

The Business World

Unit 3: Companies and People

This module is divided into three units. Each unit is designed to take three hours of class time for a class size of 30 students.

Aims

- To help students to describe events and organisations (speaking and writing) in the context of companies and their work.
- To understand and use some related vocabulary.
- To practise note-taking from listening and practise intensive listening for details.
- To help students understand the language necessary for a service encounter.
- To practise scan reading in the context of a short article on Hong Kong's service-based economy. (optional)
- "Self-reflection" activity.

Materials

- Tape on The Business World
- BW 3.1. Student's File Vocabulary Matching
- BW 3.2. Student's File Completing Answers
- BW 3.3. Student's File T/F Listening Comprehension
- BW 3.4. Student's File HK's Performance and Position
- BW 3.5. Student's File Listening to a Harvard Business School Interview
- BW 3.6. Student's File Information Gap
- BW 3.7. Student's File Organisation Chart
- BW 3.8. Student's File Services-based Economy

Procedure

1. Introduce the idea of a large international company. Ask students if they know who manufacture/supply the various appliances in their home e.g. air-conditioner, fridge, rice cooker, TV. Write up the names of the companies they give you on the board. You may want to pre-teach some vocabulary. See BW 3.1.
2. Refer students to BW 3.2 and tell them they are going to listen to someone talking about his company. They only need to write one-word answers, or very short answers. When they have finished part 1, get them to check in pairs. Play the tape again, pausing where necessary and making sure everybody has correct answers.
3. Using this worksheet (BW 3.2) as a prompt for full questions and answers, pairs now practise asking and answering orally.
4. BW 3.3 Part 2 can now be used. This worksheet is a true-false comprehension exercise. Before playing the tape, you may want to revise certain vocabulary items students will need for their listening. Use BW 3.1 (Part 2) for this purpose. Then play the tape (BW 3.3 Part 2) through 2-3 times for students to do the listening task and allow peer/pair checking. Finally, ask students to use the tapescript and play the tape through once more as the students read and consolidate what they have learnt. You may want to use the Pronunciation Spot at this point in the lesson.
5. BW 3.4 focuses on working out the meanings of words in 3 charts. Students work individually or in pairs to deduce the meanings from the context. Check answers with them when they finish and ask them to explain how they find the words.
6. BW 3.5 focuses on listening comprehension. The listening is quite long and has been divided into 3 sections. Ask students to study BW 3.5.1a and play part 1 of the tape. This exercise is to help students discriminate specialist vocabulary. After pairs have checked answers, play the tape again for whole class checking purposes. Now use these words for dictionary work, checking meanings of any unknown words.
7. BW 3.5.1b is a listening exercise designed as a chart. As the class have listened to part 1 of the tape, they should be able to complete this chart and identify words in BW 3.5 1a.
8. Student's File BW 3.5.2a, Student's File BW 3.5.2b and Student's File BW 3.5.2c: the first is a straight forward gap filling exercise (BW 3.5.2a). This is followed by listening for specific words (BW 3.5.2b) to prepare students for the listen-and-complete exercise which is BW 3.5.2c.

9. The final listening section, (BW 3.5.3), is a true/false exercise.
10. At each stage, encourage the students each to check with a partner or group before carrying out a whole class check. Finally, give out the tapescript and play the tape through for consolidation. Again, dictionary work can be a means to check unknown vocabulary.
11. The next activity (BW 3.6) is an information gap. Students work in pairs, asking and answering questions to complete their tables. This is an oral practice.

It may be useful to release/check the questions they will need first:

- _ *Who is their partner in?*
- _ *What are they making/manufacturing in?*
- _ *Where is the Roger Turnover Company located?*
- _ *What are they making there?*

and the answers:

- _ *They are making/manufacturing*
- _ *Their partner is*
- _ *In*

12. This rehearsal should be carried out when you have given out photocopies of the worksheet in Resource Kit BW 3.6 to students A and B. Encourage the class to give you the questions/answers. Do not simply tell them.
13. Check answers when the pairs have finished by asking one pair to check with another pair and then ask students individual questions to make sure all answers are correct. You may also like to check with the class by nominating a student to ask another student.
14. Worksheet BW 3.7 requires the class to listen to the tape and fill in the information. The missing information DOES NOT follow the order of blanks 1- 9. It would be useful to first play the tape once through for the class to just listen and not attempt to fill in the blanks. Then play it twice to allow students to complete the chart. Play it for checkback, stopping at each piece of missing information.
15. When the chart is completed, the class can write a summary description of the company.
Here is the beginning of the model summary:
The Waterloo plc is a multinational company with a turnover of 15 million US dollars. Its main business activity is construction and engineering.

