

Unit 9 - Teamwork



The objectives for this unit are:

- vocabulary: learn words and phrases for exploring team relationships.
- communication: practise dealing with conflict.
- grammar: study how to add emphasis.

Unit 9 - Teamwork – Vocabulary I

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

Absent-minded tending to forget things, perhaps because you are not thinking about what is around you, but about something else.

He can be a little absent-minded at times.

boundless without limits, seeming to have no end.

The new intern seems to have boundless energy.

Vigorously with a lot of energy and determination.

He vigorously denied the allegations.

Spur into action encourage someone to do something.

I was spurred into action by his letter.

Painstaking needing a lot of care, effort and attention to detail.

The event had been planned with painstaking attention to detail.



What kind of team player are you?

PLANT

Valued in a team for their ability to come up with strange and innovative solutions. Like the absent-minded professor-inventor, they often spend time quietly working alone, which results in solutions to problems, but they may have trouble communicating their ideas effectively.

RESOURCE INVESTIGATOR

This person contributes to the team with boundless enthusiasm at the start of the project. They are excellent networkers who express themselves clearly and they vigorously pursue opportunities outside the team. They tend to lose momentum towards the end of a project.

SHAPER

They spur their team into action. You have to tread carefully with this person; they thrive on pressure and challenge, and often get results by pushing others hard to do the same. In their drive to get things done, they may upset other team members by seeming to treat them unfairly.

A _____

The natural chairperson, able to detach themselves from the detail, to see the bigger picture. They are mature, good at delegating and at helping the rest of the team to reach decisions. Their management and delegating powers may mean they don't pay enough **attention** to their own duties at work.

B _____

Working closely with everyone, they like to **steer clear of** confrontation. They are good listeners and can help to calm situations by talking through problems with colleagues. However, as they don't like taking sides, they may find it difficult to make decisions.

C _____

The team's perfectionist. They take themselves very seriously – **keeping to** schedules and maintaining quality are equally important to them, and they pay painstaking attention to detail. Colleagues may have trouble relating to them as they are poor delegators and they tend to worry excessively about minor details.

D _____

They are good at judging the situation due to a great ability to analyse logically. They assess periodically and look at all the available options objectively. However, their work can **fall short of** expectations as they can lack drive and find it difficult to relate passionately to their work.

E _____

This person is disciplined and can be relied on to perform to a high level and to **cope with** things practically. They tend not to deviate from a set path and can find it difficult to take new ideas on board.

F _____

They are highly skilled and are usually viewed positively for providing specialized knowledge. They tend not to see the bigger picture, **focusing on** technicalities.

Meredith Belbin

Exploring team relationships: Check your understanding

Dr Meredith Belbin of the Henley Management College developed nine team roles to show how different individuals behave in teams. Read the text and match the roles to paragraphs A-F.

1 A	Coordinator
2 B	Specialist
3 C	Monitor-Evaluator
4 D	Team worker
5 E	Completer-Finisher
6 F	Implementer

Exploring team relationships: Complete the collocations

Read the text. Choose the adverbs which collocate with the verbs. Then match them with their meaning.

1 communicate their ideas	unfairly
2 express themselves	positively
3 tread	hard
4 push others	effectively
5 treat employees	objectively
6 work	closely
7 look at (available options)	clearly
8 be viewed	carefully

1	make your ideas known to other people in a way they understand	tread carefully
2	say or write what you think in a way that others can understand	look at something objectively
3	be very careful about what you do or say	communicate your ideas effectively
4	make someone work hard	work closely with someone
5	behave towards someone in a way that is not reasonable	push someone hard
6	be very involved in someone's work, being in contact with them often	be viewed positively
7	judge something by the facts, and not your personal feelings	express yourself clearly
8	be well regarded	treat someone unfairly

Unit 9 - Teamwork – Vocabulary II

The following words and phrases appear in the recording from the online course:

Know (something) inside out be very familiar with something.

Karl knows our products **inside out**.

pinpoint be able to give the exact reason for something or to describe something exactly.

The report **pinpointed** the areas most in need of attention.

Neglect not give enough attention to something, fail to take care of something or someone

This building has been **neglected** for years.

Exploring team relationships: Practice

Complete the dialogue with the correct prepositions.

Isaac	Do you think Dan can cope <input type="text"/> the increased workload?	<input type="text" value="of"/>
Rita	Yes, as long as he doesn't just focus <input type="text"/> one thing.	<input type="text" value="with"/>
Isaac	Will he be able to keep <input type="text"/> the timetable?	<input type="text" value="of"/>
Rita	Yes, but he needs to steer clear <input type="text"/> any diversions.	<input type="text" value="on"/>
Isaac	Good, so we can pay attention <input type="text"/> the other projects?	<input type="text" value="to"/>
Rita	Yes, and just hope Dan doesn't fall short <input type="text"/> our expectations!	<input type="text" value="to"/>

Unit 9 - Teamwork - Communication

Key words from the unit related to dealing with conflict:

Clarifying the situation

Can I just make sure I've understood this correctly?
Would I be right in thinking ...?
Do you understand what I'm trying to say?

Staying focused on the facts

Let's try not to get personal here.
Can we try and stay focused on the facts?

Expressing concerns diplomatically

I'm a bit worried about ...
I don't know if you are aware, but ...?

Expressing concerns directly

I'm really not happy with ...
The real issue here is ...

Chairing the negotiation

How do you propose we deal with this issue?
Can we try and avoid ...?
I need to know ...
Can I leave you to ...?

