

Briefing

This unit provides an introduction to the workplace contexts of IT. It ensures that all students using the book, whether experienced in IT or not, have some common shared vocabulary that is used throughout the book. It is a little different from the other units in that it is less technical and thus provides a gentle lead-in to English for IT.

Language is mostly for talking about present routines and situations such as the work of individuals and organisations in IT: the present simple and adverbs of frequency are dealt with, as are imperatives for rules and modal verbs for rules and suggestions.

IT jobs and duties

In this section the focus is on typical IT-related jobs and the duties performed by people holding those jobs. Jobs mentioned here include:

- **Software developer**, otherwise known as **programmer**: this person writes, tests and debugs computer programs, usually as part of a team.
- **Helpdesk supervisor**: this person supervises technical support staff, who may be working in a telephone call centre.
- **Database administrator**: this person designs, develops and maintains databases. Databases are used as part of many kinds of software, as well as online, to store information such as personal details and the data that the program uses. Databases are covered in more detail in Unit 4. A database administrator does not usually do the data entry for databases; rather, the job involves quite a high level of technical skill and is somewhat similar to programming.
- **Project manager**: within an IT context, a project manager co-ordinates projects such as software development or major equipment renewal. He or she is responsible for ensuring that the intended components of a project are finished on time and within budget.
- **Support technician**: this person sets up new computers, installs software and provides help with IT problems. A support technician may provide internal IT support within a company covering a range of IT uses, or may work for a hardware or software vendor and provide

support to external users (business as well as consumer) of the company's products.

- **Systems analyst**: for tailor-made IT solutions such as software written for a specific business need, the systems analyst liaises with the client to understand their requirements and then ensures that the solution is prepared to those specifications.

IT organisations

This section looks at the activities of IT companies, such as manufacturing, designing and selling. Little specialist knowledge of IT is needed; the only general knowledge required is basic knowledge of some well-known IT companies such as Apple, Google and Microsoft, and what they do.

Companies often hold **product launches** to promote new products. These can range from small, local events to major media events. Apple is particularly well known for these. Once a popular product is ready for launch to the public, people sometimes queue overnight outside shops to be one of the first to purchase it.

Most company websites have a **company profile** which gives general information about what the company does.

IT workplace rules

As with the previous section, this requires little technical knowledge. Internet **security** and **passwords** are mentioned in the reading. The only technical word is **alphanumeric**, meaning 'comprised only of letters and numbers and not including spaces or punctuation symbols'.

Meetings

Central to this section is a roleplay of a formal meeting held by videoconference with a chairperson, agenda and minutes being taken. **Videoconferences** and **teleconferences** are often used to hold meetings when the participants are in different physical locations. The difference is that with videoconferencing, the participants can see as well as hear each other, while teleconferences only use sound.

Business matters

In this section students complete a job advert, roleplay a job interview and write their own job advert. It applies the key vocabulary and grammar of this unit.

Further reading

Use the following keywords to search the internet for websites which give more in-depth information about the topics covered in this unit: database administrator, systems analyst, Apple, Google, Microsoft.

Teacher's Notes

Warm-up

While quite a lot of vocabulary is introduced in this unit, many of the words are reviewed from Book 1 (for those who are moving from that book). One of the aims of this unit is to bring out IT-specific vocabulary of which the rest of the book assumes knowledge. The unit assumes that students already know the following vocabulary: *software, hardware*.

IT jobs and duties

Speaking

- 1 Ask students to share their previous experience of IT, including both software and hardware, in pairs or small groups. This allows them to get to know something about each other, as well as giving you the opportunity to find out about their prior IT experience and whether there is subject-related expertise that can be drawn upon later, if this is not already known.

Activities throughout this book, including this one, should be varied according to your teaching situation and student needs. For example, it would be useful in this activity for students to have conversations with more than one other student; this could be done by changing pairs every few minutes or by organising this activity as a mingle.

Write vocabulary that you hear students produce on the board. Half-way through or at the end of the activity, ask students who produced the vocabulary to explain the meaning to the others. This will encourage students to learn from each other.

Extra activity

If there has not yet been an opportunity to carry out a proper needs analysis, ask students to mingle (or work in pairs/groups) and write down answers from other students to some of these questions, chosen according to appropriateness to your teaching situation, in a table:

What is your name?

Why are you doing this course?

Why is this course important to you?

What do you want to learn in this course?

Alternatively, the questions and table could be handed out in written form. If appropriate to your teaching situation, consider asking students to complete it in their own language so that lack of English ability isn't a barrier to completeness and accuracy.

