

Management Lessons for learners of English

A self-study book to learn new words and phrases
as you read and think about management



by Paul Emmerson

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1 Time management



Read

There is never enough time in the day to get everything done. How do you deal with this simple fact? Analyze your time management skills with the assessment below. Read each statement and tick (✓) a response.

		Yes	Yes, but	No
1	I use software like Outlook or Lotus Notes to manage my schedule.			
2	I use a paper-based calendar/planner on the wall or on my desk.			
3	I keep a To-Do list for tasks, and prioritize items on it.			
4	I read emails only at specific times of the day.			
5	I know how to manage distractions and interruptions – I can stay focused.			
6	I delegate well, especially when under time pressure.			
7	I am organized: I keep a clear desk and manage computer files well.			
8	I do difficult or important tasks first.			
9	I know how to keep a conversation short without offending the other person.			
10	I switch between tasks and take short breaks to keep my brain active and fresh.			
11	I know that 'perfect' is not always possible.			
12	I know how to break down large projects into small, achievable tasks.			
13	I give myself a small reward (like a piece of chocolate) when I complete a task.			
14	I have a secretary who does everything for me.			



Useful words

break down (sth)	to separate something into smaller parts
calendar	a printed table showing the days, weeks and months of the year
delegate	to give part of your work to someone else
distractions	small things that stop you paying attention to your main task
interruption	when something suddenly happens and you cannot continue your work
offend	to make someone upset or angry by doing something
prioritize	to put things in order of importance, so you know which to do first
reward	something nice you get because you have worked hard
schedule	a plan of activities and when they will happen
switch	to change from one thing to another

Complete each sentence with one of the words:

- I'll take you out to lunch as a reward for all your hard work this morning.
- As a manager she tries to do too much – she should learn to _____ more.
- I can't work from home – there are too many _____.
- I was in a bad mood and said some bad things. I hope I didn't _____ anyone.

Useful phrases

time management skills	manage my schedule	on my desk
prioritize items	times of the day	stay focused
(be) under time pressure	keep a clear desk	do difficult tasks first
keep a conversation short	offend the other person	switch between tasks
take short breaks	break (sth) down into (sth)	complete a task

Complete each sentence with one of the phrases:

- I use an online calendar to manage my schedule – it's easy to coordinate meetings.
- If I have a lot to do, I _____ according to how important they are.
- I hate interruptions – I like to _____ with my mind on just one thing.
- I find it's better to _____ and leave the easy ones until the end.
- I file away all my papers at the end of the day – I like to _____.
- I keep conversations short, but not too short. I don't want to _____.
- I try to manage my schedule well so that I am not _____.
- I only read emails at specific _____.

Answers

1 reward 2 delegate 3 distractions 4 offend 5 manage my schedule 6 prioritize items 7 stay focused 8 do difficult tasks first 9 keep a clear desk 10 offend the other person 11 under time pressure 12 times of the day

12 Presentations 1

► Read



How can you give a great presentation? It's simple! You need to: 1) know your audience; 2) prepare your content; 3) deliver confidently; 4) control the environment. Get these things right, and you're certain to succeed!

1 Know your audience

- Profile. Who are the audience?
- Needs. Why are they here? What information do they need?
- Wants. Do they want to be entertained as well as informed? If so, what is the best way to do that?
- Expectations. What do they expect in terms of content, length and audience interaction?
- Current knowledge. How much background and explanation do you need to provide?
- **Tip:** *If possible, try to 'mingle' with the audience before your talk — perhaps at a coffee break, or by greeting a few people you know at the door. This will help you to get a feel for why they are there.*

3 Deliver confidently

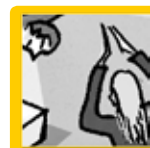
- Just before you start talking, give yourself a moment of silence and peace. Look around the audience, make eye contact, smile.
- Speak more slowly than usual, and pause often for dramatic effect.
- Pause after every new slide to give people a chance to look for themselves first.
- Connect physically with the audience — move around.
- Make occasional longer eye contact rather than always scanning the crowd.
- Be passionate. Show you really care about what you are saying.
- Be yourself. Don't try too hard. Relax. Breathe.
- If you feel nervous or forget your words, drink some water, or just pause. The audience will be glad of a few quiet moments to think.