There are five divisions; the Brent group whose main business activity is undersea oil exploration and which has a turnover of 2.5 million, Pemberley and Sons whose main business activity is low cost housing with a turnover of 1.4 million, Waterloo Asia whose main area of activity is construction and electronics with a turnover of 7.5m..... Refer to Teacher's Key BW3.7 for a full summary.

16. If you show the class the pattern:-
whose and which has.....
whose with a
then they can complete this quite quickly and also be provided with a useful summary form or shape. If you present the pattern, encourage the class to do the summary orally through before writing it. This provides another way of practising.
17. When the summary is finished, ask students to refer to the tapescript and underline the extra information that Amanda gives about each division. Then play the tape through for consolidation as the students read, relating spoken and written forms. There is also a pronunciation spot which could be used now.
18. Write the words manufacturing economy and services-based economy on the board at the top of two columns. Ask students to think of words related to a manufacturing economy. You should be able to elicit: *factory, factory worker, machinery, industrial*. Add in as necessary: *long hours, low wages, import-export, raw material/finished product*.
19. Ask if such an economy exists in Hong Kong --- (the answer should be NO!) Explain that 20-25 years ago it did and that gradually this type of work moved north to China. Hong Kong has now become a service-based economy. Encourage students to think of what those services might be. Expected answers: *tourism, finance, trade, (cargo handling) banking, hotels, retail (retail outlets), restaurants*. Refer class to BW 3.4 Hong Kong's Performance and Position.
20. See if students can see how a different employee is needed for the services industry. Who talks to whom in a hotel? Who helps whom? What is the important part of a service encounter or meeting? (People talking and sorting out what they want.) It is a very language-centred economy.
21. Ask students to write down all the people-pairs connected in a service encounter. Give an example:

- shop assistant -- shopper (consumer)

expected answers could be:

- hotel receptionist -- guest
- office receptionist -- visitor
- waiter -- customer
- clerk -- customer
- check-in counter clerk --passenger
- bank teller -- customer
- air hostess -- passenger
- tour guide -- tourist

Write up all the answers given to you and add any if necessary.

22. Now play the tape of the two mini-dialogues. For dialogue 1, ask them to listen and count how many times they hear *'please and thank you.'* (5 *'please'*, 3 *'thank you'*)

For mini-dialogue 2, ask students to think about how helpful the tour guide is. Does she offer information or give only YES/NO answers? (*She offers information/ special deal/ Hong Kong bank round the corner*)

23. Now build a dialogue with the class, choose a people-pair from the list (*waiter/customer is probably easiest*) and write on the board:-

Waiter: (ask students what he would say. Write up their ideas, correcting any mistakes, but also asking students to self-correct)

Customer: (ask students for the reply and write up their contributions)

Waiter: (continue until you have guided the class through an 8-10 line dialogue – rehearse it with them – half class, gradually rubbing out the words so that they can remember the model dialogue and have confidence in working with a partner.

24. Ask students in pairs to produce another dialogue based on another service people-pair. Stress the importance of being polite and offering information. You could play mini-dialogue 3 at this point to show them what a bad service encounter is like.
25. Monitor groups and help where necessary. Pairs of students can be encouraged to fully role play their dialogues for the class.
26. Pairs that finish quickly can be given RK BW 3.8 – a scan reading practice exercise.

Teacher's Key BW 3.1.

Match the words or phrases with their definitions. (Part 1)

- | | | |
|----------------------------|--------------|---|
| 1. an electronic device | <u> b </u> | a. a company which is part of a larger or more important one. |
| 2. consumer | <u> f </u> | b. something that has transistors, silicon chips or valves which control and change the electric current. |
| 3. retail outlets | <u> c </u> | c. shops selling goods to the public. |
| 4. a multinational company | <u> e </u> | d. the value of goods or services sold during a period of time (usually a year). |
| 5. a subsidiary company | <u> d </u> | e. a company with branches in many different countries. |
| 6. turnover | | f. a person who buys things or services. |

Match the words or phrases with their definitions. (Part 2)

