of pounds from gate receipts and television deals.

Presenter What about since then? What about the local people themselves?

Michael Nilsen Well, there've been many initiatives to help get people playing sport again. As you said in your introduction, sport plays a major part in people's lives - especially for young people. You know, er it allows them to express themselves and this can help to reduce - a little - the trauma caused by the tsunami.

Presenter Can you give us some examples of these initiatives?

Michael Nilsen Sure, here's one. I've just come back from Aceh in Indonesia. The UNDP in conjunction with Nike and the aid organization Mercy Corps, have donated over 50,000 footballs to schools, clubs, and other youth organizations across the region ...

Presenter Right. That's a lot of footballs!

Michael Nilsen ... Hmm, in the hope that it'll help to revive the 'football spirit' in the region.

listening script

This donation alone has had a very positive effect. Local clubs have been encouraged to resume their activities, and local competitions have been set up. The UNDP has also helped to rehabilitate other sporting facilities in Aceh, including volleyball and basketball courts.

Presenter But what real effect has this actually had on the people's lives?

Michael Nilsen Well, one example. I met a sixteen-year-old there called Eddi. He was so, so ... excited by the arrival of the footballs and some boots, again donated by Nike. He promised me that he wouldn't be watching the next World Cup - he'd be playing in it! Certainly for people like Eddi and his friends the donation of balls and boots gave them something back. Something they hadn't had since before the tsunami: the chance to play a game they love.

Presenter That's in Indonesia. What about elsewhere? How else has sport helped people to rebuild?

Michael Nilsen A really positive story's come from Sri Lanka. The Tsunami completely destroyed the cricket ground in Galle ...

Presenter Ah, yes. It used to be a very picturesque ground.

Michael Nilsen Right. For a long time after it looked as if the ground would be left to rot. But no. Thanks to the efforts of the cricket community both in Sri Lanka and around the world, the ground has been completely refurbished and is ready for test cricket again. For the cricket-mad people of Galle, this has had a symbolic effect that life can return to normal.

Presenter And for the those who aren't so 'cricket-mad' ... ?

Michael Nilsen Well, the return of test cricket to the region will bring an increase in revenue from tourism.

Presenter And have sportspeople continued to get involved?

Michael Nilsen Yes, sure. For example, the Sri Lankan village of Seenigama has been completely rebuilt thanks to donations to a fund set up by cricketers Muttiah Muralitharan and Chaminda Vaas. As well as rebuilding the village and assisting er twenty-five other villages in Sri Lanka, the foundation has provided new sports facilities for the village. Cricket pitches but also an athletics track and a swimming pool.

Presenter As always, some people might argue that sport is not a priority. That the money could've been used in other more useful ways. How would you respond to that?

Michael Nilsen Sport in the region hasn't been funded out of the emergency relief funds. It's been funded out of other initiatives that have raised money specifically for the purpose. Sport's an important part of people's lives. In both of the places I've just mentioned, Galle and Aceh, the people are sports-mad.

Presenter Yes, I can see that.

Michael Nilsen I mean, obviously, in the direct aftermath of the disaster, people weren't thinking about playing sport. Of course not. But as things started to get back to - some sort of - normality the locals realized that their sports facilities had been destroyed. This caused even more distress. In Galle, even while people were still living in tents and other temporary accommodation the locals were wondering why work hadn't started on reconstructing the cricket ground!

Presenter So, sport has been just one of many, many ways to help in the aftermath of the tsunami.

Michael Nilsen Exactly. Through the donation of sporting goods and other projects like the ones I talked about, we've managed to put smiles back on people's faces. Sometimes that's just as important as money in their pockets or food on their tables. You know, youth empowerment is a crucial element in post-disaster rehabilitation work ...

Presenter Michael Nilsen, I'm afraid we'll have to leave it there. Thank you for joining us.

Listening bank 03

Announcer And now, in a special edition of Living Space, Peter Marsh looks at the changing trends in the property market.

