

Subject background

This unit deals with the topic of what is commonly referred to as Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). This is an expression used to describe two related features of business practice.

- 1 A company's obligation to be sensitive to the needs of all of its stakeholders (so not just shareholders, but also employees, customers, suppliers, community organizations, subsidiaries, local neighborhoods, etc.).
- 2 The principle of 'sustainable development', which says that businesses should make decisions based not only on financial / economic factors, but also on the social and environmental consequences of their activities.

So CSR covers:

- business and the environment (reporting and regulation of waste, sustainable production, recycling)
- people in the workplace (equal opportunities, encouraging employee involvement, promoting diversity, health and safety, labour standards, family-friendly policies)
- community affairs (developing programmes for effective engagement with local communities)
- reputation management (using good practice as part of the marketing message of the company, as well as PR when things go wrong).

There is a lot of activity in the field of CSR.

- At the European level there is the European Alliance for CSR, launched by the EU in 2006 (link given below).
- At the national level there is a UK government body for CSR (link below).
- There is a private sector initiative in the UK called 'Business in the Community' (link below).
- At the individual company level, there are many big names proudly stating their activities in this field on their websites.
- There are many university courses devoted to the subject.

It is clear that CSR has become an established and important area in the business world. Indeed, good practice in CSR is now a key part of many companies' marketing strategy. Businesses stress their green and community credentials in their advertisements, and most annual reports these days would be incomplete without the CEO making reference to their company's beneficial effects on society and the environment.

But not everyone is happy with the idea that business has a role to play in CSR. Some people would argue that this is the proper responsibility of government, not business. Where are the limits? Consider these areas:

- human rights
- fair trade
- sustainable consumption.

These areas are on the borderline between social policy (the responsibility of government) and business policy.

In general, companies are usually happy to comply with social and environmental legislation. But they want to see a 'level playing field' with other companies also having to comply. Acting alone, a business has few guidelines on how to proceed (it is not their job to set social policy) and by raising standards they run the risk of increasing costs (and thereby losing profitability, causing layoffs, etc.).

A few companies are happy to take the lead and be pioneers in this field. The Body Shop is perhaps the best-known example, but BP is at the forefront of developing green energy and Marks & Spencer is famous for its diversity, employee involvement and CSR policies generally.

Useful websites

The EU organization referred to above has a website with a useful glossary:

<http://www.csreurope.org/>

The UK government body is:

<http://www.csr.gov.uk/>

And the UK private sector initiative is:

<http://www.bitc.org.uk/index.html>

6.1 About business

Corporate social responsibility

This module focuses on the issues around corporate social responsibility and examines the approach taken by one multinational in particular.

Internet research

Students could conduct these Internet searches before they start this module. For example, searching for *CSR* will provide them with information which will feed into Discussion (exercise 1) and Reading and discussion (exercises 3–4); searching for *Starbucks bean stock* and *Starbucks standards business conduct* will provide them with extra information for Part 1 of Listening for gist (exercise 5).

Before the class, assign groups of students to conduct one of the searches. Each group can then report their findings to the class at the appropriate point in the exercises.

LEAD-IN ACTIVITY

Ask students some questions about their everyday lives, e.g.:

What did you have for breakfast and where did it come from? (e.g. coffee – Brazil, orange juice – Florida)

What are you wearing and where it was made? (e.g. shirt – China)

How did you get to work? (e.g. by Japanese car), etc.

Get students to comment on the fact that many of these things come from other countries. Ask these questions:

Why are these things produced in other countries?

What impact does this have on their own local / national economy?

What impact does it have on the countries in which they were produced?

How does it affect the environment?

Discussion

1 Do this as a whole-class activity, writing students' ideas on the board. If necessary, explain *conflicts of interest* (when two or more things are in opposition to each other).

SUGGESTED ANSWERS:

Employees, customers, shareholders, the community
Shareholders generally want profitability, which is usually in conflict with employees' and sometimes customers and the community's interests.

Employees and the community want jobs, which may conflict with the customer's wish for low prices.

The community would like companies to be socially responsible and ecologically neutral, which may conflict with growth, job creation and mass production to achieve low prices and profitability.

EXTENSION ACTIVITY

To personalize the activity, ask students to tell you:

- about the different groups their own company has a responsibility towards.
- any personal experience they have of conflicts of interest (either in their working life or in their life outside work).

Scan reading

2 Get students to read the text quickly to find the answers. Give them just one minute to do this as there will be more detailed analysis of the text in later exercises.

Then give students a few more minutes to read the text again more carefully. Remind them to check any new words in the *Wordlist* on pages 155–156 in the Student's Book or in their dictionaries. Circulate and assist where necessary.

ANSWERS:

customers and end-users (doctors, nurses and patients)
employees
the community
stockholders

Reading and discussion

3 If students need help getting started, brainstorm with the whole class possible decision-makers, e.g. national government, local government, EU, courts, stockholders. Students work in small groups. Take whole-class feedback.

Focus on the meaning of *fair* (treating each person equally and according to the rules or the law), and on *reasonable* and *just*, which have similar meanings. These adjectives describe a wide range of the activities revolving around corporate social responsibility.

ANSWERS:

This is a matter of personal opinion and political sympathies. The following points may arise in discussion:

- Today, prices for health care products are regulated by government in many countries.
- Companies whose profits are perceived as being excessive attract criticism, principally from the media.
- Many western governments have implemented minimum wage legislation, and labour tribunals decide disputes over compensation.
- Perhaps a distinction should be made between justice, as defined by the judiciary, and ethics, as defined by philosophers and the community.
- Using tax specialists to find the most favourable way to apply tax laws defined by government is generally considered 'fair'; exploiting tax loopholes might be judged 'unfair' by the media and the community.
- This seems to be decided by stockholders themselves, and can cause the problems discussed by Marc Gunther below.

4 Students work in small groups. You could assign questions 1–3 to half of the class and questions 4–6 to the other half.

Questions 1–3: Students should list examples of the three aspects of corporate social responsibility. Take whole-class feedback and write students' ideas on the board.

Questions 4–6: If necessary, explain *PR* (Public Relations – the company department which works to present a good image of the organization to the public). Students should be prepared to give reasons for their answers.


Take whole-class feedback. If you divided the questions between the class, students who did not prepare answers to the questions, should listen carefully and add any further ideas of their own.

SUGGESTED ANSWERS:

The core dilemma in points 1–3 is where to draw the line.