- | | | |
|--------------------|--------------|--|
| 1. investment | <u> e </u> | a. concerned with the organisation of money, industry and trade. |
| 2. economic policy | <u> a </u> | b. the activity of buying, selling or exchanging goods between countries without restrictions. A special area. |
| 3. inflation | <u> g </u> | c. to move to a different place. |
| 4. to access | <u> f </u> | d. doing something new and possibly difficult with a partner. There is a risk of failure. |
| 5. free trade zone | <u> b </u> | e. putting money into a business or country in the hope of making a profit. |
| 6. to relocate | <u> c </u> | f. to get into a place. |
| 7. joint venture | <u> d </u> | g. a general increase in the price of goods and services. |

Teacher's Key BW 3.2.

Part 1

Listen to a manager of Electix talking about his company. Complete these answers.

1. Full name of company.
Electix UK Ltd.
2. Type of products.
Electronic

For whom?
industry and private consumers
3. Number of factories.
22
4. Headquarters located in?
France (Rennes)
5. Number of staff?
403,900
6. Where?
throughout the world

Now make full questions for these notes and practise asking questions and giving full answers with a partner.

Teacher's Key BW 3.3.

Part 2

Listen to the manager speaking and circle T or F after these statements.

1. Countries which have membership of the EU, the European Union, are very unattractive to investment from Asia. T ☒ F
2. Britain offers the best of both worlds. ☒ T F
3. In Britain, there is a firmly focused economic policy based on low inflation. ☒ T F
4. Britain has no access to the largest free trade zone in the world. T ☒ F
5. Asian investors can gain access to these markets if they relocate their factories. ☒ T F
6. Electix is pleased to be involved in several joint ventures with the PRC. ☒ T F

Teacher's Key BW 3.4.

Hong Kong's performance and position.

1. Find a word that means *a place where two roads meet and cross each other*.

crossroads

2. Find a word that means *the only one of its kind*.

unique(ly)

3. Find a word that means *obtaining something, such as supplies, for an organisation*. (This is a formal word, only used in business)

procurement

4. Find a word that means *a place which is full of energy*. (People can be this too).

powerhouse

5. Find a word that means *someone or something which closely links together activities or people so they are part of a whole system*.

integrator

6. Find a word that means *doing something complicated that involves a lot of people or equipment and doing it with skilful organisation so that it can be done successfully and efficiently*.

logistics

Teacher's Key BW 3.5.1a.

An interview with Michael Enright, a Harvard Business School Administration Assistant Professor. He is talking about Hong Kong's future as a business centre.

Listen to part 1 of the tape. Tick the words you hear. Tick the word every time you hear the word.

| | | | | | |
|---------------|-----|------------|----|---------------|----|
| seminar | ✓ | perception | ✓ | international | ✓ |
| economically | ✓ | media | ✓ | regional | ✓ |
| irrelevant | ✓ | centre | ✓✓ | strategy | ✓ |
| hub | ✓ | crossroads | ✗ | platform | ✓ |
| centres | ✓✓✓ | government | ✓✓ | management | ✓ |
| economy | ✓ | gateway | ✓ | global | ✓ |
| entrepreneurs | ✓ | exports | ✗ | trading | ✗ |
| industries | ✓ | logistics | ✗ | investment | ✓✓ |

Compare your ticked list with a partner. Now listen again to check.

Teacher's Key BW 3.5.1b.

Listen to part 1 of the tape again. Complete the chart.

| |
|--|
| <p>What is the main topic of the seminar?</p> <p><u>HK must do something about the world's idea that HK can no longer be a</u> <u>successful business centre</u></p> <p>_____</p> |
| <p>Which regional centres compete with HK?</p> <p><u>Singapore</u></p> <p><u>Taiwan</u></p> <p><u>Shanghai</u></p> |
| <p>What must be pointed out?</p> <p><u>That HK is a bridge to Southern China</u></p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> |
| <p>What is balanced in HK? (3 answers)</p> <p><u>Government and business</u></p> <p><u>local and overseas firms</u></p> <p><u>companies led by management teams and companies led by entrepreneurs</u></p> |
| <p>How much did HK invest outside of HK in 1994?</p> <p><u>US\$20.96 billion</u></p> |
| <p>How much did Singapore invest?</p> <p><u>US\$650 million</u></p> |

Teacher's Key BW 3.5.2a Listening 2

Listen and write in the missing words.

