

Business English in a Global Context

Coursebook

# Best Practice

Intermediate

Bill Mascull and Jeremy Comfort

## 情境国际商务英语 (中高级)

学生用书



人民邮电出版社  
POSTS & TELECOM PRESS

# Best Practice

## 最佳国际商务英语

李 敏 著



机械工业出版社

## 图书在版编目 (CIP) 数据

情境国际商务英语 (中高级): 学生用书 / (英) 马斯卡尔 (Mascull, B.), 康福特 (Comfort, J.) 著;

- 北京: 人民邮电出版社, 2007.10

ISBN 978-7-115-16885-6

I. 情... II. ①马...②康... III. 商务 - 英语 - 高等学校 - 教材 IV. H 31

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字 (2007) 第 147289 号

*Best Practice Intermediate: Coursebook by Bill Mascull and Jeremy Comfort*

ISBN 978-1-4130-2185-1

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## 情境国际商务英语 (中高级): 学生用书

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策 划 刘 力 陆 瑜  
责任编辑 徐向娟

◆ 人民邮电出版社出版发行 北京市崇文区夕照寺街 14 号 A 座  
邮编 100061 电子函件 315@ptpress.com.cn  
网址 <http://www.ptpress.com.cn>  
电话 (编辑部) 010-84937150 (市场部) 010-84937152  
北京中科印刷有限公司印刷  
新华书店经销

◆ 开本: 889 × 1194 1/16  
印张: 11.25  
字数: 211 千字 2007 年 10 月第 1 版 2007 年 10 月第 1 次印刷  
ISBN 978-7-115-16885-6/F

定价: 49.00 元

本书如有印装质量问题, 请与本社联系 电话: (010) 84937153



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**BUSINESS ENGLISH IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT**

**Coursebook**

**Bill Mascull and Jeremy Comfort**

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人民邮电出版社

北京



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# 1 Happiness at work

The King of Bhutan says that the overall happiness of his people is more important than how rich they are.

## Start-up

- A** City & Guilds, an educational charity in the UK, gives these tips about being happy at work. Discuss them and add three more tips.

- Start the day with a chat or gossip.
- Remember that every problem can be solved.
- Enrich your work environment with photos and flowers.
- Be positive.
- Have a laugh.

## Listening and speaking



1.1

- A** Listen to the extracts and complete the table.

Job	Speciality	What they like about the job
1 Lawyer	property law	meeting different clients
2 Fitness instructor		
3 Accountant		
4 Civil servant		

- B** Listen again. Which speaker uses these adjectives?

varied 3    interesting \_\_\_\_    secure \_\_\_\_    well-paid \_\_\_\_  
 stressed \_\_\_\_    stimulating \_\_\_\_    rewarding \_\_\_\_    satisfying \_\_\_\_

- C** With a partner, talk about what you like about your job or a job you would like to have.

## Speaking

- A** Look at the City & Guilds index of the happiest workers. Why do you think hairdressers are at the top and civil servants near the bottom?

Position	Profession	%
1	Hairdressers	40
2	Clergy	24
3	_____	23
4	Beauticians	22
5	Plumbers	20
6	_____	20
7	Builders	20
8	Electricians	18
9	Florists	18
10	_____	18
11	Care assistants	18
12	Health care professionals	17
13	Media	16
14	Chartered engineers	15
15	Pharmacists	15

Position	Profession	%
16	Scientists/R&D scientists	15
17	Butchers	14
18	_____	13
19	Interior designers	9
20	Travel agents	9
21	Teachers	8
22	Bankers	8
23	_____	7
24	IT specialists	5
25	Lawyers	5
26	Secretaries/PAs	5
27	_____	4
28	Civil servants	3
29	Architects	2

- B** Guess where these jobs go in the index, and say why. Then turn to page 128 to check your answers.

mechanics    estate agents    fitness instructors    DJs    chefs / cooks    accountants

- C** Can you see any patterns in the happiness index? For example, do the top five jobs and bottom five jobs have anything in common?



## Grammar

## Comparisons

Lawyers work **longer** hours **than** estate agents.

