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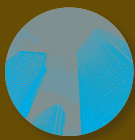
SECOND EDITION

in company

PRE-INTERMEDIATE STUDENT'S BOOK WITH CD-ROM 

CEF LEVEL A2-B1


MACMILLAN



14 HIRING AND FIRING

Hiring or firing an employee is a challenging, emotional experience and a pathway to possible lawsuits. The decision to employ or terminate someone will influence you, that individual, his or her family, your team, your customers, and your stakeholders.

THE INDUSTRIAL PHYSICIST [HTTP://WWW.AIP.ORG/TIP/INPHFA/VOL-9/ISS-3/P28.HTML](http://www.aip.org/tip/inphfa/vol-9/iss-3/p28.html)

- 1 Look at the headline below. What do you think the article is about?
- 2 Read the article to see if you are correct. Then answer the questions.
 - a Do you think the sacking was justified?
 - b Would this be possible in your company or in your country?
 - c What advice would you give to Nicola?



Ibiza phone-in prize winner fired

Nicola Williams, a 31-year-old single mother from Newbridge in South Wales, couldn't believe her luck when she was told she was the winner of a Mediterranean holiday for herself and her six-year-old daughter.

The week's break on the sunshine island of Ibiza was the prize in a radio phone-in competition. She told reporter Hefina Rendle on BBC Wales television that she was 'totally over the moon, really excited'. However, only minutes later she was laid off. Nicola, an electronic parts worker, who phoned the radio station from work using her own mobile phone, was unaware that her boss was standing nearby. He asked her to hang up, took her into his office, and told her she was sacked. She was ordered to leave the factory immediately.

This was her first job since the birth of her daughter, and she was fired by the same manager who originally hired her.

But the story may have a happy ending. The commercial radio station which ran the competition is now trying to find her another job. A spokesman for the station said that people should be allowed to take part in competitions from work, as they are in general life. He said it was sad that the manager couldn't see the good side and just congratulate Nicola on her good luck.

Skytronics, Nicola's former employer, refused to be interviewed by the BBC, and later issued a statement supporting the action of their manager.

- 3 Find two more verbs in the article that are similar in meaning to 'sack'. Which verb is more formal?

The passive

- 4 Find sentences in the article that are similar in meaning to the following:

- a They laid her off.
- b They ordered her to leave the factory immediately.

- 5 Compare the two pairs of sentences in 4.

- a Which are active and which are passive?
- b Who is mentioned first in the active sentences?
- c Who is mentioned first in the passive sentences?
- d Who is the story about?
- e What is the advantage of using the passive sentences?
- f The agent in the active sentences is *they*. What happens to it in the passive sentences? Why?

6 Read the manager's report of the incident in 2. He uses the passive to sound more objective and formal in style. Complete the report using the verbs below in the passive.

ask give (x 2) inform (x 2) note warn

RE: NICOLA WILLIAMS

On two occasions in November Ms Nicola Williams, an employee in the assembly plant, (a) that using a mobile phone in work hours was against the company rules. Both these warnings (b) by another supervisor, and (c) in her file. Then, in December, on a further occasion, she (d) a written warning. Finally, on Friday, 12 January at 10.30 I (e) of a problem on the factory floor. When I arrived there, I found a lot of noise and shouting going on. Ms Williams was using her mobile phone to participate in a radio phone-in programme. Apparently she had won a prize. I asked her to put the phone down immediately, and to come in to my office. I decided to terminate her employment, and in the presence of Ms Jones, my deputy, Ms Williams was told that she was being sacked. She became hysterical and abusive, and (f) to leave the factory immediately. She (g) that her possessions would be forwarded to her by post.

