UNIT 1 Corporate culture

This unit teaches language and vocabulary connected with company culture, phrasal verbs and defining and non-defining relative clauses.

Although none of the tasks in the unit exactly replicate exam questions, some are designed to give students the skills and practice needed to deal with them (see table below).

	BEC	BULATS
Talking point: *Aspects of corporate culture*	Speaking Part 1	Speaking Part 1
Listening: *Aspects of corporate culture*	Listening Part 2	Listening Part 3
Reading: *Creating a corporate culture*	Reading Part 2	
Talking point: *Creating a corporate culture*	Speaking Part 3	Speaking Part 3
Photocopiable activity 1	Speaking Parts 1 & 2	Speaking Parts 1 & 2

Notes on unit

Getting started
As a further extension, you can get students to brainstorm other typical characteristics of corporate culture.

You could also discuss the relationship between national cultures and corporate cultures if you think your students have the background to do this.

Talking point: *Aspects of corporate culture*
Pre-service students who have no close acquaintance with a company can be asked to talk about the culture of a college or school where they have studied.

Listening: *Aspects of corporate culture*
All audio material in this book is intended to be listened to twice.

If students are new to this type of listening activity, allow them to check their answers by looking at the transcript for Track 2 to see how the activity works.

If you wish to make the activity more challenging, Exercise 1 can be done after, rather than before, Exercise 2.

Reading: *Creating a corporate culture*
As a warmer before the reading passage, ask students to do Exercises 1 and 2.

When students do Exercise 3, they should read the whole text again when they have finished to make sure that it reads logically.

As an alternative approach to this and other tasks, you can discuss the best approach with students and get their ideas. Different students, or different groups of students, can try different ways, e.g. reading the list of sentences carefully first and then finding gaps for them, or reading to the first gap and then looking through the list of sentences, etc. They can then compare which method was most effective.

Vocabulary: *Creating a corporate culture*
If your students have a copy of the Personal Study Book, you can point out that it contains exercises which recycle vocabulary and grammar encountered in the unit and, in some units, gives extra reading and writing tasks.

You can also point out that the Personal Study Book contains a Word list which they can consult when doing vocabulary exercises.

Photocopiable activity
This activity is intended as an ice-breaker at the beginning of the course (perhaps before students have had time to buy their course books) and will take about an hour of class time.

Photocopiable activity   Time management

Getting started

> **Time management** is about managing your time efficiently so that you achieve the most effective use of your working day, and also have time for free-time activities and interests. Courses in time management are also offered in many universities to help students manage their time efficiently. This activity is intended to analyse how you spend your day and suggest some time-management methods.

Work with a partner and complete this questionnaire for each other. (Ask each other complete questions to obtain the information, e.g. _How long is your working day?_)

Job/Occupation/Studies:

Summary of duties and responsibilities / What course consists of:

Length of working day / time each day spent in class or studying:

Starts work/studies at:

Length of lunch break:

Finishes work/studies at:

Time per day spent travelling to work/college/university:

How time spent while travelling to work/college/university (e.g. reading the newspaper):

Takes work home? Yes/No
If _Yes_, give details:

Works/Studies at weekends? Yes/No
If _Yes_, give details:

Working time spent in meetings/classes/tutorials:

Working time spent on phone:

Time spent per day on enjoyable non-work/non-study activities:

Time spent per day on household chores, childcare, etc.:

Do you think you make efficient use of your time? Yes/No
If _Yes_, give details:

Photocopiable activity   Time management

Talking point

Time management experts list a number of common activities or circumstances which waste people's time. These are often called *time thieves*.

Work in groups of three. Discuss these questions.
1 How do the *time thieves* listed below waste people's time?
2 Which ones waste your time?
3 How can people reduce their vulnerability to these *time thieves*?

Time thieves
- Telephone interruptions
- Interruptions from visitors
- Meetings
- Not delegating tasks
- Crisis management (i.e. spending your day dealing with problems that arise)
- Poor communication
- Lack of training
- Unclear objectives
- Poor planning
- Stress and fatigue
- Inability to say 'No'
- An untidy desk/computer filing system
- Being a perfectionist

Reading

1 **Work in groups of three. You will each read a different text giving advice on how to manage time better.**

2 **Read your text and make brief notes on the main points.**

3 **Talk to your partners and explain the main advice and the reasons for it. When speaking, refer to your notes rather than the original text.**

4 **When you have finished, discuss which were the best pieces of advice.**

Writing

Work with a partner. Write one more piece of advice for good time management like the ones you have just read.