- Disaster relief, the Red Cross, Aids research, soup kitchens, holidays for underprivileged children, churches, museums, orchestras, sports clubs
 - Hospitals, orphanages, shelters for the homeless, parks and gardens, zoos, tennis courts, art galleries
 - Eliminate pollution from manufacturing, use only recyclable materials, use clean vehicles and machinery, encourage employees to use public transport
- 4–6 are completely subjective and all views are valid.

Listening for gist

5  2:48–2:50 Play the whole interview from beginning to end so that students get an overview of the content.

Part 1: Point out that students will need more than one word to complete each blank. Play Part 1 as many times as necessary to allow students to write their answers. Then get them to compare answers with a partner. Check with the whole class. Get students to read individual sentences aloud. If other students disagree, they should raise their hands and give their own answers. Play the recording once more to allow students to check their answers.

Part 2: With lower-level classes, play Marc Gunther's first speech, then pause to allow students to complete questions 1 and 2. Tell them that they will not hear two of these three words in the interview – they must work out if these topics have been mentioned from what Marc Gunther says.

If necessary, explain that *bottom line* refers to profit. This expression also occurs later in the unit. Then play the rest of Part 2 so that students can answer questions 3–5.

With higher-level classes, play Part 2 without pausing.

Part 3: Read the statements aloud or get students to read them aloud. Then play the recording. Check answers with the whole class. Get students to correct the false statements.

ANSWERS:

Part 1:

- 1 look after the environment
- 2 avoid exploiting developing countries
- 3 environmental groups
- 4 company owners
- 5 everyone who works there
- 6 global warming
- 7 planting trees to offset their emissions
- 8 gasoline powered cars
- 9 hybrid vehicles

Part 2:

- 1 profitability (bottom-line considerations), recruitment
- 2 They want their jobs to have meaning. They want to make the world a better place.
- 3 employee first, customer second, shareholder third
- 4 Happy employees will attract customers, the business will work and shareholders will benefit
- 5 If a customer argues with an employee, the assumption is that the employee is right and the customer is wrong.

Part 3:

- 1 T
- 2 F – they wanted to, but they were under pressure not to
- 3 F

RECORDING SCRIPT

 2:48 – 2:50

Part 1

I: Despite all the scandals of recent years, Mark Gunther thinks that corporate behavior is improving. He's a senior writer at *Fortune* magazine and author of a book contending that companies are becoming more socially responsible. Gunther is tracking companies that treat employees well, look after the environment and avoid exploiting developing countries.

MG: If you just think back 15 or 20 years ago, the workforces were much less diverse than they are now; now you see businesses working very closely with environmental groups in a whole lot of areas. Employees have become company owners in a way they never had been before. You have a company like Starbucks that gave away what it calls 'bean stocks' to everyone who works there, including part-timers, and that aligns the interests of the company with its employees.

I: I wonder if part of the question here is which company you focus on, because you just said businesses are getting along better with environmentalists, there are certainly examples of that; there is also an administration in office that has battled with environmentalists over business questions, and there are businesses that are doing things that dismay environmentalists across the country right now.

MG: Right and of course it is hard to generalize, but even on the environment, I mean the Bush administration has not even acknowledged really global warming as a serious man-made problem. If you look at the US utility industry, you have utilities that are out there planting trees to offset their emissions, you have companies like UPS and FedEx which have huge transportation costs looking for ways to drive hybrid vehicles and get off the gasoline powered cars; I'd argue that the big companies in America are much more green than the Bush administration at the moment.

Part 2

I: What is motivating companies to do that?

MG: Purely bottom-line considerations, this is not about altruism. It's about, predominantly I think, attracting and engaging the best employees, no one really wants to go to work every day to enhance shareholder value, we really want to go to work and be in a place where we feel aligned with the company's goals, where we feel there's some meaning to what we do, and where we feel we can make the world a little bit of a better place every day.

I: Somewhere you've written that, er, Southwest Airlines will favour its employees in some cases over its customers?

MG: Southwest is very explicit about the hierarchy. They put the employee first, the customer second, and then the shareholder third, and the theory is if you have happy, engaged, motivated employees, they're gonna attract customers and therefore your business is going to work, and shareholders are going to benefit, and by the way, if you go to a Southwest gate, get into an argument with someone there, the presumption when word gets back to Southwest headquarters in Dallas is that you were wrong, the customer was wrong and the employee was right because they hire people very carefully and train them and they trust their people 100%.

Part 3

I: Well, let's talk about a long-term trend that's been tracked by some business writers who will say that in the nineteen-fifties and sixties American corporations believed that they should take care of their employees, believed that they should take care of their customers as well as their shareholders, but that from the seventies, eighties onward, they've been pressured to just take care of the stock price, just take care of the share-holder, and in fact they get sued when they don't do that, or they get taken over when they don't do that.

MG: My argument is we are now correcting back from that.

That we are not as short-term driven, that we are starting to think more long-term about building sustainable businesses and this short-term model not only doesn't work for businesses in the long run, it doesn't work for our society in the long run.

EXTENSION ACTIVITY

Get students to investigate the activities of their own company or local companies in the areas of good works and charities, civic improvement, and protection of the environment and natural resources from company websites or printed materials. Alternatively, collect some relevant brochures and reports from local companies, and distribute them in class. Students should extract relevant information from them, then make a short presentation to the class describing the activities of the company in these areas.

6.2 Vocabulary

Meetings, ethical behaviour and social performance

This module presents and practises vocabulary in three areas and develops the themes of corporate social responsibility.

Internet research

A search for *Rhonda Abrams* will reveal that she offers advice and mentoring for entrepreneurs and small businesses. She is an advocate for the small business and her website offers help in many areas of setting up a business.

Students could do this research before they listen to the presentation in exercise 5 or afterwards as a follow-up activity to this module.

Meetings

1 Ask students to do this exercise with a partner. To check answers, get students to read the complete sentences aloud. Monitor stress and pronunciation.

ANSWERS:

1 c) 2 a) 3 e) 4 b) 5 f) 6 d)
7 j) 8 l) 9 k) 10 g) 11 i) 12 h)

2 Again, ask students to work on this with a partner. Check answers with the whole class. Then get students to tell you what might be happening at a meeting which would give rise to the rest of the phrases, e.g.:

Phrase 3: at the end of a discussion which does not reach an agreement / decision.

Phrase 5: in the middle of a meeting; perhaps when participants are starting to look tired.