Hairdressers are **the happiest** workers.

## A Complete the table.

Type of adjective	Base form	Rule	Comparative	Superlative
One syllable	<i>long</i>	Add -er / est	<i>longer</i>	
Two syllables ending -y	<i>happy</i>	Change -y to -ier / iest		
Two or more syllables	<i>rewarding</i>	Put more / the most before the adjective		
Ending in -ed*	<i>stressed</i>	Add more / the most		
Irregular	<i>good</i> <i>bad</i>	~ ~		

\*Adjectives ending in -ed refer to the people concerned, not to the work.

## B Complete the sentences using the words in the box. Use the comparative or superlative form.

noisy long fascinating stressed bad

- Plumbers work longer hours than DJs.
- Lawyers are \_\_\_\_\_ than fitness instructors.
- I worked in IT for three years but I hated it. It was \_\_\_\_\_ job I've ever had.
- Builders have \_\_\_\_\_ working conditions than bankers.
- I'm in R&D. I love developing new products. It's \_\_\_\_\_ work in the company.

## C Match the underlined phrases with their meanings (a-e).

- |  |                |
|--|----------------|
| 1 Hairdressers are <u>much</u> happier than teachers.            | a equal to     |
| 2 Bankers are <u>as</u> happy <u>as</u> teachers.                | b a little     |
| 3 DJs are <u>nearly</u> as happy as butchers.                    | c almost       |
| 4 Estate agents are <u>slightly</u> happier than civil servants. | d not equal to |
| 5 Pharmacists are <u>not as</u> happy <u>as</u> beauticians.     | e a lot more   |

## D Using the happiness index, compare the jobs below. Use the patterns you practised in C.

- Beauticians / chefs *Beauticians are nearly as happy as chefs.*
- Scientists / pharmacists
- Teachers / mechanics
- IT specialists / estate agents
- Hairdressers / civil servants

## E Now give possible reasons for some of the differences.

*Hairdressers are the happiest workers, perhaps because ...*

*A teacher's job is the most rewarding, but there are downsides, such as ...*

## F With a partner, compare your own job, or a job you know, with another job.



## Communication

## Talking about yourself

This section focuses on you as an individual. It helps you to develop your skills in introducing and talking about yourself.



1.2

- A** Listen to six people introducing themselves. What do they talk about? Match each speaker to one of the topics below.

a job    b origins    c family    d interests

- B** Work in pairs. Ask and answer questions to find out more about your partner. Use the Key language to help you.

## Key language

	Question	Answer
Name	What's your name (first name / surname)?	My name's ... People call me / Everybody calls me ... (nickname / short name)
Job	What do you do? What's your job? What do you do for a living? Who do you work for? Where are you based? What business are you in?	I'm an engineer. I'm a teacher. I work in sales. I work for Digicom. I'm based in New York. I'm in IT / retail.
Origins	Where do you come from? Where were you born?	I come from Wisconsin / I'm from Ireland. I was born in Milwaukee. I was brought up in ...
Family	Are you married?  Have you got any children?	I'm single / married / divorced / separated / widowed. No, but I live with my partner. Yes, I have four children.
Hobbies / Interests	What do you do outside work?	I play a lot of sport. I run a bit. I'm into vintage cars. My passion is ...



1.3

- C** In interviews, appraisals, and team-building sessions we often have to talk about ourselves. Listen to three people talk about their strengths and weaknesses. Match each speaker to one of the skills below.

a people skills    b organisational skills    c communication skills

- D** Work in small groups. Find out about each other's strengths and weaknesses. Use the Key language to help you.

## Key language

	Strengths	Weaknesses
People skills	I usually get on well with my colleagues. I'm a team player.	I'm not so good at ... I'm rather bad at ... One of my weak points is ... I find it difficult to ...
Organisational skills	I'm well organised. I'm good at sorting things out. People tell me that I'm good at ...	
Communication skills	I'm a good listener. I think I communicate quite well.	