2 Prepare your content

- Don't try to cover everything. Voltaire said: 'The secret of being a bore is to tell all.'
- Plan a good starting 'hook' to really get the attention of the audience. Don't start immediately with boring background information.
- Tell the audience your purpose or conclusion early in the talk. This helps them to stay focused and see your supporting arguments.
- Choose between three and five take-away points. Build your talk around these and nothing else.
- Plan times during the talk when you will ask for questions. This allows you to switch to a more conversational manner which is often more authentic and believable.
- Outline actions or next steps at the end.
- Plan a strong close, including a summary. Your final words can be a reference to your starting hook to provide a sense of psychological 'closure'.
- Keep slides simple. Consider cutting bullet points and replacing them with strong images and short blocks of text, 'billboard style'. Make sure that charts are easy to understand, and don't forget to label both axes.
- The information on the slide should add value or summarize — it is not just text to read aloud.
- Once you have prepared the talk, practise. The aim is to talk note-free.

4 Control the environment

- Have a back-up plan. What happens if the live internet connection doesn't work?
- Get to the room early. Check the seating arrangement, space, whether there is water for you, etc. Check that the equipment is working and that someone can call a technician at short notice.
- In your introduction, let the audience know when they can ask questions.
- Consider using a blank screen between slides (in Powerpoint press B for black or W for white) — it puts the attention back to you.
- Finish on time, or a few minutes early. Last impressions are as important as first ones.



Useful words

attention	the interest that people show in something
authentic	real, not false or artificial
axes	the lines at the side and bottom of a graph or chart
background	the general situation in which something happens
billboard	a big sign next to a road that is used to advertise something
blank	empty, without any writing
bullet points	printed circles before each item on a list
deliver	to make a formal speech to a lot of people
expectations	what you think or hope will happen
hook	something that gets people interested in what you are going to say
mingle	to move around and talk to lots of people at a social event
outline	to describe something in a general way, without giving the details
purpose	why you do something

Complete each sentence with one of the words:

- On your slide, don't forget to label the horizontal and vertical axes.
- Use a good _____ at the start of your talk: a cartoon, a story, a joke, a surprising statistic.
- Try to make your slides visually interesting – not just a long list with _____.
- _____ the structure of your talk at the start, so the audience can see where you are going.
- Leave time for questions: when you answer you will seem more _____ and believable.

Useful phrases

audience interaction	get a feel for (sth)	stay focused
supporting arguments	take-away points	psychological closure
label a chart	dramatic effect	back-up plan
live internet connection	seating arrangement	blank screen

Complete each sentence with one of the phrases:

- Plan three main take-away points and build your talk around these.
- Consider using a _____ between slides – it puts the attention back to you.
- Get to the room early to check the _____ – can everyone see the screen?
- There can be problems with technology, for example the _____ may not work.
- Pause often for _____ – for example just before key words.

Answers

1 axes 2 hook 3 bullet points 4 outline 5 authentic 6 take-away points 7 blank screen 8 seating arrangement 9 live internet connection 10 dramatic effect

21 Change management

Read

Managing change in an organization is one of the main jobs of a leader. The following diagrams help to understand the process of change:

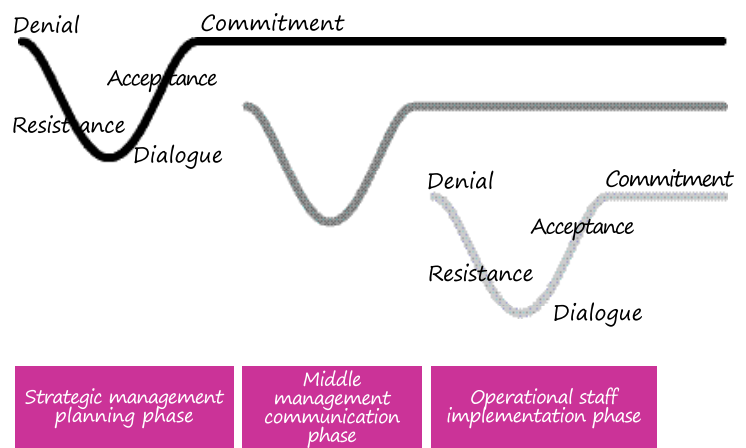


The diagram on the left is based on John Kotter's 8-step change model:

- Establish a sense of urgency: identify threats to the organization and show what could happen if nothing changes.
- Create a powerful, guiding coalition: find change leaders throughout the organization.
- Develop a clear, shared vision: all the ideas have to be pulled together into a vision that people can understand.
- Communicate the vision: talk often about the vision, address people's worries openly and honestly.
- Remove obstacles: identify processes and structures that are getting in the way, and deal with them.
- Create short term wins: look for small-scale projects that are sure to be successful and easy targets that will give some quick success.
- Build on the gains: set goals to keep the momentum for change building.
- Institutionalize the change: talk about progress and success stories; include the new values when hiring new staff.

