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SECOND EDITION

**in company**

PRE-INTERMEDIATE TEACHER'S BOOK

  
MACMILLAN



In this unit, students look at issues around getting and losing a job. In the first section, they read a newspaper article about a woman who was fired for taking part in a radio competition while she was at work. This article is used to present and practise the passive. Students then read a report giving the manager's viewpoint on the same incident and practise rewriting short texts in the passive.

The next section is about applying for a job, and students read extracts from four letters of application. They examine the formality of the language used and write a paragraph introducing their own CV.

In the next section, students look at a CV and a job advert, and listen to an interview. They decide whether or not they think the company appointed the candidate.

In the final section, they talk about wider issues around employment and relationships between workers and employers.

The grammatical focus is on the passive, and the lexical focus is on procedures.

In this first section, students read the story of Nicola Williams, who was sacked for taking part in a radio phone-in programme while she was at work. They examine the vocabulary used in the article and look at the use of the passive. They then read the manager's report on the incident, which gives an entirely different viewpoint. This text uses the passive in order to sound more formal and objective, and students go on to rewrite short texts using the passive. They then discuss the issue of sacking employees.

#### ▶ WARM-UP

Write the words *hire* and *fire* at the top of two columns on the board and ask students what they mean (to give someone a job, and to take a job away from someone). Then ask how many other words they know that mean the same thing as *hire* and *fire* or are connected with them. If they don't know any, you could put this list on the board and ask them to decide which column they should go in: *take someone on, lay off, sack, appoint, downsize, let someone go, terminate someone's employment, recruit*.

1 Encourage students to make predictions based on the headline alone and not to read the article yet. Establish that a *phone-in* is a radio programme in which listeners are invited to phone the radio station and give their opinions on air. Sometimes these involve competitions or quizzes in which people can win prizes.

2 Students read the article and see if their predictions in 1 were correct. You could use the questions as the basis for a class discussion of students' reactions to what they have read or ask them to discuss them in pairs or small groups.

3 Ask students to underline the verbs in the text which mean the same as *to sack* and to discuss in pairs which verb is more formal. Point out that informal words (such as *fired* or *sacked*) are usually used in newspaper headlines because they have more impact.

#### ANSWERS

laid off, fired  
*Laid off* is the more formal verb.

#### The passive

4 Again, suggest that students underline the sentences in the article when they find them.

#### ANSWERS

- a She was laid off.  
b She was ordered to leave the factory immediately.

5 Do this exercise with the whole class to make sure that everyone understands.

#### ANSWERS

- a *They laid her off* and *They ordered her to leave the factory immediately* are active.  
*She was laid off* and *She was ordered to leave the factory immediately* are passive.  
b They (the management of the company)  
c She (Nicola Williams)  
d Nicola Williams  
e They put the emphasis on Nicola and what happened to her. The important information comes at the beginning of the sentence.  
f It is omitted because it is unnecessary. We are not interested in who did the sacking so much as who was sacked.

#### ▶ LANGUAGE LINKS

If your students are unfamiliar with the passive, direct their attention to the *Language links* section on page 94, where they will find more information on the form and use of the passive, and practice exercises to help them use the passive form correctly.

6 Students read the manager's report, which shows that there are two sides to every story. Point out the use of the passive to make a text sound more objective and formal in style. Elicit that the opposite of *objective* is *subjective*. A subjective approach implies more emotional involvement with the case. An objective account of something sticks to the facts. When you have checked the answers, ask whether students have changed their minds as a result of reading the manager's report about whether they think the sacking was justified or not.

#### ANSWERS

- a was warned      d was given      g was informed  
b were given      e was informed  
c were noted      f was asked

7 Ask students what the source of the story about Nicola Williams that they read first was (*a newspaper*). Elicit that a newspaper is more likely to be sympathetic to Nicola than to the management of her company for a number of reasons: newspapers and their readers like 'hard-luck' stories and stories with happy endings; newspapers like to think they champion the ordinary person against the power of big business. Ask students if they think that newspapers usually publish all the facts of a case. Students discuss in pairs or small groups how the details of the incident are different in the two accounts.

**ANSWERS**

The newspaper account doesn't mention that Nicola had received previous warnings about using her mobile phone at work. It also doesn't report that she became hysterical and abusive when she was told that she was sacked.

The manager's report doesn't include personal information, such as the fact that Nicola is a single mother with a six-year-old daughter.

**8** The instructions here tell students to improve the texts by changing one verb into the passive. When you have checked the answers, ask them why they think this improves the texts (mainly because the most important information is brought to the beginning of the sentence, where it is more prominent and has more impact; also because these are formal texts, and the passive eliminates the use of the pronouns *they* and *it*, which makes the original texts sound more informal).

