

Problems

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Blue Horizon

Houston, we have a problem.

James A. Lovell, American astronaut, *Apollo 13* (1970)

Starting on

1 Match the sentences about problems.

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| 1 There isn't an invoice in the package. | a) It's broken. |
| 2 We can't find the documents. | b) I'll be 10 minutes late. |
| 3 The coffee machine doesn't work. | c) It's missing. |
| 4 The train isn't on time. | d) I think they're lost. |
| 5 I'm not ready for the meeting. | e) It's delayed by 15 minutes. |

3.1 Listen to five telephone calls. Identify the product and the problem.

Product	Problem
1 TV	instructions missing
2	
3	
4	
5	

Vocabulary

Adjectives

A Complete these sentences. Use the adjectives from the box.

beautiful broken clean fast flexible
helpful high incorrect

- 1 Our employees enjoy having *flexible* hours.
- 2 The new sales assistant got a(n) promotion.
- 3 Marketing executives earn a(n) salary at that company.
- 4 My colleagues are usually very
- 5 We want a(n) and well-furnished apartment.
- 6 Your office has got a(n) view.
- 7 Their old printer is, so they want a new one.
- 8 This invoice is ; please can you send a new one?

B Match the adjectives with their opposites.

- | | |
|----------|--------------|
| 1 long | a) fast |
| 2 heavy | b) late |
| 3 early | c) short |
| 4 slow | d) dangerous |
| 5 safe | e) light |
| 6 big | f) wide |
| 7 hot | g) low |
| 8 narrow | h) hard |
| 9 high | i) small |
| 10 soft | j) cold |

C Look at these sentences.

The bed is **too** hard. It **isn't** soft enough.

The seats **aren't** wide enough. They're **too** narrow.

Make sentences. Use *too* or *enough* and adjectives from Exercise B.

- 1 The report doesn't give much information. (too / enough)
It's too short. / It isn't long enough.
- 2 I can't carry these suitcases. (too)
- 3 I can't meet you at 6 o'clock in the morning. (too)
- 4 I don't want this car. Its top speed is only 100 kilometres per hour.
(too / enough)
- 5 Don't take any visitors to those areas late at night. (too / enough)
- 6 That camera doesn't fit in my pocket. (too / enough)
- 7 I can't get this car into the garage. (too)
- 8 Our trucks can't go under that bridge. (too / enough)

Reading

Dealing with problems at work

A Four people answered the question 'What are the biggest problems facing your company?' Read their replies.

1

“We pay a lot of rent for an office in the city centre. There isn't enough room for all our staff. Everyone is crowded into small offices. We really need a spacious office. We want to move outside the city centre as soon as possible.”

2

“There are a lot of changes in our company at the moment, and staff are worried about losing their jobs. They aren't happy. They don't come to work on time and often leave early.”

3

“One of our sales team is not a team player. He doesn't work well with colleagues. He doesn't go to meetings. He never helps anyone, and he doesn't send reports on time. He isn't very popular.”

4

“Our biggest problem is that we spend too much. We need to cut costs because we are having problems paying our bills. We've got a problem with our cash flow at the moment.”

B Match the replies in Exercise A with an appropriate heading.

- a) Changes at work ☐
- b) Space problems ☒
- c) Money problems ☐
- d) Difficult people ☐

C Find words in the replies which mean the following.

- 1 the money you pay regularly to use a building (reply 1) *rent*
- 2 when a place is too full of people (reply 1)
- 3 large, with a lot of space (reply 1)
- 4 unhappy about something (reply 2)
- 5 someone who works well with other members of a group (reply 3)
- 6 people you work with (reply 3)
- 7 a piece of paper showing how much you have to pay for something (reply 4)
- 8 amount of money coming into and going out of a company (reply 4)

D Which of these are a problem where you live?

- transport
- prices
- crime
- noise
- other

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Language focus 1

Present simple:
negatives and
questions

- We use the present simple to talk about habits and routines.

Negatives

They *don't* come *to work* on time.

He *doesn't* go to the gym.

Questions

Does he work well with colleagues?

Where do you work?

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A Work in pairs. Match the questions to the answers.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 What do you think about the new boss? | a) Peter. He's your line manager. |
| 2 What time does the meeting start? | b) Because he has to pay for the office party. |
| 3 Where does she live? | c) You can leave at 5 o'clock. |
| 4 Why does he need the money? | d) 20 euros. |
| 5 Who do I report to? | e) She's very efficient. |
| 6 How does this work? | f) You need to enter your password. |
| 7 How much does it cost? | g) In the city centre. |
| 8 When do I finish work? | h) It starts at 2 o'clock. |

B Put the words in the correct order to make questions.

- weekend work you Do at the? *Do you work at the weekend?*
- Pierre in sales Does work?
- you do travel abroad How often?
- you spell How *business* do?
- this word What mean does?
- finish does the meeting When?

