



Self-Assessment Test: BEC Higher

Levels: B1 up to BEC-Higher Course (-C1)

Thank you for your interest in our self-assessment test.

This test should give you an idea how good your current business English skills are, and help you to decide whether you are ready to join one of our BEC Higher preparation courses.

We wish you good luck and hope you will have fun doing this test.

Regulations

Time	90 minutes
Aids	No dictionaries or other aids allowed
Correction	Correct your test yourself with the key available on pages 17 – 19. Every correct answer is awarded 1 point.
Level	B1 up to the entry level for our BEC Higher Course.

Scoreboard

Assessment Test	Points	My Score
Paper 1 – Reading	40	
Paper 2 – Use of English	60	
Total	100	

Assessment

Points Scored	Level	Recommendation
75 - 100	- C1	Ready for the BEC-Higher-Diploma Course
50 - 74	B2	Ready for BEC Vantage Course
1 - 49	B1	Ready for BEC Preliminary Course

Paper 1: Reading

Part 1

- Look at the statements below and at the five extracts from a text about corporate ownership of planes on the following page.
- Which extract (A, B, C, D or E) does each statement refer to?
- For each sentence **1 - 8**, mark one letter **A, B, C, D** or **E**.
- You will need to use some of the letters more than once.

Example

0. It has recently become cheaper to own a plane.

A	B	C	D	E
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

1. The expense of plane ownership is seen as unacceptable by large numbers of people.
2. Increased business travel is leading to greater interest in plane ownership.
3. Company-owned planes are less luxurious than might be expected.
4. Rules concerning flights may slow down privately owned travel.
5. The justification for plane ownership is related to senior management pay levels.
6. Plane ownership may be taken as a sign of a business being poorly run.
7. Competition is increasing among businesses which sell planes.
8. Plane ownership enables more rapid access to many places.



- A** Regular European business travellers view travelling on commercial airlines as inefficient and inconvenient. Mostly it is not the airlines' fault but the infrastructure they have to work with. Private aircraft are being bought primarily not to save money on tickets but to save time. Scheduled flights in Europe cover only 10 per cent of the destinations available. Delays, more likely than not in European travel these days, waste precious time. The number of hours top executives with huge salaries waste has a direct impact on cost-effectiveness.
- B** The gradual completion of Europe's single market means that more and more executives are criss-crossing Europe looking for business. With European domestic air fares extremely high, a corporate jet looks more attractive for executives flying three or four times a month. Even some of Europe's smaller companies are investigating it. However, the larger European airports operate priority regulations which govern slot allocation for take-off and create delays; airlines have first priority, chartered flights come second, air taxis third and business jets are fourth on the list. Smaller airports pose problems of access and a risk of inadequate ground handling.
- C** Most businesses will not discuss their corporate aircraft or even reveal whether the already high-earning chief executive has an aircraft, for fear of shareholder reaction. There is still some stigma attached to ownership of a business jet. With new planes costing anything from \$6 million upwards plus extra comforts in the interior, many companies feel they can't justify the expense to shareholders and employees. For some European managers a private jet is seen as an unacceptable perk indicating serious problems in a company's management.
- D** The market for private aircraft divides into two sectors: the no-expense-spared rich man's plaything – the popular image – and the serious business tool owned by corporations. Manufacturers deliver the former as what is called a 'green' aircraft – a plane that is unfinished except for a green corrosive-resistant paint which covers the bare metal. Owners personalise the plane with telephones, dining areas and even cinemas. The latter sector is very different and planes are normally bought with straightforward seating.
- E** Fractional ownership of aircraft has opened up the market, as the low acquisition costs and predictable monthly fees are more palatable to shareholders and to first-time buyers. Some of the biggest names in the business jet industry have launched their own fractional ownership schemes. Several smaller companies are also getting in on the act and are trying to beat the larger companies down the runway by offering cheaper prices. Yet critics claim that fractional ownership is untested and faces the customer with a wide range of liabilities.

Part 2

- Read the article below about starting your own business.
- Choose the best sentence from the following page to fill each of the gaps.
- For each gap, **9 – 13**, mark one letter **A - G**.
- Do not use any letter more than once.
- There is an example at the beginning, **(0)**.

How to Start Your Own Business?

The first two things to do if you are starting your own business are to find an accountant and talk to your bank manager. Your accountant will help you to draw up a business plan to show what borrowings you need from your bank. **(0)** **G** .

