



DARIYA DZIUBA

NEWSLETTER #14



IT'S AN IDEA THAT MATTERS

16/08//2010

SOME CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION

You are welcome to join our "Business English Tips" group. In the group you will be able to communicate with other people who learn English. You will share your ideas about learning and also study something new. To make the participation more complete, I invite you to take part in the discussions and, of course, work on the newsletter during the two weeks you have.

Here are some tips of participation in the discussions:



Be polite



Answer the questions directly and post only relevant information



Check your post before sending it (please don't reply to the e-mails. Create a new message when answering the discussion question from your e-mail address)



Be understanding and accept other people's positions



Remember that we all study, so don't correct or laugh at any mistakes



Enjoy the opportunity you have



P.S. I will be very glad if you could tell other people about this newsletter. It's free, it's professional and it's about English. I'm sure that a lot of people will be glad to use this opportunity. To invite your friends join our newsletter, please, ask them to write to the following e-mail address: info@enrucafe.com

IT'S AN IDEA THAT MATTERS

Hello everyone,

In this newsletter you will read an article about how a good idea can help you open a successful business. In grammar section we will compare Present Perfect Continuous and Present Perfect Simple. In addition, you will solve some brain teasers, read some business stories and tales, and a funny business comic strip. In addition, we have another rubric in this newsletter (called "Useful business skills" instead of "Hints on business writing/reading").

I hope you will enjoy this newsletter. Thanks for staying with me ☺ You will receive the next issue in a month.

Dariya Dziuba

GRAMMAR: Present Perfect Simple vs. Present Perfect Continuous

In two previous newsletters we discussed how to form and when to use Present Perfect Simple and Present Perfect Continuous. In this newsletter we are going to discuss how to choose between these two tenses.

1. With actions continuing up to the present we usually use Present Perfect Progressive. For example:

- How long have you been working here?
- How long have you been learning English?

However, with non-progressive verbs (be, have, know etc.) we usually use Present Perfect Simple instead of Progressive. For example:

- He has been ill since Monday.
- I have known these people for seven years.

2. For short-lasting or temporary situations we apply Present Perfect Progressive. For example:

- Her friends have been calling her all day.
- He has been waiting for the news recently.

However, when we speak about long-lasting or permanent events, we usually use Present Perfect Simple. For example:

- She has lived here for all her life.
- They have not called me for years.

3. When we speak about our experience and about our achievements (how much or how often we have done something), we usually use Present Perfect Simple. For example:

- I have signed three contracts today.
- They have started a new advertising campaign.
- She has visited her client two times today.

However, when we talk about some actions not finished yet, we use Present Perfect Progressive. For example:

- She has been painting the room since this morning.
- They have been discussing the contract for two weeks already.
- We have been talking her plans over and over again.

Exercise. Put the verbs in the correct form.*

1. We _____ about this problem all this morning. (speak)
2. She _____ with us for seven years. (work)
3. We _____ our clients all day. (call)
4. _____ they _____ to visit the factories with us? (agree)
5. I _____ never _____ myself in such a situation. (find)
6. They _____ very many important issues this week. (discuss)
7. He _____ a report today. (complete)
8. He _____ a report for three hours. (write)
9. _____ their marketing campaign _____ successful? (be)
10. She _____ for her partner for all day. (wait)

11. The workers _____ the reparation of our new office centre. (finish)
12. _____ he _____ TV all day? (watch)
13. I _____ with bad news from my business trip. (return)
14. They _____ an accident. (have)
15. She _____ to play golf recently. (learn)
16. How long _____ you _____ for this company? (work)
17. He _____ his own car. (not, steal)
18. I _____ this story three times already. (hear)
19. Our company _____ new equipment. (buy)
20. _____ she _____ you? (help)

BRAIN TEASERS

At job interviews and at some business schools brainteasers are quite popular now. That is why I decided to include some of them into this newsletter. From now on you are going to find two brainteasers in every newsletter. Check the answers to the teasers at the end of the newsletter.*

1) You have eight balls, one of which is heavier than the others. All the balls appear identical. You have a balance-type scale, and you can perform trials on the balls. What is the minimum number of trials required to determine which is the heaviest ball?

