

19b A quality problem

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1 Your company makes flat-screen TVs. There is a quality problem in the factory and the CEO is writing an e-mail to all the senior managers. The sentences a–f from his e-mail are not in the correct order. Decide which order is best and write the sentence letter in the numbered boxes.

- a This is unacceptable – we are falling a long way behind our competitors in terms of quality.
- b I am very concerned about quality levels in our plant over the last quarter.
- c I've just been given the figures – defects are up 8% compared to the same period last year.
- d When I have your initial thoughts by e-mail, I'll write a short report and call a meeting to discuss it in more detail.
- e Please give this matter your urgent attention, and reply by no later than the end of next week.
- f The situation cannot continue and I want to know your opinions about why quality is so poor.

Correct order

1		2		3		4		5		6	
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2 Write one, two or three e-mails in reply using the information below. Use separate sheets of paper. Expand the ideas and feel free to change details or invent extra details. The maximum length for each e-mail is 100 words.

e-mail 1: You are the plant manager. You think the problem is due to poor industrial relations in the factory. The workers have no motivation. You think more money should be spent on health and safety, improved salaries and sports facilities for the workers and their families.

e-mail 2: You are the head of quality control. You think it is a waste of time trying to motivate the workers. The only solution is more automation using industrial robots, and at the same time reducing the number of workers. Automation is expensive, but in the long term the investment will be justified.

e-mail 3: You are the finance director. You think that the problem is due to the plant manager and head of quality control not doing their jobs properly. They should train the workers better, link pay rises and bonuses to improvements in quality, and investigate in detail why the level of defects is so high. Instead of this, they try to avoid any responsibility. Be careful how you make these points in your e-mail.

3 Think of a quality problem in your own company or organisation. Answer the following questions.

a What is the problem?

b Why do you think it has happened?

c Who do you need to e-mail about this problem?

d Now write an e-mail to the person you named in c. The maximum length for your e-mail is 100 words.

4 Imagine that you are the person who receives the e-mail written in 3. How would you answer it? Write the reply.