

A controversial CEO

Level

Intermediate

Tasks

Discussing the differences between words meaning 'to leave one's job'
 Completing a business biography of Carly Fiorina by scanning an article
 Identifying whether adjectives to describe people's leadership qualities are positive or negative
 Preparing a biography of a famous business person to present to the class

How to use the lesson

- 1 Ask students to give you the names of some famous CEOs (e.g. Bill Gates, Sir Richard Branson etc.) and to suggest what leadership qualities these people have. Tell students that this lesson will be about a famous woman at the top – Carly Fiorina – and invite students to tell you what they know about her.
- 2 Hand out the worksheet and ask students to describe the differences between the words in Exercise 1. How would they describe what happened to Carly?
- 3 Ask students to complete the business biography in Exercise 2 by scanning the article.

Answers

(a) *Lucent Technologies* (b) *Fortune (magazine)* (c) *chairman* (d) *2002*

- 4 Students read the article again and summarise people's opposing views of Carly Fiorina (Exercise 3). Then find out students' own thoughts about her.

Answers

A positive view: *Carly revitalised HP and pushed through a successful merger; she showed leadership and vision*

A negative view: *the merger ended the old HP way of life; people lost their jobs; the company has experienced falling sales, made losses and is unable to compete in the marketplace – a failure of the CEO*

- 5 Students say whether the adjectives describing people's qualities as a leader are positive or negative (Exercise 4). For practice, ask students to describe some famous people using these adjectives.

Answers

Positive: *charismatic, energetic, dynamic, visionary, caring, motivating;* **Negative:** *arrogant, abrasive; "competitive" is usually positive; "controversial" is usually negative.*

- 6 To prepare for Exercise 5, students could work in pairs or small groups to brainstorm the names of famous businessmen and women. If they have access to the Internet, students can research data. **NB Before class, you may want to check the first two websites below for ideas.** The students could prepare an OHT with their key dates and data, if a projector is available. After the mini-presentations, the students could vote for "the CEO of the year" or "the best CEO of all time", if appropriate.

Related websites

Send your students to these websites, or just take a look yourself.

<http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0774560.html>

<http://www.woopidoo.com/biography/>

<http://www.hp.com/hpinfo/execteam/fiorina/>

<http://www.hp.com/>