The source: http://www.coolavenues.com/career_resou/brainteasers_interview.php3

2) There are three bags of gold. One of the bags contains fake gold. All the bags and all the coins look exactly alike. There is the same number of coins in each bag. The real gold coins weigh one ounce each, the fake coins weigh 1.1 oz. apiece. You have a one pan penny scale and one penny, which means you can weigh something just once. (You load the scale, put the penny on it, and the scale spits out a piece of paper with the weight.) How can you tell which bag has the fake gold?

The source: <http://www.mbastrategy.ua/content/view/1479/217/lang,Rus/>

SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS SKILLS: How to refuse politely

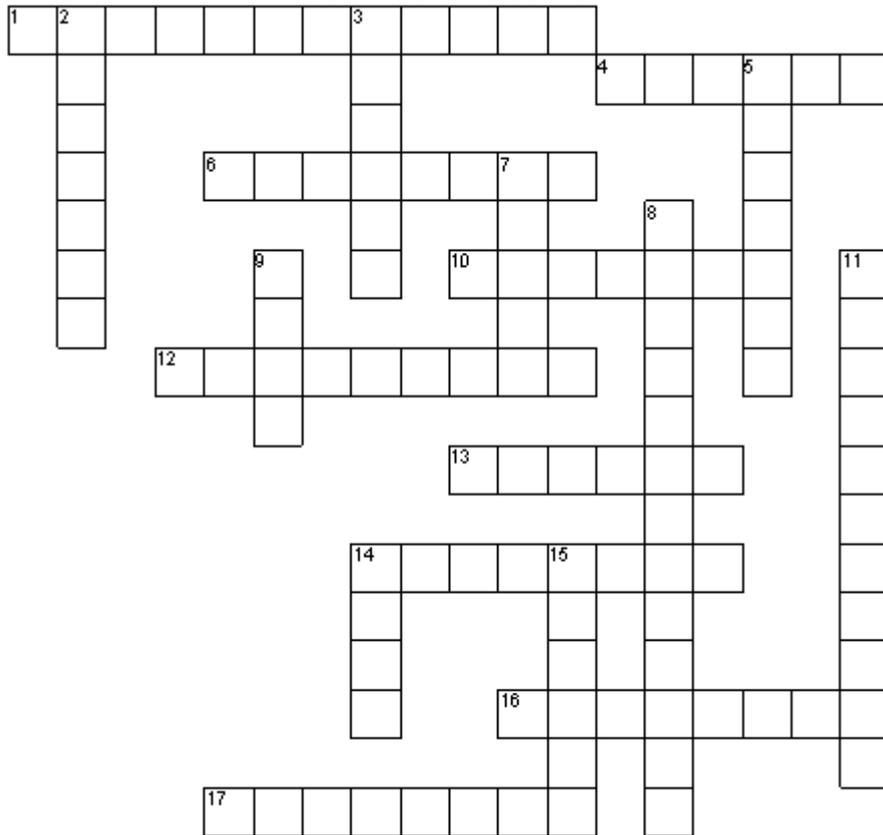
Sometimes you need to say no when someone makes a suggestion, offers something or asks you to do something for them. Of course, saying just 'no' can be rather rude. Here are some of the most common ways to say 'no' nicely - or at least not rudely.

- Would you like to see a film tonight?
I'm afraid I can't go out tonight. I've got a test tomorrow.
- Why don't we have some Chinese food?
Sorry, but **I don't particularly like** Chinese food.
- How about taking a nice walk?
I'd really rather not take a walk this afternoon.
- Would you like to come to the museum with us?
Thank you, but **it's not my idea of** a fun afternoon out.
- Let's go for a drive
Sorry, **I'm not really fond of** driving for the fun of it.
- Why don't you stay the night?
That's very kind of you, **but I really have to** get back to the city.

