

# English for Business

TEACHER'S EDITION



The **Bellcrest** Series

THE BELLCREST SERIES

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## TEACHER'S NOTES

- The Series** *English for Business* is a corpus of teaching material related to the BBC and British Council series of films known as *The Bellcrest Story*. The course aims to train the skills of communication in English speaking, writing, listening and reading within a business context. It does not set out to be a handbook of commercial English, but concentrates on the practical application of English within common business and social contexts.
- The course is a coherent series of lessons primarily designed for the teacher and a group of pupils to follow up and exploit *The Bellcrest Story*. It is therefore best used in conjunction with the film, although it can be used independently of it by the substitution of the taped version of the soundtrack of the film.
- Level** The course is designed to cater for the requirements of people working in the more general areas of commerce, e.g. the Marketing, Economics, Personnel, Supply, Production and Administrative departments of industry. It does not cater for the specialist requirements of technicians or research staff, although they will find much that is of value in the course for their day to day work. It is assumed that pupils have already covered most of the fundamental grammar of English, either at school or at evening classes, but that there remain areas of weakness in the pupil's ability to handle English efficiently in the practical situations in which he finds himself during the course of his everyday work.
- Size of Classes** The course is best suited to groups of between six and twelve pupils working under the guidance of a teacher.
- The Teaching Situation** In order that the pupil may get the maximum benefit from the course, the following conditions within the teaching situation should be assured. Pupils should work in a group, and there should be between six and ten pupils in a group, preferably not more than twelve, for parts of the course (the Role Simulation).
- It is assumed that pupils will be able to attend at least one, preferably two, double periods between each screening of the film. When the course is not used in conjunction with the film, it is assumed that pupils will be able to attend at least one double period per week. It is recognized that other time-tabling arrangements may be made to suit local requirements. Provision is made in the course for homework, and it is highly advisable that the pupils should be encouraged to do this.
- The course is flexible to the extent that it can be used by groups attending either one or two sessions between each screening. Those parts of the course marked as being optional are designed primarily for those groups attending two sessions.
- The course can also be used with groups of pupils of varying levels of attainment, in that provision is made for more advanced pupils in the course material, particularly in the language laboratory work.

**The Form of the Course** On completion of the course the pupil will have increased his general business vocabulary considerably. His ability to listen to and understand native speakers conversing will have noticeably improved, as will his ability to handle English in the more common business situations. His ability to both read and write business English will also have improved.

The course consists of

**1 The film of *The Bellcrest Story*, or a tape of the soundtrack of the film.**

The film consists of thirteen episodes of approximately twelve minutes each, and is a business adventure story for television. Each episode tells a chapter in the story of Bellcrest Ltd., a fictitious company near Leicester, in England, that manufactures electronic components. The 'story' is that of the development and financing of a new product, the SC1, an AC speed control device for electric vehicles. The film has a 'hero', the Marketing Manager, who is responsible for the project. In the course of his fight for the SC1 he meets a great many difficulties, including bitter competition from a rival company, dissension inside Bellcrest itself, the uncertainty of a Merchant Bank's advancing the vital loan to finance the project and a fire that destroys a large part of the factory. The story moves to a climax in the thirteenth episode, when the Bank's decision is made and the fate of the SC1 is decided.

**2 The Teaching Material**

The main course consists of a Teacher's book, a Tape Companion containing scripts of the recorded drills and passages for Aural Comprehension, and a Pupil's Book. There is a set of thirteen tapes that accompanies the course, each tape accompanying one unit. The pages lettered a, b, c and a key to the Written Exercises appear only in the Teachers' Book.

The films do not contain any overt teaching sequences. The purpose of the film is to expose the pupil to areas of language in readily comprehensible and common business situations, such as meetings, visiting customers both at home and abroad, production, supply and delivery problems, and entertaining. The situations portrayed in the films, and the difficulties faced by the characters, are then exploited by the teacher in the classroom according to the needs of his group.

