

5

Ethical business

Starting point

- 1 What effect (positive or negative) can companies have on the environment and the local community?
- 2 Do you know of any companies that are well known for their social responsibility? Is this a selling point for the company?
- 3 Do you know of any companies that have a public image problem because of their activities?

Working with words | Ethical business

- 1 Work with a partner. What are the characteristics of an 'ethical business'?
- 2 Read the text about a company called Patagonia. In what ways is the company an ethical business? How does this compare to your ideas in 1?

OUR REASON *for being*

Patagonia grew out of a small company that made tools for climbers. Mountain climbing is still at the heart of our business, but we also make clothes for skiing, snowboarding, surfing, fly fishing, paddling and trail running. All of these are silent sports. They don't require a motor or the cheers of a crowd – the rewards come from connecting with nature.

Our values reflect a business that was started by a band of climbers and surfers who love wild and beautiful places. This means that we act responsibly and take an active part in the fight to repair the damage that is being done to the health of our planet.

We acknowledge that the wild world we love best is disappearing. That is why we share a strong commitment to protecting natural lands and waters. Caring for the environment is very important

to us. We donate our time, services and at least 1% of our sales to hundreds of environmental groups all over the world who are working to protect and restore the environment.

But we also know that our business activity – from lighting our stores to dyeing shirts – creates pollution as a by-product. So we work steadily to reduce the impact we have, and do more than simply comply with the regulations. We use recycled polyester in many of our clothes and only organic, rather than pesticide-intensive, cotton.

Staying true to our principles during thirty-plus years in business has helped us create a company we're proud to run and work for.



- 3 Read the text again and answer questions 1–5.
 - 1 How have the company's founders influenced what the company does now?
 - 2 What does the company have a commitment to? How do they show this commitment?
 - 3 What points are made about the manufacturing process?
 - 4 Why are the owners proud of the company?
 - 5 Do you or would you buy products from companies like Patagonia? How important is it for you to buy products from ethical companies?

4 Match the words in A and B to make phrases to complete questions 1–7.

A	B
act	time
share	responsibly
take	the impact
stay	regulations
comply with	an active part in
reduce	true to its principles
donate	a strong commitment to

- Do most companies in your country always _____ or do they sometimes bend the rules?
- Do you know of any companies that _____, services or money to help local organizations?
- How can businesses _____ they have on the environment?
- Why should a company _____ and deal with any pollution that is a by-product of its business activity?
- Does your company _____ the life of the local community. If so, what does it do?
- Should a company _____ and values even if this means a loss of profit?
- What companies in your country _____ protecting the environment?

5 Work with a partner. Ask and answer the questions in **4**.

6 ▶ **5.1** Listen to a radio presenter questioning Shamsul Aziz, a spokesperson for a leading gas and oil exploration company. Answer questions 1–4.

- How would you describe the interviewer's style?
- How does the spokesperson react to the questions?
- What does the company do for ...?
a its staff b the environment c the local communities where it operates
- Do you think the company is doing enough for the environment and local community?

7 Which of these nouns from audio script **5.1** do you associate with ...?

- an ethical company
 - an unethical company
- bribery ethics deception responsibility fairness generosity
values corruption prejudice credibility greed discrimination*

8 Work with a partner. Think of an action or a situation to explain the meaning of each noun.

Example: *Bribery – paying money to a government official to get planning permission for a new building.*

9 Complete this table with the adjectives of some of the nouns in **7**.

Noun	Adjective	Noun	Adjective
deception	<i>deceptive</i>	ethics	
responsibility		corruption	
fairness		prejudice	
generosity		greed	
credibility		discrimination	

10 Work with a partner. Turn to page 136. Read about the two companies and discuss how ethical you think they are, using some of the nouns and adjectives from **7** and **9**.

» For more exercises, go to **Practice file 5** on page 114.

Context

Hummingbird Teas focuses on speciality teas from countries such as China, India and South Africa. The unique selling point of the business is its ethos. It sources teas from small, local farmers and supports fair trade. It has recently brought in Clare, a PR consultant, to help raise its profile. Clare has been organizing a trip for reporters from ethical consumer magazines to see Hummingbird's operation. She is meeting with the reporters to give details of the trip.



Tip | *advise and recommend*

Advise and recommend are both quite formal ways of making a suggestion. Be careful with the word order.

*We **advise** you to set this up directly (with the locals).*

*We **recommend** (that) you stay with our guide.*

Business communication | Planning arrangements

- 1 When you have an overseas trip for work or you are preparing for someone to visit, how important is the planning stage? What can go wrong with the preparations?
- 2 ▶ 5.2 Read the *Context*. Listen to Part 1 of the meeting between Clare and the reporters. Make any necessary changes to these notes.

