

Lesson Plan: Talking about your workplace

Try this sample lesson from *In Company 3.0* Starter (A1+) level, which shows business English students ways they can talk about themselves and what jobs they do.

Level: Starter / CEFR A1+

Time: approx 45-60 minutes (or longer depending on how the activities are used)

How to use this lesson plan:

The lesson can be used for the whole class, who can work in pairs and small groups. It also includes one-to-one (1:1) teaching notes throughout for individual teaching or coaching purposes. Use the [Student's Book pages](#) provided so that each student has a copy and download the related [audio files](#).

Teacher's notes

Learning objectives

This unit is about talking about your job and your company. Students begin by listening to people asking and answering questions about their country, company and job. Students then ask and answer these questions themselves. After that, students focus on job titles and talking about other people's jobs and countries. Next, students read two work profiles and tell the class about their partner's profile. Students learn the names of different business sectors and use them to talk about the jobs people do. They practise creating and asking Present Simple questions about people's jobs using the verbs *be* and *do*. Finally, students learn how to say more numbers (tens, hundreds and thousands) and they learn how to ask about and describe the size of a company.

The grammatical focus is on formulating Present Simple questions with *wh-* question words and *how*. The lexical focus is on job titles, sectors and numbers (tens, hundreds, thousands). The pronunciation focus is on numbers (tens, hundreds, thousands). The writing focus is on writing sentences about your job and company.

Talking about work

In this section, students listen to a conversation in which people at a conference ask and answer questions about where they're from, where they work and what jobs they do. Students focus on the form and meaning of these questions and answers. In the last exercise, students practise asking and answering the questions *Where are you from?* and *Where do you work?*

Warm-up

Tell students that they are going to listen to a conversation between two people at a technology conference. Elicit the names of any technology companies they know, e.g. HP, IBM, Apple, Sony, etc. Then ask students to brainstorm jobs that people working at a technology company could do. Write these on the board, assisting and correcting where necessary. Leave the list of jobs on the board for use in exercise 1.

Focus attention on the quotation and question at the top of the page. Check the meaning of *boss*, *customer* and *important*. Elicit that Sam Walton thinks the customer is *very important*. Ask students if this is also true in their company and, if so, what their company does to show their customers how important they are.

1:1 notes

Personalize this section by focusing on the job titles people have at your student's company. Company intranet sites or websites, business cards and email signatures are all useful sources of information. Ask your student to list the names of five of their colleagues, and help them to work out their colleagues' job titles in English. In exercise 5, both you and your student could write the names of five people you know and take the role of each of these people as you ask and answer the questions.

1 (Track 1.24) Before students listen to the recording, ask them to read the sentences and check if any of the jobs in c) are in the list on the board. Check the meaning and students' pronunciation of the jobs in c). Play the recording and ask students to circle the correct answers.

ANSWERS

a São Paulo b Appetizer c technician

Track 1.24 audio script

A: Hello – do you like the conference?
B: Yes, it's great. New technology is very interesting.
A: Yes, it is. I'm Sofia Pereira.
B: Nice to meet you. I'm Daniel, Daniel Almeida.
A: Where are you from?
B: I'm from São Paulo.
A: São Paulo? Great! And where do you work?
B: I work for Appetizer. It's a food and drink company.
A: Sounds interesting. What do you do?
B: I'm a technician. I fix computers. And what about you?
 Where are you from?

2 (Track 1.24) This time, ask students to focus on the questions that the people ask. Play the recording for students to complete the questions. Elicit that we need *do* as an auxiliary verb in questions with another verb (such as *work*, *do*, *play*, etc) but questions with *be* don't require the auxiliary *do*.

ANSWERS

a are b do c do

3 Focus students' attention on the answers and ask them to match them to the questions in exercise 2. Do not confirm the answers at this point. Highlight the use of *a/an* in front of a job title.

ANSWERS

1 I'm from São Paulo. 2 I work for Appetizer.
 3 I'm a technician.

4 Print out and give students the listening script for Track 1.24. After they have checked their answers in the listening script, you could ask them to practise the conversation with a partner, substituting their own names, countries, companies and jobs.

5 Encourage students to move around the room and talk to different people in the class, as if they were at a networking event. Ask students to make notes on the answers they get so that, at the end, they can then tell a partner or the rest of the class about who they talked to.

Jobs

In this section, students learn and practise vocabulary for jobs that people do at companies. They listen to conversations in which people ask and answer questions about what they do, where they work and where they come from. Students then practise these questions themselves.

Warm-up

Prior to this lesson, ask students to find out the English job titles of colleagues in their department. To do this, students could ask their colleagues, look at their business cards or look at the company organigram on their intranet site or website. Invite students to share these job titles with the class during the warm-up. Collate the job titles on the board and go through them with the class, clarifying the meaning and checking pronunciation. To practise the job titles, students could exchange lists of their colleagues with a partner and take turns to ask and answer questions, e.g. *What does Gerhard do? He's a financial controller.*

1:1 notes

Personalize this section by asking your student to bring a plan of their company's premises to class (or he/she could draw a simplified version of this). Ask them what job the first person they meet at reception does (*He/She's a receptionist.*) and continue to elicit or teach some other job titles around the building.

