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# YOU'RE IN BUSINESS! BUILDING BUSINESS ENGLISH SKILLS

JOHN THOMAS FRENCH

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# Preface

This book was written to meet the needs of the foreign student who is intending to study business at an American university. It is also suitable for students of English anywhere whose primary reason in learning English is for the purpose of conducting business. Many business professionals who need to conduct negotiations in English will find this book useful for learning business terminology and concepts. This book is written so that it can be used by an individual studying on his own or by an instructor as a classroom textbook.

The topics which were selected for this text deal with basic areas of business. The topics are common to many introductory textbooks on business, and therefore, a student who has completed this text will have an introduction to some of the material he will study later along with an understanding of the terminology of the field. There is a variety of topics which should be of interest to the businessman who is involved in international trade, negotiations, or financing. The topics are presented in an order paralleling the development of a business from a sole proprietorship to a multinational corporation. Each lesson is introduced and related to the previous material.

This text emphasizes several skills which both the student and professional need to develop if they are to conduct business in English. First, there are several types of vocabulary exercises. Emphasis is placed

on developing the ability to learn meanings from context. Next, there is listening practice which prepares the student and professional to be able to listen to others and make notes about the important points. This is an important skill for the student who attends lectures and for the professional who must be able to listen to discussions and presentations and take part in negotiations. Reading exercises teach the student to grasp what a writer has said by analyzing the passage to find the main ideas, to note details, and to make inferences. Writing exercises are included in order to help the student develop and express his own thoughts or opinion about a topic related to the lesson. Emphasis is placed on developing different methods of approaching problems, such as analysis, contrast, analogy, etc. Developing these skills will benefit the user of the book, no matter what type of business decisions he is called upon to make. There are also proposals for debates at the end of each lesson to enable the student to use orally some of the words and ideas that have been learned in the course of the unit.

The variety and scope of the exercises, together with the information given in the reading selections, should further develop both English language skills and student comprehension of the basic elements of business. This book not only provides a good foundation for continuing a more specialized study in the field, it also illustrates techniques that will be useful to the professional in understanding and writing up presentations in the world of business.

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# Using the Text

## To the Instructor

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The purpose of this text is to acquaint the non-English speaker who already has some background in the English language with the terms used in modern business English. The topics of the chapters are general to all types of business, and they are explained and defined in such a way that a teacher need not have a business background in order to use this text.

Each unit consists of a written text, several types of exercises: vocabulary exercises, reading comprehension exercises, listening and note-taking exercises, and a vocabulary review. There is also a writing assignment and a topic for discussion or debate.

The teacher may find it convenient to record the text on tape. This should be done at normal reading speed and at a slower deliberate speed. The tape can be played as the students follow along with the text, and the slower speed can be used for developing note-taking skills and pronunciation practice.

Depending on the level of the class, it may be possible to play the normal speed tape as an introduction to the material. The advantage of playing the tape is that it forces the student to consider the entire text quickly without becoming bogged down by the individual words. This is good practice for listening to a conversation or a lecture.

Before reading the text, the students should look over the glossary at the end of each lesson and become familiar with the difficult vocabulary



used in that lesson. In general, the vocabulary building exercises should be done immediately after reading the text. The words glossed in the margin of the reading selections are simplified clarifications of the word or phrase underlined in the text. They are not intended as exact synonyms or substitutions for the more difficult expression. The text should be read several times during the course of each lesson until the student is familiar with all the words and expressions. It can be read silently or played on a tape recorder, so that eventually the students can read it fluently.

The listening and note-taking exercises are to be done after an initial reading of the text. There is a short explanation to the student at the beginning of this section. The student should be familiar with the vocabulary at this point. These exercises, too, can be read (or played from a recording) section by section to the class at a deliberate speed. The purpose of these exercises is to teach the student to grasp ideas and to see the relationship between them. It is suggested that the instructor have the students work one exercise followed by discussion before going on to the next exercise.

The vocabulary review forces the student to look at the text one more time and to read it through in totality after having learned the meanings of the words.