▶ Review and development page 25

▶ Communication page 150



## Understanding your own culture

When working with people from different cultures, it is helpful to understand how they see your culture and what challenges they face when working with your culture. In the Communication section, we focused on you as an individual. In this section, we focus on the group, or culture, that you belong to.

Culture is like an iceberg. There are some aspects of culture which we can see easily above the surface, but there are many more below the surface.

- A** Brainstorm what culture means to you and put your ideas on the iceberg.



- B** Read what Sven Mansson, a Swedish manager, says about Sweden. He talks about five aspects of culture. Which of the following does he talk about?

language	politics	food	music	geography
history	climate	industry	work	festivals

Sweden is a big country – nearly 2,000 kilometres from north to south – and there are only nine million people in Sweden, so we have lots of space. Nobody needs to live close to each other. In winter, it's cold, especially in the north, where there is very little daylight. This makes us all worship the sun but it also seems to make us quite private people. We have learnt to be independent.

On the other hand, we have a long tradition of social democracy, and we believe in equality. This means that the differences between people in terms of their living

standards are not very big. Of course, some people are richer than others, but our tax and social security system help to minimise the differences. Most people believe that the state should support all of us.

At the moment, we don't have very high unemployment. I would say that people in Sweden work hard, but we also value our free time. We like to leave work early in the summer and enjoy life outdoors. We have special days when we celebrate the light, like Midsummer and Santa Lucia.



- C** Write some notes about your country. Choose topics from B and add your own ideas.
- D** Make comparisons between your country and another country you know or have visited. You could also compare regions within your country.

### Checklist

- |  |  |   |                                     |
|--|--|---|-------------------------------------|
| ✓ happiness at work:<br><i>satisfying, secure,<br/>stimulating ...</i> | ✓ making comparisons:<br><i>more stressed than,<br/>the most rewarding<br/>...</i> | ✓ talking about yourself:<br><i>job, interests,<br/>strengths, weaknesses<br/>...</i> | ✓ understanding your<br>own culture |
|--|--|---|-------------------------------------|



# 2 Motivation

Companies spend millions every year trying to improve the motivation of their employees.

## Start-up

### A Discuss these statements. Give reasons for your opinions.

- 1 For the best results, managers should tell employees exactly what to do and how to do it.
- 2 Employees are more productive when they have the freedom to use their own ideas and make decisions.

## Reading and vocabulary

### A Match the nouns to their definitions.

- |                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| 1 commitment     | a when people decide what to do without being told                             |
| 2 satisfaction   | b the ability to think of good ideas   |
| 3 responsibility | c when a manager tells an employee what to do and how to do it                 |
| 4 initiative     | d a good feeling you get when you have done something well                     |
| 5 supervision    | e when a manager tries to persuade an employee to do something                 |
| 6 motivation     | f the opportunity to make decisions  |
| 7 imagination    | g the feeling of belonging to an organisation, causing you to work hard for it |
| 8 encouragement  | h the feeling of wanting or needing to do something                            |

### B Read about two theories proposed by Douglas McGregor in *The Human Side of Enterprise*. Complete the gaps using the words in the box.

satisfaction   commitment   supervision   initiative   responsibility

## THEORY X AND THEORY Y

Theory X says that people are lazy and need constant (1) \_\_\_\_\_. This means that managers have to monitor their employees closely to make sure that they work hard. According to Theory X, people don't want to make their own decisions so managers have to make them. Managers don't discuss decisions with employees – they just tell them what to do.

Theory Y says that people enjoy using their imagination and creativity to solve problems. This often means that they perform better and they get a lot of (2) \_\_\_\_\_ from working in this way. Employees are also given (3) \_\_\_\_\_ for their own projects. They use their own (4) \_\_\_\_\_ and don't have to consult their managers about everything they do. As a result, they feel a sense of (5) \_\_\_\_\_ to the company and work harder. They feel that they are valued and that management appreciates the effort they make. All this contributes to a better sense of motivation among employees.

However, another theory, Theory W (not by McGregor), says that most work throughout human history has been done because people were forced to do it as slaves. (W stands for 'whiplash'.)