Phrases 6 and 10: if a participant starts to talk at length about something unimportant.

Phrase 9: at the end of a discussion when everyone agrees.

Phrase 11: when there is some additional information to feed into the meeting.

ANSWERS:

at the beginning of a meeting: 1, 2, 7, 8
at the end of a meeting: 4, 12

Adjectives

3 Students do this exercise individually or with a partner. Allow them to use dictionaries, if you wish. To check answers, read the text aloud and pause at each word in **bold**. Call on students to give you the correct definition for the word before continuing.

To focus on meaning, get students to divide the adjectives into two groups:

- positive qualities (*reliable, trustworthy, accurate, prompt, altruistic*)
- negative qualities (*deceptive, confusing, misleading, dishonest, false*).

ANSWERS:

1 prompt
2 dishonest
3 misleading
4 deceptive
5 trustworthy
6 reliable
7 confusing
8 false
9 altruistic
10 accurate

Collocations

4 Students could complete these exercises individually or with a partner. Circulate while they are working and assist where necessary. Check answers with the whole class by getting students to read the whole extract aloud.

When students have finished, get them to pick out any words or phrases which are new to them or that they are unsure of, and review their meaning and use.


ANSWERS:

1 supporting a charity
2 think long-term
3 identify with an issue
4 contribute funds
5 obey the law
6 uphold standards
7 respecting human dignity
8 recognizing merit
9 limit the impact
10 acknowledge the problem
11 negotiate a settlement
12 compensate the victims

FURTHER PRACTICE

Some of these collocations are used in the Johnson & Johnson credo on page 70, in either the same or similar ways. Get students to scan the credo for these collocations so that they can see them in another context.

Listening for detail

5  2:51 Get students to read the expressions aloud and check for correct pronunciation. If necessary, explain: *integrity* (the quality of being honest, having strong principles) *lawsuits* (the process of bringing a dispute or claim before a court of law so that it can be settled) *fines* (money paid as a punishment for breaking the law). Play the recording. Get students to tell you how many phrases they did *not* hear. If they disagree on this, play the recording again. Check answers with the whole class. Get students to make sentences with the expressions that were not used.

ANSWERS:

Phrases not heard are:
obeying the law
responsibility to your customer
misleading, confusing, or even false advertising or sales techniques

RECORDING SCRIPT

 2:51

Rhonda Abrams: Thank you. Thank you very much. Every entrepreneur hopes to do well. We'd all like to make a lot of money and have a big, profitable customer base. But over the years, I've realized that most entrepreneurs want to do more. They'd not only like to do well; they'd like to do good. They'd like their business to contribute to their community, respect the environment, play a positive role in the lives of their employees and customers.

I'm not naïve or simplistic. I strongly believe that building an honest, responsible business, with a healthy bottom line, in and of itself makes a valuable contribution to our economy and society. Such businesses buy supplies and materials, often employ others, and obviously meet a need of their customers. Over the years, however, I learned that companies with a sense of integrity and purpose actually have a competitive edge over companies that are solely focused on the bottom line. I want to tell you about four ways they achieve this. First of all, being

socially responsible helps you attract and retain employees. Having a strong corporate culture committed to good corporate citizenship enables employees to feel that they are part of something important. Company programmes allowing employees to use job time to be involved in community causes are viewed as a valuable benefit. Prospective employees look at a company's values and social commitment when comparing job offers.

Secondly, being socially responsible helps you attract and retain customers. People like to do business with companies they respect. Some customers will be attracted by specific company policies, such as looking to buy products that aren't tested on animals or are recycled. But all customers are attracted to companies that consistently deal with them honestly and fairly.

Thirdly, being socially responsible helps you reduce employee misbehaviour. Businesses that act with integrity and honesty toward their employees, customers, and suppliers are more likely to have their employees also act with integrity and honesty towards the company and their fellow workers. An atmosphere of honesty helps keep everyone honest.

And, finally, being socially responsible helps keep you out of trouble. Being a good corporate citizen – whether in your advertising, employee treatment, or environmental policies – makes it less likely that your company will get in trouble with regulatory agencies, taxing authorities, or face lawsuits or fines. When your company does good – treats employees, customers, and suppliers fairly, as well as participating in community and social activities – you'll find you also do well. Good companies can become great companies.

Discussion

6 Students work in groups. You could get students to discuss all of the company departments or assign one or two to each group. Students who work in any of these departments could share what happens in their own companies.

If students need help in getting started, refer them back to the credo on page 70 and to the listening task in exercise 5 to spark off ideas.

Circulate while students are discussing and assist where necessary. Take whole-class feedback.

SUGGESTED ANSWERS:

R&D: using recyclable, non-toxic, sustainable materials, designing eco-friendly products
 Production and quality: respecting health and safety legislation and best practice, avoiding waste and pollution
 Marketing & sales: respecting advertising standards, not taking advantage of customers, giving fair deals, being honest
 HR: avoiding discrimination of any kind, protecting the local community from redundancy, encouraging education and training
 Purchasing: not applying unfair pressure on suppliers, paying a fair market price, encouraging local suppliers
 Finance: paying taxes, ploughing back profits into the business, supporting community projects, honesty

FURTHER PRACTICE

Prepare a quiz which tests the vocabulary practised in this module. You could divide students into two teams and award points for correct answers or simply do this as a quick-fire practice session to review the vocabulary at the end of this lesson or the beginning of the next one. Some example questions are given below. Answers are in brackets.

This word means the same as:
on time (prompt)
correct (accurate)
not easy to understand (complicated)
not true (false).

Form the opposite of these words:
honest (dishonest)
reliable (unreliable)
short-term (long-term).

Complete these collocations:
obey ... (the law)
recognize ... (merit)
compensate ... (the victims)
negotiate ... (a settlement).

Make a sentence using these words or phrases:
side-tracked
misleading
unanimous decision
handout
competitive edge.

6.3 Grammar

The passive and reported speech

This module focuses on the meaning and use of the passive and reported speech within contexts related to corporate social responsibility.

Internet research

Students might search a number of newspapers and news magazines online, e.g. *Financial Times*, *International Herald Tribune*, *Wall St Journal*, *South China Morning Post*, *Japan Times*, *Time*, or *Newsweek* to find interesting comments and quotes from people and companies in the news. To focus on the topic of this unit, get students to search for stories related to corporate social responsibility. Students could also look out for the vocabulary and grammatical structures they have practised here in the articles they read.

