New apps, new work opportunities

one stop english

Level: Advanced (C1–C2)

Time: 60–90 minutes

Business topics: Recruitment, HR, Legal, Technology, Career planning

Business language focus: language associated with recruitment, technology, law and trade unions

Activities: In this lesson, students will:
- read a business article and look at the language necessary to understand and talk about it;
- look at business-specific words and expressions and apply them to their own personal work experience;
- discuss aspects of the article in greater depth;
- research an issue affecting employment and debate it with another group.

Materials: One copy of the worksheet per student, internet access for Exercise 6

Group size: All of the tasks can be completed in pairs or groups, so that as much communication as possible takes place in the class. However, this lesson plan can also be used in a one-to-one teaching situation.

This lesson is based on an authentic article, republished here with its full, original text.

The article talks about how new apps are providing new work opportunities.

Teacher's notes

1. Warmer

If possible, before handing out the worksheets, display the logos for the four companies on the board. Ask students if they recognise these companies and can say anything about what they do. Then hand out the worksheets and discuss the questions as a whole class.

If learners are unable to explain the 'gig economy' give a definition – *Low paid work with irregular hours.*

Key:
Uber – An American multinational ridesharing company, similar to a taxi firm, that operates via an app.
Deliveroo – A UK based food delivery company that also operates in other countries. People order food from a variety of restaurants through an app.
Lyft – A ridesharing company based in the US that also operates in Canada. Through an app, people can share car rides, scooters and bicycles.
TaskRabbit – An American online and mobile marketplace that matches freelance labour with local demand.
Upwork – A global freelancing platform based in the US where businesses and freelances connect and collaborate remotely.

Elicit what these companies have in common (*they are all fairly new companies, they are all based online, they all use self-employed workers*) and any other similar companies that the students know of. What are the advantages and disadvantages of being self-employed?

2. Key words and expressions

Explain that today learners are going to read an article about the 'gig economy' in the UK.

Ask learners to read the article quickly and find the words in the text that match the definitions. If you wish, you may make this into a race or set a time limit. Once finished, check the answers as a whole class.

Key:
1. *supplement*
2. *a drive*
3. *exploitation*
4. *sufficient*
5. *perpetuate*
6. *a permanent post*
7. *underemployed*
8. *Desperate*

3. Understanding the article

Ask learners to read the article again and answer the questions.

Encourage them to discuss their answers in pairs before comparing answers with the class.

Key:
1. *It helps people find temporary work*
2. *The community trade union*
3. *Southend, Lambeth and Croydon*
4. *They like it because it helps them find work*
5. *They like it because it helps them find staff but isn't exploitative, like other apps*

If learners finish this section quickly, ask them to verbally summarise the article in pairs (you could set a word limit of, for example, no more than 50 words). Vote on the best summary.

4. Business language

A Learners match the words to the definitions and check their answers in pairs. Do not allow learners to use dictionaries for this.

Key:

1.	*d*	5.	*b*
2.	*c*	6.	*g*
3.	*a*	7.	*h*
4.	*f*	8.	*e*

B Learners complete the sentences with words from A. If learners complete this task quickly, encourage them to write some sentences of their own using these words.

Key:
1. *rating/platform*
2. *safeguards*
3. *start-up*
4. *flexible labour*
5. *contractual relationship*
6. *keep me on*
7. *trade union*

5. Discussion

Students discuss the six questions in pairs. Monitor and support where necessary, making a note of any interesting answers and common errors. Feedback on these as a whole class. Encourage them to use as much new language as possible.

6. Wider Business Theme – Self-employment and workers' rights

A Divide students into groups and sub-divide each group into two groups, A and B.

Explain that group A should prepare a presentation about an employment case involving Uber and group B should prepare a presentation about an employment case involving Deliveroo.

Encourage the groups to use the internet to research their ideas.

As groups work, monitor and help where necessary.

B Ask groups A and B to present their cases to each other. After each group has finished, ask them to compare the cases and discuss the issues involved using the questions given and language from today's lesson.

Note down errors and good language during the presentations and lead a feedback session with the whole class.

> One-to-one teaching
> Ask the student to choose one of the roles from either group A or group B and prepare the presentation for homework.