

English for Secretaries

English for Secretaries

Contents

Unit 1	Schweibur: The Fiftieth Anniversary	2
Unit 2	The Sales Report	18
Unit 3	The Thanking Letter	30
Unit 4	A Telephone Message	42
Unit 5	A Death to Report	54
Unit 6	A Memo	66
Unit 7	A Journey	74
Unit 8	Minutes	86
Unit 9	An Article and a Memo	98
Unit 10	The Transfer	112
Unit 11	Changing Jobs	124
Unit 12	The New Secretary	135
	Glossary	145

Unit 1

Schweibur: The Fiftieth Anniversary



Schweibour

It is never easy to give an adequate picture of an international company such as ours in a small brochure. The pages that follow can only suggest what we do, where we do it and how we do it.

The Schweibour Group comprises more than 40 companies in 23 countries, with agents in a further 60 countries. The staff number just over 43,000 throughout the world, and are being constantly increased due to continuous expansion of the Group's activities. The turnover last year was 150 million Swiss francs.

We have a deserved reputation for superb design and quality, of which we are particularly proud and which has secured us a leading position in our field. The range of office equipment we produce, from paper clips to closed circuit television, is one of the most varied offered by any company.

Our Headquarters are located on the outskirts of Zurich, where some 6,000 employees work. A further 2,000 work in our Swiss subsidiaries. Long before 'decentralization' became a household word, our company actively pursued a production policy based on precisely this concept. Group plants

are situated throughout Switzerland, and we are currently starting to build new plants in Lausanne and outside Geneva. We are planning to invest \$70 million in these plants and in a substantial expansion of our other facilities in Switzerland over the next two years.

Decisions and policies are established by the Group management at Headquarters in Zurich and affect not only operations there, but also in the subsidiaries in Switzerland and other countries throughout the world. Features that are of special interest to visitors include:

The new exhibition hall.

The new extension to the employees' restaurant, inaugurated in 1975, and which we are already expanding.

The ultra-modern medical centre, which is staffed by two full-time doctors, and whose facilities we are constantly improving.

Exercises

Exercise A

Choose the correct or most appropriate word from those printed in italics to complete the following sentences. You should try not to look back to the Brochure while doing this exercise.

- 1 Our manufacturing company is *placed / found / located* about ten minutes by taxi from here.
- 2 We intend to *expand / increase / grow* the employees' restaurant in the near future.
- 3 The typists' pool is *worked / staffed / employed* by nine full-time office juniors.
- 4 The Group is planning a *great / substantial / large / wide* expansion of its production facilities.

Complete the following sentences. You should try not to refer to the Brochure.

- 5 Our Group c_____ 33 subsidiaries in Europe alone.
- 6 We have a l_____ position in our field.
- 7 The general opinion of Schweibur is good. In fact they have a very high r_____.
- 8 The quality of their products has s_____ them a leading position among manufacturers of office equipment.



What is this?

Find another word for the words or phrases in brackets to complete the following sentences.

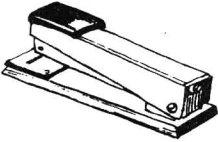
- 9 Our (*statement of aims*) p_____ is one of decentralization.
- 10 Schweibur are (*at the present time*) c_____ planning a new factory in Lausanne.
- 11 Decisions taken at Headquarters (*have an influence on*) a_____ the company's operations throughout the world.
- 12 The exhibition was (*opened*) i_____ in 1976.

Exercise B

Mary Malone is going on holiday next week. Before she goes, she has to brief her replacement, Miss Schneider, on where things are kept in the office. Complete their conversation, using the verbs in brackets and putting them in the right tense.

Mary Malone: . . . Now, the filing cabinets are over here. I (*always / keep*) files that Mr Gräber is likely to want here in the office. He (*like*) to have the files he (*currently / work*) on in his own office, and of course dead files we (*store*) in the department's central filing system.

Unit 1



What is this?

Miss Schneider: Yes, I (*see*). I (*suppose*) there's an index, is there?