This research could be done at the end of this module as a follow-up activity.

Test yourself: The passive

1 Start by reading the first part of the *Refresh your memory* box with the class. Students work alone to complete exercise 1 and then compare their answers with a partner. Check answers with the whole class by getting individual students to read the sentences aloud. If students seem unsure of the passive or would like further practice, work through some or all of exercises 1–6 in the *Grammar and practice* section (page 128 in the Student's Book, answers on page 118 in this book).

ANSWERS:

- 1 Illegal levels of nitrates are sometimes released into the river.
- 2 Too many mistakes are being made at the moment.
- 3 Unfortunately a poor decision was made in hiring unqualified staff.
- 4 Children were being employed to make T-shirts in Asia.
- 5 We have been accused of industrial espionage.
- 6 The company had been warned about the risks.
- 7 Conflict with the unions can be avoided by making small concessions.
- 8 You might be asked some delicate questions.
- 9 It was agreed that production staff should work a four-day week.
- 10 It has been decided that 300 employees are going to be made redundant.

Test yourself: Reported speech

2 and **3** Follow the same procedure as for exercise 1. Get students to define the reporting verbs, if they can, from the contexts of the original sentences. Alternatively, explain the meanings, e.g.:

announce (make something known publicly)
admit (recognize or agree that something is true)
reassure (remove someone's fears or doubts about something)
enquire (ask)
reply (answer)
warn (inform someone in advance about something)
emphasize (stress something in order to make the meaning clearer)
argue (express an opposite opinion).
 Point out that these verbs convey more nuances of meaning than simply using *say*, *ask* or *tell*.

ANSWERS:

Exercise 2

- 1 CEO Ben Straw announced that nitrate levels in the local water supply were slightly higher than normal.
- 2 Mr Straw admitted it was possible that the factory was responsible.
- 3 Plant manager Jane Lee explained there was / had been a small chemical leak last Friday.
- 4 Mrs Lee reassured the meeting that they had taken measures to ensure that this situation could not / cannot reoccur.
- 5 Mr Straw said they were negotiating a settlement with the town council.
- 6 He promised the meeting that they would announce full details in a press statement in a few days' time.
- 7 Mrs Green, a local resident, asked if there had ever been a problem like this before.
- 8 Mrs Lee replied that she could not remember any other leaks in 30 years at the factory.
- 9 Pat Holz, a union representative, enquired when they planned to re-open the factory.
- 10 Mr Straw warned that some staff might be laid off for a few days.

Exercise 3


- 2 The CEO argued that developing countries were extremely grateful for the investment and the jobs that they brought.
- 3 The CEO explained that they made fair profits and paid shareholders good dividends, but they had never exploited their employees.
- 4 The CEO accepted that they could and would do more to develop sources of alternative energy.
- 5 The CEO commented that he did not feel that higher petrol prices would reduce traffic and pollution.

4 Read each of the four extracts aloud or get students to read them silently. Then, one by one, read the statements 1–10 aloud. After each one, ask students to say who made the statement and to say what the phrase is that helped them work out the answer.

ANSWERS:

- 1 CEO Klaas Roos – labour costs in Europe could not be justified
- 2 Employees at Plazachem's Tashkent plant – they claimed that several fatal accidents had occurred
- 3 Ms Gronko – discussions were being held with local representatives
Mr Sanchez – no decision had yet been reached
- 4 Mr Sanchez – negotiations may be protracted
- 5 Ms Gronko – she was unable to give a figure
- 6 Mr Sanchez – the complexity of the legal situation
- 7 Mr Sanchez – no decision had yet been reached
- 8 Ms Gronko – all villagers forced to leave their homes by the new road would be compensated
- 9 CEO Klaas Roos – announced an end to manufacturing in Europe
- 10 Plazachem management – journalists are reported to have been refused entry
- 11 CEO Klaas Roos – Asian textile imports could no longer be matched for price
- 12 Plazachem's receptionist – Plazachem management declined to comment

Listening and reporting

5  2:52–2:57 Play all six extracts so that students get an overview of the conversation. Ask the following questions to check comprehension:

Why are 100 people being made redundant? (new automated machinery means that operators are no longer needed)

What three things the company doing to help the redundant workers? (setting up an outplacement service; making redundancy payments; helping people who want to start up their own businesses).


Play the recording again. Pause after each extract to allow students time to note down their answers.

With lower-level classes, brainstorm with the whole class which reporting verb(s) they could use. Point out that there may be more than one possible answer. Check answers with the whole class.

SUGGESTED ANSWERS:

- 2 Mr Bullard explained that new technologies had revolutionized the industry. He emphasized that the company would no longer need so many operators.
- 3 I agreed that it was difficult to remain competitive, but I enquired what Mr Bullard was intending to do to help people.
- 4 Mr Bullard told me that the company was setting up an outplacement service, and said that he was sure most people would find work very quickly.
- 5 I asked how those people who didn't find jobs would survive. I commented that they didn't have a lot of savings, and asked whether the company was offering financial help.
- 6 Mr Bullard reassured me that each person had received a generous redundancy payment, and he added that the company was making interest-free loans and advice available for people wanting to start their own businesses.

RECORDING SCRIPT

 2:52–2:57

1

Leila Belabed: Mr Bullard, the mayor is very upset. You've just dismissed 100 people from the factory! Have you forgotten that when your company arrived, you promised to create jobs for our town?

2

Geoffrey Bullard: Well, of course I understand that you are upset, Ms Belabed. Unfortunately, new technologies have revolutionized our industry. You must understand that with new automated machinery, we will no longer need so many operators.

3

LB: I know that it is difficult to remain competitive, but what about these people and their families? It's a disaster for them. What are you intending to do to help them, Mr Bullard?

4

GB: Please call me Geoffrey. Of course we share your concerns. We are setting up an outplacement service to help people find new jobs, and I'm confident that most of them will find work very quickly.

5

LB: But what about those who don't, Mr Bullard? How will they survive? These people don't have a lot of savings, you know! Are you offering them financial help?

6

GB: Yes, of course, Ms Belabed, you don't need to worry about that. Each person has already received a generous redundancy payment. And we're also making interest-free loans and advice available for those who want to start their own businesses.

6 Students work with a partner to rewrite these announcements in informal language. Read the sentences aloud with the whole class. Before they start, elicit or explain some of the features of informal language they might use here, e.g. active voice, imperatives, contractions, etc. Check answers by getting students to read their revised announcements aloud.