Key Business Activities

Local and overseas firms are involved in everything from garment manufacture and distribution to fund management and with this wonderful mixture of expertise there are key business activities, banking and financial services in general, cargo shipment, telecommunications, trading and to some extent, electronics.

Check your answers with a partner. Now listen again to make any corrections.

Teacher's Key BW 3.5.2b Listening 2

Tick the words you hear.

| | | | | | |
|---------------|---|--------------|---|----------------|---|
| transnational | ✓ | overseas | ✓ | discrimination | ✗ |
| expertise | ✓ | financial | ✓ | international | ✓ |
| expensive | ✓ | professional | ✓ | unique | ✓ |
| expat | ✓ | cosmopolitan | ✓ | | |

Teacher's Key BW 3.5.2c Listening 2

Complete the sentences.

The local economy is (seven words) built up of thousands of transnational companies

There are (six words) extensive international communications in HK

It is an (eight words) easy place to set up international joint ventures

There is very (twelve words) easy access to international expat professional services

and a large cosmopolitan workforce

This mix of (ten words) local and overseas firms and people is unique in Asia

Teacher's Key BW 3.5.3.

True or False?

1. Standards must be kept high in the workforce. ☐ T ☐ F
2. HK will no longer need a sophisticated, highly trained workforce. T ☐ F
3. The SAR should continue to allow professionals to freely enter HK. ☐ T ☐ F
4. Mainland employees with special skills could be the entrepreneurs of the future. ☐ T ☐ F
5. Proficiency in English is not important T ☐ F
6. Investment in HK's technological infrastructures is very important. ☐ T ☐ F
7. HK need not sustain support services in communications and logistic support software. T ☐ F
8. HK has had a complex history of adaptation, resilience, intuition and real market capitalism. ☐ T ☐ F
9. Hong Kong is unique. ☐ T ☐ F
10. HK's most valuable asset is being unique. ☐ T ☐ F
11. HK must change a lot to remain successful. T ☐ F

Teacher's Resource Kit BW 3.6.

Information Gap:

Look at the table below and ask your partner questions to complete the information about Electix's partners in joint ventures.

Student A

| Partner | Location | Project |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| meriko | Japan | The manufacture of CD lenses |
| The PRC | 1. Dalian 2. Shenzen | 1. The manufacture of electronic cables 2. The production of refrigerators |
| Deep River Corporation | Indonesia | The sale of air-conditioners |
| Roger Turner Company Ltd. | USA | The sale of interactive video systems |