Mary Malone: Yes, I (*retype*) it at the moment. Here we are. It (*probably/look*) rather confusing but I (*expect*) you'll soon get the hang of it. We (*use*) a numerical system, which I'm sure you (*know*) all about. Each subsidiary (*have*) an initial code number: 3 for example (*refer*) to our factory in Clermont-Ferrand, and the other numbers (*refer*) to particular subject areas. Mr Gräber (*think*) of reorganizing it, but I (*hope*) he (*do not*) as I (*find*) it's efficient enough as it is.

Miss Schneider: I (*see*). Where (*keep*) things like staples and paper clips?

Mary Malone: Over in the cupboard. It's a bit on the full side, and I (*try*) to get a proper cupboard for storage from Office Services, but they (*not be*) very helpful at the moment.

Miss Schneider: Am I responsible for ordering the things I need? I mean, (*I/indent*) for odds and ends from Office Services, or (*I/order*) them myself?

Mary Malone: You (*have to*) indent for them, although it's inconvenient, and then they (*take*) a day or so to send them up, which is why I (*like*) to order in plenty of time. Now, can I show you this circulation list?

Mr Gräber (*have to*) write a quarterly report, statistics of sales and so on, which you . . .

Exercise C

Make sentences from these notes. Begin each sentence with the words *It is*, *There is* or *There are*. For example:

obvious / documents / must / be / accessible
It is obvious that documents must be accessible.

several / ways / file / documents
There are several ways of filing documents.

- 1 number of advantages / use / alphabetical system
- 2 rules / put / files / alphabetical order
- 3 advisable / each / department / adopt / own system
- 4 clear / geographical system / be / best / export department
- 5 difficult / use / numerical system / without / index
- 6 not / enough room / keep / all the correspondence / department
- 7 usual / transfer / old letters / dead files
- 8 good reason / keep / photographs / horizontal files
- 9 also / advantages / have / vertical storage cabinet
- 10 annoying / find / file / missing

Exercise D

Miss Schneider acted as Mr Gräber's secretary while Mary Malone was on holiday. While Mary was away, Mr Gräber suddenly had to go to Schweibur's British subsidiary in Manchester. Miss Schneider had to make the travel arrangements, and book a hotel. She found these notes of Mary's about some hotels in Manchester.

If you were Miss Schneider, which hotel would you put Mr Gräber in?

Make up sentences comparing the different hotels, using the tables opposite for guidance.

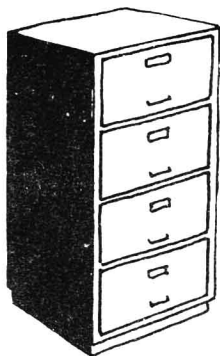
When you have compared the hotels, decide which hotel Mr Gräber should go to.

- A I would recommend | the ... (?)
I would suggest
What about

It	is	much	(efficient)	for the airport
The service	are	appreciably	(convenient)	than the ...
The food		considerably	(bad)	to Schweibur
The rooms		a little	(close)	because ...
			(etc.)	

- B I wouldn't recommend | the ...
I don't think we should put him in |

It	is	not as	good	as the ...
The service	are	less	modern	than the ...
The food			expensive	
The rooms			clean	
			etc.	



What is this?



Schweibur

EXCELSIOR

Food: Poor
Service: Quick
Rooms: Very clean
Distance to Schweibur: 7km.
Distance from Airport: 21 km.
Cost: £4-£9
Date Built: 1923

CROWN

Food: Continental cooking
Service: Efficient
Rooms: Small
Distance to Schweibur: 4 km.
Distance from Airport: 11 km.
Cost: £5-£12 for single room
Date Built: 1961

GRAND

Food: Good
Service: Slow
Rooms: Uncomfortable
Distance to Schweibur: 8km.
Distance from Airport: 3km.
Cost: £6-£10
Date Built: 1971

IMPERIAL

Food: OK
Service: Good
Rooms: Old fashioned
Distance to Schweibur: 1km.
Distance from Airport: 9km.
Cost: £2.50-£9
Date Built: 1732

GEORGE

Food: French Chef
Service: Excellent
Rooms: Dirty
Distance to Schweibur: 1km
Distance from Airport: 10 km
Cost: £4-£12
Date Built: 1970

TOWN AND COUNTRY

Food: Bad
Service: Average
Rooms: Very nice
Distance to Schweibur: 3km.
Distance from Airport: 8km.
Cost: £3-£10
Date Built: 1872

Language Laboratory Part 1

Drill 1

Miss Malone is secretary to the Assistant Marketing Manager of Schweibur. She is talking to a visitor.

