

Teacher's notes Unit 1 Corporate culture

Level: Intermediate

The overall purpose of **Slides 1, 2 and 3** is to offer content that allows you to introduce to your students some of the concepts surrounding corporate culture which you can find in the *Subject background* section on page 8 of the *Teacher's Book*. [Please note that we do not cover here the more academic approach to corporate culture described in paragraph 3 of the *Subject background* section.]

Suggested timings are given for the individual slides that contain new content.

Slide 1: Extract from *Subject background* text in *Teacher's Book*, slightly adapted and shortened.

Quickly display the individual points to make sure students understand the meaning of the phrases. You could ask students to say what factors make up corporate culture before revealing the phrases. You may need to explain what **perks** are: benefits in kind to employees, rather than money, for example a free staff restaurant.

[5 minutes]

Slide 2: photo of a group of co-workers.

The idea is to use **Slide 1 and 2 together** to allow students to talk about the aspects of corporate culture listed in **Slide 1**.

Ask your students to *imagine* what the working culture is like for this group of employees. To give them a bit of help, you could say they all work for a small software company based in Silicon Valley near San Francisco, California, which is involved in the mobiles phones industry. And refer back to the listed points in **Slide 1**.

[10 minutes]

Commentary

The first thing to say is that the **dress code** is casual but that all the employees are quite smart nonetheless. Probably this group work very **long hours** as they may well share in the equity of the company and may be very motivated when deadlines have to be met. They may **socialise together** at the weekends. (Is this something your students ever do or would welcome?) Individuals probably have an informal, friendly but competitive working relationship with each other where the use of **first names** is the norm.

Given that this is a small company, you would not expect there to be the kinds of **facilities** you'd find in a big company, like a gym or daycare facilities. **Perks** probably

amount to free coffee and soft drinks! You would expect they work in an **open plan office** with no walls separating them. **Training** is probably up to the individual.

Slide 3: three photos of people training.

The purpose of **Slides 3** is to explore the concept of **training** a little further, and what kind of training companies can offer. Ask your students to describe what kind of work training they think is going on in the photos. They could discuss these three photos in pairs.

[10 minutes]

Commentary

In Photo 1 **formal** training is being carried out, either by a colleague or an external trainer. In Photo 2 it looks like this is some informal **on-the-job** training where colleagues are looking at a problem together in an open plan office. Photo 3 shows two people abseiling down a cliff. This is probably part of a **teambuilding** exercise. If you want to find out more about this sort of activity, visit: <http://www.actiondays.co.uk/?source=adwords>, if you are online. It shows a range of teambuilding activities, which your learners might – or might not – think could be fun to do.

In addition to the kinds of training described above, companies can sponsor their employees to do external courses like **MBAs**. And, recently, **online training** has become important, with employees following courses in managed or **virtual learning environments** (VLEs) from their computers either at home or at work.

Another trend is **mentoring/counselling**, for example where an experience colleague looks after a new recruit, and **coaching** where a colleague helps an individual to set objectives. (**Counselling** features in 1.6.)

Depending on their level of experience, you could ask your students what sorts of training they themselves have experienced in companies. It is likely that at the very least they will have had health and safety training for any part-time work.

Screen 4: link to Wikipedia site.

If you are online, you can use this link to look up **perks**. You will find paragraphs about the situation in both the USA and UK. Of course, there may be other aspects of this theme you wish to explore, such as **dress code**.

[5 to 10 minutes]

Screen 5: Monkey business title, photo and first paragraph.

As an introduction to the reading text on page 7 and before you go to this screen, ask your students if they know any idioms that use the word *monkey*. They may come up with: *to monkey about* meaning *to fool around*; *monkey business* – the title of the text on Student’s Book page 7 – which the Macmillan Dictionary defines as *dishonest or bad behaviour*; *brass monkey weather* means *very cold weather*.

[5 mins]

Screen 6: Monkey business? reading comprehension.

The purpose here is to provide a second reading comprehension and vocabulary check task after the *Scan reading* for the *Monkey business?* text on page 7 of the Student’s Book. This task could be done in pairs.

- 1 In paragraph 1, which words mean *stopped* or *abandoned*?
- 2 How many stages were there in the experiment described in paragraphs 1 and 2?
- 3 In paragraph 3, it states that the unwritten rules are always a good thing. True or false?
- 4 In the example of bad company culture in paragraph 4 how do the employees trick their boss?
- 5 In paragraph 5, find three examples of discrimination.
- 6 In paragraph 6, what word means *not obvious*.

Answers

- 1 In paragraph 1 which words mean *stopped* or *abandoned*? (*gave up* in line 4.)
- 2 How many stages were there in the experiment described in paragraphs 1 and 2? (Six)
- 3 In paragraph 3 it states that the unwritten rules are always a good thing. True or false? (False. The article states here “that all too often they reinforce negative attitudes.” Lines 20-21.)
- 4 In the example of bad company culture in paragraph 4 how do the employees trick their boss? (They leave their office lights on so he thinks they are still at work.)
- 5 In paragraph 5, find three examples of discrimination. (“Women, ethnic minorities and the over 50s are not promoted.”)
- 6 In paragraph 6, what word means *not obvious*. (*subtle*, line 41)

[5 to 10 minutes]

Slide 7, 8 and 9: model answer for placement report.

The purpose of providing **Slides 7, 8 and 9** is to allow you to show the model answer to the *Ordering and writing task* on page 15 in the *Student’s Book*. This model answer is

from page 19 in the *Teacher's Book*. You can use it to analyse and review any points or issues that have arisen in your students' versions of Jason's placement report.

Slides 10, 11 and 12: an intern's letter of thanks.

Slide 10 shows a **screenshot** of a model letter of thanks from an intern, which students can find on their **DVD-ROM** in the *Business documents* section. Point out that students can download these documents for future reference and use.

Slides 11 and 12 contain the model letter of thanks in more readable form. It leads on neatly from the intern's report. Showing this gives you an opportunity to highlight and explain any phrases that you think are particularly useful to your students. The tone of the letter is quite formal and you may like to focus on this aspect, for example *I would like to take the opportunity to thank ...* and *Please extend my thanks ...* .

Acknowledgements:

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