

10b *Reprimands*



Script 1

- A:** Come in.
B: You wanted to see me?
A: Yes. Sit down. I've been meaning to speak to you for some time. You've been with us for almost a year now, haven't you?
B: Yes. I much prefer this to my last company.
A: Good. Any criticisms?
B: Well, there's not much contact with bosses. I come in and do my job, but I don't get much information about how well I'm doing. But the good side of that is that there's a lot of freedom to do things your own way.
A: And do you think you're doing a good job?
B: Well, I certainly hope so. I work hard. I've had some very good feedback from customers. John Wells was kind enough to say that he liked working with me, this morning.
A: Well that's excellent. You don't think you've had problems with other people in the office?
B: Sorry?
A: I just wondered if you'd been aware of any problems with colleagues.
B: Well, I get on better with some people than others. Why do you ask?
A: It's just that some of the people in your department say that you don't pull your weight.
B: Who says so?
A: I can't tell you that.
B: What is this? When didn't I pull my weight?
A: It isn't really a question of a specific event – it seems to be a sort of general feeling.
B: A 'general feeling'? What does that mean? Don't you keep records?
A: We don't like to be too formal here. We rely on trust.
B: But you don't trust me?
A: Of course I do. It's just that I have to follow these things up, it's my job, you know. I thought you'd have some idea what the problem was.
B: Well, I don't.



Script 2

- A:** Come in.
B: Hello. You wanted to see me?
A: Yes. I'll not waste any time. Your performance isn't up to scratch.
B: Sorry?
A: We expect a lot from people here. If you don't want to work there are plenty of people who do.
B: I'm sorry, what's the problem?
A: I've received reports that you haven't been doing your share of the work in the department.
B: And who made these reports?
A: People whose opinions I trust. I want to see an immediate improvement in your attitude.
B: My attitude? Is it my attitude or my work that's the problem?
A: From the way you're speaking right now, it's obvious that your attitude leaves a lot to be desired. And I have reliable reports that the same can be said about your work.
B: Just a moment.
A: No. That's it. Please get back to your desk. This time I won't put anything on file, but if I have to speak to you again, next time there'll be a written record.
B: Hang on...
A: I said that's the end of this meeting. Goodbye.

10c *Reprimands*



Script 3

- A:** Come in, come in.
B: You wanted to see me?
A: Yes, I did. Look, I'm a bit pushed for time so I'll come straight to the point.
B: Which is?
A: Your work hasn't been as good as we would have hoped recently.
B: Sorry?
A: Yes. We had some reports from people in your department that you weren't doing your fair share.
B: That can't be...
A: Just a moment. Let me finish. I checked and it's quite true. There has been a drop off in your productivity. Six months ago you were completing 80% of your workload on time, which is acceptable. That's fallen to less than 60% in the last three months.
B: There is a reason for that...
A: I'm sure there is. And I understand that things can be difficult sometimes. But this is a company and we're here to make a profit.
B: Yes, I realise that. It's just that...
A: After all, if we don't make a profit we'll all be out of a job, won't we?
B: Yes...
A: And other people in your department are achieving these levels of productivity, aren't they?
B: Yes...
A: So what's the matter with you?
B: Er... I don't know.
A: Well, let's see if you can't do a little better. I'll be keeping an eye on your figures over the next month and we'll see how it goes. Now I've really got to move on. I've got a very important meeting on the other side of town at eleven, so I really have to rush.
B: Oh.



Script 4

- A:** Come in.
B: You wanted to see us?
A: Yes. Sit down, both of you. Make yourself at home. Coffee?
B: No thank you.
C: No thanks.
A: Now, before we start our meeting I'd like to talk about a couple of little problems.
B: Problems?
A: Yes. Well. First of all you, Jo.
B: What's my 'problem'?
A: In one word, productivity. You aren't getting the figures we look for, Jo. You're slipping.
B: Er... sorry.
A: Don't worry. I know you can do better. I just want you to know that I'm watching. And Ben...
C: What? Am I having productivity problems too?
A: No, not at all. Your problem is timekeeping. Flexitime is a good thing, Ben. Don't abuse it. Core time is from 10 to 4. You've arrived after 10 several times this month.
C: Well, only a few minutes.
A: Excuse me?
C: I'm sorry. It won't happen again.
A: Good. Otherwise, you're both doing a good job. Now let's move on to the main reason for our meeting.
B: Oh.
C: Right.

Reprimands

Worksheets 10b and 10c

NOTE: You may need both worksheets b and c for this activity, depending on the size of your class.

ACTIVITY

Pairwork, groupwork, classwork: reading, speaking

AIM

To act out situations in which reprimands are given ineffectively and then to discuss what went wrong.

GRAMMAR AND FUNCTIONS

Should(n't) + verb

Should(n't) have + past participle

VOCABULARY

feedback, to pull your weight, fair share, up to scratch, attitude, to put something on file, to come to the point, a drop off, productivity, flexitime, workload, to keep an eye on something or somebody

PREPARATION

Make copies of Worksheet 10b and Worksheet 10c and cut them up into scripts as indicated. Make enough copies so that each student has a script and a role to play in it. The first three scripts have two roles, the last has three. If you have fewer than nine students, you will not need all the scripts.

TIME

20-30 minutes

PROCEDURE

- 1 Write the word *reprimand* on the board and ask the students to think of other words associated with it. Write their suggestions on the board.
- 2 Tell the students that they are going to look at situations where reprimands are given at work.
- 3 Divide the class into pairs and/or threes and give out copies of the scripts. If you have fewer than nine students in the class, each pair or three will be able to have a different script. For example, if you have seven students in the class, use two of the first three scripts plus the last one.

- 4 The students read the scripts, checking unfamiliar vocabulary in their dictionaries or with you.
- 5 The pairs, or threes, now rehearse the conversations.
- 6 Still in their pairs or threes, the students discuss the conversation, looking for what the bosses should or shouldn't have done or said. If you have more than nine students, combine pairs which have read the same dialogue to make groups of four.
- 7 Allow 5-10 minutes for discussion, then ask the students to stop.
- 8 Tell the students that they had different scripts; some may not have realised.
- 9 Ask each pair or three in turn to act out their conversation for the rest of the class, and then explain what they thought went wrong.
- 10 Ask the whole class to work together to draw up a set of golden rules for giving reprimands. For example:
REPRIMANDS
Allow enough time for the meeting.
Carry out reprimands one to one - only praise should be done in public.
State the reason for the meeting at the beginning of your conversation.
Be specific - have facts and figures to hand.
Allow the person to state their case - they may not agree with you.
Don't talk about blame and fault: talk about problems and solutions.
Set specific objectives and deadlines for performance improvements.
Stick to the subject of the meeting.

FOLLOW-UP

Ask students to write and act out scripts which follow the rules in Procedure (10) or the ones they have come up with themselves.