The last exercise involves writing a paragraph. The instructor should review the basics of good sentence structure and grammar as required, depending upon the ability of the students. Since this is not an elementary text, it is expected that students will already be able to write sentences about the topic without copying word-for-word from the text. The goal here is to use the vocabulary of the lesson correctly as well as to present a topic in a clear and logical order. Individual conferences with students to assist with revisions of the paragraphs are quite helpful if time allows.

The debates are supplementary exercises which can be used to help students acquire the new concepts and ideas as active vocabulary, as well as to foster their skills in logical organization and oral argumentation. If possible, representatives from the business world could be brought in as guests to discuss these topics with the class. The debates should be assigned in advance so that the students can both prepare their own arguments and be familiar with those of the opposing side. For a more interesting debate, the group should be divided in half, with some of the stronger and weaker students on each side. A representative from each side should be designated to present the opening statement, and another to summarize the arguments presented. If the group is very large, a five-minute time limit can be set for the individual arguments and answers. This will help to avoid repetition and encourage clear, logical, and concise statements.

## To the Student

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This book will help you learn business words and concepts. You should begin each lesson by looking at the glossary with the vocabulary exercises. They will help you learn the meanings of the words. If you see a word you do not know in the reading, you should continue reading until the end of the sentence. Then read the sentence again and try to guess the meaning of the word. If you still have difficulty, read the paragraph completely through, and if necessary, reread the paragraph to try to learn the meanings of the unfamiliar words. You should think about the main idea of the paragraph—what the paragraph is mostly about. You should then be able to guess the meaning of the word. If you cannot guess the meaning, look again at the glossary at the end of the lesson. Try to understand the explanation of the word. After having learned these strategies, if you are still unable to understand the word, you may use your dictionary. But remember: you may need to do the exercises and read the lessons several times before you understand them completely.

Many of the exercises concentrate on a specific section of the text. The note-taking and listening comprehension exercises will teach you how to outline material you read, which is a good way to help you remember it. You learn to recognize details, main ideas, and methods of explaining. You can use the outlines for reviewing the material. To answer the questions in the reading comprehension exercises you need to note details and make inferences. Details are specific items of information and inferences are ideas which occur to you after thinking about what you have read. The details will be found in the text, but the exact answer for an inference question may not be found there. To find it, you need to think about the topic and form your own opinion.

The writing exercise requires you to consider the entire text you have read and how it was written. In order to do the writing exercise, you need to be able to organize all that you have read in a logical order according to the prescribed formula. Writing helps you to determine what your own ideas are and to express them so that others may read them. When you write, you are trying to convince the reader that your ideas and opinions are correct.



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# Contents

<b>Preface</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>Using the Text</b>	<b>ii</b>
To the Instructor	xiii
To the Student	xv

---

## **1 Basic Factors in Business**

---

1	Introduction	1
2	Reading: The Nature of Business	3
3	Vocabulary Building Introduction	5
	<i>Exercise A: vocabulary in context</i>	
	<i>Exercise B: matching</i>	
	<i>Exercise C: completion</i>	
4	Listening and Note-Taking Skills	8
	<i>Exercise D: noting details</i>	
	<i>Exercise E: outlining</i>	
5	Reading Comprehension	10
	<i>Exercise F: comprehension questions</i>	
	<i>Exercise G: anticipating information</i>	
6	Vocabulary Review: Rephrasing	11
	<i>Exercise H: rephrasing expressions</i>	
7	Writing	12
	<i>Exercise I: writing a paragraph</i>	
8	Debate	12
9	Glossary	12

## 2 Legal Forms of Organization

17

- 
- 1 Introduction 17
  - 2 Reading: How a Business is Organized 19
  - 3 Vocabulary Building Introduction 22
    - Exercise A: word analysis*
    - Exercise B: vocabulary fill-ins*
    - Exercise C: vocabulary in context*
    - Exercise D: matching*
    - Exercise E: multiple choice*
  - 4 Listening and Note-Taking Skills 26
    - Exercise F: outlining*
    - Exercise G: organizing information into categories*
    - Exercise H: analyzing a paragraph*
    - Exercise I: outlining by noticing parallelism*
  - 5 Reading Comprehension 27
    - Exercise J: comprehension questions*
  - 6 Vocabulary Review: Rephrasing 27
    - Exercise K: rephrasing words*
  - 7 Writing 28
    - Exercise L: writing and organizing a paragraph*
  - 8 Debate 28
  - 9 Glossary 28