A   SPEND TIME PLANNING AND ORGANISING. Using time to think and plan is time well spent. In fact, if you fail to take time for planning, you are, in effect, planning to fail. Organise in a way that makes sense to you. Some people need to have papers filed away; others get their creative energy from their piles. So forget the 'shoulds' and organise *your* way.

SET GOALS. Goals give your life, and the way you spend your time, direction. When asked the secret to becoming so rich, one of the famous Hunt brothers from Texas replied, 'First, you've got to decide what you want.' Set goals which are specific, measurable, realistic and achievable. Your optimum goals are those which cause you to 'stretch' but not 'break' as you strive for achievement. Goals can give creative people a much-needed sense of direction.

PRIORITISE. Use the 80–20 rule originally stated by the Italian economist Vilfredo Pareto, who noted that 80 per cent of the reward comes from 20 per cent of the effort. The trick to prioritising is to isolate and identify that valuable 20 per cent. Once identified, prioritise time to concentrate your work on those items with the greatest reward.

USE A 'TO-DO' LIST. Some people thrive using a daily 'to-do' list which they construct either last thing the previous day or first thing in the morning. Such people may combine a 'to-do' list with a calendar or schedule. Others prefer a 'running' 'to-do' list which is continuously being updated.

Photocopiable activity   Time management

B

BE FLEXIBLE. Allow time for interruptions and distractions. Time management experts often suggest planning for just 50 per cent or less of one's time. With only 50 per cent of your time planned, you will have the flexibility to handle interruptions and the unplanned 'emergency'. When you expect to be interrupted, schedule routine tasks. Save (or make) larger blocks of time for your priorities. When interrupted, ask Alan Lakein's crucial question, 'What is the most important thing I can be doing with my time right now?' to help you get back on track fast.

CONSIDER YOUR BIOLOGICAL PRIME TIME. That's the time of day when you are at your best. Are you a 'morning person', a 'night owl', or a late-afternoon 'whiz'? Knowing when your best time is and planning to use that time of day for your priorities (if possible) is effective time management.

DO THE RIGHT THING RIGHT. Noted management expert Peter Drucker says 'doing the right thing is more important than doing things right'. Doing the right thing is effectiveness; doing things right is efficiency. Focus first on effectiveness (identifying what is the right thing to do), then concentrate on efficiency (doing it right).

ELIMINATE THE URGENT. Urgent tasks have short-term consequences, while important tasks are those with long-term, goal-related implications. Work towards reducing the urgent things you must do so you'll have time for your important priorities.

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C

PRACTISE THE ART OF INTELLIGENT NEGLECT. Eliminate from your life trivial tasks or those tasks which do not have long-term consequences for you. Can you delegate or eliminate any of your 'to-do' list? Work on those tasks which you alone can do.

AVOID BEING A PERFECTIONIST. In the Malaysian culture, only the gods are considered capable of producing anything perfect. Whenever something is made, a flaw is left on purpose so the gods will not be offended. Yes, some things need to be closer to perfect than others, but perfectionism, paying unnecessary attention to detail, can be a form of procrastination.

LEARN TO SAY 'NO'. Such a small word – and so hard to say. Focusing on your goals may help. Blocking time for important, but often not scheduled, priorities such as family and friends can also help. But first you must be convinced that you and your priorities are important – that seems to be the hardest part in learning to say 'no'. Once convinced of their importance, saying 'no' to the unimportant in life gets easier.

REWARD YOURSELF. Even for small successes, celebrate achievement of goals. Promise yourself a reward for completing each task, or finishing the total job. Then keep your promise to yourself and indulge in your reward. Doing so will help you maintain the necessary balance in life between work and play. As Ann McGee-Cooper says, 'If we learn to balance excellence in work with excellence in play, fun, and relaxation, our lives become happier, healthier and a great deal more creative.'