NOTE: Notice how we often say 'thank you' in some way before refusing the offer. When someone makes an offer it is polite to first thank that person and then say no, often offering an excuse for not wanting or being able to do something. Just saying 'no' is considered very rude behavior indeed!

The source: http://esl.about.com/od/grammarstructures/a/f_sayno.htm

BUSINESS CROSSWORD



www.CrosswordMaker.com

CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Rate and efficiency of work.
- 4. Ask the bank to advance money.
- 6. Money paid for a loan.
- 10. Wealth of person or business.
- 12. Promise to repair or replace.
- 13. Amalgamation of two companies.
- 14. Legal agreement.
- 16. Total sales of a company.
- 17. Share of profits paid to shareholders.

CLUES DOWN

- 2. Proof of payment.
- 3. Put money into a company or business.
- 5. Money paid to owner of copyright or patent.
- 7. Part of the capital of a company.
- 8. Where shares are bought and sold.
- 9. Money lent.
- 11. Amount of money spent.
- 14. Neither cheque nor credit card.
- 15. Money returned.

The source: <http://www.learn-english-today.com/wordgames/xwords-printable/business-finance.htm>

BUSINESS STORIES AND TALES

Carrie Birmingham

The travellers and the monk story (positive attitude, life outlook)

One day a traveller was walking along a road on his journey from one village to another. As he walked he noticed a monk tending the ground in the fields beside the road. The monk said "Good day" to the traveller, and the traveller nodded to the monk. The traveller then turned to the monk and said "Excuse me, do you mind if I ask you a question?".

"Not at all," replied the monk.

"I am travelling from the village in the mountains to the village in the valley and I was wondering if you knew what it is like in the village in the valley?"

"Tell me," said the monk, "What was your experience of the village in the mountains?"

"Dreadful," replied the traveller, "to be honest I am glad to be away from there. I found the people most unwelcoming. When I first arrived I was greeted coldly. I was never made to feel part of the village no matter how hard I tried. The villagers keep very much to themselves, they don't take kindly to strangers. So tell me, what can I expect in the village in the valley?"

"I am sorry to tell you," said the monk, "but I think your experience will be much the same there".

The traveller hung his head despondently and walked on.

A while later another traveller was journeying down the same road and he also came upon the monk.

"I'm going to the village in the valley," said the second traveller, "Do you know what it is like?"

"I do," replied the monk "But first tell me - where have you come from?"

"I've come from the village in the mountains."

"And how was that?"

"It was a wonderful experience. I would have stayed if I could but I am committed to travelling on. I felt as though I was a member of the family in the village. The elders gave me much advice, the children laughed and joked with me and people were generally kind and generous. I am sad to have left there. It will always hold special memories for me. And what of the village in the valley?" he asked again.

"I think you will find it much the same" replied the monk, "Good day to you".

"Good day and thank you," the traveller replied, smiled, and journeyed on.

The source: <http://www.businessballs.com>

BUSINESS COMIC STRIPS: JUST FOR FUN

Scott Adams



The source: <http://www.dilbert.com/strips/comic/2010-06-27/http://www.dilbert.com/strips/comic/2010-06-27/>

USEFUL EXPRESSIONS: Business Proverbs and Sayings

- Don't count your chickens before they are hatched.
- Don't cross the bridge till you come to it.
- Don't fall before you're pushed.
- Don't look a gift horse in the mouth.
- Don't make a mountain out of a molehill.
- Don't mend what ain't broken.
- Don't open a shop unless you like to smile.
- Don't put new wine into old bottles.

- Don't shut the barn door after the horse is gone.
- Don't spit into the wind.

The source: <http://marketingdeviant.com/700-business-proverbs/>

TEXT TO READ AND THINK ABOUT

Starting a Business: A Grandmother's Success Story

Janet Attard

Summary: *Starting a business was not something Anita Crook set out to do at nearly 60 years of age. But when her pocketbook organizer idea took off, this South Carolina grandmother found herself running a multimillion-dollar business.* At age 59, starting a business was something Anita Crook had never considered. Yet, by age 60, she was a budding entrepreneur, and by age 64, the owner of a multimillion-dollar business which produces a handbag organizer called Pouchee®.