Presenter Across Europe, property prices are rising - from a staggering 40% in Moscow ... to 20% in Prague ... and 10% in Paris. In the UK, the cost of an average London house has risen to £300,000! With most mortgage companies demanding a 10% deposit, a young person trying to get into the property market needs a £30,000 deposit before they can even start looking for a property, and then an annual income of over £64,000 before lenders will approve their mortgage application. The rise in house prices has been caused by a number of factors - one of them being a partial breakdown in the way the housing market works. In the old days, people used to 'climb a ladder' - buying a cheap property when they were young before selling up and moving on to a more expensive one when their incomes and/or families grew. But a recent trend shows people moving on without selling. Elena Ruzicka has just bought a new three-bedroom house here in the outskirts of London without selling her one-bedroom flat in the north-west of the city. Elena, why didn't you sell the flat?

Elena Well, I'd be crazy to sell it. With the current state of the property market, I mean, it could be worth half as much again in about five years' time! And even if it isn't, I'm still renting it out and making over £100 a week on it, which makes the cost of upgrading much more manageable.

Presenter Right. So how did you afford the deposit for this new house?

Elena I put it on my credit card ...

Presenter Your credit card?!

Elena Yes ... you see the credit card companies are always offering new deals, so you can borrow money on one card, and get six months' interest-free credit. Then when the special offer runs out, you just look around for another special offer!

Presenter Thanks, Elena. So that's one way of getting a deposit together to get a mortgage. How do other people save money so that they can afford to buy for the first time in London? Trends across Europe show that most people try to live with their parents for as long as possible, with the average age of leaving home in London now at twenty-eight, putting it on a par with Rome which has traditionally had the highest age for children to leave home. But not everyone wants to be tied to the parental home! Meet Steve Evans, who's found a range of ways to save money for his deposit. Steve, what have you done?

Steve Well, to start out I was a building guardian ...

Presenter Which is ... ?

Steve Well, I lived in an old warehouse in east London. I paid just £200 a month to live there, but in return for the cheap rent I had to make sure the building was secure. Basically, I was a security guard. I guess I acted as a deterrent to vandals, you know, who might damage an empty property. Or squatters ... they could cause problems when the building's owners get planning permission.

Presenter Living in a warehouse - that sounds a bit odd.

Steve Well, there was hot and cold running water, and a shower and cooking facilities so, er, I guess it was fine. The only reason I moved out was because the owners got planning permission. So now I'm what's known as a 'couch surfer'.

Presenter That's another new one. A couch surfer. What's that?

Steve Well, rather than renting a room in a flat, I rent this sofa. I'm paying about £40 a week to rent a sofa.

Presenter Cheap!

Steve Yeah, I'd have to pay over £100 if I was renting a room, or even sharing a room. But being a couch surfer means I can continue saving for a deposit on a flat but also live near the centre of London.

Presenter What's it like - sleeping on a sofa?

Steve Well, as you can see, the sofa's pretty big ... and comfortable. To be honest, I don't really notice. Of course, there are downsides. First off, I have to make sure I keep my things together, just here - the others hate it if I don't put the bedding away or leave my clothes around. Then I don't have much privacy, you know. I can't really go to bed until the other two do. I can't really have friends over. If I want some time to myself, I have to go out for a bike-ride or something.

Presenter What do your flatmates think?

Steve The couple who own this flat are old friends, so it's cool. They bought it three years ago and interest rates have gone up since then - it's good business for them. My £160 a month helps them to pay their mortgage. I try to do my share of little jobs ... household stuff ... and cook dinner a couple of times a week to make sure that I'm not outstaying my welcome.

Presenter OK. And how long do you think you can keep it up?

Steve Good question! I'd love to buy a one- or two-bed flat in east London. But that won't be cheap. I'm saving about £250 a week towards a deposit. Hmm. I think I'll be ready to buy in about five months. I'd like to get a two-bed and rent out the second room. If I got a one-bed flat though, perhaps I'll get someone to pay to sleep on my sofa!

Presenter So there you go. Another trend is for people, older people, to downsize - leaving their family homes after their children have flown the coop, moving into smaller more manageable houses. They're what estate agents call 'holding folding'. People who are cash buyers, not needing to take out a mortgage. I met Owen and Liz White who did this about five years ago. Owen, why did you downsize?

