

Unit 2 - Careers



The objectives for this unit are:

- vocabulary: learn words and phrases to compare career paths and choices.
- communication: practise managing discussions and sharing ideas in a meeting.
- grammar: study how to express attitudes to the past.

Unit 2 - Careers - Vocabulary I

The following words and phrases appear in the text you are going to read in this section:

aspiring wanting to start the career or activity that is mentioned
Aspiring managers need to be good communicators.

scrutiny careful examination
Our company's environmental record has come under scrutiny recently.

rung a step on a ladder or in a series
She's on the bottom rung of the promotional ladder.

get up rise; go up
He's not going to get up to chief executive officer unless he improves his attitude.

ruthless hard and cruel; determined to get what you want whatever the cost
He has a ruthless determination to succeed.

Making the right move



On a global recruitment website, Professor Ben Fletcher of the University of Hertfordshire, UK, compares careers to the children's game of 'Snakes and Ladders'.

Which of the lists below do you think are the typical 'snakes', and which are the typical 'ladders'?

List 1

- Being determined to succeed.
- Keeping in with key people.
- Being ruthless.
- Taking more risks than others.
- Appearing active and fast-moving.
- Staying ahead of the game.

List 2

- Standing up for what you believe in.
- Taking the initiative – coming up with your own list of priorities for job success.
- Taking account of the ethical and moral dimension in business decisions.

- Managing 'others' in pursuit of your cause.
- Holding on to successes and blaming failures on others.
- Standing out from the crowd – getting noticed by the 'right people'.
- Taking a minority position if you believe it is right.
- Sticking up for your team blindly – taking the blame for mistakes they make.
- Doing a good job quietly, without taking the credit.
- Looking out for problems others have not seen in a decision, and highlighting them.
- Getting on with your life outside work.
- Looking out for your colleagues / team.

To many aspiring corporate climbers, the first list appears to be the ladders to success, and the second list, the snakes of failure. Of course, this strategy doesn't stand up to scrutiny in a good company with good management, and in the end it is those companies that you will want to be in. If you really want to move on to the next rung of the corporate ladder you need to play by different rules. Yes, you guessed it; those things that look like the ladders are really the snakes. Of course, some people do get up the so-called snakes, but they are not what I call the True Super Achievers and they struggle to cling on to what they achieve.

Comparing career paths and choices: Complete the verbs

Match the prepositions with the verbs to form multi-word verbs from the text.

1	cling	on to
2	hold	in with
3	stick	out from
4	stand	on to
5	look	out for
6	stay	on with
7	come	ahead of
8	move	up with
9	get	on to
10	keep	up for

Comparing career paths and choices: Practice

Complete the questions with the correct endings.

1	Do people in your team stick	on to next?
2	What do you think today's employers have to do to stay	for new job opportunities?
3	Are you a workaholic or do you prefer to just get	cling on to your job?
4	Can you come up	in with the boss?
5	How important is it for staff to keep	on to if you changed jobs?
6	What perks would you want to hold	on with your life?
7	Do you always look out	up for colleagues if they are being unfairly treated?
8	What sort of job would you like to move	out from the competition?
9	What can this company do to stand	with any ideas for making your job more interesting?
10	Have you ever made a big mistake at work but managed to	ahead of the competition?

Unit 2 - Careers - Vocabulary II

broaden become wider; make wider

If we **broaden the appeal** of our products, we'll sell more.

ambassador a person who acts as a representative for an organization

Employees who attend conferences are **ambassadors** for their company.

scope opportunity or ability to do something; potential

There's still **plenty of scope** for improvement.

demotivating make somebody feel it is not worth making an effort

Having **perks** taken away is very **demotivating**.

demotion a move to a lower rank or position, often as a punishment

He decided to leave the company rather than accept the **demotion**.

Comparing career paths and choices: Match the phrases with their meanings.

Match the phrases on the right with the meanings on the left.

1	do something original or unusual	follow less conventional paths
2	change jobs for a similar salary and responsibilities	broaden your horizons
3	improve your situation	move horizontally
4	increase your experience or knowledge	put yourself in a better position
5	get to a point where ...	grow into your role
6	develop to a point where you can do your job well	reach a stage where ...
7	develop further than current limitations allow	take a step backwards
8	cancel the effects of any progress you had made	go beyond the scope of your job

Unit 2 - Careers - Communication

Key words from the unit related to managing the discussion in a meeting:

Managing the discussion

So let's get started.
The purpose of today's meeting is ...
Can I suggest we come back to ...?
Coming back to ...
I'll get on to that in a moment ...