7 In what way are the details about the incident different?

8 Improve these short texts by changing one verb to the passive in each text.

- a They have laid off over 35,000 people in the last five years, unemployment is rising, and there are social problems in the region.
35,000 people have been laid off in the last five years, unemployment is rising, and there are social problems in the region.
- b The business is a great success. They are hiring new staff and it is expanding fast.
- c As there was a recession and the number of orders decreased, they closed one of the factories.
- d To improve margins, it is making the new model in Hungary, where labour costs are lower.
- e Ford has several plants in Europe. One of them is in Valencia and it produces the Escort there.
- f They have announced plans for the new industrial estate. It will cover ten hectares and create space for over 15 business ventures.

Discussion

9 Work in groups. In what situations do you think sacking is justified? Think about the following:

dishonesty disrespect to superiors
 inappropriate dress
 industrial action (going on strike)
 not meeting objectives or achieving results
 punctuality revealing company secrets
 violence

Add your own ideas, if you like.

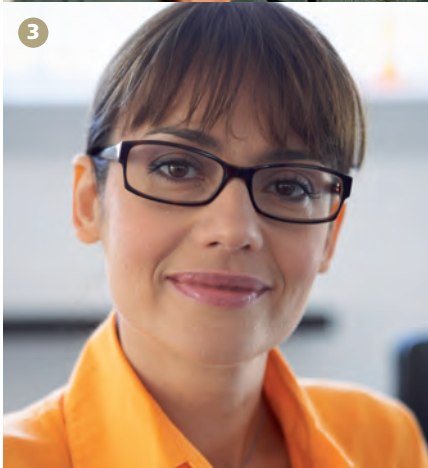




1



2



3



4

APPLYING FOR A JOB

1 **2.14–2.17** Listen to four people talking about their approach to applying for a job. Take notes and match the people on the left to the summaries below.

- a I'm looking for a chance to develop and demonstrate my true potential.
- b My qualifications and experience speak for themselves.
- c I'm so brilliant at whatever I do, they would be lucky to have me working in their company.
- d There may be people with better qualifications and experience, but no one is more enthusiastic or hard working than me.

2 Which speaker(s) do you agree with? What approach did you use to get your present job? Does the approach you use depend on the job?

3 Read the following extracts from letters of application. Match them to the summaries in 1.

i I am very keen to work for your company because of its excellent reputation. I do not have the specific qualifications or experience referred to in your advertisement. However, I am applying because I feel I am able to make up for this through hard work and willingness to learn.

ii If you believe in the pursuit of excellence, then I am interested in joining your company. I set high standards for myself and expect them from others, especially the organisations that I work for. I look forward to an opportunity to add to the list of already outstanding achievements, which are outlined in my CV.

iii From my CV, you will see that five years at a chemicals multinational have given me a solid business background. I am responsible for my department's logistical planning, which has developed my organisational skills. However, I am now looking for opportunities for further development and responsibility, which my present employer cannot offer.

iv As a commercially aware and linguistically trained university graduate, I have a broad range of employment experience at blue-chip companies in both the USA and Europe. I am dynamic and creative, with a strong team spirit and leadership qualities. I have a proven record of working with individuals at all levels through highly developed interpersonal and communication skills.

Reading between the lines

4 Read the extracts in 3 again. There are certain formal phrases people use in letters of application to talk about their qualities and achievements. Underline phrases which mean the following:

- a I'd really like to work for you because you're such a great company.
- b If you think doing things well is important, I'd like to work for you.
- c I don't really have the profile of the ideal candidate.
- d I've worked with many different, important companies.
- e I've shown I can work with all kinds of people and get on with everyone.
- f I look after the practical day-to-day aspects of department organisation.
- g I want a new job because my company probably won't be able to promote me.
- h I have five years of international business experience working for a chemicals company.

5 Use some of the phrases in 3 to write a paragraph introducing your own CV.

A JOB INTERVIEW

- 1 Read the job advert and CV below. Why do you think Sara applied for the job?

MULTINATIONAL FOOD PACKAGING EQUIPMENT MANUFACTURER

seeks International Sales Manager to call on Europe and Latin America.


Base \$80K and commission, full benefits and expenses.