## 3 Production

33

- 
- 1 Introduction 33
  - 2 Reading: The Two Basic Methods of Production 35
  - 3 Vocabulary Building Introduction 37
    - Exercise A: parts of speech*
    - Exercise B: vocabulary in context*
  - 4 Listening and Note-Taking Skills 40
    - Exercise C: topic sentences*
    - Exercise D: outlining*
  - 5 Reading Comprehension 40
    - Exercise E: organizing information into categories*
    - Exercise F: multiple choice*
  - 6 Writing 41
    - Exercise G: writing a paragraph of contrast*

- 7 Vocabulary Review: Rephrasing 41  
*Exercise H: rephrasing words*
- 8 Debate 42
- 9 Glossary 42

## 4 Factory Layout

47

- 
- 1 Introduction 47
  - 2 Reading: The Two Basic Types of Factory Layout 49
  - 3 Vocabulary Building Introduction 52  
*Exercise A: vocabulary in context*  
*Exercise B: matching*  
*Exercise C: completion*
  - 4 Listening and Note-Taking Skills 56  
*Exercise D: outlining*
  - 5 Reading Comprehension 56  
*Exercise E: comprehension questions*  
*Exercise F: multiple choice*  
*Exercise G: main idea and details*  
*Exercise H: topic and development*  
*Exercise I: outlining*
  - 6 Writing 58  
*Exercise J: writing a paragraph*  
*Exercise K: writing an organized composition*
  - 7 Vocabulary Review 59  
*Exercise L: rephrasing words and expressions*
  - 8 Debate 60
  - 9 Glossary 60

## 5 Personnel

65

- 
- 1 Introduction 65
  - 2 Reading: The Importance and Role of the Personnel Department 67
  - 3 Vocabulary Building Introduction 76  
*Exercise A: vocabulary in context*  
*Exercise B: matching*  
*Exercise C: parts of speech*
  - 4 Listening and Note-Taking Skills 78  
*Exercise D: outlining*  
*Exercise E: listing specific information from a narrative*

- 5 Reading Comprehension 79  
*Exercise F: completion*  
*Exercise G: comprehension questions*
- 6 Writing 80  
*Exercise H: writing general and specific paragraphs*
- 7 Vocabulary Review: Rephrasing 80  
*Exercise I: rephrasing words*
- 8 Job Interview 81
- 9 Glossary 82

## 6 Marketing

85

- 
- 1 Introduction 85
  - 2 Reading: The Changing Concept of Marketing 87
  - 3 Vocabulary Building Introduction 89  
*Exercise A: rephrasing ideas*  
*Exercise B: matching*
  - 4 Listening and Note-Taking Skills 90  
*Exercise C: form and content clues*  
*Exercise D: comprehension questions*  
*Exercise E: outlining*  
*Exercise F: analytic questions*
  - 5 Reading Comprehension 92  
*Exercise G: multiple choice*
  - 6 Writing 94  
*Exercise H: writing a paragraph*
  - 7 Vocabulary Review: Rephrasing 94  
*Exercise I: rephrasing words and expressions*
  - 8 Debate 95
  - 9 Glossary 95

## 7 Distribution

99

- 
- 1 Introduction 99
  - 2 Reading: Methods and Routes of Distribution 101
  - 3 Vocabulary Building Introduction 104  
*Exercise A: rephrasing ideas*  
*Exercise B: matching*  
*Exercise C: completion*

- 4 Listening and Note-Taking Skills 107  
*Exercise D: vocabulary in context*  
*Exercise E: comprehension questions*  
*Exercise F: outlining*
- 5 Reading Comprehension 108  
*Exercise G: comprehension questions*
- 6 Writing 110  
*Exercise H: writing a paragraph*
- 7 Vocabulary Review: Rephrasing 110  
*Exercise I: rephrasing words and expressions*
- 8 Debate 111
- 9 Glossary 111