Owen Basically, it made economic sense to do so. Our three children had left home and the two of us were rattling around a four-bedroom house. When we looked at the market, we discovered we were sitting on a fortune. We decided to sell

the house, buy this smaller one, and still have a nice little nest egg left over for our retirement.

Presenter And were there any problems?

Owen At first there was a cash flow issue, so we needed a small loan. But after the sale went through, we could easily pay that off. Otherwise, I suppose, er ... it was fairly easy. Was it? Yes, yes. When the estate agents discovered we were paying with cash, they were falling over themselves to help us. Obviously, you can tell it's a bit of a squeeze now - if all the family come home at one time, but we manage.

Presenter There we have it - three first-hand accounts of new trends in the UK housing market. But what about countries where it's still the norm to rent rather than buy ...

Listening bank 04

Presenter Hi. Welcome to Web Weekly: the programme that looks at the business of the Internet. I'm Guy Holmes and this week we're going to start by looking at an internet phenomenon which might - I say 'might' - just change the way we watch TV. I'm talking about the new company Joost and their plans to make your favourite television programmes available to watch anywhere, any time. Here with me are TV-industry expert Lauren McCall, and the editor of *MyNet* magazine, Anil Ramesh. Let's start with you, Anil. Joost - funny name - what is it exactly?

Anil Well, according to their website, Joost is a new way of watching TV on the internet - giving you the freedom to choose what to watch, and when.

Presenter So what's the big deal? Aren't there already hundreds of us already using websites to watch TV clips, sports events, and so on?

Anil Right. But Joost's gonna bring it all together in a much more structured way. They promise high-quality, full-screen pictures, hundreds of full-length programmes, and easy-to-find shows. They're claiming that they can avoid the chaotic systems that are currently available.

Presenter So who's behind it - the company, I mean?

Anil Well, it's the brainchild of two of the most successful internet entrepreneurs of recent times. The men behind Skype and Kazaa - Janus Friis and Niklas Zennstrom. Skype is one of the world's leading VoIP systems - now that's 'voice over internet protocol' - which has changed the way millions of people make telephone calls and represents a huge threat to the telecom industry. So, you could say people are taking this new venture pretty seriously.

Presenter OK. Lauren, is that true? Is this serious stuff?

Lauren Yes, I think it is. What's more, it's thought that a lot of the plus sides of Skype will be added to Joost. The founders seem to be envisaging a world where friends could be at opposite sides of the globe but could be chatting online while watching the same programmes. Or fans of a certain show can be connected via chatrooms and actually interact while watching. It's set to make TV-watching a much more interactive experience.

Presenter Sorry, I still don't quite get what's new about this.

Anil Well, there are other features being discussed too. You know, users can track what shows their friends are watching or choose to be pointed in the direction of other programmes they may

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enjoy – just like online retailers tell customers which other products they might like.

Presenter OK. So what do TV companies think about it all, Lauren?

Lauren Er ... you might think that this kind of thing would have TV company bosses quaking in their boots. It might be considered their worst nightmare. I mean – imagine a world where anyone could watch any show free of charge, and at a time of their choosing! That could bankrupt the industry overnight ...

Presenter Exactly.

Lauren ... But, but the TV companies are seemingly being more mature about this than their music industry counterparts. They're meeting the challenge head on. Joost has already signed deals with some of the major US companies, including America's CBS, who make 'Survivor' and the 'CSI' shows. Also MTV owner Viacom – makers of 'The Daily Show'.

Presenter Hm. Why are they so eager to get behind Joost?

Lauren I think it's because they're seeing a change in trends in how people watch TV. Especially the under-25 age group. There's been a real proliferation of TV channels recently because of digitalization. Here in the UK, for example, just twenty years ago there were only five, er, four ... four channels but now anyone with a digital set-top box can access hundreds of channels. Sport, music, drama, cookery ...

Presenter But more choice doesn't mean more people watching TV.