Prefers: fluency in one or more foreign languages.

Send resumé with cover letter indicating citizenship and salary requirements.

CURRICULUM VITAE

NAME	Sara Verkade
ADDRESS	58, Stoppard Drive, London SW16
TELEPHONE	Tel: 353 865 344872
E-MAIL	sara.verkade@gmz.net
DATE & PLACE OF BIRTH	23.7.78, Maassluis, The Netherlands
MARITAL STATUS	Single
NATIONALITY	Dutch
QUALIFICATIONS	September 1996 - July 1999 BComm, Marketing Management, Haagse Hogeschool, The Hague
EMPLOYMENT HISTORY	June 2000 - present Management Team Co-ordinator, Helena Rubinstein, L'Oreal Organising meetings, events and conferences. Analysing sales figures and producing relevant reports and charts. Customer relations and responding to complaints and queries. June 1999 - June 2000 SPC Professional, Sales Productivity Centre, IBM Sales team support. Research, pricing and proposal-writing on million dollar bids.
LANGUAGES	Dutch, English, German, Spanish
IT SKILLS	Proficient user of Microsoft Office suite

- 2  2.18 Sara was interviewed for the job. Listen to the interview. Questions a – i below are typical in an interview for a job. Which of the questions does the interviewer ask? (He does not use the same words.)

- Why did you apply for this job?
- Why should we employ you?
- When are you free to start?
- Does your present employer know that you want to leave?
- Have you ever done anything like this before?
- How do you feel about travelling?
- How good are your computer skills?
- What are your language skills like?
- Do you have any questions?



- 3 Do you think the interviewer was fair in the interview?
Do you think Sarah got the job?

**Asking for clarification**

4 Listen again and complete the phrases below.

- a How much managerial experience do you have? It's
..... your CV.
- b Yes, you're the leader of a team?
- c Oh, I see, of personal assistant?
- d But a manager?
- e in your
previous position, you were 'an SPC professional'. What
.....?
- f you were directly involved in sales?
- g So,
..... involve?
- h Can specific, please?

Fluency

5 Write a brief CV for yourself and give it to your partner. Then take it in turns to interview each other for the job Sarah wanted or another job. Ask for clarification of the details of the CV.

WHAT ABOUT THE WORKERS?

1 What is happening in the photograph on this page? How do you think this situation relates to employment and staffing?

2 Work with a partner. You will each read an article relating to the employment situation in a country and do three exercises. When you have finished, turn back to this page.

Student A: Look at page 136. **Student B:** Look at page 137.

3 The noun / verb combinations in the box were in the articles in 2. The verbs were in the passive. Can you remember the sentences? Tell your partner.

A

conditions / agree firms / contact salaries / negotiate staff / pay survey / carry out

B

anyone / sack country / bring offers / put reforms / defend strike / call

Discussion

4 Discuss the following questions in relation to your country.

- a What are the laws about unemployment benefits? Do you think they are fair?
- b What rights do workers have? How do they affect employment?
- c Why do you think there is a shortage of skilled workers? Do you think the use of temporary labour is a good solution to the problem?
- d 'It is increasingly difficult to provide people with jobs for life.' Do you think this is true?



14 HIRING AND FIRING

LANGUAGE LINKS

▶ Phrase Bank: Asking for clarification

- Now, can we just check out some details?
 Does that mean ... ?
 But do you/are you ... ?
 It says on your CV/in your e-mail that ... What exactly does that mean?
 What does ... involve?
 Could you be a bit more specific about ... , please?