The diagram on the right shows the stages that everyone goes through when faced with change:

- Denial. This stage is characterized by fear, confusion and blame.
- Resistance. This stage is characterized by anger and feeling helpless.
- Dialogue. This is when you want to tell your story, and you try to find meaning in the situation.
- Acceptance. This is when you accept the inevitable and start exploring options.
- Commitment. You are now 'on board' and see the changes as positive. A meaningful life returns.



The second diagram reminds us that not all individuals go through these stages at the same time. Just when one group of more senior managers is starting to accept the changes and explore the implications, other employees lower down the structure are still unaware, in denial, resisting, or just beginning the process of dialogue.



Useful words

acceptance	when people agree that something is right
blame	saying or thinking that someone is responsible for a bad situation
coalition	when various people join together to achieve a shared aim
commitment	enthusiasm for something and a determination to work hard at it
consolidate	to make your success stronger and more effective so that it continues
denial	a refusal to believe that something bad exists
dialogue	when people talk in order to solve problems
gains	successes, improvements
implementation	taking action that you planned
implications	possible effects or results
inevitable	impossible to avoid or prevent
institutionalize	to give something an official structure
momentum	progress that is becoming faster or stronger
obstacle	a difficulty that stops you from doing something
on board	involved in a project and in agreement with its aims
resistance	when people oppose or fight against something

Complete each sentence with one of the words:

- When you make a big change in your organization, you first meet ___ *denial* ___ and resistance.
- The denial stage is characterized by fear, confusion and _____.
- After some discussion and _____, you get acceptance of the need for change.
- There will always be _____ to change, and you must look for ways to remove them.
- It is good to look for some short term wins and then _____ and build on these gains.
- Finally you want commitment, with everyone _____ and fully involved.

Useful phrases

sense of urgency	shared vision	short term win
build on the gains	address people's worries	set goals
momentum for change	find meaning in a situation	(be) in denial

Complete each sentence with one of the phrases:

- To begin the process of change management, establish a ___ *sense of urgency* ___.
- All the ideas for change have to be pulled together into a _____.
- The change leader must talk about the vision and _____ openly and honestly.
- Managers have to set goals to maintain the _____.

Answers

1 denial 2 blame 3 dialogue 4 obstacles 5 consolidate 6 on board 7 sense of urgency 8 shared vision 9 address people's worries 10 momentum for change

35 Mission, goals, KPIs

Read

Words like ‘mission’, ‘strategy’, ‘goals’ and ‘KPIs’ are often used when discussing strategy and planning. What exactly do they mean? How do they relate to each other? To understand this, it is useful to imagine a pyramid like the one shown below:



The **MISSION** is the organization's fundamental purpose. It is often described in a ‘mission statement’ which describes the customer, the critical processes and the winning idea of the organization.

The **VISION** is what the organization wants to be in the future. It is often described in a ‘vision statement’ that is a source of inspiration and provides decision-making criteria.

The **STRATEGY** translates the vision into a concrete long-term plan. It talks about new markets, new products, etc. Strategy is decided by the Board with input from the senior management team.

The **GOALS** are the aims of the plan. A goal may consist of a number of specific, measurable objectives.

The **CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS** (CSFs) are the few key areas that must be performed well if the business is going to succeed. They show employees what the priorities are. They can change as the business changes, and might include things like ‘attract new customers’, ‘keep good relationships with suppliers’, ‘retain key staff’, ‘secure financing for expansion’ etc.

The **KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS** (KPIs) are ‘metrics’ – things that can be measured. There might be ‘big picture’ KPIs like turnover, operating profit, market share or customer satisfaction. Alternatively there might be department-level KPIs like sales of a particular product, or defect rates in production measured in parts-per-million. KPIs are often put on a ‘dashboard’ in management information systems: their status is shown as green, orange or red. Many CSFs have KPIs.

An **ACTION PLAN** is a list of all the tasks that have to be carried out for the organization to achieve its objectives.