Listening

Extra activity

If students are relatively confident with English or have some prior work experience in an environment involving IT, they could be asked to brainstorm, in pairs or small groups, IT jobs and the duties associated with each, as a lead-in to Activities 2 and 3.

- 2 ► 02 Students listen to people describing their jobs and match the jobs to the speakers' pictures.

1 software developer **2** helpdesk supervisor
3 project manager **4** support technician
5 database administrator **6** systems analyst

- 3 Students listen again and complete verb–noun collocations describing the duties and tasks that the people mention.

1 a team **2** a problem **3** for **4** after
5 software **6** the problem/a problem/problems **7** databases **8** databases
9 specifications

Pronunciation

- 4 The focus here is on stress (and, consequently, rhythm) within the collocations in the previous activity. In pairs or small groups, students first predict where the stress lies – from prior experience with English and their memory, conscious or otherwise, of the recording.

Depending on your class, this would be an appropriate place to discuss the pronunciation of weak forms, in other words, how to produce an unstressed syllable and how to produce stress (make the syllable longer, slightly louder and change to a different pitch).

1 supervise a team **2** have a problem
3 be responsible for IT projects **4** look after computers **5** install software **6** diagnose the/a problem/problems **7** design databases
8 maintain databases **9** write specifications for software

Vocabulary

- 5 In pairs, students make new collocations using the verbs in Activity 3. Encourage them to think of as many collocations as they can that might work, and check with you whether they do.

Suggested answers

supervise people/[any job title]
be responsible for a team/computers
look after databases/a team
install databases/software
design software/databases
maintain computers

Speaking

- 6 Students now use collocations from Activity 3 (and possibly 5) to describe what the people in Activity 2 do in their jobs.

Suggested answers

- 1 A software developer writes software.
- 2 A helpdesk supervisor is responsible for/supervises/looks after a team.
- 3 A project manager supervises people/projects.
- 4 A support technician looks after computers/install software/diagnoses problems.
- 5 A database administrator looks after/is responsible for/installs/designs/maintains/writes databases.
- 6 A systems analyst supervises software developers/writes specifications.

- 7 In small groups, ask students to think of other IT-related jobs and tasks associated with those jobs. Also ask them to share ideas about which jobs they would or would not like to do, giving reasons.

Suggested answers

website administrator, website developer, network technician, e-commerce specialist; A website developer develops/maintains/looks after/tests websites.

Answers to the other parts of the question will depend on students' own personal opinions.

Listening

- 8 ► 03 Students now listen to an IT worker (Robert) talking to his new manager about his job. Ask them to listen and guess which person is the manager. During this initial gist listening, they simply check their prediction and decide what Robert's job title might be.

Robert is a support technician. (Similar job titles, such as technician or support staff would also be acceptable.)

- 9 Ask students to look at the sentences with tick boxes. They then listen again and tick the items that happen regularly ('usually happen') in Robert's work routine.

1, 2, 3

- 10 Students now put the phrases in the box in the correct place in the sentences in Activity 9. Depending on your class, you could ask students to do this in pairs before listening. This activity provides a 'way in' to the language focus on expressing frequency.

- 1 Robert generally checks emails./Generally, Robert checks emails.
- 2 Robert usually has emails waiting for him.
- 3 Robert normally visits people at their desks./Normally, Robert visits people at their desks.
- 4 Sales people occasionally have problems./Occasionally, sales people have problems.
- 5 From time to time, Robert attends meetings./Robert attends meetings from time to time.
- 6 Robert hardly ever visits other companies.

Language

The Language box focuses on two language points useful for talking about jobs and their associated duties: adverbs of frequency and adverbial phrases of frequency (called 'time expressions' here). Students at this level are likely to have encountered these points before, so for most, this will be review.

For reference, here are some points that go beyond the information in the Language box. Teachers should use their discretion about whether to cover the third point, to avoid overloading students with information.

Adverbs of frequency normally go before the main verb (as stated in the Language box). However, a significant exception to this is where the main verb is *be*, when they go after the main verb (for example, *He is usually late*.).

Some common student mistakes are: mixing up *hardly* and *hardly ever* (for example, *I hardly arrive early* instead of *I hardly ever arrive early*.) and mixing up *almost* and *almost always* (for example, *I almost work hard* instead of *I almost always work hard*.). Both of these can cause significant

misunderstandings, so highlighting them is worthwhile.

When adverbs are placed at the beginning of a sentence, the meaning of the adverb is emphasised.

You may want to ask students to generate their own time expressions: *three times a year*, *twice a month*, *once an hour*, etc. This will help them get used to the sequence *once*, *twice*, *three times*, etc.