While you are engaged in these consultations, it is a good idea to find out whether you are entitled to any government subsidies or similar financial help. **(9)** . Check too whether training grants are available for yourself or people you employ.

Once you have completed these preliminary tasks, there are a number of specific things you then need to do. Doing them in the right way and at the right time can save you a lot of money, so make sure you know what to do.

Perhaps the most important is to tell the Inland Revenue that you have left your job and have started your own business. **(10)** . The Inland Revenue will also need to amend their records to show that you are now self-employed. Next, you should think about registering for Value Added Tax (VAT). Generally, if your sales exceed a certain amount you have to charge VAT on them. **(11)** .

Consider the consequences of employing people in your business. As soon as you start to take on employees, you will need to establish proper procedures. These include drawing up proper contracts of employment. You will also need to get in touch with your local tax office to register your employees.

Lastly, as part of becoming an employer of others, you must become familiar with a number of legal issues. Once you have more than a minimum number of people on your payroll, you will need to comply with Health and Safety requirements. **(12)** . One issue that you should certainly think about once your business expands and your staff grow in numbers is equal opportunity. In particular, you should consider drawing up a company policy on equal opportunity. **(13)** .

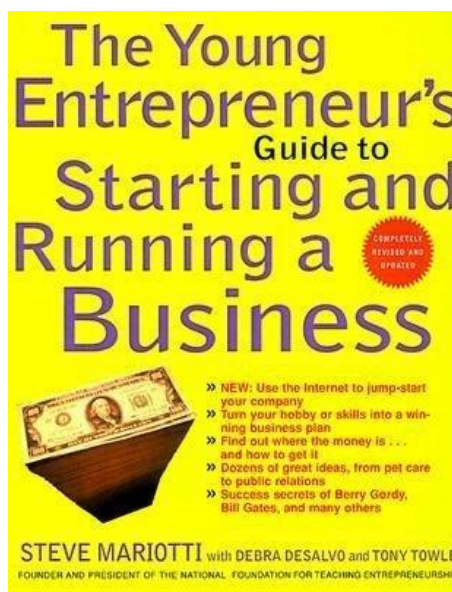
If you need more information on legal or other matters relating to employment, contact your local Chamber of Commerce, which will either be able to help you, or will put you in touch with organizations who can.

Example

0.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G

- A It is a good idea, when considering this issue, to ask your local Fire Authority to check your work premises in order to ensure that they comply with current fire regulations.
- B Even if your sales are under that figure, it may be worthwhile registering voluntarily because you could recover what you have been charged on your business purchases.
- C If you are new to this, talk to your local Chamber of Commerce about placing suitable advertisements in the local press.
- D For example, you might be in a less prosperous region where grants are made to encourage the start-up of small businesses.
- E You may be due a repayment of income tax deducted while you were in employment, so do this as soon as possible.
- F If this includes a commitment to employ disabled people, you will need to ensure that your premises are equipped to accommodate them, for example with ramps for wheelchairs, special provision of restrooms, and so on.
- G If this is done, your bank manager will need to review the plan and discuss any overdraft facility you might need.



Part 3

- Read the newspaper article about the behaviour of some bosses and the questions on the following page.
- For each question **14 – 19**, mark one letter (**A, B, C** or **D**) for the answer you choose.

Some Bosses' Dirty Little Tricks

There are some bosses who do not just have bigger salaries or cars than the rest of us - they also behave differently. In many sometimes subtle and often painful ways, they show you it is them rather than you who is in the driving seat. This power allows bosses to behave badly at employees' expense. The accumulation of humiliations for subordinates adds up to the status they feel. One ploy, for example, is not to answer to employee calls for days. It takes relatively little time to make a quick call but often the excuse after two or three weeks is that the boss did not have time. This, and a battery of degrading actions, merely emphasise where the power lies. What that excuse is saying is that the boss did not have time for you. The boss may even add insult to injury and say: "Did you phone? I'm sorry, I never got the message." The contempt of one that has power is never more starkly shown than when the boss tells such a lie.

Bosses may set up a meeting and then either cancel it at the last minute or be very late. Not only are they often late for a meeting, they also leave early and often have little or no idea what the detail of the meeting is about. They sit cryptically in the corner for a minute and then leave. All of that is there to show you who it is who has the power and that your time and convenience are less important than this childish show. Often this is the result of insecurity or just a failure to learn good manners.

