

- 1** In some industries women who become managers can have problems with their fellow male managers. These can include:
- inappropriate or tasteless comments
 - unwelcome physical contact
 - requests to make the coffee or go out for cigarettes.

What steps can a woman take in this situation? What problems might there be with the solutions you find?

- 2** Some managers find it difficult to make time for everything they have to do. They are at the office early and stay until late. They are always behind with work and their jobs become less and less satisfying.

How can a manager organise tasks and time efficiently? What problems might there be with your solutions?

- 3** There are many ways to communicate information. For example:

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| - by letter | - on notice boards |
| - by phone | - in memos |
| - in reports | - face to face |
| - in informal meetings | - in formal meetings |
| - by fax | - through rumours |

Each one is appropriate to different types of information and in different situations. What are they? What examples can you give? Which methods are the most and least expensive?

- 4** Many companies waste vast amounts of paper, electricity and other resources. Apart from its being bad business sense, this type of practice is increasingly seen as being environmentally irresponsible.

What policies can companies introduce to reduce waste? What advantages and disadvantages do these policies have?

- 5** Every year small businesses go broke not because they are failing to sell, but because cash flow problems leave them unable to pay urgent debts. In other words, their clients pay them too late.

What policies should a small business have in relation to payments? What problems might there be in enforcing policies?

Business tips Worksheet

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ACTIVITY

Pairwork and whole class: reading, speaking

AIM

To discuss appropriate ways to act in a range of business situations and to present the conclusions of the discussion.

GRAMMAR AND FUNCTIONS

If clauses

Infinitive of purpose

By + -ing

VOCABULARY

to take steps, to be behind with work, task, informal/formal meetings, notice board, rumour, resources, irresponsible, waste, cash flow, debts, policy, to enforce

PREPARATION

Choose the discussions you want to use and which you think will interest your class. You may want to supplement with discussions about problems specific to the students' companies. Copy the worksheet and cut up the five discussion questions so that there is one for each pair or group of three students in the class. Keep an extra copy for yourself.

TIME

30–45 minutes

PROCEDURE

- 1 Tell the students that they are going to talk about different business problems and give presentations of their solutions.
- 2 Divide the class into pairs (or threes if necessary).
- 3 Give each pair a discussion question.
- 4 Allow time for the students to read and understand the problem. Circulate, helping with vocabulary or encouraging dictionary use.
- 5 Explain the procedure.
- 6 Students should discuss in their pairs different answers to the questions in their discussion sheets, and prepare a two- or three-minute presentation to the rest of the class. Make sure they realise that they all have different problems to discuss.
- 7 Put the following plan on the board for them to follow in the presentations.

Explain the problem.
Present solutions.
Invite questions.

- 8 Students discuss and then give their presentations.

FOLLOW-UP

Ask the students to write a brief report (about 150 words) on the problem and the solution they have proposed.