In exercise 4, take the role of your student's partner. Follow this up by making a list of five people you know who do a range of jobs and have your student ask you about them. For this activity, you may have to help them with third person singular questions.

At the end of this section, focus on the activities your student does in their job, and work on some verb-noun collocations for these activities, e.g. *answer the phone, phone suppliers, organize meetings*, and so on.

1 Check students' understanding of *human resources and sales*. Ask students to look at the pictures and then match the jobs in the box to the pictures. After checking the answers, model and drill the connected speech in *he's a / she's a*, and draw students' attention to the fact that we say *a taxi driver*, but *an engineer*. Make sure students are aware of when they should use *a* and *an*.

ANSWERS

a a human resources manager b a taxi driver
c a hotel manager d a receptionist e an engineer
f a sales manager

2 (Track 1.25) When students have listened and written down the names, elicit the question we ask to find out what job someone does (*What do you do?*). If students don't know, you can provide them with a copy of the listening script on page 90 and tell them to find the answer there.

ANSWERS

Michael: receptionist Sara: human resources manager

Track 1.25 audio script

Conversation 1

A: So, where do you work, Michael?

B: I work for Emirates Airlines, in Dubai.

A: Sounds interesting. What do you do, exactly?

B: I'm a receptionist. I answer the phone but I also do a lot of other things ...

Conversation 2

A: Hi, I'm Fatma. Good to meet you.

B: And you. I'm Sara.

A: What do you do, Sara?

B: I'm a human resources manager at El Corte Inglés.

A: El Corte ... ?

B: El Corte Inglés. It's a big retail company in Spain.

A: Okay. How big is it?

B: It's a very big company.

A: Really?

B: Yes, it's an interesting job. I organize company training sessions. Where do you work, Fatma? Is new technology important in your job?

3 (Track 1.25) Ask students to read the instruction and the sentences before you play the recording again. Check students' answers and then elicit that the missing verbs need an *-s* because they come after *he* or *she* (the third person singular).

ANSWERS

a answers b organizes

4 Go through the instructions with the class first. Model and drill the questions and answers in the speech bubbles. You might want to challenge stronger students by asking them to add some more information about the activities they do in their jobs, e.g. *I answer the phone and I organize meetings*. While students are talking, go around monitoring and assisting as necessary.

Writing tips

Direct students to the *Writing tips* box and ask them to read the information about punctuation at the end of sentences and questions. After they have done the exercise in the box, write a few more sentences and questions on the board and ask students to add the correct punctuation.

ANSWERS

a I'm a technician. b What's your name?
c Can you speak Spanish? d She's from Brazil.

Work profiles

In this section, students consolidate and build on what they have learned in the two previous sections, i.e. talking about the jobs people do, where they work and where they come from. Students also focus on using the third person singular to give this information.

Warm-up

Check the meaning of *work profile* and elicit what information you would put in your work profile, e.g. your name, your town/city and your jobs (previous and current). Clarify the meaning of *current*. Ask students if they have an online profile on any networking sites, e.g. LinkedIn, Xing, About.me and, if so, what information they put on it and what they use it for. If they don't have one, ask them what information they would include. Brainstorm ideas and write them on the board.

1:1 notes

If your student has an online work profile that they are happy to share with you, ask him/her to identify the information in it, e.g. name, town, company, jobs (previous and current), university/college, school, and so on. Based on this information, you and your student could each create a work profile for a colleague or a famous person, and see if you can both identify who the people are.

1 Ask students to cover up the work profiles and focus on the photos. Ask them to speculate where the two people are from and what jobs they do. Then check that students understand what information the questions are asking for. Students read the profiles and answer the questions. Check the answers with the class.

ANSWERS

- a** She's from Tokyo **b** He's a Website Designer.
c She works for Sony.

2 Point out the use of the contraction *he's* or *she's* in the example. Fast finishers could also write sentences about the other person. Go around monitoring and giving support where necessary. Invite some students to read out their sentences at the end.

SUGGESTED ANSWERS

Antony is from London. He's a Website Designer. He works for PrimeSite.

Misha is from Tokyo, Japan. She's a human resources manager. She works for Sony.

3 Model and drill the questions first. Then put students in pairs with a classmate they don't usually work with, if possible. Ask students to ask and answer the questions and make notes of their partner's answers.

4/5 Give students time to use the notes they made in exercise 3 to complete the description about their partner. Go around monitoring and assisting where necessary. Then encourage students to read out the work profile of their partner to the class. As a follow-up, you might want to have students do a mingling activity in which they stand up, move around and ask as many other students as possible the questions within a certain time limit, e.g. three minutes. This will give them practice talking to different people and help them produce the language more quickly and spontaneously.