C Make negative sentences. Use *don't* (*do not*) or *doesn't* (*does not*).

- I like meetings. (presentations)
I like meetings, but I don't like presentations.
- Raj likes Fridays. (Mondays)
- We agree about most things. (budgets)
- Susan sends a lot of e-mails. (faxes)
- Alex and Connie speak Chinese. (Japanese)

D Work in pairs. Ask and answer the questions. Student A: turn to page 139. Student B: turn to page 146.

- What time / start work? *What time do you start work?*
- When / finish work?
- Where / work?
- Who / report to?
- How often / work at the weekend?

Language focus 2

have got

- We use *have got* to talk about possession.
We've **got** a new printer, but it doesn't work very well.
The office **hasn't got** a lift.
Have you **got** a problem with cash flow? Yes, we **have**. / No, we **haven't**.
- We use *some* with plurals in positive sentences.
I've **got some** problems with cash flow.
- We use *any* with plurals in questions and negative sentences.
Have you **got any** meetings today?

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A Make sentences about Marco's possessions.

Marco's got a Mercedes. He hasn't got any running shoes.

Mercedes	1	fax machine	0
running shoes	0	swimming pool	1
children	0	tennis court	0
telephones	2	computer	1

B Work in pairs. Talk about these two offices.

Office A has got a lift. Office B hasn't got a balcony.

Office A

lift
view of the high street
balcony
very colourful walls
no car park
fax machine in next room
large windows
air conditioning

Office B

no lift
view of the mountains
no balcony
white walls
large car park
fax machine in the office
small windows
no air conditioning

C Work in pairs. Answer these questions.

- 1 Which office from Exercise B would you choose?
- 2 Describe your own office / study room.

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Skills

Telephoning:
solving problemsA 3.2 Listen to four phone calls. Write the number of the call after the problem. Some calls have two problems.

- 1 There are no instructions. ☐
- 2 A piece is missing. ☐
- 3 The printer doesn't work. ☒ 1
- 4 The invoice is incorrect. ☐
- 5 The air conditioning doesn't work. ☐
- 6 The line is engaged. ☐



B 3.2 Listen again and complete the sentences.

- 1 Please return it, and we can look at it for you.
- 2 Would you like to ?
No. Can he me back, please?
- 3 I'm sorry to hear that. Which is it?
- 4 Right. Let me down the

C 3.3 Look at the Useful language box. Listen and tick the expressions you hear.

Useful language

Answering

Hello. This is Carl Fisher.
Good morning. Marta Gomez speaking.

Apologising

I'm very sorry about that.
I'm sorry to hear that.

Getting details

Can you give me some more information?
Which model is it?

Finding solutions

We can give you a refund.
I can talk to the manager.
We can send you a new one.

Getting through

Can I speak to Janet Porter, please?
Can he call me back, please?

Stating the problem

I've got a problem with ...
There are some problems with ...

Giving details

The invoice is incorrect.
There's a piece missing.
It's the wrong part / model / item.

Finishing a conversation

Thank you.
Thanks for your help.

D Work in pairs. Student A is a sales representative. Student B is a customer. Role play the conversation. Use your role cards. Use some of the expressions from the Useful language box.

Student A

Sales representative

Answer the phone.
Ask for details.
Apologise for first problem.
Apologise again and offer solutions.
Say goodbye.

Student B

Customer

Introduce yourself. Say you have some problems with order. exhibition BROCHURES
Give details of first problem (are wrong colour and size).
Give details of second problem (want 2,000 not 200, as soon as possible).
Thank the sales representative.
Say goodbye.

Problems

Vocabulary

A Complete the sentences.

- Flight FR42 is delayed by half an hour because of bad weather. We apologise for the inconvenience.
- The photos aren't in the envelope. They're m _____.
- Nobody knows where the report is. It's l _____.
- Don't sit on that chair! It's b _____.
- Let's take a taxi. We don't want to be l _____ for the meeting.

too / enough

B Match each sentence on the left with a sentence on the right.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 I think Alpha Tours is too expensive. | a) We need more detail. |
| 2 It's too far to walk. | b) I'll book your flight with a different company. |
| 3 The office is really too small. | c) It takes three minutes to make 10 copies. |
| 4 The interviewer talks too fast. | d) Let's take a taxi. |
| 5 There isn't enough information in this report. | e) It's difficult to understand her. |
| 6 They say the Royal Hotel isn't good enough. | f) There isn't enough space for all the staff. |
| 7 This machine's too slow. | g) They want to stay at the Astoria. |

too / enough / very

C Correct the sentences that are wrong.