Your production is **extremely** varied, isn't it?

Yes, we produce a wide variety of equipment.

Is it true there's a large expansion programme?

Yes, we're expanding to meet increased demand for our products.

- 1 produce /wide /variety /equipment
- 2 expand /meet /increased demand /products
- 3 employ /well over 2,000 /Zurich /alone
- 4 extend /offices /give /more space
- 5 reorganize /whole filing system /Marketing Division
- 6 store /all our files /these cupboards /till /new office /ready
- 7 refer /whenever /any enquiry /staff
- 8 compile /statistics /quarterly reports

Drill 2

Miss Schmidt is a secretary in the Travel Department. She is often asked to recommend a hotel to visiting agents or customers.

I don't want anything too expensive.

In that case I'd recommend the Imperial. It's much cheaper than the Majestic.

Well, I'll be without a car . . . so I don't want to be anywhere too inconvenient.

In that case I'd recommend the Limatt. It's much more convenient than the Grand.

- | | | |
|---|----------|----------|
| 1 | Imperial | Majestic |
| 2 | Limatt | Grand |
| 3 | Hilton | Palace |
| 4 | Skyway | Bristol |
| 5 | Lake | Imperial |
| 6 | Grand | Limatt |
| 7 | Majestic | Albert's |
| 8 | Grand | Lake |

Pronunciation Practice

Examples:

- 1 I beat him.
- 2 I bit him.

Listen carefully to the sentences on the tape. Write down whether the main word is like example 1 or example 2. Write down the numbers only.

Limerick

I've Given the JOB to Miss REED.
 She is JUST the PERson I NEED.
 She is PRETty and SLIM
 And her Flgure is TRIM
 And she HITS the right KEYS at great SPEED.



Dialogue

Mary's ringing the Skyway Hotel to book rooms for two visitors from Japan.

This is Schweibur. I'd like to book two rooms for a Mr Takashi and a Mr Mitsui for the night of the 15th, please.

Yes, please. And they particularly want rooms which don't face onto the main road, if that's possible.

Yes, I think we'd better take the single and one double in that case.

Mr Takashi, T-A-K-A-S-H-I and Mr Mitsui, M-I-T-S-U-I.

Could you confirm that in writing for us, please?

Correspondence

The following letter is a draft written by one of Mr Gräber's assistants in the Marketing Division. It is to one of Schweibur's agents. It has been brought to Mary Malone for typing. What corrections and improvements should she make before typing it out?

Dear Mr Mouskouris,

We are reterring to the telephone conversation between you and Mr Gräber on May 2. It appears to be a misunderstanding. Please notice that schemes to stop production of our XF range of file cabinets do not now go ahead, so there is not a necessity for you to worry about supplying your customers. Most of our agents like you have great orders for this line and the customers are appearing to be satisfied with this produce.

However, we still are considering whether to introduce a second range of file cabinets. These would be much stronger and solidier than our existing range. We are presently doing some market research to find out what demand there would be for this new, more improved range. Naturally, we are also wanting to know the view of our agents. The research report will form a base for discussion when you are coming to Headquarters for our next conference.

We remain,

Yours faithfully,

Telegrams

Mr Gräber is away from the office on a business trip. Today Mary received these two telegrams from him. What is she to do?

MEET REP ARRIVING GARUDA THREE TWO ZERO
THURSDAY STOP

CABLE SCHMIDT ADDRESS HAMBURG TO PARIS HOTEL
SOONEST STOP

Mary also had to send off two telegrams to Mr Gräber giving him the following messages. How should she word the telegrams?

- 1 Herr Geisner has had to cancel his meeting with you in Munich on Friday owing to illness. You should contact Herr Bloch in the Berlin office as soon as possible.
- 2 Head of Despatch confirms that order 3491 has been given priority but the following items cannot be sent because we are out of stock: 4328 and 4329. He thinks our Brussels subsidiary may have them.