Anita's inspiration for starting the business was also part of the reason for success: She found a need, then found a way to fill it.

"It was one of those things that just happens when you're not expecting it," Anita explains.

"My son bought me a really nice purse for Christmas one year. It was an expensive purse, but it didn't have any pockets in it to organize things, and I didn't know how to tell him I'd never use it. So, I kept thinking that if I had a way to organize this bag, I would use it."

Anita couldn't find anything on the market that would let her organize the purse in a useful way, so she "played around with some ideas" and came up with a design she thought would work. She designed Pouchee specifically to fit inside women's handbags to make them more organized with a place for everything: Outside pockets for pens, sunglasses, mobile phone, credit cards, keys etc. Inside pockets for lipsticks or small flashlights, zippered pockets for change or personal items and inside dividers that keep it all organized and in one compact place.

There was one little hitch, though. Anita's design was on paper. She didn't know how to sew. Through a friend, she found a woman who could sew. That woman made Anita a prototype and put her in touch with another person who introduced Anita to a broker who helps US companies find reliable manufacturers in China.

"The next thing I knew I had a few samples in hand and 2000 Pouchees coming in from China," says Anita.

At that point, Anita took up the one task she most dreaded: finding buyers for her new product. Her target customers were the owners of gift shops and boutiques who wanted something different to sell to their clientele –things that couldn't be found in department stores. And at first, she approached them with trepidation.

"Selling isn't my cup of tea," says Anita. "With fear and trembling I went door-to-door showing my little Pouchees to the owners of small specialty boutiques and gift shops. I was scared that if they rejected them I'd run out of the store crying."

Despite her fear of selling, she approached one shop owner after another, in the Greenville, SC area. "Every store I went to loved them and bought them, Anita recalls." In fact, Anita's Pouchees were such a hit with shop owners that she sold out the entire first shipment of 2000 before it arrived from China.

Anita reordered, and soon shipments of 2000 turned into 5000, and then more.

For the first couple of years, Anita stored the inventory and operated the business from the three-car garage attached to her home. And, in the beginning, like most startups, she did everything herself. She was not only the designer and salesperson, but also the bookkeeper and the person who packed up orders, shipped them out and kept track of inventory.



To expand the business she started exhibiting at the Atlanta Gift Show, and started using sales reps to widen her reach. Now, some 2000 stores carry Pouchees in the US and abroad. As the business grew, Anita hired a couple of employees and moved the business out of her home to a warehouse location.

"My biggest challenge has been in knowing how to regulate my inventory. Our business has grown 45% a year-- even in the last year's economy. I don't know how you plan for that. I remember looking at my inventory one August and my shelves were stocked to the ceiling. I thought, 'How will I ever sell all of these.' And September came along and our sales were 107% over the previous year's sales. I had very few of the style of Pouchees that everyone wanted on my shelves and we were heading into October, our biggest month of the year."

To keep overseas shipping costs down, Anita normally places orders about 90 days in advance and has them shipped from China by boat. But to accommodate her customers for Christmas that year, she had some Pouchees air freighted in.

One challenge other entrepreneurs often face that Anita has been able to avoid has been funding growth. She started the business with about \$10,000 of her own savings, and applied for a line of credit early on so she wouldn't have to worry about running out of money. She still has the line of credit, but hasn't had to use it.

"An advantage of being older when you start a business is that you work a lot smarter," Anita says. "I knew I didn't have time or money to waste, so I did a lot of the work myself for as long as I could. I didn't go out and buy nice office furniture or get a swanky office. I worked out of my home in the beginning. Even now, the office we have is functional, but not swanky."

Working smart and staying out of debt "as much as possible" were two strategies that helped Anita build her business into a multi-million dollar operation. Another strategy has been to keep coming up with new designs and new products.