Lauren No, no – you're right. According to media regulator Ofcom, 60% of 16-24-year-olds say they've already downloaded programmes over the Internet but at the same time, a growing number of that age group are switching off their TVs altogether. Around 3% more each year! So, as these figures suggest, and as the success of existing sites like YouTube have demonstrated, broadcasters have little choice but to embrace the phenomenon.

Presenter OK, OK. Anil, music sharing sites have been riddled with problems and legal challenges. Will Joost avoid these?

Anil Well, it looks like the founders have done their homework.

Presenter Meaning?

Anil Meaning it's thought that they're agreeing revenue-sharing deals with the major television distributors. There's actually no file-sharing element or user-generated content – so that avoids other copyright issues. The real key though will be to secure global content distribution rights, you know, so all their programmes are available to all their users, wherever they are in the world. At the moment, some of their content isn't available in Spain while other programmes aren't available in Japan. But the company's confident they'll overcome this problem soonish.

Presenter So ... is this the end of TV as we know it?

Anil Yes! Not Well ...

Lauren No, no I don't think so. TV is such a part of the national psyche. It provides a shared experience, it provides the 'water-cooler moments'.

Presenter Ah, yes. Water-cooler moments ...

Lauren You know, the next day in work. You stand around the water-cooler or coffee machine discussing the main events on TV the night

before. The dramatic ending to a soap opera or a controversial documentary, that sort of thing. I think TV still has a future. It also has the benefit of new technology such as high-definition pictures.

Presenter So, a final comment from you both – will Joost be a success? Anil?

Anil I think so, yes. They have the expertise in Friis and Zennstrom who've been here before. They seem to have the TV companies onside and initial demand has been high, so yes, this has all the right ingredients to be a real winner.

Presenter Lauren?

Lauren I agree, although I don't think it'll be the only way people watch TV. I think that especially for the under-30s Joost will offer an alternative that suits their busy and hectic lifestyles.

Presenter Well, there you go. Looks like we'll have to wait and see if Anil and Lauren are right. I, for one, remain unconvinced! Thanks to both of them for joining us. Now, our next item takes us to the developing world ...

Listening bank 05

(Note: While based on actual facts, the following interview is fictitious)

Presenter I'm here at the twelfth annual Beer Producers' Fair, in what many people consider the home of beer: Munich, Germany. As well as playing host to the Beer Producers' Fair, Munich is also the home of the Oktoberfest. That's the occasion when over six million people descend on the city to sample the beer and local cuisine. But I'm here today to take a mini 'world tour' of beer and brewing.

A recent survey by international marketing analysts AC Nielsen found that beer is the world's favourite drink. In Russia and China, sales are booming. At present, it's the USA that leads the way in terms of beer production but it's thought that China will overtake it by the end of the decade. Consumption there grew by a massive 88% between 1995 and 2000. Since the liberalization of the economy, global brewers have descended on China, trying to muscle in on the potential market. It's thought that there're over 800 breweries in China, the oldest being Tsingtao.

But our world tour doesn't start in China, instead ... we're starting in India. While some Indian states ban alcohol, the country's local breweries range from the far north in the Simla hills to Bangalore and Hyderabad in the south. Well-known Indian beers are Lion and Golden Eagle from Mohan Meakin, and Kingfisher from United Breweries. But maybe the best known 'Indian' beer is not actually Indian at all.

Cobra beer is nominally based in Bangalore but it was founded by Cambridge graduate, Karan Billimoria, and is brewed in Bedford in the UK. I'm hoping Cobra spokesman Rajesh Powar can tell me more. Rajesh?

Rajesh True, true. Our founder, Karan Billimoria, looked at the beer market in the eighties in Britain and saw that it was dominated by euro lagers – gassy euro lagers. Unlike wine, beer wasn't seen as a complement to food.

Presenter Right.

Rajesh Mr Billimoria realized that Britain needed a smoother lager, you know – less gassy – that would appeal to both ale drinkers and lager drinkers alike. And also one that complemented all types of cuisine. So he started to develop a premium, high-quality lager ...

Presenter A bold move.