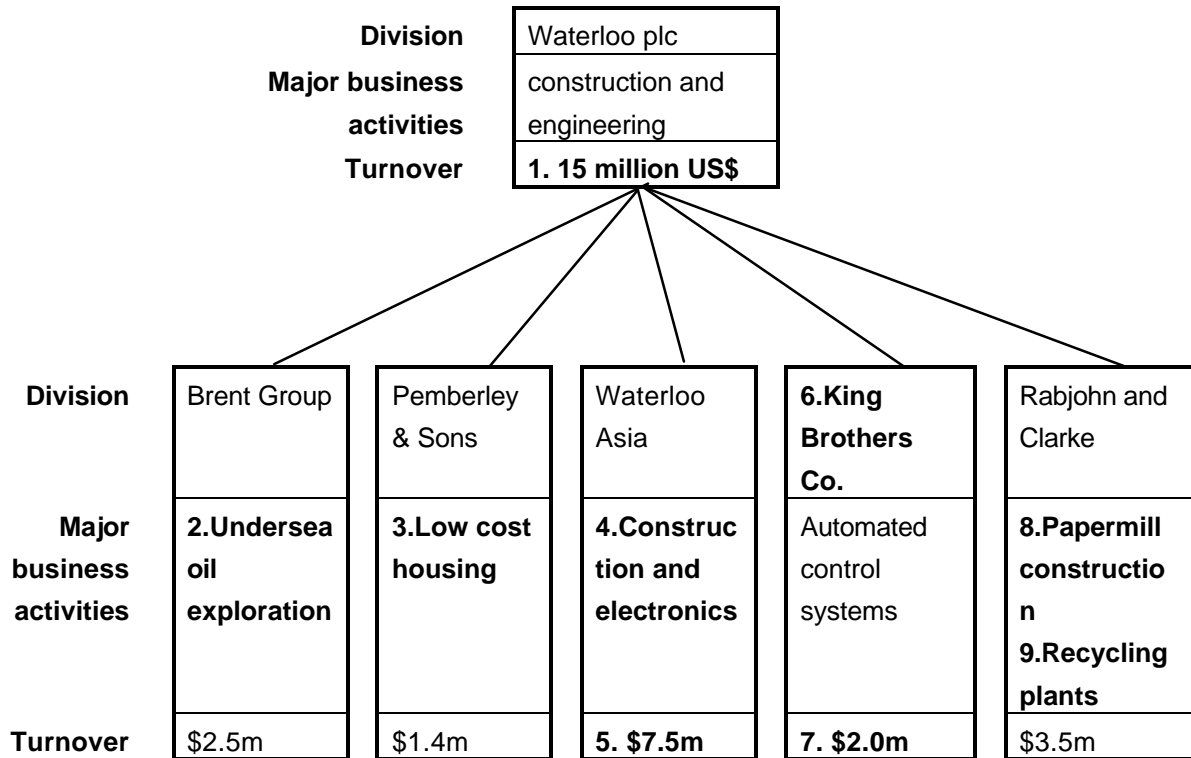
Student B

| Partner | Location | Project |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| meriko | Japan | The manufacture of CD lenses |
| The PRC | 1. Dalian 2. Shenzen | 1. The manufacture of electronic cables 2. The production of refrigerators |
| Deep River Corporation | Indonesia | The sale of air-conditioners |
| Roger Turner Company Ltd. | USA | The sale of interactive video systems |

Teacher's Key BW 3.7. Listening 3

Listen to a manager describe her company.

Listen and complete the chart below.



Can you write a summary description of the company now that the chart is complete?

A model summary:

The Waterloo plc is a multinational company with a turnover of 15 million US dollars. Its main business activities are construction and engineering.

There are five divisions: the Brent Group whose main business activity is undersea oil exploration and which has a turnover of 2.5 million, Pemberley and Sons whose main business activity is low cost housing with a turnover of 1.4 million, Waterloo Asia whose main area of activity is construction and electronics with a turnover of 7.5m, King Brothers Company whose main business activity is automated control systems with a turnover of 2 million, Rabjohn and Clarke whose main activities are papermill construction and recycling plants with a turnover of 3.5 million.

Teacher's Resource Kit BW 3.8

Read and answer the questions as you read:

Services-based economy seen as productive

by DUNCAN HUGHES

Hong Kong's transition to a services economy will create more stable economic growth but widen the gap between the territory's best and worst paid, according to a research report by the Hang Seng Bank.

The report — The expanding role of Hong Kong as a services centre — concludes that a broadly diversified services-based industry will insulate the economy from the large swings seen in the manufacturing sector.

The territory has been undergoing profound structural changes as the services sector's contribution to gross domestic product jumped from about 67 per cent in 1980 to 83 per cent in 1994.

During that period, the percentage of the workforce engaged in services-related employment increased by more than 40 per cent to about 79 per cent.

The report concludes: "The rapid growth of the service sector is a sign of increasing prosperity in Hong Kong and a testimony to the rising importance of the territory as a financial and trading centre.

"The diverse nature of the various service industries offers a broader range of employment opportunities. The sector is expected to experience further growth in the years ahead as economic development in China and the Asia-Pacific region continues to fuel growing demand."

The report warns of the need to improve the territory's physical infrastructure to maintain the momentum. The completion of Chek Lap Kok in 1998 is expected to ease pressures on air freight and tourism.

The expected trebling of cargo-handling over the next 15 years will be hindered by delays in building Container Terminal 9.

"The rise in operating costs had meant the territory is one of the most expensive places to do business in," it said. "To maintain Hong Kong's long-term competitiveness, it is imperative that labour productivity be enhanced to compensate for the high costs."

Teacher's Key BW 3.8.

1. What will widen the gap between Hong Kong's best and worst paid employees?
the transition to a services economy
2. Where do large swings in the economy occur?
the manufacturing sector
3. What has increased by more than 40%?
the workforce engaged in services-related employment.
4. How is Hong Kong seen to be important?
as a financial and trading centre
5. What needs to be improved?
the physical infrastructure
6. Why?
to ease pressures (on air freight and tourism)
7. How can Hong Kong's competitiveness be maintained?
by enhancing (improving) labour productivity