## 8 Promotion

117

- 
- 1 Introduction 117
  - 2 Reading: The Role and Activities of Promotion 119
  - 3 Vocabulary Building Introduction 123  
*Exercise A: vocabulary in context*  
*Exercise B: matching*  
*Exercise C: multiple choice*
  - 4 Listening and Note-Taking Skills 128  
*Exercise D: vocabulary in context*  
*Exercise E: comprehension questions*  
*Exercise F: outlining*
  - 5 Reading Comprehension 129  
*Exercise G: comprehension questions*
  - 6 Writing 130  
*Exercise H: writing a planned paragraph*
  - 7 Vocabulary Review: Rephrasing 130  
*Exercise I: rephrasing expressions*
  - 8 Debate 132
  - 9 Glossary 132

## 9 Financial Statements

137

- 
- 1 Introduction 137
  - 2 Reading: The Types and Purposes of Financial Records 139

3	Vocabulary Building Introduction	144
	<i>Exercise A: vocabulary in context</i>	
	<i>Exercise B: matching</i>	
	<i>Exercise C: multiple choice</i>	
4	Listening and Note-Taking Skills	148
	<i>Exercise D: comprehension questions</i>	
	<i>Exercise E: outlining</i>	
	<i>Exercise F: completing an outline</i>	
5	Reading Comprehension	150
	<i>Exercise G: comprehension questions</i>	
6	Writing	151
	<i>Exercise H: writing a paragraph</i>	
7	Vocabulary Review: Rephrasing	151
	<i>Exercise I: rephrasing words and expressions</i>	
8	Debate	152
9	Glossary	153

## 10 International Business

159

---

1	Introduction	159
2	Reading: Basic Factors and Ideas in International Business	161
3	Vocabulary Building Introduction	164
	<i>Exercise A: vocabulary in context</i>	
	<i>Exercise B: matching</i>	
	<i>Exercise C: rephrasing ideas</i>	
4	Listening and Note-Taking Skills	169
	<i>Exercise D: comprehension questions</i>	
	<i>Exercise E: completing an outline</i>	
5	Reading Comprehension	170
	<i>Exercise F: comprehension questions</i>	
6	Writing	171
	<i>Exercise G: writing a business scenario</i>	
7	Vocabulary Review: Rephrasing	172
	<i>Exercise H: rephrasing words and expressions</i>	
8	Debate	173
9	Glossary	175



## 11 Computers

177

- 
- 1 Introduction 177
  - 2 Reading: Computers in Business 179
  - 3 Vocabulary Building Introduction 182
    - Exercise A: vocabulary in context*
    - Exercise B: matching*
    - Exercise C: matching*
    - Exercise D: multiple choice*
  - 4 Listening and Note-Taking Skills 187
    - Exercise E: comprehension questions*
    - Exercise F: outlining*
  - 5 Reading Comprehension 187
    - Exercise G: working with generalizations and examples*
  - 6 Writing 188
    - Exercise H: explaining through analogy*
  - 7 Vocabulary Review: Rephrasing 189
    - Exercise I: rephrasing words and expressions*
  - 8 Debate 189
  - 9 Glossary 190