Rajesh Oh, yes. When we started production we had no idea if it would take off. Britain was in the grip of recession. Mr Billimoria was taking a big risk.

Presenter But it did take off, didn't it?

Rajesh It did indeed. Sixteen years later, Cobra Beer is now stocked in over 6,000 restaurants and in most major supermarkets and off licence chains in the UK. It's also increased its presence in mainstream retail outlets and is available in nearly 6,000 pubs, style bars, and clubs.

Presenter Impressive! But it's not just about the sales, is it?

Rajesh No, of course not. We're concerned with the quality of our beer. We use only the finest natural ingredients. We're also very proud that it's won a range of prestigious awards.

Presenter So, can I ask ... just while we sample a taste here ... is Cobra a British or an Indian beer?

Rajesh Certainly Indian. Cobra was first brewed in Bangalore in 1990 and imported to the UK for seven years. So, very Indian. It was only in 1997 that Cobra started brewing under licence with Charles Wells in the UK. Now, in a strange twist of events, you might say, we've partnered with Mount Shivalik Group. Now that's the largest independent brewing company in India. We plan to brew Cobra under licence for India's rapidly growing domestic market. This is a turning point in Cobra Beer's history - this time we will brew Cobra in India, for India.

Presenter Hmm, and very refreshing it is too. Well, we leave India now and move on to South America. It also has an impressive brewing history. The Spanish built breweries in the lands they conquered, although the modern influence is German, so there are plenty of lager-style beers. But long before the Europeans arrived, Aztecs and Mayans made beers - some basic, some surprisingly sophisticated. I have here - somewhere, oh, here - a bottle of Xingu. This is a black beer made commercially in Brazil and exported to the USA. It's based on an ancient recipe made in the Xingu region of the Upper Amazon since 1557! What do you think of that? Let's try this one ... hmm, it's full-bodied, definitely. Certainly very different from anything I've ever tried before. Hm. Sweet? Sweet with a treacly taste. Right. Moving north, Mexico also has an interesting brewing history. The European influence can be seen in beers such as Dos Equis and Negra Modelo. These dark lagers are based on a style known as 'Austrian red'. I'm joined by Juan Ferrer of Dos Equis. Juan, how do you account for the Austrian influence in Mexican brewing?

Juan They reflect the period when Mexico was part of the Austrian Empire. The Austrian reds are brewed with dark malts that give them a fine chocolate, roast, and spicy character.

Presenter And, tell me Juan, where does Dos Equis get its name from?

Juan Well, it's because of the two crosses on the label. Originally, in Spanish, it was called 'Siglo XX' which means '20th century'. The brand was named to commemorate the arrival of the new century.

Presenter I see. Well, let's sample this one ... Lovely, yes. And this is the original Austrian red style?

Juan Yes, this is Dos Equis Ambar - it's actually more popular in export markets like the USA. That one, Dos Equis Especial, no - in the green bottle - is more popular at home.

Presenter So how are the Americans dealing with all these competitors from around the world?

As Loyd Evans from *Brewing USA* magazine explained, less is probably more.

Loyd The country's currently enjoying a revolution at the moment, with more than 1,300 'micro-breweries'. Their sales grew by 16% last year and they now enjoy a market share of more than 10%. Many of these 'micro's' are extremely big by international standards: Sierra Nevada in Chico, California, for example, produces 800,000 barrels a year.

Presenter Tell us more about Sierra Nevada.

Loyd Well, it was founded in 1979 by Ken Grossman and made its first batch of Pale Ale in November 1980. The brewery was built out of dairy tanks, a soft-drink bottler, and equipment salvaged from old breweries.

Presenter An interesting start!

Loyd Yes, but right from the start it was very popular. Grossman soon had to update his brewing equipment in order to quench the thirst of the drinking public.

Presenter And Sierra Nevada also produce the very successful Bigfoot, of course, which we're going to try now. Hmm. Nice and rich, certainly. Sort of a barleywine style.

Loyd Sure. Hmm. Yep, yep.

Presenter From the USA, we move on to the Czech Republic - maybe the birthplace of the modern lager ...