Expressing points of disagreement

I can't just ...
I just don't understand how ...
I see what you mean, but ...
I just won't be able to ...

Offering a compromise

I'm prepared to ... if ...
Would it help if ...?
I'd be more than happy to ...

Dealing with conflict: Practice

Choose the correct words to complete the sentences.

- | | | |
|----|--|---------------------------------------|
| 1 | <input type="text"/> do you think we should do about this problem? | <input type="text" value="go"/> |
| 2 | <input type="text"/> do you propose we solve the problem? | <input type="text" value="stay"/> |
| 3 | Can I just <input type="text"/> sure I've understood what you are saying? | <input type="text" value="Can"/> |
| 4 | I'd be more than happy to <input type="text"/> along with you on that. | <input type="text" value="How"/> |
| 5 | I'm prepared to <input type="text"/> a discount on a larger order. | <input type="text" value="make"/> |
| 6 | <input type="text"/> you understand what I'm getting at? | <input type="text" value="What"/> |
| 7 | Can we try not to <input type="text"/> personal here? It's about the team. | <input type="text" value="consider"/> |
| 8 | <input type="text"/> I leave you to discuss this at a further meeting? | <input type="text" value="Would"/> |
| 9 | <input type="text"/> I be right in thinking that you are dealing with this, Susan? | <input type="text" value="Do"/> |
| 10 | Let's try and <input type="text"/> focused on the facts. | <input type="text" value="get"/> |

Unit 9 - Teamwork - Grammar: Adding emphasis

1 Adverbs of degree can add emphasis to most adjectives and adverbs. These include: *very, really, extremely, so, just so, very ... indeed.*

It was *just so* short-sighted of them to risk upsetting our Japanese distributors.

2 Some adjectives and adverbs are ungradable: they express extreme qualities such as perfection. With these words we use adverbs such as *completely, absolutely, utterly* (not *very*).

It's *absolutely* vital that you inform me of things like that. (Not: ~~It's very vital that you inform me of things like that.~~)

There are four main language techniques for adding emphasis:

Cleft sentences

Cleft sentences begin with *it* or *what* and emphasize a particular word or group of words.

John broke the photocopier. > It was John who broke the photocopier.

I manage the team. > What I do is manage the team.

Fixed phrases to add emphasis

We can use many fixed phrases to add emphasis such as *The reason I say this is ...*, *Which is why ...*, *Not only ... but, Which is why ...*

Fronting

Fronting is when we place the information we want to emphasize at the beginning of the sentence.

I liked the first candidate. I thought the second was arrogant. > The first candidate I liked. The second I thought was arrogant.

Adverbs of degree

We can use adverbs of degree to add emphasis to most adjectives and adverbs, for example: *very, really, absolutely, just so ...*

It-clefts

Form: *it + be + emphasized language + relative clause*

Use: To focus our attention on a noun phrase or adverbial.

It was the finance director who suggested freezing recruitment.

It was earlier this morning that she phoned me.

What-clefts

Form: *what + noun phrase / clause + be + emphasized language*

Use: To move our attention to the end of the sentence.

What he does is assess proposals.

What I want is an evening off.

Other phrases

We can also use phrases such as *the person / people who / that, the place where, the reason why, the thing that* to add emphasis.

Tom is the person that you need to speak to.

The place where our next conference will be held is Brighton.

The thing that annoys me most is that no one contacted us about the problem.

Fronting

1 In most active sentences, the subject of the verb comes first. However, we can alter the word order to place the information we want to emphasize at the beginning of the sentence. This is called 'fronting'.

I liked the conference hall, but I thought the accommodation was awful. > The conference hall I liked. The accommodation I thought was awful.

2 Note that subject and verb / auxiliary are inverted after negative expressions, after *only*, and after participles.

Rarely have I seen such a confident presentation.

Only in Japan can you get fish as fresh as this.

Included in the contract was a job description.

Adding emphasis: Techniques

Which techniques for adding emphasis 1-4 are used in sentences a-i?

1. Cleft sentences: it's... which/that, what... is...
2. Fixed phrases used to add emphasis.
3. Fronting: putting a topic at the start of a sentence
4. Adverbs of degree

- a The reason why I say this is because if we get it right this time, any future campaigns should run more smoothly.
- b Which is why this whole thing is just so frustrating.
- c How we resolve this is the issue now.
- d It's the Vienna convention which really worries me.
- e In which case, Riccardo, can I leave you to liaise with the printer ...?
- f What really concerns me is the way this has been handled so badly by the printers.
- g The problems with the artwork I'm prepared to overlook.
- h The thing that bothers me is that we just don't have time.
- i Not only do we have a major error on our hands, but we're also not sure how this happened.

Adding emphasis: Practice

Choose the correct words to complete the sentences.

1. *What/Which* we must be clear about from the start is how much we want to invest.
2. It's the fact that our CEO is also a renowned musician *what/which* amazes me.
3. *How/what* bothers me is how little Sandra actually does to help.
4. Paul is away at a conference in Geneva, which is *how/why* I am speaking here today.
5. *How/Why* we reach an agreement is the issue facing us right now.
6. *It's/They're* the changes that make the job interesting.
7. *Not only/Only* does she do little work, but she also disrupts other employees.
8. *That/Why* she is late I don't know.
9. *What/Why* I like about him is his attention to detail.
10. You've done a *very/an absolutely* fantastic job!