### C Form verbs from the nouns in A. Use a dictionary to help you, if necessary.

commitment – to be committed to, to commit to

### D Go back to the answers you gave in the Start-up discussion. Have your ideas changed now that you have read about Theory X and Theory Y?



## Listening and speaking



2.1

### A Listen to four managers and complete the table.

Which theory does each manager seem to prefer – Theory X or Theory Y?

	Organisation	Industry	Theory X or Theory Y?
1	Call centre		
2			
3			
4			



2.2

### B Now listen to four employees. Which organisation in A do they work for?

### C Listen to the employees again. Which speaker uses which expressions?



1 I get a lot of responsibility.

2 We're encouraged to use our initiative.

3 Decisions are imposed from above – there's no consultation.

4 The manager's breathing down my neck all the time.

5 Valued employees make for valued customers.

6 You just follow established procedures.

7 They want to see what you're doing the whole time.

8 I get a lot of satisfaction from my work.

9 We're judged on results.

### D Look at the expressions in C. Which are more typical of Theory X organisations and which are more typical of Theory Y organisations?

### E Work in pairs.

**Student A:** You are an employee who works under a manager who believes in Theory X.

**Student B:** You are an employee who works under a manager who believes in Theory Y.

**Have a conversation about these topics in your respective organisations:**

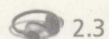
- working hours
- supervision
- breaks
- working from home
- initiative



## Communication

## Finding out about people

Asking questions and responding to answers is the way that we find out about people. In business, we do this in many situations, including socialising and small talk.



2.3

- A** Listen to Michael talking to Susanne, a new employee in the company. As you listen, make notes about what he finds out about Susanne. Use the following headings to help you:

place of birth    education    family    first job

- B** Look at the Key language below. Then listen again and tick the types of questions and the comments that Michel uses.

## Key language

Open questions / comments	Could you tell me something about ...? I'd love to hear about ... I'd be interested to know ...
Closed questions	Do / Did you ...?
Wh- questions	Who, what, when, where, why, how
Probing questions	What / How exactly ...? Could you tell me more about that?
Reflecting questions	So, you mean that ...? If I understand you, you are saying ...? I guess it's ...?
Encouraging comments	That's interesting. Oh really?



- C** Complete this conversation between Susanne and her new colleague, Petra.

*Susanne:* So how long have you worked here?

*Petra:* Nearly two years now.

*Susanne:* And (1) \_\_\_\_\_ you like it?

*Petra:* It's pretty good. The atmosphere is very informal and relaxed.

*Susanne:* So, you (2) \_\_\_\_\_ that there's not much supervision?

*Petra:* That's right. Of course, if you have a problem, you can talk to your team leader about it.

*Susanne:* (3) \_\_\_\_\_ you \_\_\_\_\_ me something about the flexitime system? I'm not sure I understand it.

*Petra:* Well, you have to be in the office between 11.00 and 3.00 but you can start and finish when you like.

*Susanne:* And (4) \_\_\_\_\_ you have to do an eight-hour day?

*Petra:* It varies. Nobody really counts.

*Susanne:* That (5) \_\_\_\_\_ great!

*Petra:* Yes, it is, especially if you have children.

*Susanne:* And what (6) \_\_\_\_\_ should I do to arrange my working hours?

*Petra:* HR will send you a form to fill out. It's pretty straightforward.



- D** Work in pairs. Find out about your partner. Ask questions about and respond to comments about each other's life, work and interests.