Being tough and unresponsive to people and their feelings, the boss assumes everyone else is as well. They may even imagine that people respond better to terror and threats than to encouragement and praise. That produces a penchant for abuse, attack and denigration. And that in turn will produce good work only from a narrow range of resilient and thick-skinned people.

But it is once you get into meetings that real power language starts. When you get face to face, body language really becomes unmistakably obvious and the assertions of power become easy and evident. Typically, during a lengthy and well-researched presentation you are giving, the boss might put up a hand, turn to someone else and say: "Yes, I think we get the drift and I hear what you say. Now, John, I think you have one or two ideas which might help push this boat out."

However, some support for bosses behaving badly comes in *48 Laws of Power* by Robert Greene. Law 43 in this book states that those who act with authority are more likely to be accepted as leaders. Keeping a distance rather than attempting to be chummy is vital if leaders wish to have the ability to inspire loyalty, fear or love. Those who pretend to be one of the crowd elicit contempt. While many see a boss's unpredictability as an abuse, Law 47 states: "Those who succeed at the game are those who control the patterns and vary them at will, keeping people off balance while they set the tempo. The powerful vary their rhythms and patterns and learn to improvise."

Consultant Jonathan Wilson says: "Many of those we work for do not realise the difference between the exercise of power and bullying. Bosses behaving badly may work in the short term and even be tolerated, but in the end those bosses cut themselves off from the organisations and do not get any meaningful feedback. Also, those beneath them will be too frightened to do anything creative and only do to the letter what they are told. People are people and sometimes they behave badly and lose their tempers, but sustained bullying as a way of running an organisation is counter-productive."

14. The writer uses the examples of bosses not returning calls to illustrate
- A the fact that people change when they become bosses.
 - B the bad behaviour that most bosses are unaware of.
 - C the low regard that bosses have for employees.
 - D the unpredictable way in which bosses behave.
15. The writer says in the second paragraph that when bosses attend meetings,
- A they make it clear that they hate having to do so.
 - B they aim to create a certain impression.
 - C their contribution often spoils the meeting.
 - D their behaviour varies from meeting to meeting.
16. According to the author, when bosses are tough and unresponsive
- A the attitudes of people working for them often change.
 - B some employees feel they have to improve their performance.
 - C some people working for them do not find this upsetting.
 - D employees tend not to understand their intentions correctly.
17. The writer uses the example of a presentation to illustrate
- A the fact that bosses tend to disagree just for the sake of it.
 - B how little bosses really know about the work their employees do.
 - C the fact that bosses often come to the wrong conclusions.
 - D how keen bosses are to be in control of certain situations.
18. In *48 Laws of Power*, the author states that
- A many bosses would like to be more pleasant to employees.
 - B many bosses do not realise their behaviour is unpredictable.
 - C bosses who are friendly do not gain respect.
 - D bosses are seldom given the credit they deserve.
19. Which of the following does Jonathan Wilson say about bosses' bad behaviour?
- A It is understandable to a certain extent.
 - B It is caused by their desire to keep away from employees.
 - C It takes a great many different forms.
 - D It can cause employees to do their work badly.

Part 4

- Read the text below about executive business courses.
- Choose the correct word to fill each gap on the following page.
- For each question **20 – 30**, circle one letter (**A**, **B**, **C**, or **D**) for the answer you choose.
- There is an example at the beginning (**0**).

Business Courses

Today, there is an enormous **(0)** ___**B**___ of business courses to choose from. New trends in technology are also changing the executive education landscape. They will **(20)** _____ the options further in the coming years by presenting alternative delivery methods and learning experiences. So how do managers decide on the best course for their staff.

Most human resources professionals agree that being clear about what you want to achieve is the best way to **(21)** _____ down the choices. Recent surveys consistently **(22)** _____ that companies want courses that are relevant to their business **(23)** _____. The message from companies is “give us knowledge but make it knowledge that we can use”. Indeed, the greatest criticism of business schools in the past was that they were out of **(24)** _____ with business reality. In recent years, schools have worked hard to change their **(25)** _____ by developing working relationships with industrial and commercial partners to bridge the **(26)** _____ between classroom theory and workplace **(27)** _____ .

Survey findings suggest that organisations now **(28)** _____ executive programmes using five criteria: a faculty’s academic reputation, and its business experience, the international **(29)** _____ of participants, and programme length and price. Practical **(30)** _____ mean that geographical factors can play an important part in the choice of course, too, but in future years this may become less of an issue. The ability of technology to overcome distances is already making the ‘electronic classroom’ a reality and, in time, may well reduce the dependence on local course providers.