The main course consists of thirteen units. Each unit consists of

- 1 A summary of the episode last screened or listened to
- 2 Exercises
- 3 Structural Drills
- 4 Dialogue
- 5 Gambit Drills (optional)
- 6 Role Simulation (optional)
- 7 A passage for Aural Comprehension (optional)

The parts of the course marked 'optional' are intended for those groups who have two double periods between each screening of the film. They are 'optional'

in the sense that a teacher will probably not be able to handle them as well as parts 1–4 in one double period alone. With certain classes the teacher may of course prefer to substitute one of the ‘optional’ sections for a section earlier in the unit.

### 3 The Grammatical Content

The grammatical work in the course should be regarded as remedial. The course does not set out to provide a complete ‘grammar syllabus’, but concentrates on those grammatical items that learners of English find difficult to master and most frequently misuse.

The items dealt with in the course are

- Verb Tenses: Formation of the Present Simple  
Present Simple contrasted with Present Continuous  
Formation of the Past Simple  
Past Simple contrasted with Past Continuous  
Past Simple contrasted with Present Perfect  
The Present Perfect  
The use of the Future Tenses  
Reported Speech  
Indirect Questions  
Formation of the Passive  
Impersonals and Obliques  
The Gerund as a Noun  
Gerund v. Infinitive  
Conditional Sentences  
The Modal Verbs  
Verbs followed by an Infinitive  
Tenses and Time references
- General: Comparison of Adjectives  
Adjective v. Adverb  
Position of Adverbs  
Comparative with ‘than’  
Adjective plus Infinitive  
‘There is’ v. ‘It is’  
‘Used to’/‘be used to’  
‘Much’/‘many’/‘a lot of’  
Connectives

### 4 The Summary

The purpose of the summary is to re-present the language used in the film for the teacher to deal with thoroughly with his class. The teacher will find Comprehension Questions in the Unit Summary of each episode designed to elicit use of the key words and structures dealt with in the unit as a whole. The teacher will readily find further areas of useful language in each summary not immediately covered by the Comprehension Questions, and is encouraged to expand these to suit the needs of his group.

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it be better if . . .' that are so frequently used by English people to signal manoeuvres in discussions and negotiations and are therefore important for the learner, but that cannot be adequately treated as 'structural' items.

Provision is made in the course for the expressions in the dialogues to be actively used by the pupil in situations which demand their use — the Role Simulation. The Dialogues can therefore be viewed together with the Gambit Drills as a preliminary to the Role Simulation.

## **7 The Gambit Drills**

These are more complex and demanding on the student than the structural drills, and it is suggested that the teacher should consider carefully whether all or only some of his class are able to handle them satisfactorily.

These drills are designed for the pupils to practice intensively the ways in which an Englishman expresses himself when he wants to signal a 'manoeuvre' or 'gambit' during the course of negotiations or a meeting, or a discussion. The drills are contextualized, in that they place the pupil within a specific situation, such as a meeting, where the use of the gambit being drilled is appropriate.

The teacher is strongly recommended to encourage his class to use these gambits in the Role Simulation, thereby giving pupils the opportunity of employing them in the natural context of free conversation and discussion.

## **8 Passages for Aural Comprehension**

These passages are designed to improve the pupil's ability to listen to and understand native speakers conversing in a natural way. The teacher will find a passage for Aural Comprehension on each tape. This consists of a conversation or discussion on a business topic between two or more native speakers. The teacher will find a transcript of each passage in the Tape Companion, where he will also find the Comprehension Questions based on the passage reproduced.

## **9 The Role Simulation**

Each unit contains a 'Role Simulation', consisting of a Statement of Problem, Description of Roles and a Written Follow-up. The material in this part of the course is designed to activate and improve the pupil's ability to handle English within common, clearly-defined business situations.

This is done by adopting the role simulation approach widely used on Management Training Courses, where a specific business problem is put before a group, to which a solution must be found based on lifelike discussions/negotiations leading to collective decisions. Each member of the group is allotted a specific role, e.g. Marketing Manager, in the light of which he must actively participate in the discussions/negotiations and contribute towards collective decisions.