▶ Review and development page 25

▶ Communication page 150

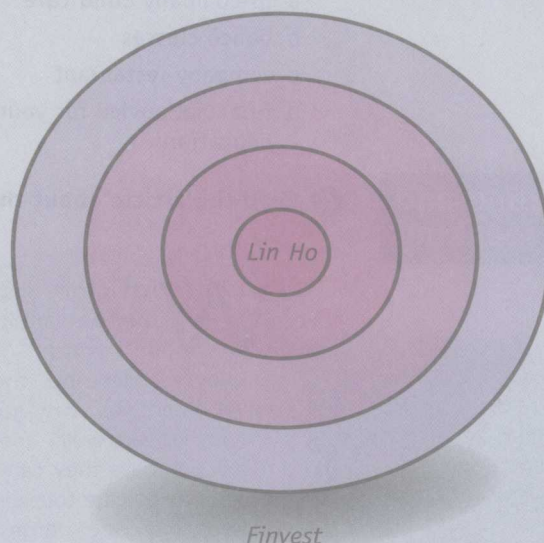
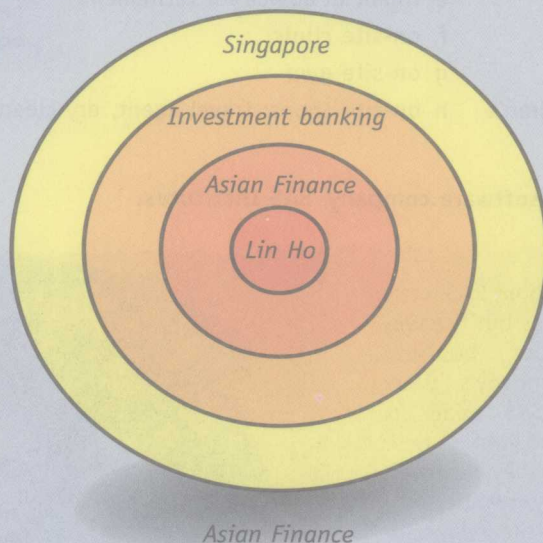


## Understanding different types of culture

There are different layers of culture, and these can have an impact on our behaviour. In this section, we will uncover some of these layers.

2.4

- A** Lin Ho is from Singapore. She used to work for a local company, Asian Finance, but now works for Finvest. She talks about her experiences in these two companies and how she sees the impact of culture. Listen and label the diagram for Finvest.



- B** Draw an onion diagram for the types of culture which surround you at work. Then explain it to a partner. Choose from these layers:

- country culture (e.g. British, Chinese, German)
- regional culture (e.g. north or south of the country, city or rural)
- company culture (name of your employer)
- functional culture (e.g. finance, sales, HR)
- sector culture (e.g. banking, retail, engineering)
- team culture (e.g. department or section)



2.5

- C** Lin Ho talks more about Finvest and the company culture. What aspects of culture does she talk about?

dress	body language	organisation	values
offices	management style	language	image
brands	communication	history	

- D** Draw an iceberg, like the one on page 7, of a company or organisational culture that you know. Use the aspects of culture listed in C above as a starting point.

### Checklist

- ✓ theory X and theory Y
- ✓ words to do with motivation: *initiative, encouragement, responsibility ...*
- ✓ finding out about people
- ✓ understanding different types of culture



# 3 Incentives



Mid-size companies in the USA spend an average of \$19,991 per employee per year on benefits.

## Start-up

**A** With a partner, put these benefits in order of importance to you.

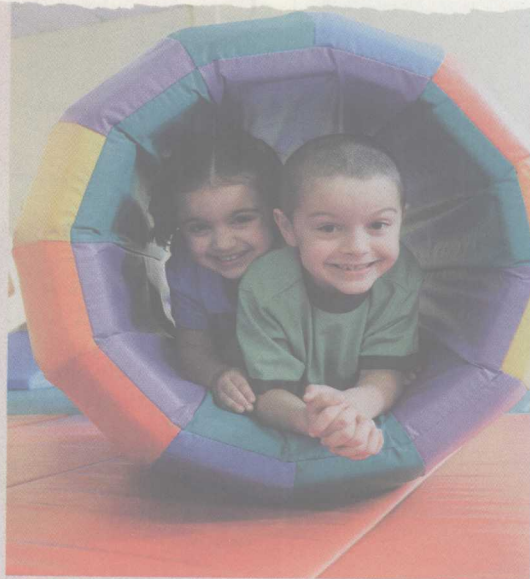
- |  |   |
|--|---|
| a in-company child care                          | e financial advice for retirement                 |
| b dance classes                                  | f on-site clinic                                  |
| c company restaurant                             | g on-site gym                                     |
| d financial advice for your children's education | h on-site shops: travel agent, dry cleaners, etc. |

## Reading and speaking

**A** Read the article about the US software company, SAS Institutes.

What is truly unusual about SAS is not the software it creates but the way in which it does business. Employees describe the company's work environment as easy-going. SAS treats its employees very well – there is no limit on how many sick days they can take; they can even stay home to care for sick family members.