- I can afford to buy the LJ200 printer, but it's ~~too~~ expensive. *very*
- This mobile phone is too big to fit in my pocket.
- It's too late to telephone. They close at 5:30.
- Come to our country! The food is delicious and the people are too friendly.
- My boss is great, and my colleagues are too nice.
- I can't do it enough fast. I need some help.

Vocabulary +

D Match these adjectives with their opposites. Use a good dictionary to help you.

- | | |
|-----------------|----------------|
| 1 boring | a) cheap |
| 2 difficult | b) clean |
| 3 dirty | c) strong |
| 4 dishonest | d) efficient |
| 5 expensive | e) honest |
| 6 inefficient | f) interesting |
| 7 negative | g) modern |
| 8 old-fashioned | h) pleasant |
| 9 unpleasant | i) positive |
| 10 weak | j) easy |

E Choose the correct adjective to complete the sentences.

- 1 It's very *honest/modern* of them to say they've made a big mistake.
- 2 Can you help, please? These instructions are too *dirty/difficult* for me to understand.
- 3 Lena always does a lot of work, and she works so fast! She's very *efficient/pleasant*, isn't she?
- 4 The trade show was great, but the speech at the beginning was very *interesting/boring*.
- 5 He says exports are not very good because our currency is too *strong/negative*.
- 6 You always say business is not very good. Come on, try to be a bit more *positive/old-fashioned*.

Language review**Opposites****A Write the opposite of the following sentences.**

- 1 They report to the director. *They don't report to the director.*
- 2 She doesn't start very early. *She starts very early.*
- 3 She finishes work late.
- 4 We don't often work at the weekend.
- 5 They sell office equipment.
- 6 I make a lot of phone calls.
- 7 He doesn't write reports.

Forming sentences**B Put the items in the correct order to make sentences.**

- 1 do / report / to? / Who / you *Who do you report to?*
- 2 a / assistant. / got / has / Lena / new
- 3 Alan / Does / his / job? / like / new
- 4 documents. / got / haven't / the / They
- 5 come / don't / on / They / time. / to / work
- 6 does / finish / she / time / What / work?
- 7 attend / do / How / meetings? / often / you
- 8 does / always finish / he / late? / Why / work

C Study the information in the table. Then complete the sentences.

	Kate and Ross	Jim
1 Do you often travel abroad?	x	✓
2 Do you get lots of e-mails?	✓	x
3 Do you have regular breaks?	x	✓
4 Do you attend a lot of meetings?	✓	x
5 Do you often entertain foreign visitors?	x	✓
6 Do you read the <i>Financial Times</i> ?	✓	x

- 1 Kate and Ross *don't often travel abroad*
- 2 Jim e-mails.
- 3 Jim breaks.
- 4 Kate and Ross meetings.
- 5 Kate and Ross visitors.
- 6 Jim the *Financial Times*.

Language +

D Study the information in exercise C again. Then complete the sentences, as in the example.

- 1 Kate and Ross don't often travel abroad, *but Jim does* .
~~NOT Kate and Ross don't often travel abroad but Jim often travels abroad.~~
- 2 Kate and Ross lots of e-mails, but
 3 Kate and Ross regular breaks, but
 4 Jim a lot of meetings, but
 5 Jim often visitors, but
 6 the *Financial Times*, but doesn't.

Writing
Spelling**A Write out the full forms.**

- 1 We'd like to inform you that there's a problem with the printer.
We would like to inform you that there is a problem with the printer.
- 2 Their company's got a cash flow problem.
 3 Our order's delayed.
 4 It doesn't work properly.
 5 It's very efficient.
 6 She hasn't got an assistant.

Tip

When you write a business letter or a report, always use the full forms.

B Add the missing letter/letters in the sentences which are not correct.

- 1 The package is damaged. ✓
 2 We have go^t a problem with our photocopier a^t the moment.
 3 You delivery is late again.
 4 The part are not in god condition.
 5 He often takes art in company vents.
 6 She attends a lot of business meetings.

Focus on
punctuation**C Separate the words and punctuate the sentences. Use capital letters where necessary.**

- 1 healwayssendshisreportsontime
He always sends his reports on time.
- 2 theypayalotofrentforasmallofficeinthecitycentre
 3 whendoesthemeetingfinish
 4 billhasgotalargeofficebuthehasnotgotacompanycar
 5 howmanypeopledotheyemploy

Linking
information:
*and or but?***D Match these sentence halves. Then link them with *and* or *but*.**

- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| 1 He is a good team player | a) it is very heavy. |
| 2 She is always on time | b) it is very easy to understand. |
| 3 The new machine is small | c) she is very efficient. |
| 4 The report is very long | d) it is in the city centre. |
| 5 There are a lot of changes | e) he does not go to meetings. |
| 6 Our office is small | f) staff are worried about their jobs. |
1. *He is a good team player but he does not go to meetings.*