**ANSWERS**

- a 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. New staff are being hired, and it is expanding fast.
- c As there was a recession and the number of orders decreased, one of the factories was closed.
- d To improve margins, the new model is being made in Hungary, where labour costs are lower.
- e Ford has several plants in Europe. One of them is in Valencia, and the Escort is produced there.
- f Plans have been announced for the new industrial estate. It will cover ten hectares and create space for over 15 business ventures.

**Discussion**

**9** Go through the items in the box with the class to make sure everyone understands them. Students then discuss the question in small groups. You could appoint a secretary in each group to take notes and report back to the class on what was said. Emphasise that students can include any ideas of their own.

**APPLYING FOR A JOB**

In this section, students listen to people talking about their approach to applying for a job and match the people to extracts from their application letters. These are then examined for examples of formal language, which is appropriate for such letters. Students are invited to decide what this formal language really means. They then write a paragraph introducing their own CVs.

**WARM-UP**

Find out what the normal procedure is for applying for a job in students' own countries. They may be interested to know that, in the UK, most jobs are advertised in the press. Some of the adverts ask people to contact the advertiser to receive an official application form. Others ask for a letter of application and a CV (curriculum vitae), which lists the applicant's personal details, education, qualifications, job experience and interests. In both cases, applicants would write a covering letter, explaining why they are interested in applying for the job and noting any relevant points that they wish to highlight from their CVs or which are not covered in either the CV or the official application form. Application letters are written in formal language.

**1** **2.14–2.17** Focus students' attention on the pictures of the four people. Ask them to speculate on what kind of people they are. What adjectives would they use to describe them? Make sure students have read the summaries before you play the recording so that they know exactly what they are listening for. Then play the recording and ask them to match the people to the summaries. Check the answers with the class.

**ANSWERS**

Speaker 1: c  
Speaker 2: d  
Speaker 3: b  
Speaker 4: a

**2.14****1**

I think that these days, you have to really sell yourself. Certainly this is what employers expect in the US. You should show them how great and self-confident you are. Modesty isn't going to get you anywhere, and no one is going to mind if you exaggerate a bit and dress things up to sound more impressive. Make the potential employer feel that, although this is the job you always wanted and of course you are the ideal person for it, if they don't snap you up, someone else will. So, they had better hire you before they lose the chance.

**2.15****2**

It's not often that qualifications and experience totally match up to an advertised post, so it's preferable to emphasise other qualities like your willingness to learn and the fact that you work hard. In fact, you should be careful not to give the impression you are over-qualified for the job. I think that employers are often more interested in things like loyalty and ability to fit in. A high-flier who knows too much can create a bad working atmosphere and break a team. Personally, I want the employer to think that I am going to be easy to work with and won't create too many waves.

**2.16****3**

No one likes a 'big head' but, on the other hand, don't be falsely modest, either. Basically, your qualifications and experience tell their own story, so you're not going to impress anyone by adding a lot of adjectives like *excellent* and *outstanding* to your CV. Usually, this will make an experienced recruitment officer suspicious. It doesn't hurt to acknowledge one or two weaknesses, either – areas that you would like to improve and you want a chance to develop. Above all, be honest, because if you exaggerate or lie, in the end someone is going to catch you out, and you'll end up looking stupid.

**2.17****4**

People's motivations interest employers. If you want to work for a specific company, tell them why, especially if you are changing jobs. Valid reasons would be that you are frustrated by the limitations of your present post, or that you can't fulfil the potential of your background and education. Don't whine, though, and don't blame your current employers: you've learnt a lot with them, but it's time to move on. Tell potential employers that you have a lot to offer, and all you need is an opportunity to show it. If someone gives you a break, they won't be disappointed.

**2** Elicit students' reactions to the people they listened to. Which one(s) do they agree with? Ask students to discuss in pairs which approach they used to get their present job and whether the approach depends on the job. If your students are not yet employed, ask them to discuss which approach they think would be the most successful. Again, would this depend on the type of job?

**3** Establish that these are extracts from letters of application written by the four people featured in 1. Allow students to work in pairs to match them to the summaries. Then check the answers with the class.

#### ANSWERS

Speaker 1: ii  
Speaker 2: i  
Speaker 3: iv  
Speaker 4: iii

### Reading between the lines

**4** Ask students what they think the expression *reading between the lines* means (working out the motivation that lies behind what the writer has written and what the words really mean, as opposed to what they appear to mean). Find out if there is a similar expression in students' own language(s). In letters of application, people want to make themselves sound as good as they can, without actually lying about their abilities, qualifications and experience. Formal language is often used to give the impression that something is true, without actually giving false information. This will be demonstrated in the next section. Here it is simply used to make the application letter sound more formal and impressive. Students read the extracts again and find the formal phrases that match sentences (a) to (h).