From *Thirteen timely tips for more effective personal time management* by Kathy Prochaska-Cue

Answer key

Student's Book activities

Getting started

1   1 b   2 g   3 e   4 d   5 f   6 c   7 a
2   1 mentor   2 dress code   3 goals   4 autocratic
    5 bonuses   6 do things by the book   7 vision
    8 entrepreneurial

Aspects of corporate culture

Listening
1   1 g   2 j   3 a   4 i   5 d   6 e   7 c   8 b   9 f
    10 h
2   Candela: 5   Henry: 4   Sonia: 7   Omar: 3

Vocabulary
1 out   2 through   3 up with   4 to   5 turn
6 getting   7 down

Creating a corporate culture

Reading
1   1   The board of directors
    2   It can affect ethics, risk-taking and bottom-line
        performance.
    3   Board members often lack an understanding of
        corporate culture.
3   1 G   2 F   3 D   4 C   5 A   6 E

Vocabulary
1 b   2 g   3 c   4 a   5 d   6 f   7 e

Grammar workshop: *defining and non-defining
relative clauses*

1   How should a director think about the "corporate
    culture" of the company on **whose** board he or
    she serves?
2   Consult a management text on organizational
    culture and you'll find a chapter or more of
    definition **which**/**that** boils down to something
    like "a pattern of shared basic assumptions."
3   Every organization has a culture **which**/**that**
    manifests itself in everything from
    entrepreneurship to risk-taking all the way down
    to the dress code.
4   An understanding of corporate culture is one of
    the main things missing on boards, but they really
    need it if they're going to monitor **what**'s going
    on inside the corporation.
5   Nucor's culture, **which** he describes as
    "extraordinarily powerful, effective, and unique,"
    can be traced back to the values and vision of its
    legendary founder, F. Kenneth Iverson.

Transcript

Listening page 11

Omar: So, Candela, what's it like working for a large car
               manufacturer?
Candela: You'd be surprised, actually. You hear so much
               about cut-throat competition amongst managers
               in my type of company, but in fact, as someone
               starting out on the management ladder, I get a lot
               of back-up from senior staff. We have twice-
               weekly get-togethers where we talk through our
               difficulties and come up with ideas and solutions.
               It's great. I don't get the feeling that it's 'sink or
               swim' at all.
Omar: And you, Henry?
Henry: Well, as you'd expect working in hospital
               administration, there's plenty of red tape. We
               have to stick to the rules fairly carefully because
               at the end of the day, people's health's involved,
               and we're publicly accountable. But that doesn't
               mean there's no room for inventiveness. We're
               always looking for ways of streamlining
               procedures and making efficiency gains.
Omar: And saving taxpayers' money.
Henry: That's right.
Omar: Now, Sonia, what's it like working for a dotcom?
Sonia: It's not exactly a dotcom. As a matter of fact, it's
               more a software developer. And it really suits me,
               you know, I nearly always turn up at work
               wearing jeans and a T-shirt, which is great for a
               manager, and everyone talks to everyone else in a
               really relaxed way. There's none of that 'them-
               and-us' feeling between management and staff
               that you get in other industries. I mean, in most
               ways the staff are more expert than the managers!
               And what about you, Omar?
Omar: My company, as you know, is a consumer
               products company, and we're all organised in
               divisions, and the divisions in teams, and we're
               all competing against each other. Our pay is
               performance-related, and nobody gets the same.
               Getting ahead and even keeping your job depends
               on your performance.
Sonia: Um, and how's performance measured, Omar? Is
               there a yardstick?
Omar: Not really. In the end, it boils down to
               performance in comparison with other teams and
               divisions.
Henry: Sounds quite a rat race.
Omar: For me, that's business!

2 Leaders and managers

This unit studies language and vocabulary related to the functions and qualities of leaders and managers. It revises the grammar of *as* and *like* and teaches a number of management collocations.

Although none of the tasks in the unit exactly replicate exam questions, some are designed to give students the skills and practice needed to deal with them (see table below).