SUGGESTED ANSWERS:

- 2 Could you please use the stairs while the lift is being repaired?
- 3 We are sorry, but we can't give you your money back unless you have the receipt.
- 4 We can only give you your deposit back when you've brought all the equipment back to reception.
- 5 They're holding all the meetings in the training centre until they've finished redecorating the conference room.
- 6 I'm afraid we can't reimburse your expenses unless your manager has approved them.

Roleplay

7 To help students get started, brainstorm some products or services with the whole class, e.g. an item of clothing, a computer, a night at a luxury hotel. If possible, bring some pictures to class to stimulate ideas. Ask in what ways they might be dissatisfied with the products and services they have listed (e.g. the item of clothing has shrunk in the wash).

While students are working, circulate and monitor. Make a list of any common mistakes in the target language for remedial teaching later.

6.4 Speaking

Meetings – teamwork

This module explores appropriate language and behaviour at meetings and provides contexts for students to discuss issues of ethical behaviour.

Internet research

A search using “golden rules of meetings” will find a number of websites which explore how to run effective meetings. Typically these will include the following advice:

- Be clear about the purpose of the meeting.
- Invite the right people.
- Start and finish on time.
- Be prepared.
- Don't get sidetracked.
- Don't hold unnecessary meetings.
- Finish meetings with a clear statement of the next steps and who will take them.

Students could do this research before they do the work on meetings in this module. They could then aim to implement some of these rules in exercises 8 and 9, e.g. the third and fifth rules.

Alternatively, they could do this research as a follow-up to the work done in this module.

Discussion

1 Students discuss this question in groups. Take feedback from the whole class, getting students to give reasons for their answers.

Useful words and expressions that may arise from this discussion are:


bribe / bribery (money, services, etc. offered to someone in return for (often) dishonest help)
backhander (an informal word for a bribe)
corruption (dishonest behaviour).

In-work students may be able to share information about their company's corporate gift policy, which sets out what kinds of gifts are acceptable. Pre-work students could comment on what kinds of gifts might be acceptable or unacceptable. If necessary, provide some prompts, e.g.: a corporate pen; dinner at a top-class restaurant; a gold watch; cash; tickets to a sporting event, concert or play; a weekend at a beach resort.

ANSWERS:

It will often depend on the relationship with the customer, but in most cases everything except cash and employing a relative would be acceptable.

Listening

2  2:58 Before students listen to the recording, get them to predict the ways in which someone might behave inappropriately at a meeting. Write a list of the students' ideas on the board.

Play Version 1 and get students to check what they hear against the list on the board, noting down any other things they hear.

ANSWERS:

Stanislas constantly interrupts, tries to impose his point of view, uses inappropriate register, goes off the topic and gets involved in an argument with another attendee.

RECORDING SCRIPT

 2:58

Version 1

Anna: Do we all agree on that then? All right. That brings us to the next point on the agenda – company policy on gifts from suppliers. Now, in the past we used to turn a blind eye, but now I tend to think that we need ...

Stan: Well, it's stupid!

A: I'm sorry, Stanislas. Did you want to say something?

S: Yes. It's stupid. Really, really stupid. Well, it is, isn't it, Anna?

A: Well, I'm not quite sure why Stanislas feels so strongly about this issue, but the fact is, we had a major problem with our packaging supplier recently. It seems they had been sending regular 'goodwill packages' to our buyer's home.

S: What?!

Jon: Gifts, Stan. Cases of vodka, I believe.

S: Vodka?! Oh, I see.

A: Yes. Well, apparently, the suppliers thought the contract was guaranteed for life, and unfortunately Mr Vieri, from our purchasing department, 'forgot' to mention our policy of calling for new tenders every three years.

S: So, we should sack Vieri, that's what I think!

J: Stan, I see your point, but you can't just sack someone for making one mistake after twenty years with the company!

S: No, you're wrong, Jon! It's not right, and he has to go.

J: But Stan, don't you think that everyone should have a second chance? I mean ...

A: Jon, Stan, I think we're getting side-tracked here. The question today is not how we deal with Mr Vieri, but what our company policy should be in future.


S: Yes, but his behaviour was unethical, do you understand? Unethical! So he must be fired!

Magali: Could I just come in here?

A: Yes, Magali, do you have any views on this issue?


M: I'm sorry, Anna; when you say this issue, do you mean our policy, or Mr Vieri's vodka?

A: Listen, perhaps we should break for coffee. I think we're all getting a bit tired. Could we come back to this later?

3  2:58 Version 1 again while students write down any inappropriate words and expressions they hear. Students should also listen for tone of voice, stress, intonation, etc.

SUGGESTED ANSWERS:

- 1 Well, it's stupid!
- 2 Well, it is, isn't it, Anna?
- 3 What?!
- 4 That's what I think!
- 5 No, you're wrong.
- 6 Do you understand?

4  2:59 Play Version 2. Students listen and note down the differences in vocabulary and tone of voice and in the way the meeting proceeds. They then compare their answers with a partner. Take whole-class feedback.

ANSWERS:

Stanislas uses more appropriate language and the meeting is more constructive.

RECORDING SCRIPT

2:59

Version 2

Anna: Do we all agree on that, then? All right. That brings us to the next point on the agenda – company policy on gifts from suppliers. Now, in the past we used to turn a blind eye, but now I tend to think that we need ...

Stan: Sorry to interrupt, but ...

A: Yes, Stan. Go on.

S: Well, I must say, I think accepting gifts from suppliers is unwise. Would you agree, Anna?

A: Well, Stanislas, on the whole, yes, I would. Now, recently we had a major problem with our packaging supplier. It seems they had been sending regular 'goodwill packages' to our buyer's home.

S: Sorry, Anna. I don't see what you mean.

Jon: Gifts, Stan. Cases of vodka, I believe.

S: Vodka? Oh, I see.

A: Yes. Well, apparently, the suppliers thought the contract was guaranteed for life, and unfortunately Mr Vieri, from our purchasing department, 'forgot' to mention our policy of calling for new tenders every three years.

S: Well, I feel strongly that we should dismiss Mr Vieri!

J: Stan, I see your point, but you can't just dismiss someone for making one mistake after twenty years with the company!

S: I'm afraid I can't agree, Jon! It's not right, and he should leave the company.

J: But Stan, don't you think that everyone should have a second chance? I mean ...

