BUSINESS NEWS LESSONS

Watching your workers–Intermediate
Teacher's Notes

onestopenglish

Title of the lesson: Watching your workers

Level: Intermediate (B1–B2)

Time: Up to 90 minutes

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

Business topics: Health and safety at work; technology for surveillance

Business language focus: phrases and phrasal verbs, industry vocabulary

Skills: Reading, speaking

Materials: One copy of the worksheet per student

Overview: This article discusses how businesses have been using technology to monitor their staff more closely and how this has impacted on employees' physical and mental health.

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1. Warmer

a. Ask students to consider the verb *monitor* and to make a list of five other words they associate with it.

b. Explain that there are many industries that use high numbers of monitoring technology to observe what their staff are doing. Consider providing examples of industries as prompts: taxi drivers, the police; and reasons for doing so: health and safety, personal protection. Ask students to write a paragraph about an industry with increased staff monitoring and the kinds of monitoring tools they might use.

2. Key words

Key:
1. complying
2. transmission
3. prompt
4. intense
5. contracting
6. efficiency
7. productivity
8. tempt
9. collective
10. negotiate

3. Understanding the text

a. Have students read the statements and decide whether they are true or false. They can correct any that are false.

1. True
2. True
3. True
4. False. A company that produces guitars uses technology to track how long it takes a worker to complete each task.
5. False. Many employers want to explore the ways in which monitoring tools can drive productivity and performance.
6. True
7. False. Some businesses are monitoring staff working from home and checking how long they take for breaks.
8. False. Workers feel unhappy and tired when they are under pressure to meet targets and they are being watched all the time.
9. True
10. True

4. Business language – Phrases and phrasal verbs

a. Students match the words to make phrases. Remind students that although other matches are possible, they are aiming to make words that appear in the article. They can check the article to help them answer.

Key:
1. f. / 2. a. or h. / 3. d. / 4. b. / 5. h. or a. / 6. c. / 7. e. / 8. g.

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b. Students write the phrases and phrasal verbs next to the definitions.

Key:

1. *up from*	5. *for instance*
2. *based on*	6. *fight against*
3. *depend on*	7. *struck by*
4. *more than*	8. *under pressure*

c. Students complete the statements with two of the phrases and phrasal verbs.

Key:
a. *under pressure*
b. *based on*

d. Put the students into pairs and ask them to discuss whether they agree or disagreement with the statements. Ask for pair feedback and encourage further exploration of alternative views.

5. Business Language – Compound nouns

a. Students complete sentences using the compound nouns in the wordpool.

Key:
1. *security cameras*
2. *work processes*
3. *incident reports*

6. Discussion questions

a. Put students in small groups and ask them to discuss the questions that expand on topics from the article. Invite groups to share their answers with the rest of the class and summarise similarities and difference once all groups have contributed.

7. Wider business theme – identifying technological solutions

a. This activity helps students to build an important business skill. Students identify how technology can be used to achieve specific business goals. Put students in small groups and ask them to discuss the points in part 1. If necessary, offer examples of monitoring technology used to improve physical health: digital watches and trackers, software that provides activity reminders. Ask them to consider physical activity that is possible during the working day and how technology could be used to encourage people to be more active. Ask them to go further, examining which technology is likely to be cheaper and therefore appeal to many businesses. Students should come to a group decision about the technology they think would be most commercially successful.

b. Ask each group to nominate a student to describe their idea to the rest of the class. Invite the rest of the class to ask the group questions and facilitate further discussion. Once all groups have presented their ideas, ask students to vote for their favourite suggestion.

Intermediate