

How to discuss resources

In this lesson you will learn how to talk about resources on a project.

Starter

- 1 What policy does your company have for staff use of company resources (telephone, the Internet, email, company cars) in the office, when travelling, and for private use? How does the company monitor this?



- 2 How regularly is your company's IT updated? Who is responsible for this?

Expressions

- 1 Gustav Holsten works for the Stockholm office of an international logistics firm. He is managing a project to upgrade the branch office computer systems in the Baltic States. Read the email to his boss in the USA. What specific problems are there with the project?

Russ,
Each of the guys did a great job last week, and are now in Riga. Attached are the expenses for Tallinn. I'm afraid the budget has been **underestimated**.

I'm particularly concerned about some of the **claims** for laundry and hotel expenses, several of which seem completely **superfluous**. However, there's little I can do about a few of the other expenses:

- Jon has to take taxis because of his ankle injury. This wasn't costed in at the start.
- The hotel dial-up rate seems extortionate. I'll get them to use the office intranet instead.

One more thing – Thomas has to return to Tallinn for a few nights to do some **unforeseen** updates on the OS. **Provision** hadn't been made for that. It'll entail added costs if we don't want to put the project on hold.

Overall, we'll need an increase of 40% in the budget to meet their expenses, even taking into account a **dramatically** reduced hotel bill in Riga and Vilnius.

I'd be grateful if you could get back to me asap.
Gustav

Speaking

- 1 Look at the situation below. Decide what you want to say, and then role-play it with your teacher.
 - 1 You are Gustav. Phone one of your project team in Riga (your teacher), and outline the changes in each of the categories below to keep the budget down.
 - accommodation
 - food / drink
 - phones
 - equipment

Language box

There are a number of rules relating to the use of quantifiers.

few / a few / little / a little

We use (a) *few* with countable nouns, and (a) *little* with uncountable nouns:

We have a *few* copies left.
(= some – not many, but enough)

We have *few* copies left.
(= not many, not enough)

I have a *little* time before the meeting starts.
(= some – not much, but enough)

I have *little* time before the meeting starts.
(= not much, not enough)

Hint

To **run up a bill** means to spend a lot of money on something (e.g. telephone bill, credit card bill) so that the bill is very high.

I had to phone head office twice a day and run up a huge telephone bill.

To **run out of** something means to use all of it and to have none left.

I'm afraid we've run out of money on that project.

Run over means something lasts longer than intended.

Sorry I'm late. The session ran over.

Writing

- You are Russ. Based on ideas in the email and phone call, write an email to all staff about budget considerations for future projects.
- Complete the sentences (1–9) with the words below.
few a few little a little most of each every each of
 - The candidates were _____ asked to outline their experience.
 - _____ people would opt for a new computer if they were offered one.
 - We've cancelled the training because _____ people signed up.
 - _____ you must fill in a separate document.
 - No, I'll give you some. There's just _____ left.
 - We had _____ opportunity to see the sights in Riga – we were far too busy.
 - _____ item on the expense form must be accounted for.
 - Look – there are _____ good jobs on this month's circular you could apply for.
 - _____ us would love to travel to the Baltic States.

Look

Look again at the email in Expressions and listening script 9.1 on page 125. Find examples of phrases using these quantifiers. Categorize each one according to the groups in the Language box.

2 Look again at the email in 1. Try to explain the words in bold.

3 Russ phones Gustav from the USA. Listen and note what Russ's suggestions are to try to keep within budget.

4 Listen again. What expressions do Russ and Gustav use instead of the phrases below?

- extra money
- a major cut
- large quantities
- they pay themselves
- a major replacement / upgrade
- much more than is necessary
- obtaining / buying equipment
- the best suppliers
- cheaper rates
- go through the usual route

most / most of

Note the difference in meaning in these two sentences:

Most people like travelling, but I don't.
(= the majority everywhere)

I knew most of the people at the party.
(= the majority of a certain group)

each / every

We can use *each* or *every* with singular countable nouns, and with a singular verb:

Each / Every manager has responsibility for their own staff.

Each can be used before the main verb, or at the end of a clause:

We each got a bonus. / We were each given a bonus. / We were given a bonus each.

Lesson record

3 new words from this lesson

3 useful phrases from this lesson

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Things to remember

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