Vocabulary

Procedures

1 Match the parts of the sentences.

- a She was employed ...
 - b The incident was reported ...
 - c John was consulted ...
 - d The staff have been informed ...
 - e She was sacked ...
 - f The conditions were agreed ...
 - g He didn't accept the offers which were put ...
 - h The worker was injured ...
 - i The flight was delayed ...
 - j The passive is used ...
- 1 ... on a temporary basis.
 - 2 ... about the decision.
 - 3 ... for writing reports.
 - 4 ... for stealing office stationery.
 - 5 ... to him by the employment office.
 - 6 ... by the bad weather.
 - 7 ... to the supervisor.
 - 8 ... at a company wide level.
 - 9 ... of the new working hours.
 - 10 ... by an explosion in the chemical plant.

a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j

2 Combine one word from box A with one word from box B to complete each sentence below.

A	B
electronics	application
written	secrets
job	position
company	rights
workers'	needs
job	security
previous	workers
skilled	warning
temporary	staff
unemployment	benefits
staffing	industry

- a For young people is not usually as important as a good salary.
- b We gave the employee a for arriving late to work two days running.
- c In the summer there is more work so we have to take on more people to meet our
- d He was accused of revealing to a competitor.
- e A hundred years ago didn't exist because there were no unions.
- f You always have to include a CV in your
- g Education is important because industry needs a supply of
- h Was your a full-time post?
- i In many countries there are no for people who have no work.
- j At Christmas, shops take on because it's a busy time of year.
- k The is an important sector of the local economy.

3 Reorganise the letters to form words to complete the sentences.

kasc veritwine kemart girinf
 dali fof revbal nowd

- a Two hundred workers at the factory have been because of the bad financial situation.
- b This mobile phone is the smallest on the
- c I asked her to put the phone and come into my office.
- d They can't you without giving you at least two warnings in writing.
- e someone is one of the most difficult things a manager has to do.
- f The first thing you have to do is give the employee a warning.
- g How did your go, then? Do you think you got the job?



Grammar

The passive

The object in active sentences becomes the subject in passive sentences.

Active

Someone *services* the machine every year.
They *have closed* down five factories.
They *decorated* the offices last year.
They *are encouraging* her to apply for the job.
They *don't clean* the office on Friday.

Passive (to be + past participle)

The machine *is serviced* every year.
Five factories *have been closed* down.
The offices *were decorated* last year.
She *is being encouraged* to apply for the job.
The office *isn't cleaned* on Friday.

You often use the passive to put the important information at the beginning of a sentence. The passive can be more impersonal than the active. For this reason, you can use it in formal documents such as reports.

You can use *by* to emphasise *who* or *what* performed an action.

- *The book was written by Peter Hudson.*
- *The equipment is damaged by prolonged exposure to sunlight.*

Practice 1

Reorganise the words to make correct sentences.

- a June was at the contract the signed end of
.....
- b sacked slowly Sheila was working too for
.....
- c damaged fire the the in was office
.....
- d workers accident injured were the in some
.....
- e measures announced the have new been
.....
- f staff employed new no year this be will
.....
- g redesigned corporate is image being our
.....
- h salaries increased year have this been our
.....

Practice 2

Rewrite the sentences in the passive.

- a They have cancelled the order.
The order has been cancelled.
.....
- b They haven't finished the new building.
.....
- c Someone told him about the meeting.
.....
- d Someone stole the plans for the new engine.
.....
- e Someone will pick you up at the airport.
.....
- f They didn't ask him if he wanted the job.
.....
- g Did anyone tell you about what happened at the meeting?
.....
- h They hold a sales conference every year.
.....

Practice 3

Answer the questions using a sentence in the passive and *by*.

- a Who was the inventor of the light bulb?
The light bulb was invented by Thomas Edison.
.....
- b What currency was the replacement for the peseta, franc and lira in 2002?
.....
- c How many countries form the United Kingdom?
.....
- d Who is the author of this book?
.....
- e Who is the owner of this book?
.....
- f What type of heating have you got in your office – oil, gas or electric?
.....
- g Who was the director of the film *Some Like it Hot*?
.....
- h Which company was the original manufacturer of the PC?
.....

Answers at foot of page.

Answers (Practice 3)
g Billy Wilder h IBM
b euro c four d Simon Clarke