The teacher is urged to do the Role Simulation, where time-tabling permits, as this part of the course provides a framework within which the pupil can generalize, and re-apply the structures, vocabulary and gambits practised in the unit as a whole. For this reason it is best handled as the last activity in each unit.



## 10 Homework

Each unit contains two items for homework, an exercise (Exercise E in each unit) and a written follow-up to the Role Simulation.

### The Materials and Their Use

#### 1 Diagram of Contents

| Materials Activity              | Pupil's Book  | Tape  | Teacher's Book  | Tape Companion                                |
|---------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| Presentation                    | Film/TV series  | on sound-track                                      | tapes   |   |
| Review of the film              | Summary text  |   | Summary text  |   |
| Comprehension                   |   |   | Comprehension questions                               |   |
| Oral Activation                 |   |   |   |   |
| Structural exercises and drills | Exercises<br>Drill notes                              | Drills  | Exercises and key<br>Drill notes                      | Drillscript                                   |
| Dialogue practice               | Dialogue text   | Recording of dialogue with exploitation             |   | Complete script                               |
| Gambit drills                   | Drill Notes   | Drills  | Drill notes   | Drillscript                                   |
| Aural comprehension             | Written questions                                     | Recording (3—5 mins) of a discussion/interview etc. | Written questions                                     | Complete script<br>written questions and keys |
| Role Simulation                 | Statement of problem                                  |   | Statement of problem<br>Description of Roles          |   |
| Homework                        | Exercises E and written follow-ups to Role Simulation |   | Exercises E and written follow-ups to Role Simulation |   |

#### 2 Presentation of Materials

The suggested order in which the material is best presented is:

- a The Film, or the tape of the soundtrack
- b The Summary with Comprehension Questions

- c The Grammatical Content of the unit, both in the classroom and in the language laboratory.
- d The Dialogues and Gambit Drills
- e The Aural Comprehension
- f The Role Simulation

It is left to the teacher to calculate the amount of time he will need to spend on each part of the unit according to the needs of his individual group. It is recognized that adjustments to the above order of presentation of the material may well be necessary to suit local conditions. Such adjustments are left to the discretion of the teacher.

### 3 The Summary

The summary is best handled immediately after the screening of the film. Pupils may, if desired, be requested to prepare the summary before the screening of the film. With a weak class this will aid comprehension of the film, though it will of course reduce the impact of the story line in the film.

### 4 The Exercises and Structural Drills

It is suggested that the lexical exercises are best dealt with orally immediately after handling the summary, as many of them deal with areas of related words which may pose difficulties for the pupils in distinction of meaning and usage. They can also be written for homework as reinforcement. There is also an 'exercise' for homework, usually in the form of a letter. Pupils should be strongly encouraged to do the homework, as practice will increase their ability to write English within a business context.

The exercises can then be done either orally in class as supporting material for the teacher's introduction, or as homework for revision purposes. It is recommended that structural drills should be seen as practice material for the establishment of the structure within the pupil's working knowledge of English, and they should therefore be used as a reinforcement of the teacher's work in the classroom. A possible approach to each grammatical item would be:

- First Step: Oral introduction by the teacher, leading from selected sentences in the summary.
- Second Step: The relevant exercise done orally in the class (or as homework).
- Third Step: Intensive oral practice in the language laboratory (using the appropriate structural drill).
- Fourth Step: Generalization, either worked out by the teacher or done through the medium of the Role Simulation.

It is recognized that this scheme may not fit all timetabling arrangements, and it is left to the teacher to adapt the practices outlined above to suit his own requirements.

### 5 The Dialogue and Gambit Drills

These are best handled after the structural drills. Pupils should be encouraged to use the expressions in the Role Simulation.

### 6 The Passages for Aural Comprehension

These passages are best dealt with in the language laboratory, where the pupil can stop his tape to answer the questions in his own time, although they can also

be handled with a tape recorder in the classroom.