	BEC	BULATS
Getting started	Speaking Part 2	Speaking Part 2
Reading: *Great leaders and great managers*	Reading Part 3	Reading Part 2 Section 5
Listening: *Great leaders and great managers*	Listening Part 1	Speaking Part 1
Listening: *Managing staff*	Listening Part 1	
Talking point 2: *Managing staff*	Speaking Part 3	Speaking Part 3

Notes on unit

Getting started
Giving short talks of this type is a useful business skill: business people are often asked to talk in meetings about their ideas, activities or projects.
If you want to extend the discussion, you can:
- ask students about well-known business leaders from their country
- ask which qualities are most valued by business leaders and managers in their country, or if some of these qualities are not considered important in their country.

Talking point: *Great leaders and great managers*
As an alternative task, ask your students to work in small groups. Tell them each to:
- pick out three sentences from the text whose ideas made an impression on them
- read each sentence to the others in their group, who then give their reaction to it
- if appropriate, ask them to compare Branson's attitude to managing people with the attitudes in the companies where they work.

Listening: *Great leaders and great managers*
The task tip suggests students should try to predict the type of information they will need to complete the notes. You can help them by eliciting:

- gap 1: *Do you think you need a noun, verb, adjective or what? What qualities might help the business progress?*
- gap 2: *What part of speech do you need? What is the essential difference between managers and leaders, and what is their relationship?*, etc.

Vocabulary 2: *Great leaders and great managers*
As a follow-up to this activity, you can:
- ask students if they can identify two different **types** of collocation with *management* (**answer**: types or categories of management, and things which are managed)
- ask them to brainstorm two or three other collocations for each category.

Talking point 1: *Managing staff*
If you have pre-service students, ask them:
- if teachers fill a similar role to managers
- what teachers can do to optimise the performance of their students
- what aspects of their education might prepare them for management roles.

Photocopiable activity
This is intended as a fun approach to some people-management issues and practises related vocabulary.
Encourage students to give reasons for their answers. When they come to score their answers, encourage them to disagree with the interpretations if they wish, since these are intended to be mildly provocative.
This activity will take more than an hour of class time.

Photocopiable activity   Management problems

Reading

What sort of people manager are you / would you be? Do the quiz to find out.

1 Work in pairs. Read each question and then tell each other:

• the answer you would choose

• the reason why you would choose that answer.

2 When you have finished, add up your partner's score and give him/her the appraisal which follows.

How to score

1 a 1 **b** 7 **c** 1 **d** 3

Even if he's a brilliant and valuable worker, you're not doing him a favour letting him get away with working in an undisciplined way – and it's bad for the morale of other staff, who might feel he's being treated too kindly.

2 a 5 **b** 5 **c** 1 **d** 6

If she's been in the department for 20 years, she probably has more 'ownership' of the job than you. On the other hand, she may benefit from a change of scene. The personal interview is brave, but may be counter-productive.

3 a 1 **b** 5 **c** 1 **d** 1

All options except (b) may show weakness on your part. At least (b) shows a constructive approach to a human problem.

4 a 1 **b** 5 **c** 2 **d** 0

More money won't solve work-related stress. The only sensible solution is (b), though you will have to justify it to your boss.

5 a 6 **b** 2 **c** 1 **d** 3

The only sensible option is (a).

6 a 3 **b** 7 **c** 1 **d** 7

If your team is doing well, it reflects the fact that you are a good leader. The only absurd reaction is (c). Although taking the kudos is a very natural reaction in an ambitious manager, it can have a damaging effect on staff motivation.

7 a 0 **b** 0 **c** 6 **d** 3

Option (c) is reasonable, but (d) is possible in some circumstances; some customers are wrong and need to be told so. Loyalty to your staff is also a good quality in a manager.

8 a 5 **b** 1 **c** 0 **d** 4

Surely this is none of your business unless passions start affecting productivity.

9 a 0 **b** 3 **c** 0 **d** 4

Your team's poor performance can reflect badly on your boss as well as on yourself, so the best answer is to get her involved in actively finding a solution.

10 a 8 **b** 3 **c** 0 **d** 0

See how he manages with more challenge before doing anything else. You can't move everyone every time they complain.

Results

1–18: You may not be cut out to be a manager and perhaps a little more management training would be useful.

19–35: As a manager your skills are average. You may well get to the top of your profession, but not because of your skills in managing people.