- Trip planned to China or South Africa (to be confirmed)
- Five days travelling around different tea plantations
- Opportunities for sightseeing will be provided
- Two possible dates for trip: February and March
- Two internal flights

- 3 ▶ 5.2** Listen again. Complete these phrases for explaining the plans and arrangements for the trip.
- 1 We _____ once you've decided what you'd like to see.
 - 2 So, _____ how Hummingbird's operation works in China.
 - 3 The _____ spend four days at one of the sites where the tea is grown.
 - 4 You _____ accompany the workers in their daily work.
 - 5 We've looked at all the options, and _____ two dates.
- 4 ▶ 5.3** Listen to Part 2 of the meeting.
- 1 What activities and visits can the reporters take part in?
 - 2 What advice can Clare give about the guide?
- 5 ▶ 5.3** Listen again and complete these phrases.
- 1 We _____ watch the tea being prepared.
 - 2 English isn't spoken so _____ with our guide.
 - 3 On the subject of language – _____ a project set up to help build a new school.
 - 4 That _____ really interesting. I _____.
 - 5 ... as it _____ travel with our interpreter.
 - 6 A visit to the site _____.
 - 7 I was there for the first time last month ... It's _____.
 - 8 Mmm ... _____ I'm looking for.
 - 9 Well, alternatively, _____ introduce you to the team who work for Hummingbird in China.
 - 10 That would be great – _____.
- 6** Put phrases 1–10 in **5** into categories a–c.
- a inviting _____
 - b recommending _____
 - c responding to an invitation or recommendation _____

» For more exercises, go to **Practice file 5** on page 114.

Key expressions

Explaining plans and arrangements

We'll email you the (final) itinerary.
 We're planning to ...
 The idea is to ...
 We're going to arrange ...
 You'll get the opportunity to ...
 The flight leaves on ...

Inviting

We'd like to invite you to ...
 You're welcome to ...
 Alternatively, we'd be delighted to ...

Recommending

We strongly recommend you (stay) ...
 It would be a good idea to ...
 ... is highly recommended.
 It's well worth a visit.

Responding

That would be great.
 That sounds really interesting.
 Good idea.
 That makes sense.
 It's just the kind of thing I need.
 That's not really what I'm looking for.

- 7 Work with a partner. Read this information about activities organized by Hummingbird Teas. Choose information A or B and take turns to invite and make recommendations of things to do or points to look out for. Decide for yourself if you want to accept or decline.

A

Hummingbird Teas

Invitation: Information day – How and why does Hummingbird Teas practise fair trade?

Recommended activities on the day:

- Presentation about the Slow Food movement in Europe and how Hummingbird Teas' activities complement this
- Tea tasting – rare and exotic teas

Advice: Arrive early for tea tasting – only ten people in each group

B

Hummingbird Teas

Invitation: Informal visit day, including presentation – The man behind Rooibos tea.

Recommended activities on the day:

- Hummingbird Teas help to make a difference – Slide show of tree replanting in the Himalayas
- Tea-making workshop – How to make the perfect cuppa

Advice: Taste teas at workshop before buying

- 8 Work with a partner. Your company has arranged an open day to give customers an insight into its operation. (If you don't work for a company, use the information on page 136.)
- 1 Make a list of:
 - the things you plan to show your guests on the day
 - any recommendations of things to do or points to look out for
 - things you hope to invite your guests to do
 - 2 Find another partner (from a different company if possible). Take turns to:
 - explain your plans for the day
 - make any recommendations
 - invite your partner to do things
 - respond appropriately

Practically speaking | Responding to invitations

- 1 When someone invites you to do something, do you ever find it difficult to say 'no'? What are some ways to decline or delay your response?
- 2 ▶ 5.4 Listen to five invitations. Match each invitation 1–5 to how the other person responds, a–e.

invitation 1	a accepts
invitation 2	b declines
invitation 3	c partly accepts
invitation 4	d partly declines
invitation 5	e neither accepts or declines
- 3 ▶ 5.4 Listen again and write down any useful phrases the speaker uses in the responses.
- 4 Invite as many people as you can to these activities (or make up your own). When you receive an invitation, use some of the phrases from 3 to respond.

• go to the cinema (to see?)	• go for dinner (where?)
• watch a football match (which team?)	• hiking at the weekend (where?)
• go to the theatre (to see?)	• have a coffee (where?)