#### ANSWERS


- a I am very keen to work for your company because of its excellent reputation.
- b If you believe in the pursuit of excellence, then I am interested in joining your company.
- c I do not have the specific qualifications or experience referred to in your advertisement.
- d I have a broad range of employment experience at blue-chip companies in both the USA and Europe.
- e I have a proven record of working with individuals at all levels through highly developed interpersonal and communication skills.
- f I am responsible for my department's logistical planning.
- g I am looking for opportunities for further development and responsibility, which my present employer cannot offer.
- h ... five years at a chemicals multinational have given me a solid business background.

**5** This writing exercise could be set for homework. Make sure that students use suitably formal language for their paragraphs.

### A JOB INTERVIEW

In this section, students look at a job advert and the CV of a woman who applied for it. They then listen to the interview that she had for the job. This reveals how she used formal language to suggest that she was better qualified and more experienced than she really was. Students are asked to complete phrases from the interview and decide whether or not she would have got the job.

**1** Go through the advert and the CV with the class and explain anything they don't understand. A *résumé* is the same as a CV and is the preferred word in American English. Ask why they think Sara applied for the job and whether from looking at her CV they think she would be a suitable candidate. They may point out that the job offers an attractive salary and benefits and that Sara's language abilities would match one of the employer's preferences. Don't preempt the listening by pointing out at this stage that Sara has no real management or sales experience and that *Management Team Co-ordinator* and *SPC Professional* are vague titles which give no idea of the amount of responsibility she actually had in either of these jobs.

**2**  **2.18** Go through the interview questions with the class so that they know what to listen out for. Make sure they understand that the interviewer will not use exactly the same words. Play the recording for students to listen and tick the questions he asks.

#### ANSWERS

The interviewer asks questions which are similar to (a), (d), (e) and (h).

#### 2.18

- A: Right, shall we make a start? My name is Philip Rickett. I work in the Human Resources Department and I'm responsible for recruitment.
- B: Right, pleased to meet you.
- A: Did you find us all right?
- B: Yes, the map you sent me was very clear.
- A: Good. Now, this is just a preliminary interview to check out some details. If you're successful, you'll go on to a more in-depth interview this afternoon. Is that all right?
- B: Yes, I don't have to be back at work until tomorrow morning, so as long as I have time to drive back this evening, that's fine.
- A: Do your present employers know where you are?
- B: No. I asked for a day's unpaid leave for personal reasons. I didn't say why.
- A: What don't you like about your current position?
- B: Actually, there are a lot of things I do like about it, but no job is perfect. I think I am ready for more responsibility and when I saw your advert, I thought I should apply.
- A: You know this job is a managerial position. How much managerial experience do you have? It's not very clear from your CV.
- B: Well, in my present job, I'm a Management Team Co-ordinator.
- A: Yes. Does that mean you're the leader of the team?
- B: Not exactly. I assist the General Manager in running the department.
- A: Oh, I see. Are you a kind of personal assistant?
- B: No, I think it's a bit more than that ...
- A: But are you a manager?
- B: I suppose not.
- A: It says in your CV that in your previous position, you were 'an SPC professional'. What exactly does that mean? Is Sales Productivity Centre basically a sales department?
- B: Yes, we provided backup for 20 salesmen from different sectors of the company.
- A: Are you saying you were directly involved in sales?
- B: No, it was more about providing support to help drive sales and increase productivity.
- A: I see. So, what sort of work did the job involve?
- B: I'd say it was a position that required a lot of time-management skills and prioritising of tasks. It gave me a lot of insight into the sales process.
- A: Can you be a bit more specific, please?
- B: Well, to be honest, some of the work was secretarial, but I am applying for your post because I'm capable of doing far more. I'd like more responsibility and to be able to use my studies and my languages.
- A: Yes, your English is obviously excellent, and you speak Spanish. Is your Spanish as good as your English?
- B: Yes, it's not bad.
- A: Could you tell me about your degree course ... in Spanish?
- B: I'm sorry? Oh, I beg your pardon ... Well, I need a little time to think ... Let's see ...



**3** Have a class discussion on whether they think the interviewer was fair or not. How far do students think job applicants should exaggerate their qualifications and experience in order to secure an interview? The interviewer here had clearly ‘read between the lines’ of Sara’s CV. Do they think she would even have got an interview if she had been clearer and more honest about her work experience? Find out how many students think the company would have employed Sara and how many think they wouldn’t. Encourage students to give reasons for their opinions.

