

Putting people above profits – Intermediate Teacher's notes

Title of the lesson: Putting people above profits

Level: Intermediate (B1–B2)

Time: 90 minutes +

Groups: One-to-one, small groups, whole class

Business topics: Business, profit, values

Business language focus: Collocations, vocabulary related to business and industries

Skills: Reading, speaking, writing

Materials: One copy of the worksheet per student

Overview: This lesson is based on an authentic article from a trusted news source. The article is about how, despite the public having shown appreciation for work done under extreme circumstances and pressure all over the world, companies and managers still have a long way to go in making sure their employees are truly valued. The author suggests that this pandemic could be used as an opportunity to make radical changes, and properly reassess value within companies.

1. Warmer

- a. Tell the students to look at the pictures of the people and ask the class which occupations they think they have (food delivery cyclist, fast food worker, package delivery driver). Note that two of these people are wearing masks and working during the pandemic. Ask them what kinds of challenges this situation could present for these jobs. Then, ask them to consider what their employers could do to help them face these challenges and succeed.

2. Key words and expressions

- a. Students complete the definitions with the words from the box. Remind them that they can use the section numbers to find the words in the article.

Key:

1. *strict*
2. *collective*
3. *boosted*
4. *genuine*
5. *appreciation*
6. *highlight*
7. *insight*
8. *solely*
9. *investors*
10. *sufficiently*

3. Understanding the article

- a. Have students work in pairs to decide and tick the statements that are supported by information from the text.

Key:

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. ✓ | 8. ✓ |
| 2. ✓ | 10. ✓ |
| 5. ✓ | |

4. Business Language – Collocations

- a. Students make collocations by combining the words. Make sure they understand the meaning of all the collocations before starting the next activity.

Key:

1. *delivery drivers*
2. *genuine appreciation*
3. *in demand*

- b. Ask the students to complete the sentences with the collocations they made in activity a.

Key:

1. *in demand*
2. *genuine appreciation*
3. *delivery drivers*

5. Business Language – Vocabulary for industries

- a. Students put the words and expressions from the wordpool in the correct column in the table. Make sure the students understand the difference between the three industries.

Financial	Environmental	Delivery
banking	climate	drivers
credit	preserving the planet	maintaining supplies

6. Discussion questions

Put students into small groups and have them read and discuss the questions. Once all groups have completed the discussion, encourage further discussion with the whole class. Ask the class to think of a time when they wanted more freedom at work and invite individual students to describe their experience. Did they succeed in gaining more freedom or not? Encourage several answers before moving on to the next task.

7. Wider business theme – Negotiating independence

- a. Explain that students will work in pairs to do a role play, with one of them playing the role of a restaurant manager and the other a chef in the kitchen. The aim of the role play is to practise negotiation of responsibilities and delegation of tasks, with role B demonstrating that they are ready to take on greater responsibility. Divide the class into A and B roles and then put them in pairs. If there is an odd number, work with the remaining student. Consider providing a scenario to get the role play started if necessary: B walks into the restaurant and sees their manager is sitting alone... Observe the pairs and choose a good example to perform their role play in front of the class at the end. Consider further discussion – ask the students if they found negotiation to be challenging and how they might approach a situation like this differently in their own jobs. How would they advise others to negotiate for more freedom at work?