Listening bank 06

1 Jan Jirasek - general director, energy multinational (USA)

I think a great boss should lead by example. My credo, if you like, is that in business no one'll work harder than the boss. Also, no one'll be more optimistic than them. So it's up to the boss to set a good personal example. If my staff see me hard at work, then they'll be more motivated to work hard. If I were always at lunch - well, more than I am now - then, you know what they say ... when the cat's away, the mice will play.

I also think a boss needs to know how to listen. Big ears, small mouth. Just because you're in charge doesn't mean you know everything, so being able to listen and respond to those around you is important. And finally, erm a boss should remember that they're like everyone else. Last summer, for example, I miscalculated how long it would take to set up our new regional offices. I'm prepared to admit that - incorrect, I'm not immune from blame just because I'm the boss.

2 Tung Tsang - general director, national saving bank (Hong Kong)

A great boss is one who works as hard as possible for his clients, staff, shareholders, and the company. Also, it's a person who listens more than they speak. They should be open to ideas and be ready to put their own ideas up for debate. Hm. But ... they mustn't be afraid to make difficult decisions. Yes, I can delegate work but I must be willing to be decisive when necessary. For example, if I don't think we should rebrand till next year, then we don't rebrand till next year.

For me, a good boss needs to make sure that there's a system in place that encourages the employees to work as hard ... as enthusiastically as possible. People respond best not only to

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rewards and praise but also by feeling that they're part of a team. That's why I gave us 'team holidays'. So a boss can help to motivate the workforce by offering rewards for performance, but also by making sure the channels of communication are open between the management and the employees.

- 3 Anne Davies - testing manager, large pharmaceutical company (Australia)
I only manage a small team of fifteen people ... but - and it's a big 'but' - I do make it my business to know all about them. That's so I can monitor their progress and be aware if any of them are having difficulties or problems. This helps to foster a teamwork ethic. A great boss is interested in the team as people and doesn't only see them as workers. I actually sit down with them. I talk to them about their kids as well as about their tasks for the day. However, I'm not afraid to administer some 'tough love' too. Just yesterday, I had to have a little word with one of my juniors - you know, not pulling his weight. I let him know what he was doing wrong and what I expected of him.

Good motivation stems from what I just said. If my staff know what's expected of them, then they'll respond positively. I think staff lack motivation when they're not sure what they're working towards or, er, they don't feel like their role is important.

- 4 Lars Poulsen - general director, international brewing conglomerate (Denmark)
Well, a good boss - a great boss - knows how to listen and when to be able to delegate. They give authority and space to their employees. I try to do that, you know, so the workforce are able to do their job effectively. Also, a good boss needs to be able to give clear direction and leadership when needed and be able to justify their decisions to the staff. With key decisions, I don't just send a global email. I give a speech, a presentation. Take questions, that sort of thing. A good boss needs to have a clear overview of what is going on in all areas of the company and not just those that interest them. At least once a week, I take an hour to walk around the production floor. My 'little tour', I call it. I suppose the key to being a great boss is knowing exactly how to get the best out of each individual who works for you.

Talking about motivation, the company can provide different things to try to help motivate their staff but obviously success is the best motivator - everybody wants to play for a winning team.

- 5 Anna Fiata - regional manager, multinational communications company (Czech Republic)
In the first place, a boss must always be seen as consistent - they can't have a different opinion every week. Say one thing and do something different. I mean they can't have a 'do as I say not as I do' mentality. For example, when smoking was completely banned on our company premises, I had to go outside - or try to quit - like everyone else. Secondly, all of their team must feel that they're well supported and have enough, erm, autonomy to do their work. At the same time, they must be well co-ordinated with each other, so they're all working towards the same goal. So, a great boss is more an

overseer than an organizer. Finally, it's extremely important to be honest and open with the company and its employees. Last Friday, even my boss told me he thought I could do better. Well, a little better!

When it comes to the question of motivation, a good boss must create an environment for their workforce that allows for, er, for growth - professional growth. And good working conditions, and attractive rewards for hard work.