Language Laboratory Part 2

Drill 3

Mary Malone works for the Assistant Manager of the Marketing Division of Schweibur. Her boss is frequently out of the office, and she has to deal with a lot of telephone calls from customers in his absence.

Jekyll speaking; can I have a word with Mr Erich Gräber, please?

I'm afraid Mr Gräber is out to lunch, Mr Jekyll.

Duclos here. Is Mr Gräber in?

I'm afraid Mr Gräber is in a meeting, Mr Duclos.

- 1 out /lunch
- 2 meeting
- 3 abroad /this week
- 4 other line

Now as you will have noticed, Mary Malone isn't being very helpful to the customer. Listen to her again, when she adds a suggestion or offer of help for the customer.

Jekyll speaking; can I have a word with Mr Erich Gräber, please?

I'm afraid Mr Gräber is out to lunch, Mr Jekyll. Can I take a message?

Duclos here. Is Mr Gräber in?

I'm afraid Mr Gräber is in a meeting, Mr Duclos. Can I get him to call you back?

- 1 out /lunch . . . take /message
- 2 meeting . . . get /call /back
- 3 abroad /this week . . . put /through /deputy
- 4 other line . . . ask you /call back /later
- 5 not /office /today . . . help /at all
- 6 show /visitors /round . . . give /message
- 7 conference /Gothenburg . . . ask /call /031 22 22 22
- 8 still ill . . . be /any help

Drill 4

Mr Gräber's always kept very busy at the office. Sometimes visitors who have an appointment with him have to be kept waiting for a short while because he isn't quite ready to see them.

My name's Koster. I have an appointment to see Mr Gräber at three.
Ab, good afternoon. Mr Koster. Mr Gräber is expecting you. He's just coming out of a meeting.

Is this Mr Gräber's office? I arranged to see him at eleven. My name's Steiner.

Ab, good morning Mr Steiner. Mr Gräber is expecting you. He's just taking a phone call.

- 1 Koster—coming out of a meeting
- 2 Steiner—taking a phone call
- 3 Ayala—dealing with an unexpected enquiry
- 4 Nilsson—checking up on the terms of the contract

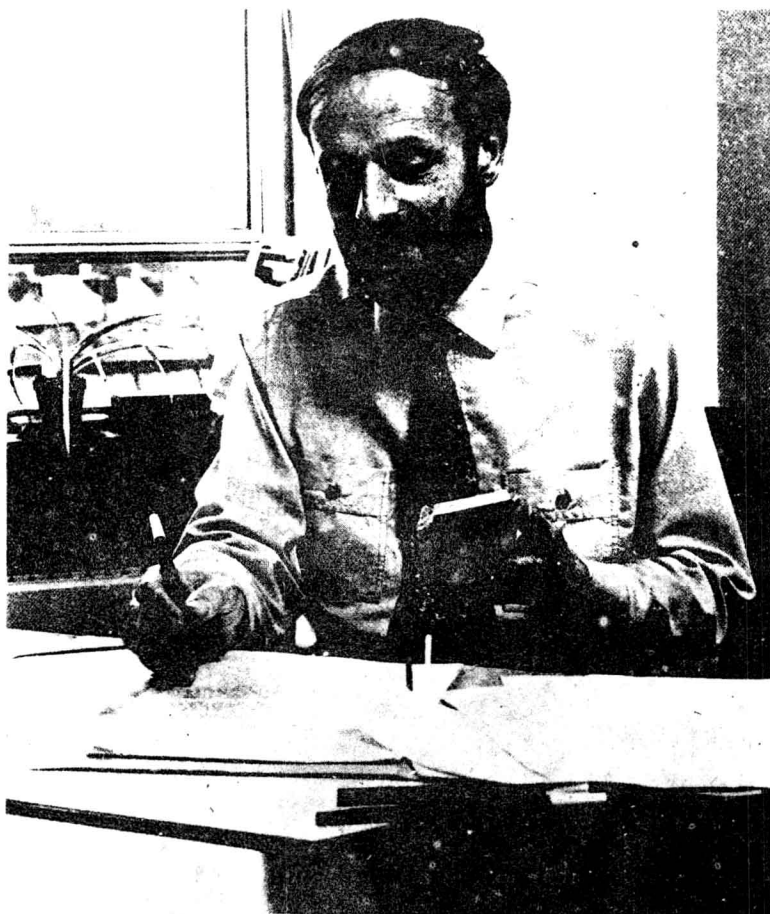
If a visitor has to be kept waiting like this, as a matter of politeness the secretary should ask him to sit down and reassure him that he will not be kept waiting long.