Useful words

aim	something that you want to achieve
concrete	definite and specific
criteria	facts that you use when making a choice
critical	very important
CSF	(critical success factor) something that must be done well
dashboard	the part in front of a driver of a car that has the controls on it
defect	a fault
inspiration	someone or something that gives you new ideas and enthusiasm
KPI	(key performance indicator) a measurement that shows what something is like
measurable	able to be expressed in size, time or amount
metrics	a group of numbers that give information about a process or system
mission	an aim that is very important to an organization
priorities	important things that must be done first
purpose	why you do something
secure	to get something important

Complete each sentence with one of the words:

- The 'mission' is the organization's fundamental purpose.
- A few key areas must be performed well: these are the _____ success factors.
- A goal consists of a number of specific, _____ objectives.
- Managers need to have decision-making _____ before they can make choices.
- Knowing the CSFs for your company helps you to see what the _____ are.
- Specific KPIs are often put on a _____ on a manager's computer screen.

Useful phrases

mission statement	vision statement	source of inspiration
decision-making criteria	senior management team	operating profit
market share	customer satisfaction	defect rate
parts-per-million	carry out the tasks	achieve your objectives

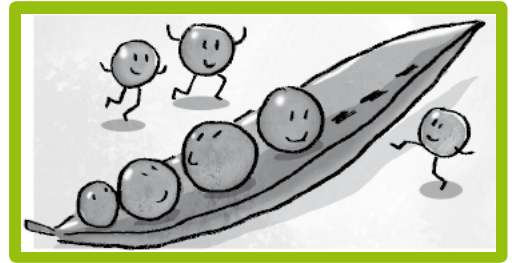
Complete each sentence with one of the phrases:

- The vision statement should be a source of inspiration.
- A typical KPI in the production area is the defect rate in _____.
- A typical KPI in the finance area is _____.
- If you _____ on the action plan you will achieve your objectives.

Answers

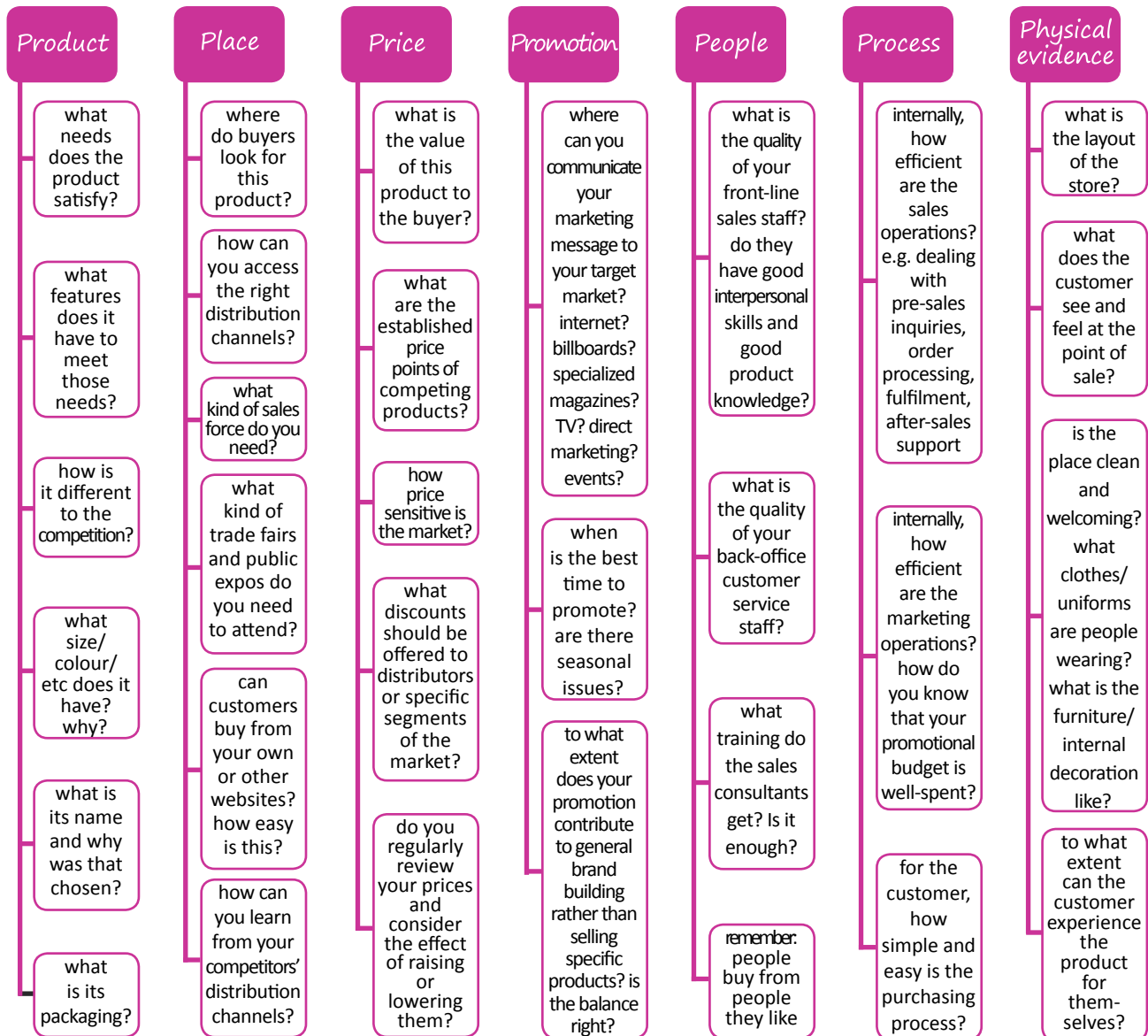
1 purpose 2 critical 3 measurable 4 criteria 5 priorities 6 dashboard 7 source of inspiration 8 parts per million 9 operating profit 10 carry out the tasks