A: Jon, Stan, I think we're getting side-tracked here. The question today is not how we deal with Mr Vieri, but what our company policy should be in future.

S: Yes, but wouldn't you agree that his behaviour was unethical? So he should be dismissed.

Magali: Could I just come in here?

A: Yes, Magali, do you have any views on this issue?

M: I'm sorry, Anna. When you say this issue, do you mean our policy on gifts, or the wider issue of corporate ethics? You see, it seems to me that we need some kind of global charter or code of conduct which would cover all possible ...

5 Play 2:58 Version 2 again so that students can complete the expressions. Check answers by getting students to read the complete sentences aloud, using appropriate intonation.

ANSWERS:

- 1 Sorry to interrupt, but ...
- 2 Would you agree, (Anna)?
- 3 Sorry, (Anna), I don't see what you mean.
- 4 Well, I feel strongly that (we should dismiss Mr Vieri).
- 5 I'm afraid I can't agree, (Jon).
- 6 Yes, but, wouldn't you agree that (his behaviour was unethical)?

6 and **7** Do these exercises as whole-class activities.

With lower-level classes, play 2:58 Version 2 again so that students can hear the expressions again in context.

ANSWERS:

Exercise 6

- 1 That brings us to the next point on the agenda.
- 2 I tend to think that we need ...
- 3 I see your point, but you can't just dismiss someone ...
- 4 Don't you think that everyone should have a second chance?
- 5 I think we're getting side-tracked here.
- 6 Could I just come in here?
- 7 Do you have any views on this issue?
- 8 When you say this issue, do you mean our policy on gifts?

Exercise 7

Giving an opinion	Asking for opinions	Managing the discussion
In my opinion ... It seems to me that ... I feel strongly that ... I tend to think that ...	What's your feeling? Would you agree? Do you have any views on ...?	Do we all agree on that, then? Perhaps we should break for coffee. Could we come back to this later? That brings us to the next point on the agenda. I think we're getting side-tracked.

Disagreeing tactfully	Interrupting	Asking for clarification	Persuading
I agree up to a point, but ... I'm afraid I can't agree. I see your point, but ...	Sorry, but could I just say ...? Sorry to interrupt, but ... Could I just come in here?	So are you saying that ...? Sorry, I don't see what you mean. When you say ... , do you mean ...?	Isn't it the case that ...? Wouldn't you agree that ...? Don't you think that ...?

8 Read the four issues aloud with the class.

With lower-level classes, brainstorm some opinions on each issue with the whole class and write them on the board. Students can use these in their conversations.

Circulate while students are speaking and assist where necessary. Check that students are using the target language appropriately. When they have finished, get some pairs of students to present their conversation to the class.

9 Each group should choose one person to chair the meeting. Give students a few minutes to read the instructions and think about what they might say. Remind them to review the language and expressions in this module and in earlier modules which might help them with this task.

While students are speaking circulate and assist where necessary. When they have finished, get the chairperson in each group to report to the whole class what was decided in each case.

To follow up, students could write a brief summary of their decision in each case.

EXTENSION ACTIVITY

Students discuss how they would deal with the following behaviour at meetings:

- someone who never speaks
- someone who dominates the meeting by talking too much
- someone who always arrives late
- someone who can't stick to the point
- someone who constantly interrupts
- someone who often does not come to meetings and does not inform you in advance.

Students work in groups or pairs and note down what they would say or do in these situations. Check answers with the whole class.

6.5 Writing

Reports and minutes

This module provides practice in using the appropriate grammar and vocabulary for writing reports and minutes of a meeting.

Internet research

A search for *email ethics* will reveal a wide range of information on the use and abuse of email within companies, including real-life stories about employees losing their jobs because of inappropriate use of email; suggestions for a code of ethics for email use; tips for avoiding problems with email at work, etc.

This research could be done as a follow-up activity after students have completed exercises 4 and 5.

Discussion

1 Get students to explain the meaning of *community projects* (schemes or activities which improve the quality of life for people living in a certain area) or explain it yourself, and make a list of some examples of community projects, e.g. building a children's playground, establishing a community garden, planting trees, providing books for schools, etc.

Get students to work in groups to brainstorm ideas. Take whole-class feedback.

SUGGESTED ANSWER:

Companies often rely on the local workforce, so it's in their best interests to invest in the community so that they have a happy, committed and loyal workforce. It will also raise their profile with local councilors and government which could be useful for them.

EXTENSION ACTIVITY

To personalize the activity, get students to add to the list any community projects they know of in their own locality.

Brainstorming

2 Do this as a whole-class activity. Write the words in the box on the board and elicit alternatives from students, who should also spell the word as you write it on the board.

SUGGESTED ANSWERS:

but: however, although
and: in addition, also
so: therefore, this means
say / tell: inform, explain, etc.
think: imagine, believe, etc.

Skim reading

3 Question 1: Students read the report silently, underlining the answers to the first question.

With lower-level classes, you could tell students in advance how many arguments there are for and against. Check answers with the whole class.

Question 2: Get students to close their books and listen for the answers to question 2 while you read the minutes aloud. Check answers with whole class. Students then open their books and read the minutes silently to double-check their answers.

ANSWERS:

1 Arguments for:

Benefits to the company's image justified more active and extensive support, in particular after the recent difficult negotiations.

Substantial benefits in terms of motivation and job satisfaction.

A positive effect on expansion of our manufacturing facilities and recruitment of our workforce locally.

Need for good relations with local communities benefits in developing team spirit.

Arguments against:

Group policy is to give encouragement, but only limited financial support.

Concerns about the size of the investment and the project's impact on productivity.

Risks involved for production, for example, absenteeism and quality issues.

The project could become an excuse to take time off work.

2 a) Head Office decided to support Mirratec's decision.

b) Mirratec decided to approve the project.

EXTENSION ACTIVITY

Put students into groups of three and get them to roleplay the meeting that was reported in the minutes on page 78 in the Student's Book. Before they start, each student should re-read the minutes to check what was said by the person they will be roleplaying. They can also review the language practised in 6.4. Circulate while students are speaking and monitor the use of language, pronunciation, and how effectively the meeting is run.

Scan reading

4 Read through the list of titles in the left-hand column with the whole class. See if students can guess what the missing words are. Then give them a few minutes to read the report and the minutes and complete the answers.