## **7 The Role Simulation**

Where no specific recommendations are made in the Additional Notes to a unit, the Role Simulation is best handled as follows:

- a Study of the Statement of Problem. It is vitally important that the pupils fully understand the problem they have to solve. If desired, pupils can be asked to look through the text before a lesson in order to save classroom time.
- b On completion of the Statement of Problem, allot a role to each pupil in the group. When allotting roles, it is advisable to bear in mind the pupil's actual work and use of English in real life.
- c Pupils should now be allowed time to prepare their roles. Where time-tabling permits, this should be done as homework; where not, the teacher should allow 15–25 minutes of classroom time for this purpose.

The teacher will notice that the Descriptions of Roles occur only in his book, and not in the pupil's book. This is because there is frequently information in individual roles of a confidential nature, and for all members of the group to have access to this detracts from the effectiveness, not to mention the enjoyment, of the confrontation.

### **d Faction Meetings**

Pupils are usually required to prepare their roles individually. There are occasions in this course, however, when a 'Faction Meeting' is necessary. Where it is necessary, the teacher will find it stated in the Additional Notes. A 'Faction Meeting' is essential when the members of the Group divide into two or more teams representing two or more different companies, and therefore working together. The purpose of the Faction Meeting is to give the representatives of the two opposing sides in the confrontation a chance to meet apart from each other and to work out a common approach to the problem to be solved and to decide on the tactics they will adopt to get what they want out of the opposition. Preparation of individual roles is then done after the Faction Meeting and in the light of the decisions reached at it. If possible the two or more factions should hold their meetings in different rooms.

### **e The Confrontation**

The problem should now be fully discussed and acted out. The whole discussion should be recorded so that in the follow-up both pupils and teacher may refer back to selected segments of the discussion to illustrate and discuss salient language points.

### **f The Role of the Teacher**

The role of the teacher changes from the moment the pupils embark on the 'Faction Meetings' (where held) or Confrontation. Experience has shown that it is highly inadvisable for the teacher to interrupt, whether to correct a mistake or for any other reason, during the course of a discussion as it detracts from its tempo and atmosphere. During discussions the teacher therefore acts as an observer.

Mistakes can be followed up by the teacher in two ways. He can either equip himself with a pad of paper and note mistakes as they crop up, or he

can record the discussions. Recording has shown itself to be the more effective way as far as the pupils are concerned. Although it is recognized that to listen to and select passages from such recordings takes up a lot of the teacher's time, experience has shown that to be able to recall selected mistakes and have them corrected in context is of great benefit to pupils.

**g Teacher's Follow-up**

Regardless of how the teacher records mistakes made during the course of discussions, the teacher should follow these up as soon after the discussion as possible. Action should be taken according to the nature of the mistakes made.

**h Pupil's Follow-up**

There is a task for homework directly related to the Role Simulation that the pupils should be strongly encouraged to do.

**i Additional Roles**

The number of roles given for each unit is ten. Where a teacher has less than ten pupils in his group, pupils may be asked to take two related roles, e.g. Managing Director and Assistant to the Managing Director. Where there are more than ten pupils in a group, the teacher should add the requisite number of roles himself. This can be done quite easily by, for example, dividing one role into two parts, by giving one or two of the leading characters an assistant or by inventing a completely new role.

# THE STRUCTURE OF BELLCREST LIMITED

**CHAIRMAN & MANAGING DIRECTOR** ————— **PERSONNEL MANAGER**  
Maurice Downes

**MARKETING MANAGER**  
Paul Malone

**PRODUCTION MANAGER**  
Tom Driver

**CONTROLLER & COMPANY SECRETARY**  
Charles Spence

**SITE ENGINEERING & SERVICES**

**BUYING**

**TRANSPORT**

**FACTORY**

**ACCOUNTS**

**INVOICING**

**DATA PROCESSING**

**SECRETARIAL DUTIES**

**SALES MANAGER**  
Dennis Evans

**STATISTICS & MARKET RESEARCH**

**PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT**  
Bob Orpenshaw

**DISTRIBUTION**

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George Hanson, a journalist writing a series of articles on successful companies, visited Bellcrest to make a case study of the firm. Bellcrest Limited is a medium sized company with its factory and offices near Leicester in the English Midlands. It manufactures electronic components for computers and communications and control systems.