Speaking

- 11 In pairs, students imagine they are doing a job of their choice from Activity 2. They ask and answer questions about the job, the tasks they undertake in the job and how often they do those tasks.

Extra activity

If your students are currently working in IT, they could ask and answer questions, in pairs or as a mingle, about the duties in their job and how often they undertake them. They may need to ask you for some additional vocabulary.

IT organisations

Speaking

- 1 In pairs, students choose technology companies they know about and say what they think those companies do. Students can be warmed up to this by asking them in open class for the names of some technology companies.

A lot of vocabulary from the previous section could come out here (for example, *Microsoft develops software*; *Apple designs devices such as the iPad and iPhone*. Other answers might include: *Dell makes computers*. *Samsung makes many things: mobile phones, disk drives, computers and cameras*.

Vocabulary

- 2 Students read profiles of three companies. Gist questions can be provided: *Which company produces software? Which produces hardware?* (Answers: IBGroup and Digital World produce software. Futachiba produces hardware.). Students then find words in these profiles that match the definitions given. The matching part of this activity can be done effectively in pairs. When you have gone through the answers, make sure that students know what *feedback* means (second line of the Digital World profile).

1 provider, suppliers	2 manufacturers
3 production facilities	4 products
computing	5 cloud
6 clients	7 launch

Reading

- 3 Students read the company profiles again and answer some specific information questions about the companies' operations.

1 IBGroup	2 IBGroup, Digital World	
3 Futachiba	4 Digital World	5 IBGroup

- 4 Students now underline five types of software mentioned in the company profiles (there are actually six, though students don't need to find all of them). Then they try, from prior experience, to think of examples of each and what people might use them for. Typically, students will know the name of the software (for example, Microsoft Word). What is more likely to be new to them are the names of the types of software (for example, *word processing*). This second stage could be done in pairs or even small groups. If students are not sure what a spreadsheet is, refer them to the screenshot on page 28.

word processing program

examples: Microsoft Word, OpenOffice Writer

used for: writing

spreadsheet program

examples: Microsoft Excel, OpenOffice Calc

used for: doing things with numbers

presentation program

examples: Microsoft PowerPoint, OpenOffice Impress

used for: making presentations, making slides

database program

examples: Microsoft Access, OpenOffice Base, FileMakerPro

used for: doing things with/processing information/data

games

examples: World of Warcraft, Grand Theft Auto

used for: having fun

operating system

examples: Windows, Mac OS, iOS, Android

(all mentioned in the texts), Linux, UNIX

used for: operating/controlling computers

Speaking

- 5 This activity personalises the topic and vocabulary, allowing it to be applied to real life. In small groups, students list some real IT companies, such as Apple and Google, and say which they would like to work for and why.

Listening

- 6 ► 04 As a lead-in to the Language box on present simple questions, students read a conversation between two people working in different IT companies and complete the gapped questions in pairs. They then listen to the conversation to check their answers. Most students at this level will have encountered this grammar point before (even if they make a lot of mistakes with it), so will be able to have a good go at completing the gaps before listening. However, if your students are weaker or less confident in this language area, you may want to have them read without completing the gaps, then listen to the turns one by one, completing the gaps as they go and comparing with a partner after each.

- 1 ... what does your company do?
- 2 ... who are your customers?
- 3 Does your company produce any hardware?
- 4 ... what are your future plans?
- 5 Do you want to come?

Speaking

- 7 Students answer some questions about product launches, a concept mentioned in the listening.

Suggested answers

A product launch is something/an event for a new product, maybe to advertise it.
Product launches help people to find out about the product.
Apple holds big product launches.
They have talks and online presentations.
They open their shops early and customers often queue/stand in line for hours to buy the new product.

Language

The language focus here is questions in the present simple. The majority of students at this level will have encountered this grammar point previously, so this is intended as review and an opportunity to improve accuracy. Note that subject questions (questions that do not use auxiliary verbs, for example, *Who met you?*) are not dealt with in the Language box. You may want to deal with these if your students are quite confident with present simple questions already. Explain to your students that if the answer is the subject of a sentence, the auxiliary verb is not used in the question.

Pronunciation

- 8 To build awareness of the points about question intonation at the end of the Language box, students listen to the questions in track 4 again to identify the intonation pattern before practising the intonation themselves.

1 ↘ 2 ↘ 3 ↗ 4 ↘ 5 ↗

Writing

- 9 Students practise present simple question formation by writing questions, imagining that they are writing the questions for a magazine questionnaire, in order to find out what some local IT companies do. This can be done in pairs or individually.