35 + : You are clearly one of those rare individuals – a good manager of people. Show the results of this test to your Human Resources Director and see if he/she is equally impressed!

Vocabulary

Find words or phrases in the quiz which mean the following.

1   amount of work to be done (question 2)
2   reaching an acceptable standard (question 3)
3   dismissal (question 3)
4   admiration that a person receives as a result of a particular achievement (question 6)
5   extra amount of money that is given to you as a reward for good work (question 6)
6   people who are at the same level in an organisation (question 7)

7   person in a less important position in an organisation (question 7)
8   ignore something that you know is wrong (question 8)
9   stop it (question 8)
10 watch (question 8)
11 difficult, in a way that tests your ability or determination (question 10)
12 moving to a new job (question 10)

Photocopiable activity   Management problems

What sort of people manager are you?

1 **One of your staff often arrives late for work. He's a good worker – efficient, brilliant and original – but arriving late means that he often misses the beginning of team meetings, or other people have to answer his phone calls. Do you …**
a write him a letter threatening him with dismissal if he doesn't improve?
b have an informal private chat with him where you suggest he pulls his socks up?
c make sarcastic comments about his poor time-keeping in front of the team?
d ignore the problem – he's a good worker after all?

2 **There's a member of your staff you just don't like. She often openly disagrees with your decisions, and you're sure she criticises you constantly behind your back. Do you …**
a put up with her because she's been in the department for 20 years?
b transfer her to another department where someone else will have the pleasure of her company?
c increase her workload in the hope that she will leave?
d have a personal interview with her where you talk over the problems between you?

3 **A new recruit to your department is not learning the job as quickly as you had hoped, and you consider him to be a weak link in your team. Do you …**
a tell him he's not up to scratch and threaten him with the sack?
b tell him your opinion and offer him further training?
c pretend there's no problem – if you take action against this person, it may upset other members of your team?
d offer him a transfer to another department where he may be more at home?

4 **You've noticed signs of stress in your team: people are irritable, complaining of headaches, taking sick leave. Do you …**
a offer to give them a pay rise?
b take on more staff to ease their workloads?
c try to do more of their work yourself?
d carry on as if the situation was normal?

5 **Your divisional boss has asked you and your team to take on an extra project. You're already working flat out on a current project. Do you …**
a explain the situation and ask for another solution?
b accept the extra work because you're afraid to say 'no'?
c accept the extra work because you're ambitious and it could eventually mean promotion?
d tell your boss he must be joking – your people are under enough pressure as it is?

6 **Your team is doing extremely well – you're exceeding all your targets and easily meeting all your deadlines. Your divisional boss recently called you in to congratulate you. Do you …**
a take all the kudos – after all you're the leader?
b pass on the praise to your team and suggest they be paid a bonus?
c ask your boss to set even higher targets?
d hold a team party to celebrate?

7 **An important customer has complained that one of your staff was very rude to him. Do you …**
a confront her during a team meeting and then reprimand her in front of her peers?
b fire her on the spot?
c ask her for her version of events and take it from there?
d stand by your subordinate and tell the customer he was wrong?

8 **You've noticed that two of your team are getting more than friendly. You imagine that there's an office romance under way. Do you …**
a turn a blind eye?
b get involved in the office gossip to find out what's happening?
c tell them to put an end to it?
d keep an eye on the situation in case it has an effect on team efficiency?

9 **Your divisional manager has told you that your team's performance is not up to scratch. Do you …**
a blame the team?
b blame outside circumstances which are beyond your control?
c take the blame yourself?
d tell her it's her fault for not giving you the necessary resources?

10 **One of your staff tells you he doesn't find his job sufficiently challenging. Do you …**
a offer him more responsibility and empowerment in his current job?
b promote him to a position of greater responsibility?
c tell him it's time he was moving on?
d tell him he should be happy he's got a job at all?