Example

0 **A** group **B** variety **C** extent **D** spread

A	B	C	D
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

20. **A** continue **B** stretch **C** widen **D** grow

21. **A** narrow **B** let **C** bring **D** close

22. **A** exhibit **B** show **C** present **D** display

23. **A** wishes **B** hopes **C** desires **D** needs

24. **A** touch **B** hand **C** order **D** control

25. **A** appearance **B** representation **C** picture **D** image

26. **A** space **B** opening **C** gap **D** hole

27. **A** manner **B** custom **C** practice **D** exercise

28. **A** evaluate **B** calculate **C** account **D** figure

29. **A** association **B** mix **C** union **D** alliance

30. **A** doubts **B** cares **C** fears **D** concerns



Part 5

- Read the text below about improving employability through personal branding.
- For each question **31 – 40**, write one word in CAPITAL LETTERS into the gaps.
- There is an example at the beginning (**0**).

Personal Branding

Our society (**0**) is geared increasingly towards the individual, and that means you have to find ways to stand (**31**) _____ from the crowd in order to compete. Developing your personal brand is one way to do so.

Branding has moved a long way (**32**) _____ it meant simply building recognisable product names. Brands now represent whole worlds of meaning. And that's just (**33**) _____ you need to do if you want to be visible among the masses.

"We live in a competitive climate, not least in the world of work," says Helen Nash, identity consultant for brand consultancy Smith and Milton. "Employers are (**34**) _____ just looking for skills, but for different qualities too. More and more, young people have degrees, and you'll find many other candidates with the (**35**) _____ skills and qualifications as you."

Personal branding is a form of self-presentation, but it must be done naturally, making it more (**36**) _____ just superficial. "You need to (**37**) _____ a good look at yourself and ask fundamental questions," says Nash, "such (**38**) _____ , who am I? What are my strengths and weaknesses? From the answers, decide where you want to be positioned in the world, and precisely (**39**) _____ you want the others to see you."

Over time, you can learn to create your own brand identity to make (**40**) _____ more memorable. It's a particularly useful exercise at time of change in your career.



Paper 2: Use of English

Part 1 - Grammar

- Complete the following sentences by putting the verbs in brackets into the **infinitive** or the **gerund**. (1-4).
- For each correct sentence, 1 point is allotted.
- There is an example at the beginning (0).

0. I'm sorry I forgot to call (call) you, but I was really busy.
1. Do you mind _____ (be) picked up at the airport by a taxi?
2. We've stopped _____ (meet) so often. It was a waste of time.
3. I regret _____ (quit) my MBA course. It would have boosted my career.
4. The Minister refused _____ (be) questioned about the bribe.
5. Our CEO enjoyed _____ (travel) to London.
6. You promised _____ (deliver) by April, and it's now May.

- Complete the following report (7-12) by putting the verbs into the **present perfect active** (has done) or the **present perfect passive** (has been done).
- For each correct form, 1 point is allotted.
- There is an example at the beginning (0).

Investment Choice: Brazil

Brazil (0) has been transformed (transform) from an economy based on sugar and coffee into a leading industrial power, and this has happened over a relatively short time. Over recent years inflation (7) _____ (bring) under control, and foreign direct investment (8) _____ (encourage). The Government (9) _____ (privatise) many state-owned companies, and they (10) _____ (also / invest) a lot of money in advanced infrastructure. In an attempt to decentralise the economy, Campinas was chosen to be Brazil IT capital, and car production (11) _____ (move) away from traditional centres to states such as Rio Grande do Sul in the South. No one pretends that all the old problems (12) _____ (solve), but Brazil is final taking its place on the world's stage.

- Complete the following sentences with **who, whose** or **that**. (13-18).
- For each correct sentence, 1 point is allotted.
- There is an example at the beginning (0).