Language at work | Talking about the future

- 1** Read the sentences a–e. What tense is used in each sentence?
- a She's **coming** in later on this morning to speak with you.
 - b This **will give** you a real insight into their lives.
 - c We've looked at all the options, and we're **going to** arrange two dates.
 - d The first morning flight **leaves** at 7.15.
 - e A ... it'd be a good idea to travel with our interpreter.
B That makes sense. We'll **speak** to our colleagues and let you know.
- 2** Match sentences a–e in **1** to situations 1–5 in the *Language point*.

LANGUAGE POINT

- 1 someone making a decision as they speak ____
- 2 someone talking about a plan, intention, something they have already decided to do ____
- 3 someone talking about an appointment or arrangement ____
- 4 someone making a prediction ____
- 5 someone talking about a timetable or schedule ____

» For more information, go to **Grammar reference** on page 115.

- 3** Work with a partner. Decide which is the best option in *italics* in each sentence.
- 1 I can't see you on Friday – I 'll *do* / 'm *doing* a training course in London.
 - 2 According to the weather forecast, it 'll *be* / 's *being* hot tomorrow.
 - 3 The next flight to Tokyo *arrives* / *is going to arrive* there at 10.45 tomorrow morning.
 - 4 A By the way, I'm out of the office tomorrow.
B Are you? OK, I 'll *let* / 'm *letting* Christina know.
 - 5 I'm not in the office on Monday – I 'm *going to go* / 'll *go* to an exhibition.
 - 6 I *meet* / 'm *meeting* Mrs Brasseler at 3.30 this afternoon.
 - 7 A Could you give me some information about Mr Ward's visit?
B Of course, I *email* / 'll *email* the details now.
 - 8 I think Greta *is noticing* / *will notice* a lot of changes in the office when she returns from maternity leave.
- 4** Work with a partner. Ask and answer these questions using *will*, *going to*, the present continuous or the present simple.
- 1 Have you got a busy weekend?
 - 2 Are you doing anything tonight?
 - 3 What's the weather forecast for the weekend?
 - 4 What time is the last train?
 - 5 What do you think about the threat of global warming?
 - 6 Are you free tomorrow afternoon?
 - 7 Have you booked your next holiday?
 - 8 What plans have you got for projects at work or home?

» For more exercises, go to **Practice file 5** on page 115.

- 5** Think of future work commitments, career plans or key events for your company. Write only the dates and times for these on a piece of paper. For example, *in 2025*, *7.30 tonight*, *next Friday*, *next October*, *when I am 60*, etc. Compare your dates with a partner. Ask them to explain the importance of each date.

Example: A Why is 5th May 2025 important?

B That's when the company will be exactly 50 years old. We're going to have a big celebration with all our major clients – it will be a big achievement for us.

TALKING POINT

Rule 47: A set of personal standards

Richard Templar's book *The rules of work* provides 109 rules to follow in order to be successful in business. Rule 45 requires that you know the ethics of your industry. Ask yourself, what does your industry or company contribute to society? Is the contribution positive and beneficial, or negative and damaging? How much a part of that industry are you?

If your answers to these questions lead you to believe that your industry stinks, that doesn't (necessarily) mean you have to hand in your notice today. After all, you can always try to change things from the inside. However, if you are ever faced with the ethical dilemma of crossing the line and doing bad things, then you will need to set personal standards. This is Rule 47. Rule 47 requires you to set personal standards which you won't break for any reason, such as:

- I will not break the law in order to further my career.
- I will share my skills and knowledge with anyone who would benefit in the same industry.
- I will not be jealous of anyone else's success in the same industry.
- I will always put my family first (before work).
- I will not work evenings or weekends, unless it is an emergency.

Discussion

- 1 Do you think it's always necessary to contribute something to society in business? Why/Why not?
- 2 What do you think the terms 'your industry stinks' and 'crossing the line' mean in the article?
- 3 If you think the industry you work in is unethical, which do you think is better: to hand in your notice, or to try and change things from the inside? Give reasons for your answer.
- 4 Do you think it's a good idea to have a set of personal standards at work? Why might it be difficult not to break them sometimes?

Task

- 1 Look at the list of five personal standards in the article. Which ones would you include in your list of personal standards? Which would be difficult to follow?
- 2 Work in groups. Tell the group your answers for 1 and give your reasons.
- 3 As a group, write a list of between eight and ten more personal standards to follow at work. You can use some (not all) of the standards in the article and add your own. Start each standard with the words 'We will ...' or 'We will not ...'
- 4 Present your list to the other groups.