Answer key

Photocopiable activity
Vocabulary
1 workload   2 up to scratch   3 the sack   4 kudos
5 bonus   6 peers   7 subordinate   8 turn a blind
eye   9 put an end to it   10 keep an eye on
11 challenging   12 moving on

Student's Book activities

Getting started
1 1 h   2 f   3 b   4 c   5 e   6 g   7 a   8 d

Great leaders and great managers
Reading
3 1 D … says his goal is to turn Virgin into 'the
          most respected brand in the world'.
          (paragraph 1)
   2 B 'I think being a high-profile person has its
          advantages,' he says. 'Advertising costs
          enormous amounts of money these days. I
          just announced in India that I was setting up
          a domestic airline, and we ended up getting
          on the front pages of the newspaper.'
          (paragraph 2)
   3 C I have to be willing to step back. The
          company must be set up so it can continue
          without me. (paragraph 4)
   4 D For the people who work for you or with
          you, you must lavish praise on them at all
          times (paragraph 5)
   5 A Employees often leave companies, he
          reasons, because they are frustrated by the
          fact that their ideas fall on deaf ears.
          (paragraph 6)
   6 B … then give chief executives a stake in the
          company (paragraph 7)

Vocabulary 1
1 founder   2 venture   3 underlying   4 flamboyant
5 from scratch   6 lavish praise on   7 slipped up /
made a mess of something   8 firing   9 immersed
10 the ins and outs   11 stake

Listening
1 vision   2 implementation   3 hands-on
4 experienced, good people   5 opportunity to develop

Grammar workshop: *as* or *like*?
1 b   2 a (like)   3 c   4 a (as well as)
5 d (as … as)

Vocabulary 2
1 g   2 d   3 a   4 c   5 b   6 e   7 f

Managing staff
Listening
2 1 directional strategy   2 (responsibility and)
   ownership   3 superficial level   4 opportunities
   5 (kind of) mentor

Transcripts

3 ❘ Listening page 16

I = interviewer; RB = Rachel Babington

I: What do you think makes a great leader as opposed to a great manager, because they're quite different things, aren't they?

RB: I think I've worked in a lot of places where a lot of senior people haven't really been leaders, they've been managers, and I think I'd say probably a … a good leader has <u>vision</u> and can see how to develop and take things forward and is inspirational. Really, a manager, I think, is more about the <u>implementation of that vision</u>, and I think too many people who are in leadership roles get bogged down with the nitty-gritty management side, which is probably not what they should be doing, but I suppose it takes a strong leader and a confident one who believes in their team to take a step back, um, and I think really they should. I don't think they should be too <u>hands-on</u>.

I: Can you describe a bad leader to me?

RB: I think someone who … has a team of quite <u>experienced</u>, <u>good people</u> who won't give them the space to get on and do their job and is overbearing and involved, um, and doesn't take a step back and give … give people the responsibility to get on with their role, and I suppose who doesn't give a person room to grow and the <u>opportunity to develop</u> their career, because I think that happens a lot, that you just are expected to tick along and not expect anything back from your job. Whereas if you're good at it and reasonably ambitious, you want to know you're going somewhere.

4 ❘ Listening page 17

I = interviewer; RB = Rachel Babington

I: What … How would you describe empowerment? And how can workers be empowered, do you think?

RB: I think empowerment is … um … giving someone the opportunity to decide the <u>directional strategy</u> of a job and agreeing on it, and then leaving them to get on and do it and be in the background to help them if they need it, but not to be breathing down their neck. Um, and I suppose it is that feeling of <u>responsibility and ownership</u> that makes people feel empowered. I think if you work with someone who really lacks confidence to give their team responsibility, it's very difficult to break out of that cycle.

I: And has managing techniques, or have managing people, changed over the last … in the last ten years?

RB: I don't know, I'm probably a bit cynical, but I think there's a lot, certainly, that I have noticed in the organisations I've worked in, there are a lot of steps that are taken to be seen to be empowering individuals, and so I think things … probably at a <u>superficial</u> <u>level</u> look to have changed, but whether they really have deep down, I'm not so sure.

I: How do you think people could be managed in order to get the very best from them?

RB: I think to get the most out of them, you want them to feel empowered, that they're achieving, that they're, they're um, developing, that there are <u>opportunities</u> ahead of them that they can strive to work to, that they're … um … under a manageable amount of pressure, um, that they're getting the right kind of support. I think what a lot of people lack is a <u>kind of mentor</u> and someone that'll help them develop in their career, and you can become very stale if you don't have that. So I'd say that would be important to people as well.