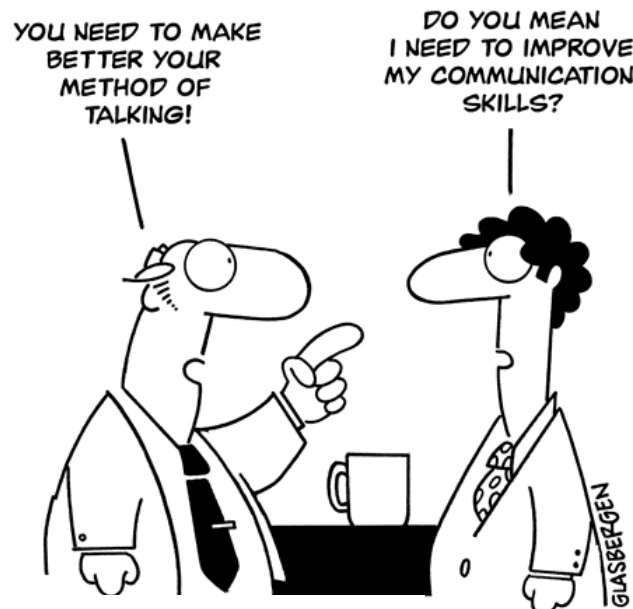
0. The customer ___ *whose* ___ company I visited is phoning this afternoon.
13. Your colleague, _____ I met this morning, had a different opinion.
14. They promoted the manager _____ sales team was the most successful.
15. The salad _____ came with the fish was excellent.
16. The technician _____ spoke to our IT executive claimed the network was working fine.
17. Rolex is a manufacturer _____ reputation is excellent all over the world.
18. The products _____ were attracting most interest were the smaller, lighter models.

- Complete the following sentences (19-24) with one of the **linking words** from the box. Use each word or phrase just once.
- For each correct sentence, 1 point is allotted.
- There is an example at the beginning (0).

although	anyway	but	in spite of	still	though	whereas
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0. Our CFO didn't recognise me, ___ *although* ___ we had met before.
19. I don't like karaoke bars _____ I went with my Korean clients anyway.
20. I offered my best price, but they _____ didn't seem to be interested.
21. I think we'll have to change our suppliers. It's a pity, _____.
22. _____ the early problems, the project has been a great success.
23. Spain is a saturated market, _____ in Portugal there is still room for growth.
24. We haven't got all the facts, but it's worth discussing it _____.

- Complete the following sentences (**25-30**) with a **phrasal verb** that means the same as the words in brackets. The particle has been given to help you.
 - For each correct sentence, 1 point is allotted.
 - There is an example at the beginning (**0**).
- 0.** Did you find out ... why they haven't paid their invoice? (discover)
25. If Mike Jenkins arrives, could you _____ *after* ... him until I return?
(take care of)
26. In my job I _____ *with* ... a lot of paperwork. (handle)
27. Any more questions? OK, I'll _____ *on* ... with my presentation
(continue)
28. If you like, I can _____ *up* ... the parcel on my way home. (collect)
29. Can you _____ *on* ... a minute until I have found the information?
(wait)
30. You need determination to succeed. Don't _____ *up* ... now. (quit)



Part 2 – Business Vocabulary

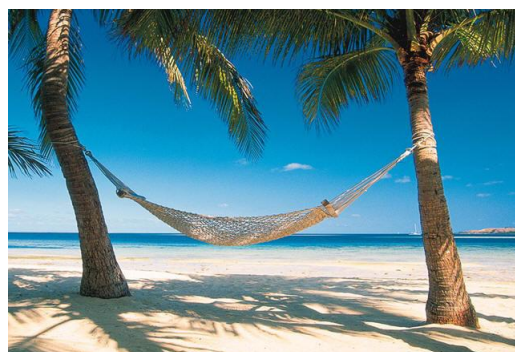
- Complete each sentence with the correct option (**31-60**).
 - There is an example at the beginning (**0**).
- 0.** We need to clarify our objectives before we start our campaign.
a.) clarify b.) interpret c.) prescribe
31. Many supermarkets are looking to _____ into new product lines.
a.) deregulate b.) destabilise c.) diversify
32. What we're looking for is loyalty and _____ from our shareholders.
a.) enterprise b.) commitment c.) congestion
33. We want to _____ new reporting procedures to improve communication.
a.) initiate b.) motivate c.) brief
34. We're _____ the company on the NYSE to raise capital for expansion.
a.) sharing b.) selling c.) floating
35. They need to _____ two different cultures to make the merger work.
a.) implement b.) integrate c.) join
36. We bought an address list and did a _____ of 2,500 addresses.
a.) posting b.) mailshot c.) send-off
37. Many dotcoms went bankrupt when the internet bubble finally _____.
a.) deflated b.) broke c.) burst
38. We need to find ways of _____ our customers' wants more effectively.
a.) anticipating b.) guessing c.) considering
39. The company faced a hostile takeover when its shares _____.
a.) peaked b.) plummeted c.) soared

