

Experience

by Adrian Doff

Level: Intermediate and above

Assumed knowledge: Learners should already have a basic idea of the present perfect tense and how it is used.

Aims:

- to talk about work experience and what you have and haven't done before
- to say if it's the first time you've done something

There are three ways to use this worksheet:

- Give the worksheet to students to work through independently and then in the next lesson go through the exercises and deal with any points that arise.
- Use the worksheet for an active classroom lesson. The notes below give ideas for doing this.
- Do not give the worksheet out in class, but use it as the basis for your own lesson, getting ideas and phrases from the students and presenting language on the board (use the notes below to help you). Then give out the worksheet at the end, and ask the students to do the exercises for homework.

Warm up

Write the word *experience* on the board. Ask students to think about their own job: what experience do they need for it? Don't go into the language too much at this point - just brainstorm a few ideas (e.g. using a computer, Excel, office work...)

Larger classes: In pairs, students tell each other what experience they need for their job. Then ask a few students to report back what they said.

Worksheet

1 Establishing the concept

- Before you hand out the worksheet, ask the class to imagine they are in an interview for a job like their present one. Ask a few students *What experience do you have?*. Use their answers to focus on two ways of expressing the concept:
 - *have experience of (marketing)*
 - Present perfect tense: *I've (worked in marketing) before.*
- Now hand out the worksheet.

2 Present perfect tense

- Read through the letter extract. Ask, *What is this?* (an application letter, he/she is applying for a job). *What kind of job is it?* (a job in a PR (public relations) company).
- Focus on the examples of the present perfect tense (*I have worked, I have used*). Point out:
 - the form of the tense: *have/has + past participle* (write the forms on the board if necessary)
 - why we use this tense. This is a typical use of the present perfect: it isn't important *when* she worked as a PR consultant, but just the fact that she *has* worked as one. It just means 'this is part of her experience'.
- To reinforce this idea, look at the examples on the worksheet:
 - *She has worked in several different PR companies* (= at different times; so she knows about it)
 - *I haven't worked in marketing before* (= I'm new to it, I don't know anything about it)
 - *Have you used Adworks before?* (= at any time, do you know this program?)

3 have experience of

- Look at the letter extract again, and focus on the phrase *I have some experience of working...* This phrase conveys the same meaning as the present perfect tense (*I have experience of working with clients* = I have worked with clients before). Read through the other examples on the worksheet. Point out that:
 - it is followed by noun or verb *+ing*:

I have experience of	Adworks using Adworks
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- we can also use the adjective *experienced*. Read the examples. Then ask students their job (e.g. *I'm a sales manager*), and ask *Are you an experienced sales manager?*

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Extension: Write *I have _____ experience of...* on the board, and brainstorm words that can go in the gap.
Possible answers: *a lot of, some, no, considerable, wide, recent, direct, many years.*

4 *be familiar with*

- Look at the letter extract and focus on the phrase *I am familiar with*. Point out:
 - the pronunciation of *familiar*.
 - that it means *I know about it*.
- Read the examples. Then ask a few students what computer programs they are familiar with. At this point, you could do the *Talk or write* section (see below).

5 *the first time*

- To introduce this, ask students to imagine a new employee in a company, and write on the board what he might say:
I haven't used Adworks before. → This is the first time I've used Adworks.
- If you like, give a few other sentences like this, and get students to change them, e.g.:
I've never stayed in 4-star hotel. → This is the first time I've stayed in a 4-star hotel.
I haven't eaten octopus before. → This is the first time I've eaten octopus.
She hasn't spoken in public before. → This is the first time she's spoken in public.
- Now get students to read the dialogue about China (top right). Then read through the examples in the section 'the first time'.

Extension: Imagine you are visitor from London to your students' office. Get them to suggest different ways of asking you if it's your first time there:

- *Is this your first time in ...? Is this your first visit to ...?*
- *Is this the first time you've visited ...? Is this the first time you've been to ...?*

Pairwork: Student A is a visitor from abroad to Student B's office. Student B asks one of the questions, and Student A replies. Then they swap roles.

Practice

1 **Talk or write**

Students write the three sentences. Then ask them to read out what they have written.

Classes with a variety of jobs: Collect the sentences that students have written. Read them out in turn. Other students guess who wrote them.

2 **Exercise**

Do the exercise together round the class; or let students do it alone or in pairs, then go through it together.

Answers: a. This is the first time I've had my own office; b. He is an experienced negotiator; c. Do you have (any) experience of using spreadsheets?; d. This is the second time she's flown to Tokyo on business; e. I haven't used English in my work before; f. I lived in Tokyo for five years, so I'm familiar with Japanese culture.

3 **Other language areas you could explore:**

Opposite forms:

- *experienced / inexperienced*
- *experience / lack of experience*
- *familiar/unfamiliar, familiarity / lack of familiarity*

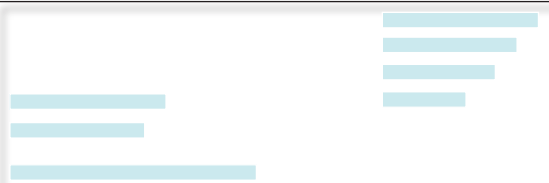
Expressions connected with knowledge:

- *know (a lot / a bit / nothing) about...*
- *have (some / extensive / slight) knowledge of...*
- *be an expert in...*

be used to:

- *I'm not used to speaking in public (= I haven't often done it before).*
- *She's used to dealing with difficult customers.*

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I have worked as a PR consultant before, and I have some experience of working with clients in Britain and in the USA. I have used Adworks software, and I am familiar with version 6.5.



Present perfect tense

To talk about *experience*, we can use the present perfect tense (*have + past participle*):

She *has worked* in several PR companies.

I *haven't worked* in marketing before.

Have you *used Adworks* before?

have experience of

We can express the same idea using *have experience of*.

She *has some experience of* PR work.

I *have no experience of* marketing.

Do you *have any experience of using* Adworks?

Note: We can also use the adjective *experienced*, e.g. She's *an experienced* computer programmer. (= she has a lot of / considerable experience)

be familiar with

She's *familiar with* the problems of dealing with clients (= she knows about this, she has a lot of experience of it)

Are you *familiar with* the latest version of Adworks? (= Do you know it? Have you used it?)


the first time

We can say:

(my)	first second ...	visit to... time in...	This is my third time in London. Is this your first visit to the New York office?
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or

the	first second ...	time (I've)	visited... been to...	This is only the second time I've been to a sales conference. Is this the first time you've visited the New York office?
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Talk or write 

Write three sentences about your experience (either about work or other interests).

1st sentence: use the Present perfect tense
2nd sentence: use *experience of*
3rd sentence: use *experienced*

Exercise

Write these sentences in a different way. Use the words and phrases in brackets.

- I've never had my own office before. (the first time)
- He has a lot of experience of negotiating. (experienced)
- Have you used spreadsheets before? (experience)
- She's flown to Tokyo on business twice before. (the second time)
- I have no experience of using English in my work. (I haven't)
- I lived in Tokyo for five years, so Japanese culture isn't new to me. (familiar with)