42 Marketing mix: 7 Ps



Read

Most business people know the famous 4 Ps of marketing: **p**roduct (or service), **p**lace (distribution), **p**rice and **p**romotion. To this list another three Ps can be added: **p**eople, **p**rocess and **p**hysical evidence. Note that the 7 Ps model is most useful when you are analyzing one particular product line, not the whole company offer.



Useful words

billboard	a big sign next to a road that is used to advertise something
budget	money available for something, or a plan for how it will be spent
event	something that happens, especially something important or interesting
features	parts of a product that you notice because they are important or interesting
fulfilment	all the activities between receiving an order and delivery to the customer
inquiry	a question that you ask to get more information
layout	the way that something is arranged
packaging	the container or material that a product is sold in
satisfy	to provide something that is needed or wanted
segment	one of the parts that something can be divided into

Complete each sentence with one of the words:

- Sales operations include order processing and fulfilment as well as pre-sales activities.
- The _____ of a product can attract customers in-store as well as give useful information.
- We organized a fantastic _____ – it was a cocktail party for our clients in an old castle.
- The _____ of a store can make a big difference to how long customers stay there.

Useful phrases

satisfy a need	distribution channels	sales force
trade fair	price points	price sensitive
raise/lower a price	target market	direct marketing
seasonal issues	general brand building	front-line sales staff
interpersonal skills	back-office staff	pre-sales inquiries
order processing	after-sales support	point of sale

Complete each sentence with one of the phrases:

- When you choose a software package, the quality of after sales support is a key issue.
- It's a very _____ market – if we raise the price by 10% sales fall by 20%.
- Promotion can be about selling specific products, or about _____.
- Promotion may be affected by _____ such as summer holidays or Christmas.
- Small, local companies often use _____ such as leaflets through the door.
- We have to decide on the best way to communicate our message to our _____.

Answers

1 fulfilment 2 packaging 3 event 4 layout 5 after-sales support 6 price-sensitive 7 general brand building 8 seasonal issues 9 direct marketing 10 target market

Management Lessons for learners of English

Management Lessons for learners of English is a self-study book that helps you improve your English at the same time as you find out about the latest management ideas.

The book can be used by anyone learning English:

- professionals with a career, or students studying management still at university
- business people, or people in the public sector
- people studying English alone, or people attending a course with a teacher.

There are 50 units covering a wide range of topics. Each unit begins with a lively text that summarizes an important area of management and introduces key vocabulary. After this there is a list of useful words and phrases from the text, and short practice exercises to help you remember the new vocabulary.

But *Management Lessons for learners of English* is not just about improving your knowledge of English. As you read the texts you will think more deeply about your job. You will reflect on the day-to-day interactions you have with employees, and on the decisions you make about planning and strategy. So you might find that the book helps you to be a better person and a better manager as well!

Formats for learners

Management Lessons for learners of English is a self-study book. It is available through www.BEhereBEthere.com, an eLearning site for Business English. *Management Lessons for learners of English* is available as:

Book	ISBN 978-1-908722-03-4
PDF	ISBN 978-1-908722-04-1

Formats for teachers

For teachers there is a book called simply *Management Lessons*. It has similar content, but also includes discussion activities for the classroom. The hard copy version is spiral-bound for ease of photocopying. There are two PDFs, with a black and white one for printing for classroom use. *Management Lessons* is available as:

Spiral-bound book	ISBN 978-1-908722-00-3
PDF (black and white)	ISBN 978-1-908722-01-0
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