Hanson learned that five years ago Bellcrest was in financial difficulties, because it had been concentrating on the research and development of new products rather than on marketing them. Ashburnham's, the merchant bank, made a loan of £300,000, at a low rate of interest, and bought a percentage of the shares. They put Edward Needham, Sir Frederick Ashburnham's assistant, on the Board of Directors and appointed Maurice Downes as Chairman and Managing Director.

As Downes and the Marketing Manager, Donald Williams, disagreed on policy over discontinuing certain products; Williams was forced to resign and Downes appointed Paul Malone in his place. Downes reduced the range of products and concentrated on making better use of resources and on more efficient production

As a result of his policy, annual sales have increased rapidly during the last five years, and the sales output per employee has almost doubled; Bellcrest is now a successful profit-making concern. Hanson also learned that Malone is looking out for opportunities to expand and diversify while Downes is very cautious about changing his policy.





At a meeting at the Bank, Sir Frederick Ashburnham expressed his satisfaction at Bellcrest's recovery, indicated by the rise in share prices and the increase in the final dividend. He told Downes that, in Edward Needham's view, Bellcrest no longer needed the loan, and the Bank might decide to withdraw it in order to reinvest the capital with an expanding competitor with development plans.

Downes was taken aback at this news and had to agree to let the Bank have detailed proposals of Bellcrest's development plans within the next two months in the hope of persuading the Bank to allow Bellcrest to keep the loan.

Downes' first course of action after this unexpected turn of events was to call at Malone's home the same evening. He instructed Malone to look at all Bellcrest's development projects and to report back to him with his recommendations.



## EXERCISES

### Exercise A Complete the following sentences:

- 1 An \_\_\_\_\_ is a man who puts his money into a business. If he i.  
his money in a company, he usually buys \_\_\_\_\_ in that company and is  
known as a \_\_\_\_\_. Instead of a fixed r. \_\_\_\_\_ of i. \_\_\_\_\_ he usually  
receives a d. \_\_\_\_\_ on his capital.
- 2 Unless a company holds a monopoly, it has to \_\_\_\_\_ with rival firms.  
The existence of \_\_\_\_\_ is a factor no company can ignore; indeed, many  
companies keep a constant eye on the activities of their \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 Before a company decides to introduce a new product it must ensure that there  
is a \_\_\_\_\_ for it. To find out whether it can \_\_\_\_\_ the product,  
a company will often conduct a m. \_\_\_\_\_ s. \_\_\_\_\_. Most companies  
have a M. \_\_\_\_\_ M. \_\_\_\_\_ who is in charge of sales promotion.

### Exercise B Make sentences from these notes:

*Examples:*

*Bellcrest/make/electronic components?*

*Does Bellcrest make electronic components?*

*Malone/want/diversify/product range.*

*Malone wants to diversify the product range.*

- 1 Orpenshaw/work/research and development department.
- 2 Downes/carry/heavy responsibility.
- 3 Evans/not/Board of Directors.
- 4 Bellcrest/manufacture/electronic components?
- 5 Ashburnham/not/want/continue/loan/Bellcrest.
- 6 When/you/want/my report?
- 7 Downes/not/understand/Needham/arguments.
- 8 He/delay/every decision/until/too late.
- 9 You/have/plans/development?
- 10 We/not/know/why our products/not/sell.

### Exercise C Complete these sentences:

- 1 Five years ago Smith & Co. only (manufacture) \_\_\_\_\_ bicycles.
- 2 They always (sell) \_\_\_\_\_ most of their products on the home market  
but (export) \_\_\_\_\_ some of them to Africa.
- 3 In 1968 foreign competition (increase) \_\_\_\_\_ and sales (drop)  
sharply.
- 4 The Board of Directors (feel) \_\_\_\_\_ that the company (must)  
diversify.
- 5 They (plan) \_\_\_\_\_ to get a loan from the Bank and as the company (enjoy)  
a high reputation, they (have) \_\_\_\_\_ no difficulty in  
getting one.