Suggested answers

What does your company do?
Does your company sell software or hardware?
Does your company have a service centre?
Where is it?
Who are your customers?
What does your company sell?
What are your company's products?
What do you do in the company?

Speaking

- 10 Students think of answers to the questions they wrote in Activity 9. This can be either for a company they know (which, if they are currently working in different companies from each other, could be their own company) or an imaginary company. They then ask and answer their questions in pairs or as a mingle.

- 11 Students now practise present simple questions and the section's vocabulary by asking questions about the companies mentioned in Activity 2. They should use appropriate intonation as well as trying to form the questions correctly.

IT workplace rules

Speaking

- 1 In pairs or small groups, students look at some signs and work out the rules they express. At this stage they would not be expected to express them in a sophisticated way – imperatives are fine – though it's likely that many students will have encountered the language of rules before.

Suggested answers

no drinks near the computer
no mobile phones/Don't use mobile phones here.
Switch off the monitor.

**Suggested answers for the first situation
(installing new software)**

Rule: You mustn't install new software.
Reason: The IT staff need to check that the new software is OK.

- 2 Students now say whether they have the same rules in their place of work or study and whether they think the rules are good or bad. It is best to hold off from discussing further rules at this point; there will be plenty of opportunity later for students to use the target language with different rules.

Vocabulary

- 3 Students read a short memo about some workplace rules relating to IT security and use context to match words from the text to the definitions given.

1 CIO 2 security 3 data 4 password
5 network 6 alphanumeric 7 characters
8 colleagues

Language

- 4 As a discovery activity in anticipation of the Language box, students underline words and phrases in the memo that they think are used to express rules. They can then read the Language box to check their answers.

Don't use common words or numbers as passwords, such as ...
Passwords must be alphanumeric ...
You need to change your password every ...
Also, you should not share it ...

The Language box deals with modal verbs and imperatives to express rules. Imperatives take the form: verb (+ object) or *do not/don't* + verb + object. There is no subject. For even stronger rules, we can use *always* at the beginning of positive statements and *never* instead of *don't* for negative statements (for example, *Always keep your anti-virus software up to date. Never install your own software.*). To help students avoid some common mistakes, point out that *don't have to* and *don't need to* are not used for rules.

Speaking

- 5 In pairs or small groups, students generate their own rules for some of the activities. They then compare their ideas with other pairs or groups, and discuss possible reasons for their rules.

Listening

- 6 ► 05 Students listen to two people, Lateefa and Ivan, talking informally after work about rules in their different workplaces. While listening, students complete a table to show what the speakers are and are not allowed to do. Warn students that these do not come up in question number order.

Lateefa

✓ Ask a technician to install software.
Work from home (occasionally).

✗ Make personal phone calls.
Install/Update software.

Ivan

✓ Use email.
Install apps.

✗ Make personal phone calls.

- 7 This activity asks some follow-up questions from the listening about Lateefa's feelings about the rules she mentions. The skill practised is listening for attitude – an important skill for functioning well in any workplace. Students are also asked to identify reasons for their answers.

Suggested answers

She's not happy about the rules in her workplace – she's complaining about them.
She doesn't seem to like her manager – she's happy to work from home because she doesn't see her manager then.

Speaking

- 8 This is a pairwork information gap activity: Student A's information is on page 9 and Student B's is at the back, on page 69. To begin with, A Students use prompts to explain company rules to B Students, who play the role of employees new to the company. Then they swap roles.

- 9 Students now discuss real rules in their own workplace or place of study. They also discuss their opinions about the rules and indicate which ones they would like to change.

Writing

- 10 As a consolidation activity, students write a list of rules for a computer room in a college, which may be where they are currently studying or, if not in a college, an imaginary college or one at which they previously studied. Alternatively, depending on their prior experiences, they could write them for a current or previous workplace. If appropriate to do so in your teaching context, you may want to suggest they make their rules humorous. At the end of the activity, students could compare answers in pairs or small groups.

Meetings

Speaking

- 1 Most students will have experienced meetings of some kind. Even if they have no prior work experience, they may have participated in meetings in clubs they were members of at school, taken part in sports team meetings or seen workplace meetings in TV shows. Before commencing Activity 1, you could discuss such prior experiences with the class. This will lead nicely into the questions provided for small group discussion. While monitoring discussions, listen out for the concepts behind the words in Activity 2 being mentioned; if you hear them, this is a good opportunity to supply the vocabulary at the point where students want to use it.

Suggested answers

- 1 People discuss ideas and problems, try to find solutions and make decisions.
- 2 Answers will depend on students' experience.

