


Unit 3 Business

Business studies: Family businesses

Listening skills: Identifying different points of view; recognising turn-taking language

Speaking skills: Putting forward different points of view; inviting people to comment

1 SPEAKING


- a**  Read about a family hotel business, then discuss the questions.




In 1954 my grandfather opened a small hotel in the south of Austria, with just ten guest rooms. When my parents took it over in 1980 they expanded it and provided more facilities, so it became successful as a business hotel. Now my parents are retired and my husband and I are running the hotel. We've added a new wing with a spa and swimming pool, so it attracts not only business people but also couples coming for wellness weekends.

- 1 What do you think are the advantages of a family business of this kind?
- 2 Are there any disadvantages?
- 3 Do you know any family businesses? Think about:
 - people you know
 - shops and businesses in your area
 - well-known family businesses in your country

2 LISTENING

- a**  **3.1** Four students discuss family-run businesses. In the first part they talk about positive things. Which of these points do they mention?
- 1 Family members believe in the family and always give it their support.
 - 2 They can help each other when times are difficult.
 - 3 They make more careful decisions.
 - 4 They can take over jobs when one person is busy.
 - 5 They have similar ideas about what is important.
 - 6 The company has a longer life.
- b** The speakers mention these concepts. Match them with the sentences in 2a.
- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| 1 a support system | 3 loyalty |
| 2 flexibility | 4 shared values |

- c**  **3.1** Listen again and complete the notes with the words in the box.

busy	family	inbuilt	mission
share	stick	take over	

Good points

- 1 loyalty to the _____ ... _____ support system – they _____ together
- 2 flexibility – family members can _____ if one person is _____
- 3 they _____ the same values – a family set of values – 'company _____'

- d** In the second part, you will hear the students talk about negative aspects. Here are some possible problems with family businesses.

- 1 they might not be interested in the company
- 2 they might have no-one to follow them
- 3 they might want to continue too long in the job
- 4 they might have different ideas about how to run the company

Which do you think are about ... ?

- a the father/mother
- b the children

- e**  **3.2** Listen and check.

f **CRITICAL THINKING** UNDERSTANDING AT A DEEPER LEVEL

Discuss the questions.

- 1 They talk about problems of 'succession' and 'lack of succession'. What do they mean by this and what is the difference? What does the word 'succession' normally refer to?
- 2 Why is this not such a big problem in a normal company?

- g** **Skills focus** Identifying different points of view

Think about the way the students discussed this topic. If necessary, listen again to check.

- 1 Did they ... ?
 - a agree completely on every point
 - b all agree after some discussion
 - c strongly disagree
- 2 How would you describe their discussion?
 - a an angry argument
 - b formal and polite
 - c friendly and helpful
- 3 How did they record their ideas?
 - a they all contributed ideas and one person made notes
 - b they each made their own notes
 - c they didn't make notes – they just talked about the topic

3 LANGUAGE FOCUS 1

Agreeing and disagreeing

- a** How did the students agree and disagree? Add one word to each expression in bold.
- SONYA** ... Maybe that wouldn't happen so much in an ordinary company.
 - CARLOS** Yeah, **that's** ¹_____, also family-run businesses have a kind of in-built support system – that's what you're saying really, aren't you?
 - SONYA** Yeah, ²_____, they stick together.
 - SONYA** ... Someone else in the family can usually take over, so they can be more flexible.
 - PETER** Yeah, **that's a good** ³_____, ...
 - CARLOS** ... another thing is, um, they usually share the same values,
 - PETER** Yeah, **that's** ⁴_____.
 - VICKI** **I'm not** ⁵_____, I think that depends, doesn't it? I mean – **I see what you** ⁶_____, but still the family may not all see things in quite the same way, not always.
 - PETER** Isn't that the same with any company, though?
 - CARLOS** **Well, not** ⁷_____ because you just advertise for a new manager, um – or else someone who's ambitious gets promoted from inside the company.
 - PETER** **OK,** ⁸_____ **enough.**

b **3.3** Listen and check.

c Which expressions are used to (a) agree (b) disagree? Write them in two lists.

4 PRONUNCIATION

Rising and falling tones

- a** **3.4** Listen to six expressions again. In each expression, does the speaker's voice ... ?
- rise or stay high at the end
 - fall or stay low at the end
- b** Choose the correct answers.
- We usually use a rising tone ...
 - when we agree
 - when we disagree
 - both when we agree and when we disagree
 - We do this because ...
 - we're asking a question
 - we're showing surprise
 - it sounds less aggressive
 - When we agree, we usually use ...
 - a rising tone
 - a falling tone

c Work in pairs, A and B.

- A** Make one of the points below about family businesses.
B Either agree or disagree and add a comment.
A Agree or disagree with what B said.

Then change roles.

- Family businesses can build up loyal customers.
- If they're not careful, family businesses can often seem old-fashioned.
- Family businesses never have a chance to grow and develop.
- Some family businesses are huge – like Walmart, for example.

5 LANGUAGE FOCUS 2

Inviting people to comment

a **3.5** Listen again to what Peter says. How does he ... ?

- ask for other ideas
- invite Carlos to speak

Write down the expressions he uses. Why does he use this language but the others don't?



b Here are more ways to ask people to comment. Which two shouldn't you use?

- (Do you have) any other ideas?
- Please tell me your opinion.
- Is there anything else?
- What do you think, (Carlos)?
- Do you want to say anything else?
- What do you mean?
- Do you want to add something, (Carlos)?

STUDY SKILLS: GROUP DISCUSSION

Work in a group. Write five tips for a successful group discussion. Think about ...

- contributing ideas
- agreeing and disagreeing
- making notes
- organising the discussion
- covering the topic

Compare your ideas with other groups.

6 SPEAKING

a You're going to have a group discussion. Choose one of the following topics.

- advantages of small shops v. supermarkets
- advantages and disadvantages of choosing the same career as your parents.
- good and bad points about being a student
- positive and negative aspects of global chains, e.g. H&M, Tesco, IKEA

b Alone, prepare two or three points to make about the topic.

c Have a discussion in groups.

- Choose one person to 'chair' the discussion. He/She should ask for ideas and make notes of points.
- Discuss the topic together. Use expressions from 3a to agree and disagree.