SAS has the largest on-site day-care operation in North Carolina. To encourage families to eat lunch together, the SAS cafeteria has baby seats and high chairs. To encourage families to eat dinner together, the company has adopted a seven-hour workday. Most people at SAS leave the office by 5 p.m. SAS has 3,000 square metres of gym space



and a ten-lane swimming pool. Massages are available several times a week, and classes are offered in golf, African dance and tennis. If you're worried about finding a retirement

home for your ageing mother, the company's coordinator for the care of elderly relatives will assist you. If you need to see a doctor, you'll be able to see one on-site, at the SAS health clinic.

A group at the company meets monthly to discuss proposed new benefits, evaluating them in the context of a three-part test: Will the benefit fit into SAS's culture? Will it serve a significant number of employees? Will it be cost-effective: that is, will its value to employees be at least as high as its cost? Every benefit has to pass all three tests. Coming soon: advice on financial planning for college and retirement.

**B** Look again at the benefits listed in Start-up above. Which of them are mentioned in the article? Which of them does SAS already provide?

**C** True or false?

- 1 SAS's work environment is relaxed.
- 2 The company's policy on sickness only covers employees.
- 3 SAS encourages people to work late.
- 4 Employees can take family members to the company restaurant.
- 5 Possible new employee benefits are analysed according to two criteria.



## Vocabulary and listening

### A Match these benefits to their definitions.

- |                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| 1 incentives        | a all the advantages available to employees such as healthcare, free gym membership, etc. |
| 2 benefits package  | b a general word for advantages designed to make people work harder and perform better    |
| 3 perks             | c extra money earned for reaching a particular target etc.                                |
| 4 performance bonus | d time off given to a female employee who will have / has had a child                     |
| 5 maternity leave   | e time off given to a male employee who will have / has had a child                       |
| 6 paternity leave   | f a savings fund for retirement   |
| 7 company pension   | g an informal word for benefits   |

### B What other possible benefits do you know of (perhaps ones offered by your organisation or one you would like to join)? Which benefits are the most attractive for you personally?



3.1

### C Listen to a job candidate discussing incentives and benefits with an interviewer. Make a list of the benefits mentioned.

## Grammar

### First conditional

To form the first conditional, you use the present simple in the *if* clause. In the main clause, you use *will* + infinitive.

You use the first conditional to talk about a possible future situation.

*If you reach 110 per cent of your target, you'll get a performance bonus of €1000.*

*Our financial advisor will advise you if you need help with financial planning.*

*Unless* means the same as *if not*

*You won't get a bonus unless you reach the target.*

### A Complete the sentences using the first conditional.

- What \_\_\_\_\_ the benefits package \_\_\_\_\_ (contain) if I \_\_\_\_\_ (join) the company?
- We \_\_\_\_\_ (pay) all the bills, if you \_\_\_\_\_ (need) hospital treatment.
- If you \_\_\_\_\_ (become) seriously ill, the company \_\_\_\_\_ (give) you up to four months' sick leave on full pay.
- If you \_\_\_\_\_ (need) to have your clothes cleaned, our on-site laundry service \_\_\_\_\_ (take care) of it.
- You \_\_\_\_\_ (get fired) if you \_\_\_\_\_ (call in) sick six Mondays in a row!

### B Rewrite the sentences using *unless*.

- If employees do not inform us first, their families cannot use the restaurant.  
*Unless employees inform us first, their families cannot use the restaurant.*
- You can't go to dance classes if you don't finish your work first.
- Employees will not get the end-of-year bonus if they do not arrive on time in the mornings.
- You can't take more than three days off sick if you do not phone your manager.
- If you do not tell your boss about your summer holiday dates by 31 January, you will not get the dates you want.

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