ANSWERS:

Function	Linking words
Addition	besides, moreover, in addition, furthermore
Conclusion	lastly, in conclusion, finally
Consequence	so, therefore, consequently
Contrast	but, however, even so
Equivalence	that is to say, namely, in other words
Example	for instance, such as, for example
Generalization	in most cases, as a rule, on the whole
Highlighting	mainly, chiefly, in particular, especially
Stating the obvious	of course, naturally, obviously, clearly
Summary	to sum up, overall, in brief

Writing

5 Give some brief information about Josiah Wedgwood. (He was an influential 18th century businessman who founded the world-famous Wedgwood china company. He pioneered innovative products, efficient production methods, and effective marketing strategies for his products.)

Students do this exercise with a partner. Check answers with the whole class by getting students to read the sentences aloud with the appropriate linking word in place.

SUGGESTED ANSWERS:

Josiah Wedgwood was a pioneer in social responsibility, building a village for his workforce. In addition, his products combined technology with classical culture. More than a century later, George Cadbury developed social housing for his chocolate factory workers. Consequently, Cadbury's became one of Britain's most respected companies. Both men were pioneers of corporate social responsibility. However, they were also accused of paternalism. Today, sustainable development policies aim to manage the effects of business on employees, the community, and especially on the environment. Multinationals like Shell are focusing on the idea of being good neighbours, in particular, by consulting local stakeholders before beginning new projects which may affect them.

Reading for detail

6 Do this as a whole-class exercise. Students read the report silently, underlining the impersonal structures. When they have found five, they should raise their hands. When most students have raised their hands, check answers with the whole class.

ANSWERS:


it was felt that ...
it is recommended that ...
it is hoped that ...
it is believed that ...
It is expected that ...

7 Ask students do this exercise alone and then compare their answers with a partner. Check answers by getting students to read their sentences aloud.

ANSWERS:

- 1 Christopher agreed that productivity was a concern.
- 2 Christopher stressed that only a small number of staff would be directly involved.
- 3 Christopher claimed that most department managers didn't expect any problems.
- 4 Christopher reported that there was a similar project in Greece where they had actually improved productivity.
- 5 Christopher suggested that team spirit would be much better when the community centre had been built.

Listening and writing

8  2:60 Play Jan's first speech and pause the recording. Ask students what they think *diversity* in the workplace means (employing people from different parts of society and ensuring a representative mix of ages, gender, mobility, ethnic background, etc.).

Play the rest of the recording and get students first to listen, without making notes, so that they can get an overview of the whole discussion. Then play the recording again, pausing at appropriate moments while students take notes. They then compare answers with a partner. Circulate and assist where necessary. Check answers with the whole class to ensure that everyone has the correct information.

Students then write their summary. When they have finished, they should exchange their summaries with another pair and check each other's work. They should underline or circle any mistakes or things which are unclear and pass the summary back for correction and improvement.

When students have finished, display the summaries on a desk or wall and allow students to read them all.

RECORDING SCRIPT

 2:60

Jan: All right, then. Let's move on to point two on the agenda: diversity. As you know, our workforce is still 80% male. What's more, we have very few employees from ethnic minorities. The general feeling within the group is that we need to take measures in order to reflect the increasing diversity in society ...

Ines: Sorry to interrupt, Jan, but when you say 'measures', do you mean positive discrimination? Hiring women in preference to men, for instance? Because that's all very well in sales and admin, but I really, really can't see women doing the heavy jobs in production. And anyway, I'm not sure that positive discrimination is the right way to approach the problem.

Christopher: No, I don't think it is either. It seems to me that we would just go from one extreme to another – you know, all our employees would be middle-aged female immigrants with disabilities!

J: Point taken, Christopher. But, seriously, that's what we want to avoid – extremes. In fact, what we need are measures to ensure that we don't discriminate against anyone on whatever criteria, whether it's their age, their race, their gender, their religion, or anything else.

C: But Jan, don't you think that's just an HR problem? I mean, they're the people who interview the candidates, not us. Nine times out of ten, we only see a short-list of people they've already approved. It's even worse when we recruit from the agencies. And that's another problem, by the way: half of the people they send us are absolutely hopeless. I don't know how they select them, but honestly ...

J: Yes, Christopher. I know the agencies are a problem, but I think we're getting sidetracked here. Could we agree that we'll talk about the agencies next Monday?

C: OK.

J: Good. So, getting back to diversity. Ines, what can we do to attract more applications from women?

I: Well, for a start, we should offer more part-time positions. Flexible hours, longer holidays when the schools are closed, a four-day week. You know, jobs that women with families can manage. That's really obvious. I've been saying this for years! I mean, why don't we start by allowing our present staff to go part-time if they want to? I can think of at least four women who'd be delighted to work part-time! That would mean we could offer more part-time jobs to new candidates.

J: Yes, Ines, thank you. That's an excellent idea. Shall we get HR to work on it? Christopher?

C: That's fine by me.

J: All right, that's decided then. All right, shall we break for coffee now, or take point three first?

6.6 Case study

Phoenix

This case study brings together the themes and language practised in the unit requiring students to roleplay interest groups at a public meeting about the site of a new vehicle recycling centre.

Internet research

Students will find detailed information about what is involved in *automobile recycling contamination* (only 82% of a car is recycled which means 18% of them go into landfill. This search could supplement the information in exercises 2, 3 and 4. It would be useful to do this research before you start this module. However, it is not essential, and could be done as a follow-up to this module.

Discussion

1 Students work in groups to answer this question. First elicit from the whole class or explain the meaning of *recycling centre* (a place where used or waste materials are processed and converted into reusable material) and ask what kinds of things might be recycled (fridges, building materials, garden waste, cars). To focus on the topic of the case study, ask students to answer the question about a car recycling centre. Take feedback from the whole class.

Reading

2 Read the text aloud or get a student to do it. To help them answer the questions students can refer back to the vocabulary and expressions they practised earlier in the unit.


SUGGESTED ANSWERS:

- 1 The company tries to present itself as a responsible member of the community, protecting the environment by providing a valuable service, and applying an ethical code of fair practice in its dealings with all its partners.
- 2 Depending on how high-tech their equipment is, it may be very clinical and relatively clean, or very dirty, dusty, heavy, noisy, unpleasant and dangerous.

ROLEPLAY PREPARATION

Read the roleplay preparation notes with the whole class and divide the class into three groups. Students should work in their groups for the remaining exercises in this module.

Listening

3  2:61 This exercise provides the background information for the meeting in exercise 6.