**SUGGESTED ANSWER**

The interviewer questions Sara quite closely, but he is not actually unfair. It is unlikely that the company would have employed her, as they were looking for an executive with managerial and sales experience, and Sara’s previous jobs were little more than secretary and personal assistant. Also, her confusion at the end of the interview when she is asked to speak Spanish suggests that she has not been totally honest about her language abilities.

**Asking for clarification**

**4** Play the recording again for students to complete the phrases. Then check the answers with the class.

**ANSWERS**

- a not very clear from
- b Does that mean
- c Are you a kind
- d are you
- e It says in your CV that; exactly does that mean
- f Are you saying
- g what sort of work did the job
- h you be a bit more

**▶ LANGUAGE LINKS**

In the *Language links* section on page 93, there is a further exercise to practise using vocabulary for procedures. You can also direct students’ attention to the Phrase Bank on page 93 which has useful language for asking for clarification.

**Fluency**

**5** The preparation for this roleplay could be done at home if you have little time in class. Refer students to the Phrase Bank on page 93, where they will find useful language for asking for clarification. Go round listening to the interviews and noting any which could be performed afterwards for the class.

**1:1**

Prepare your own CV so that you can do this exercise with your student.

**WHAT ABOUT THE WORKERS?**

In this section, the focus turns to wider issues of employment and the relationship between workers and employers. Students look at a photo and say what is happening in it and how the situation relates to employment. They then read articles about the employment situation in two different countries and work together to complete sentences with vocabulary from the texts. They then reconstruct some sentences in the passive and discuss various issues related to employment in their country.

**1** Elicit various opinions on what is happening in the photograph and how the situation pictured relates to employment and staffing.

**SUGGESTED ANSWERS**

Striking workers are marching through the streets.  
*Significance:* Workers sometimes strike, usually for better pay and conditions; sometimes they organise marches to demonstrate against company or government policies.

**2** First, divide the class into pairs and have them decide who is A and who is B. Students will need to stay in these pairs for 3 as well. The two articles are quite difficult, so allow students plenty of time to read them and to do the exercises accompanying them. In the third part of the exercise, you may need to point out that only five of the definitions relate to the five words in bold in the article. The other five definitions relate to words in the article their partner is reading. Allow plenty of time for the discussion in the fourth part of the exercise, as students will need to summarise their articles for their partners.

**ANSWERS****Student A**

- 2 was carried out, were contacted, were paid, were frequently negotiated, were usually agreed
- 3 a make up for c skilled workers h workforce  
i staffing needs j temporary staff

**Student B**

- 2 will be brought to a halt, has been called, are put to, is sacked, have been defended
- 3 b unemployment rate d long-term unemployed  
e workers’ rights f incentives g unemployment benefits

**3** As Student A tries to reconstruct the sentences, Student B could look at the text on page 136 that Student A read and help by prompting a little if necessary. They then reverse roles, with Student B attempting to reconstruct the sentences and Student A prompting where necessary from the text on page 137.

**1:1**

If you have limited time, this exercise could be done with the student studying only one of the texts. You can then have the discussion about the student’s own country.

**Discussion**

**4** In monocultural classes, this could be done as a class discussion. Otherwise, you could either form groups of students from the same country and ask them to discuss and report back to the class on the situation in their country, or have mixed groups and have each student contribute information on his/her particular country.

## ▶ LANGUAGE LINKS

### ANSWERS

#### VOCABULARY

##### Procedures

- 1 a 1 b 7 c 2 d 9 e 4 f 8 g 5  
h 10 i 6 j 3
- 2 a job security b written warning c staffing needs  
d company secrets e workers' rights  
f job application g skilled workers  
h previous position i unemployment benefits  
j temporary staff k electronics industry
- 3 a laid off b market c down d sack e Firing  
f verbal g interview

#### GRAMMAR

##### Practice 1

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

##### Practice 2

- a The order has been cancelled.  
b The new building hasn't been finished.  
c He has been told about the meeting.  
d The plans for the new engine have been stolen.  
e You will be picked up at the airport.  
f He wasn't asked if he wanted the job.  
g Were you told about what happened at the meeting?  
h A sales conference is held every year.

##### Practice 3

- a The light bulb was invented by Thomas Edison.  
b The peseta, franc and lira were replaced by the euro in 2002.  
c The United Kingdom is formed by four countries (England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland).  
d This book was written by Simon Clarke.  
e This book is owned by [student's own name].  
f My office is heated by [oil].  
g The film *Some Like it Hot* was directed by Billy Wilder.  
h The PC was originally manufactured by IBM.