My name's Koster. I have an appointment to see Mr Gräber at three.
Ab, good afternoon Mr Koster. Mr Gräber is expecting you. He's just coming out of a meeting. If you'd care to take a seat, he'll be with you in a moment.

Is this Mr Gräber's office? I arranged to see him at eleven. My name's Steiner.

Ab, good morning Mr Steiner. Mr Gräber is expecting you. He's just taking a phone call. If you'd care to take a seat, he won't keep you waiting long.

- 1 Koster—coming out of a meeting—with you in a moment
- 2 Steiner—taking a phone call—keep you waiting long
- 3 Ayala—dealing with an unexpected enquiry—be more than a few minutes
- 4 Nilsson—checking up on the terms of the contract—with you shortly
- 5 Johnson—showing out his last visitor—be back directly
- 6 Post—finishing a briefing session—free in a minute
- 7 Lamartine—attending to an urgent matter—be long
- 8 de Freitas—talking to one of the directors—ready to see you in a minute

**Active Listening**

Passage 1: Your boss, the Training Manager, has dictated a letter on to a dictation machine.

- 1 What were the last two words you heard?
- 2 What are you to do?
- 3 What were the last three words you heard?
- 4 What were the last two words you heard?
- 5 What were the last three words you heard?
- 6 What was the last word you heard?
- 7 Did that last sound have any meaning or not?
- 8 What were the last two words you heard?
- 9 What was the last word you heard?

Passage 2: Mary Malone received the following telephone call one morning. Her boss, Mr Gräber, was out.

- 1 How many points in Mr Gräber's letter has Mr Daly not accepted immediately?
- 2 Which points were they?
- 3 What does Mr Daly want Mr Gräber to do?
- 4 What number did Mr Daly give?
- 5 Now write out the message you would give Mr Gräber on his return.

Role simulation

Meeting visitors and talking to them for short periods is something many secretaries have to do quite often. To give you practice in this, you will be asked to play a role in each unit.



In this unit you must imagine that you have been detailed to act as a guide for a group of visitors on a conducted tour of your company. Your task is to answer the visitors' questions. Here are the things you must do:

Welcome the visitors to your company.

Introduce yourself and explain who you are.

Offer to answer any questions the visitors may have about the company.

Respond to any comments the visitors make.

You will also be asked to play the part of a visitor, but to **help you do this** the teacher will give you a role card which will tell you what to say.

When you are playing your role you should try to use words and expressions that are new to you, or which you are not sure about.

Homework

Study the following phrases. They will be useful in writing letters.

Reference

Thank you for your letter of . . .

With reference to your memo / invoice, . . .

Further to our telephone conversation yesterday . . .

Your advertisement / article in . . . has been brought to our notice / attention

You may recall that we met . . . In the course of the conversation you mentioned that . . .

You will probably be aware / have heard that . . .

We were pleased / sorry to hear / learn that . . .

We note that . . .

With regard to your request for / query about . . .

Thank you for pointing out / offering to / drawing our attention to . . .

Expressing wishes

We would (very much) like to . . .

We would prefer not to . . .

We (particularly) want to . . .

We would rather not . . .

We (do) hope . . .

We are reluctant to . . .

Requests

We would be grateful if you would / could . . .

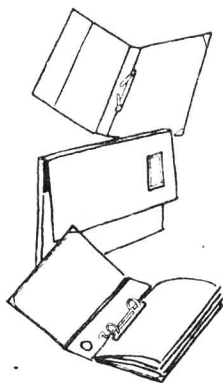
Would you be so kind as to . . .

We would appreciate it if you could . . .

Could you please . . .

Would you mind . . . ing . . .

Please let us know when / how much / if . . .



What are these?