40. We reviewed our _____ processes and cut production times by 12%.
a.) operating b.) management c.) sales
41. They're cutting administrative jobs to _____ the company structure.
a.) shrink b.) streamline c.) economise
42. After our company's success, other companies jumped on the _____.
a.) trend b.) hype c.) bandwagon
43. Due to large losses, shareholders won't receive a _____ this year.
a.) dividend b.) bonus c.) revenue
44. In China it is very _____ to arrive late for a meeting.
a.) hospitable b.) discourteous c.) harmonious
45. The software wasn't _____ with our system so we had to replace it.
a.) interactive b.) interconnected c.) compatible
46. Smart companies are pushing social issues up the _____.
a.) schedule b.) agenda c.) itinerary
47. We ordered 500 12-page glossy _____ to hand out at the trade fair.
a.) leaflets b.) brochures c.) samples
48. They had to sell off some _____ in order to reduce their level of debt.
a.) headquarters b.) capital c.) assets
49. We don't own the Paris office. We _____ it from a larger company.
a.) lease b.) hire c.) borrow
50. The joint venture has been a successful _____ for both parties.
a.) interaction b.) teamwork c.) collaboration
51. By _____, we've been able to reduce our office space by 20 %.
a.) swapping desks b.) desk exchange c.) hotdesking

52. The meeting lasted all night due to the _____ of the negotiations.
a.) disparity b.) complexity c.) flexibility
53. Do you know how much of the budget has been _____ to recruitment?
a.) allocated b.) ensured c.) prescribed
54. Many companies now no longer allow employees to accept _____.
a.) gadgets b.) gimmicks c.) gifts
55. Our customers buy our goods from independent high street _____.
a.) wholesalers b.) retailers c.) distributors
56. Despite early losses, the managed to _____ by the end of the year.
a.) stabilise b.) level out c.) break even
57. The new warehouse allows us to manage our _____ a lot better
a.) inventory b.) assets c.) holdings
58. We sold our _____ in Marbidex Inc. to focus on our core activities.
a.) partition b.) presence c.) equity stake
59. A recent wave of _____ has left only five big players in the market.
a.) consolidation b.) joint ventures c.) efficiencies
60. There are some important issues _____ from the findings of this report.
a.) attributing b.) arising c.) coming

Congratulations – You Have Made It!
This is the End of the Self-Assessment Test:

It is Time to Relax!



Key

Every correct answer is awarded with one point.
You can score a maximum of 100 points.

Paper 1: Reading

Part 1

1	C	2	B	3	D	4	B
5	A	6	C	7	E	8	A

Part 2

9	D	10	E	11	B	12	A
13	F						

Part 3

14	C	15	B	16	C	17	D
18	C	19	A				

Part 4

20	C	21	A	22	B	23	D
24	A	25	D	26	C	27	C
28	A	29	B	30	D		

Part 5

31	OUT	32	SINCE
33	WHAT	34	NOT
35	SAME	36	THAN
37	TAKE / HAVE	38	AS
39	HOW	40	YOURSELF

Paper 2: Use of English

Part 1 - Grammar

- | | | | |
|----|----------------------------------|----|---------------------|
| 1 | being | 2 | meeting |
| 3 | quitting | 4 | to be |
| 5 | travelling (BE) / traveling (AE) | 6 | to deliver |
| 7 | has been brought | 8 | has been encouraged |
| 9 | has privatized | 10 | have also invested |
| 11 | has been moved | 12 | have been solved |
| 13 | who | 14 | whose |
| 15 | that | 16 | who |
| 17 | whose | 18 | that |
| 19 | but | 20 | still |
| 21 | though | 22 | In spite of |
| 23 | whereas | 24 | anyway |
| 25 | look | 26 | deal |
| 27 | go / carry | 28 | pick |
| 29 | hang / hold | 30 | give |

Part 2 – Business Vocabulary

- | | | | |
|----|--------------|----|----------------|
| 31 | c diversify | 32 | b commitment |
| 33 | a initiate | 34 | c floating |
| 35 | b integrate | 36 | b mailshot |
| 37 | c burst | 38 | a anticipating |
| 39 | b plummeted | 40 | a operating |
| 41 | b streamline | 42 | c bandwagon |
| 43 | a dividend | 44 | b discourteous |

45 c compatible
47 b brochures
49 a lease
51 c hotdesking
53 a allocated
55 b retailers
57 a inventory
59 a consolidation

46 b agenda
48 c assets
50 c collaboration
52 b complexity
54 c gifts
56 c break even
58 c equity stake
60 b arising



THE END