Involving people

Perhaps you'd like to talk us through ...
Did you want to talk about ...?

Asking / giving permission to speak

Could I just say something?
If I could just come in there ...
Go ahead.

Putting forward unpopular ideas

I know you're not keen on it but ...
You probably won't like this idea ...
I'm not sure what your feelings are about this, but ...

Putting forward ideas under consideration

We were wondering if ...
Something else we've been thinking about is ...

Putting forward ideas you are confident about

I'm sure you'll understand the need to ...
The obvious solution to this problem must be to ...

Disagreeing / expressing reservation

It's interesting you should say that, because actually ...
You're absolutely right, but ...

Interrupting / dealing with interruptions

Would this be the right moment to mention ...?
Now, coming back to ...

Managing the conversation in a meeting: Practice

Choose the correct word to complete the sentences.

- | | | |
|----|---|------------|
| 1 | So let's [] started. First, can we discuss the graduate training programme? | say |
| 2 | Perhaps you'd like to [] us through some of the issues, John. | get |
| 3 | You probably won't [] this idea, but I think we should do some more research before reaching our final decision. | come back |
| 4 | Would this be the right moment to [] the contract details? | get on to |
| 5 | I'm sure you'll [] the need to find the best possible candidate. | keen on |
| 6 | It's interesting you should [] that, David, because actually ... | understand |
| 7 | Can I suggest we [] to this point about overtime later in the meeting? | talk |
| 8 | I know you're not [] Ana's suggestion, Matt, but we do need to consider it. | mention |
| 9 | If I could just [] here for a moment, Jan? How should we ensure ...? | come in |
| 10 | I'll [] the subject of pay scales in a moment. | like |

Unit 2 - Careers - Grammar: Expressing attitudes to the past.

Third conditional

Use the third conditional

1 to talk about past situations that did not happen

If you had chased up the reference, you would have known not to employ him.

2 to express regret or to analyse past actions

If I had sold my shares in May, I would have made a good profit.

3 to congratulate ourselves or others for the actions they took, or to express relief

If we had followed the consultant's advice, we'd have probably gone bankrupt.

Perfect modals

Use perfect modals

1 to talk about things that did not happen in the past

I would have finished the presentation on time, but the power went off.

2 to talk about our likely actions if we were in the situation described

I would have told my manager straight away, rather than hiding everything.

3 to express irritation and criticism

I might have known the distributors would let us down.

They should have consulted me about the cancellation.

They ought to have warned us about the strike.

Fixed phrases

There are many fixed phrases that can be used to express our attitude to the past.

Fixed phrase + past simple

We can use *I'm (so) glad ...* and *It's a good thing ...* with the past simple to express satisfaction.

I'm so glad we met.

It's a good thing you came to the meeting.

We can use *It's just as well ...* with the past simple to express relief.

It's just as well you spoke up when you did.

We can use *I still don't think (that) ...* with the past simple to express dissatisfaction.

I still don't think he was a very good manager.

Fixed phrase + past perfect

We can use *Suppose / Supposing ...* and *Imagine if ...* with the past perfect to express relief.

Suppose we had invested in Northern Rock ...

Supposing the boss had come back in ...

Imagine if we had kept the shares ...

Expressing attitudes to the past: Practice

Choose the correct ending to complete the sentences.

- | | | |
|----|--|---|
| 1 | If the interview had gone better, | that's my biggest criticism of him. |
| 2 | Even if the interview had gone better, | promotions at this level should be automatic. |
| 3 | It's a good thing you had four years' experience | I might have got the job. |
| 4 | You needn't have sent a CV - | we were able to match their offer. |
| 5 | My first boss could have given me more support - | your application form had all the relevant information. |
| 6 | If I'd been born into a very rich family, | I probably wouldn't have got the job. |
| 7 | If only I'd gone to Harvard or Yale, | I don't think I would have been so determined. |
| 8 | It would have been better | or they wouldn't have considered you for a senior post. |
| 9 | It's just as well | my opportunities would have been better. |
| 10 | I still don't think that | if you'd told us about their offer. |