Question 1: Read this question aloud and play the first part of the meeting up to '... attract new business and jobs to the area'. Check answers with the whole class.

Question 2: Play the rest of the meeting. First get students to tell you where sites A, B and C are and write notes about the locations on the board. If necessary, play the second part of the recording again so that students can answer question 2.

Question 3: Explain *charm* (the power to please or attract people) and *diplomacy* (art or skill of dealing with people by gentle or tactful means) and get the whole class to brainstorm what 'Operation Charm and Diplomacy' might involve in this context.

ANSWERS:

- 1 Port Katherine is a good choice for Phoenix because:
 - a) it's close to Perth.
 - b) it's far enough away not to attract too much attention from the environmentalists.
 - c) the population is only about 3,500, so there shouldn't be too much local resistance.
 - d) the local authorities are desperate to attract new business and jobs to the area.
- 2 For the Planning Department, site A is likely to be politically sensitive, but is conveniently close to the highway on the edge of town.

Site B will probably produce the most income for the community and seems to have no major disadvantages. Site C would involve major demolition and road-building work, so is less suitable.

For the Residents' Association, site A is a problem because it's close to a school.

Site B seems to be a good choice as it will not disturb residents.

Site C may involve a lot of demolition and building, which could disrupt residents' lives in the town centre.

For Phoenix, site A is the best: it's close to the highway, the price for the land is reasonable and it's a nice flat site to build on. The disadvantage is that it's right next to the local school.

Site B is on a business park, but it's a bit expensive, and taxes will be higher.

Site C is an old factory site near the harbour in the town centre. Access would be a problem, unless they built a new road, and they'd have to demolish the old building.
- 3 'Operation Charm and Diplomacy' is an attempt to establish good relations with the local community by stressing the company's environmentally friendly ethics and mission statement in order to outweigh the disadvantages and break down resistance in people's minds.

RECORDING SCRIPT

 2:61

Justin: ... so we all agree that we need to keep an eye on that one. All right, that just leaves point six on the agenda: the new site for the South West. Helen, can you bring us up to date?

Helen: Yes, Justin. There's good news: we've identified three possible sites in a place called Port Katherine.

Glenn: Never heard of it!

H: Well, it's a small town about 30 miles south of Perth. It's exactly what we were looking for: close to Perth, but far enough away not to attract too much attention from the environmentalists.

G: Well, that's good news! We don't want another disaster like Cairns. Those Greens have absolutely no idea what this country would look like if we didn't recycle cars!

J: Yes, all right, Glenn. Shall we let Helen finish?

G: Oh, yes. Sorry, mate.

J: Helen?

H: Thank you. Port Katherine's population is only about three and half thousand, so Glenn will be happy to know there shouldn't be too much local resistance. And the local authorities are desperate to attract new business and jobs to the area.

J: Sounds good. You said there were three possible sites?

H: Yes, that's right. I've put all the details in this handout. There you are, Glenn.

G: Oh, yeah. Thanks.

H: Now, site A is a good one. It's a greenfield site just on the edge of town. There are several plus points. Firstly, it's close to the highway, so access for our trucks is easy. Secondly, the price of land is reasonable. And thirdly, it's a nice flat site to build on.

- J: Any negatives?
 H: Well, just one. It's right next to the local school.
 G: Uh-oh!
 H: But I don't think it's going to be a problem. I spoke to someone at the planning department, and they were very enthusiastic. Sites B and C are also possible, but they have other problems. Site B is on a business park, so no problems with residents, but it's a bit expensive and taxes will be higher. Site C is actually in the town centre.
 G: Oh yeah, perfect! Twenty ton trucks in the high street!
 H: Actually, Glenn, it's not that bad. It's on a big old factory site near the harbour. We'd have to demolish the old building, and access would be a bit of a problem, but they could build a new road. It's possible.
 J: OK, thanks, Helen. Excellent work. I'll send somebody out there to start talking to the locals.
 G: 'Operation Charm and Diplomacy', eh?
 J: Yes.
 H: Hm. Better not send Glenn, then!

Reading and discussion

This section provides key information that each of the three interests groups will need to present its case in exercise 6.

4 and **5** Circulate while students are doing these exercises and assist where necessary. You could set a time limit for the opening presentations, e.g. 5 minutes per group. Encourage students to refer to the previous modules in the unit to help them in their preparation, e.g. 6.2 and 6.4. Students could write notes on cards to help them with their presentations.

ANSWERS:

Group A: Port Katherine Planning Department

- 1 The email is from Duncan Gillespie, one of the Mayor's staff.
- 2 Your role is to organize and chair the meeting, and to try to find an agreement which suits everyone.
- 3 It's important to keep the residents happy because the elections are coming up soon. If they are unhappy, the Mayor may not be re-elected.
- 4 The project is important because the town desperately needs new jobs and investment.
- 5 Site B is the best choice for financial reasons.

Group B: Port Katherine Residents' Association

- 1 Members feel strongly about preserving the environment and the safety of their children.
- 2 Demonstrations, protests, lobbying, sabotage?
- 3 Because the elections are approaching and the mayor wants to be popular.
- 4 Ideally, you would prefer the centre not to be in Port Katherine at all. The industrial environment of Site C seems to be the best choice.
- 5 Make sure site A is not chosen.

Group C: Phoenix

- 1 Make friends and sell the benefits of the recycling centre.
- 2 Improving facilities at the school, redeveloping the port area in the town centre, attracting new businesses to the business park?
- 3 To develop the largest recycling centre on the continent.
- 4 Site A is the best if the residents' resistance can be overcome. Site B is possible, but more expensive. Site C depends on the town agreeing to build a new road.
- 5 The cost argument against site B may not receive much sympathy from the residents and the authorities; the contamination argument is delicate and may increase resistance to the project. The cost for the town of a new road is probably a good argument to use against site C. The disruption to the city centre is more delicate, as this argument can also be used against site A.

Roleplay

6 Play the part of chairperson of the meeting yourself – welcome the participants and introduce the three presenters; summarize the discussion at the end.

Hold the meeting, following the agenda. While students are speaking, make notes of any common errors for remedial teaching later. You could also make a note of any particularly good uses of the target language to share with the rest of the class when the activity is over.

When they have finished, students could also assess their own performance, commenting on one thing they think they did well and one thing that could be improved.

Writing

7 Students should refer to earlier work in the unit on the passive and reported speech (6.3) and writing reports (6.5). Students could exchange their first drafts with another group for feedback before finalizing it.