Vocabulary

- 2 Students discuss what the five provided words mean and speculate about why the meeting-related concepts they represent are useful. If the words have not come up during or in feedback from Activity 1, you may wish to go through the meanings at the beginning of this activity or have students look up the words in a good dictionary. This would be a good opportunity for some work on dictionary skills such as checking pronunciation and parts of speech.

Suggested answers

chairperson: the person who controls meetings; useful for running the meeting smoothly and keeping it focused
agenda: a list of points to talk about at a meeting; useful so that people can prepare for the meeting before it starts and to keep the meeting focused
minutes: a record of what people talked about and decided at a meeting; useful so that people can remember the decisions
teleconference: a meeting where people are in different places; uses telephones; useful because people don't have to travel, thus saving time and money
videoconference: like a teleconference, but with video; useful for the same reasons as teleconferences and because it's easier to understand people when you can see their faces

Listening

- 3 ► 06 Before listening, students read the meeting agenda. It is useful here to teach *attend*. Draw attention, perhaps through eliciting, to the fact that the attendees are in different locations (head office and local office). Elicit also the first topic the participants will be heard talking about on the recording (replacing old computers). Students should read the questions before the recording is played.

- 1 He suggested upgrading to a new version of windows/a new operating system.
- 2 The computers won't run the new Windows well. They're too old.
- 3 buying more memory
- 4 They can't put any more memory in. The computers are already full.
- 5 replacing four computers for now and the other four later
- 6 Ulrik's

Language

More modal verbs are looked at here, this time for making suggestions, agreeing and disagreeing in meetings. Other language for this function is also included, as well as 'softeners' that help to avoid disagreements sounding too harsh or argumentative.

- 4 So that students see examples of the language from the Language box in context, they look at the audio script and underline the softeners in the responses (not the suggestions).

...
U: Um ... well ... I'm afraid there might be a problem. Unfortunately, the computers just won't run the new Windows well. They're just too old.
F: OK ... Could we buy more memory then?
U: That wouldn't work either, unfortunately. We can't put any more memory in. They're already full. I really don't think that upgrading will work.

...

Speaking

- 5 For controlled practice, students make and respond to suggestions they think of themselves. Depending on students' level and ability to generate their own ideas, you may want to give them situations to choose from (for example, people in the company are asking for new computers; the General Manager wants to cut IT costs) and/or ask them to write their suggestions before the pairwork begins.
- 6 In this pairwork information gap activity, students roleplay meetings. With lower-level learners, it could be useful to get two of them to demonstrate the activity, with help from the other students and from you.

Business matters

Here, students complete a job advert, roleplay an interview for the job and go on to write an advert for their own job or one they would like.

Extra activity

To review vocabulary from the first section, make up some cards before class (or have students make them) with job titles and duties on them. Then, in class, students mingle, asking and answering questions about the jobs and duties on the cards.

Reading

- 1 A good lead-in to this activity is to have a class discussion about applying for jobs, eliciting vocabulary such as *job advert* and talking about the kind of information that job adverts contain. Then students complete the gaps before discussing their answers in pairs.

1 supplies 2 service centres 3 provide
4 spreadsheet and database 5 launched
6 client 7 installing 8 maintaining
9 diagnosing 10 from time to time

Speaking

- 2 As a lead-in, brainstorm with students some questions that might be asked in a job interview, using the advertisement they have just read as context. Students could write down the questions they think of. They then roleplay the interviews, then swap roles and repeat, ideally with a different partner. Further work on job interviews is in Unit 8.

Writing

- 3 This activity looks at basic text organisation; students decide which of four patterns of organisation are followed by the texts on the page.

As a follow-up activity, ask students whether they think texts in their own language(s) often follow the same pattern. They may need to think about specific examples, such as reports they wrote at school/work. With confident students, you may also want to ask them if they notice a difference in the formality of the writing in the company profile and the advert. The profile uses more formal vocabulary (for example, *provide*, *supply*), whereas the advert addresses the reader more directly by using *you* and questions.

2

- 4 To practise writing using the pattern they identified in the previous activity, students write an advertisement for their own job or, if not currently working, a job they would like to have. This is also an opportunity to recycle vocabulary from the first two sections of this unit.

Extra activity

Students could write a profile for a company they know using those on page 6 as models. If they are currently working in IT, it could be for their company.

Preparing for the next unit

In **Unit 2** students will be discussing hardware, including the parts inside a computer and items that can be attached to a computer, and instructions for using software (such as *Double click here.*). You can prepare students for this by brainstorming lists of internal computer parts and external parts (peripherals), and ask them to extend their lists before the next lesson for checking at that time.