"We are always coming up with innovative ideas. We want to stay fresh. We can't keep selling the same old Pouchees to the stores. To keep them excited and keep them ordering more, you keep trying new things."

Those "new things" range from making Pouchees in different fabrics and designs to changing the placement of pockets and the size of the organizer. Some of the ideas have evolved from the customers, themselves.

"We had a lot of ladies who told me they love to take their Pouchee out of their purse and carry it by itself. We thought that if this is something people want to do, let's see if we can come up with a way to make it better. So we made a slightly bigger Pouchee, put the credit card pocket on the inside, and put a pocket on the outside to hold a Blackberry or cell phone. "

Anita's advice for other budding entrepreneurs? Try to stay out of debt, and "Don't try to be the biggest guy on the block at first," she says. "Test the market first. There's a learning curve in every business. I've hired PR firms, been on TV, been on QVC... getting your name out there is important. But you don't want to do too much too soon. In the beginning you're learning and you can pay a heavy price for that learning if the market isn't there for the product."

The source: <http://www.businessknowhow.com/startup/grandmotherstartup.htm>

VOCABULARY TO THE TEXT

- **hitch** (noun) – a delay; *Ex. The only hitch in our project was that the calculations haven't been ready.*
- **put somebody in touch with** (expression) – to connect several people, help somebody communicate with someone; *Ex. She put me in touch with her boss.*
- **take up** (verb) – begin a new activity; *Ex. We will take up this task tomorrow.*
- **dread** (verb) – something you do not want to do because it is unpleasant; *Ex. You know, I dreaded to call the tax inspection yesterday.*
- **trepidation** (noun) – fear; *Ex. She approached them with trepidation.*
- **something isn't my cup of tea** (idiom) – something which you don't like to do; *Ex. Selling isn't my cup of tea.*
- **shipment** (noun) – delivery; *Ex. Soon shipments of 2000 turned into 5000.*
- **accommodate** (verb) – supply; *Ex. To accommodate our customers we need to order more units.*
- **run out of** (verb) – lose something; *Ex. We've run out of stock.*
- **swanky** (adjective) – elegant; *Ex. I was really shocked when I saw their office which was very swanky.*

- **budding entrepreneur** (expression) – being in an early developmental stage; *Ex. We are going to invite a lot of budding entrepreneurs to visit our workshop.*

***Answers to the exercises.**

Exercise.

1. We have been speaking about this problem all this morning.
2. She has been working with us for seven years.
3. We have been calling our clients all day.
4. Have they agreed to visit the factories with us?
5. I have never found myself in such a situation.
6. They have discussed very many important issues this week.
7. He has completed a report today.
8. He has been writing a report for three hours.
9. Has their marketing campaign been successful?
10. She has been waiting for her partner for all day.
11. The workers have finished the reparation of our new office centre.
12. Has he been watching TV all day?
13. I have returned with bad news from my business trip.
14. They have had an accident.
15. She has been learning to play golf recently.
16. How long have you been working for this company?
17. He has not stolen his own car.
18. I have heard this story three times already.
19. Our company has bought new equipment.
20. Has she helped you?

Brain teasers:

Answer 1.

Two. You start by putting three balls on each side of the scale. There are two basic outcomes: one set of three is heavier, or both sets are in balance. If one set is heavier, you choose two balls from that set and weigh one on each side of the balance. If the balls balance, you know that the remaining one from the set is the heavy one. In the second outcome from the first measurement, the two sets of three balls are in balance. That means the heavy ball is among the remaining two. Weigh them, and you'll have your answer.

Answer 2.

You take one coin from the first bag of gold, two coins from the second bag, and three coins from the third bag. Place them all on the scale. If the coins weigh 6.1 oz., then you know that the first bag held the fake gold. If they weigh 6.2 oz., then it was the second bag. If the coins weighed 6.3 oz., then the third bag held the gold.

Business Crosswords



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