**Answers****195****Skills Index****222**

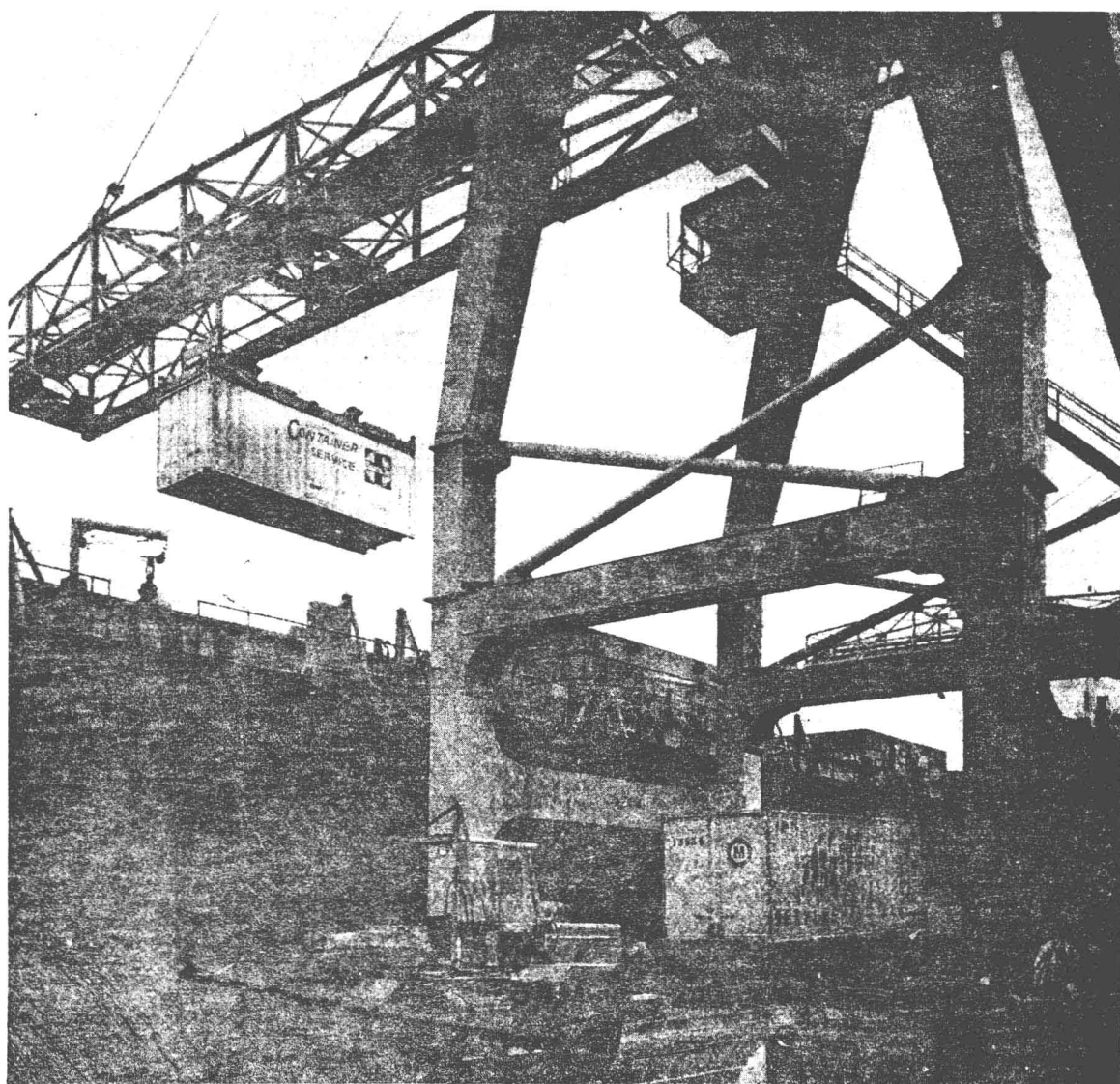
## **Introduction to Lesson One: Basic Factors in Business**

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Lesson One discusses the basic factors necessary for any business undertaking. Definitions of business factors are presented by means of examples and explanations. Texts often begin with definitions of the topic and an explanation of why it is worthy of study. Here, the concepts of land, labor, capital, and entrepreneurship are defined and explained as they relate to the field of business.

The text defines the nature of business activity as a necessary social institution and gives an explanation of the role of land, labor, and capital in business. It is the combination of these factors, or entrepreneurship, that enables business to operate. Each factor is discussed by means of examples and operations. The reader should keep the overall organization of the written text in mind. By realizing that each paragraph deals with a particular topic, the reader develops an analytical approach to reading. This approach increases comprehension.

Linguistic concepts important for this lesson are: sentence adverbs, connectors/transition elements, predicate nominatives, and synonyms.



Machines perform the hard physical labor which in earlier times required several workers.