

# 11.4 I'll get the hang of it

## READING Thrown in at the deep end

- 1 Work in pairs. When you have to learn a new job or skill, are you a person who performs better under pressure? Or do you like to go slowly and have a lot of support?
- 2 Read the extract from a blog. Answer the questions.
  - 1 How do most people feel when they start a new job?
  - 2 What three-word-expression sums up the approach of some companies to new employees?
- 3 Discuss what advice you would give someone who has been thrown in at the deep end in a new job. Then compare your ideas with the ideas on page 177.



## Thrown in at the deep end

It's rare to be in a new job where you don't feel at least slightly overwhelmed. You are acutely aware that you will need to learn a lot quickly and, if you are a halfway conscientious person, you'll feel the weight of your new employer's expectations. You want to get it right from the outset. The question is how much support can you expect and how much *should* you expect?

It's quite fashionable for companies to adopt a sink-or-swim approach to new appointments. If the person is good enough, they'll figure it out, the logic goes. But does throwing people in at the deep end really work? Isn't there a danger they'll panic and do a bad job? Will they be able to prioritize tasks, or will they get lost in some insignificant detail? Will they feel stimulated by the responsibility of their new role? It obviously depends to some extent on the person and the circumstances of the job, but my advice if this happens to you is this ...

## LISTENING Starting a new job

- 4 48 Listen to someone describing their experience of starting a new job. Answer the questions.
  - 1 What was the job?
  - 2 What did she find difficult at the beginning?
  - 3 How did she cope with her lack of knowledge and experience?
  - 4 How did she feel at the end of the experience?
- 5 48 Look at the expressions in the Useful language box. Then listen to the speaker again and tick (✓) the expressions she uses. (Sometimes the speaker uses a different tense.)

## DESCRIBING CAPABILITIES

### In control

It all seems pretty straightforward.  
I've got it off pat.  
I feel (pretty) on top of it.  
I could do it with my eyes shut.

### Confident of improvement

I'm sure it'll come back to me.  
I'll get the hang of it.  
I'm a quick learner.

### Need to improve

I got up to speed (quite) quickly.  
I'm a bit rusty.

### Struggling

It just goes in one ear and out the other.  
I was (pretty) clueless about ...  
I was out of my depth.  
It was quite / pretty daunting.

## Pronunciation Linking vowel sounds

- 6a 49 Read the sentences. What hidden consonant sounds link the underlined vowel sounds? Discuss with your partner. Then listen and check.
  - 1 I could do it with my eyes shut.
  - 2 It just goes in one ear and out the other.
  - 3 They just left me to it.
  - 4 So I can't say that it was a bad thing.
  - 5 I saw an opportunity to learn something new.
- 6b Work in pairs. Practise saying the sentences in Exercise 6a, linking the words in the same way.

**SPEAKING** In at the deep end

**7** Work in pairs. Think about the advantages and risks of throwing these people (a–e) in at the deep end. Then take turns to imagine you are one of these people and ask and answer questions to describe what happened and how you felt in this situation. Use expressions from the Useful language box on page 126.

- a a teacher trainee
- b an apprentice car mechanic
- c a new manager of a corporate events team
- d a trainee GP (general practice doctor)
- e a sales assistant in a department store

**WRITING** A formal letter

**8** Read the letter from one professional person looking for co-operation with another. What do you notice about the format, structure and register? (For more information about format, structure and register, see the notes on page 177.)

Dr Kyle Haldane  
Astall Business School  
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24 May 2015

Dear Dr Haldane

Please excuse me for writing to you at what is probably a busy time for you, but I wanted to catch you before the summer break.

I represent an association of small businesses in the Birmingham area called 'The SME Network'. It is a well-supported group – over 200 members – and we meet monthly to exchange ideas and discuss initiatives that could help to promote business in the area. After seeing your recent talk on marketing at Astall Business School, I wondered if you might be willing to give a short talk at one of these meetings.

With so many larger companies raising their profiles through social media marketing, it would be very interesting for our members to hear more on this topic that you have written about so extensively. The dates I suggest are either 19 October, 17 November or 14 December. Our members would be extremely interested and I hope, by learning more about their experiences, you would also be able to benefit from such a meeting.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Meryl Napier

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Birmingham  
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**Writing skill** Preposition + participle

**9a** Find the clauses in the letter that mean the following.

- 1 After I saw your recent talk ...
- 2 Since so many larger companies are raising their profiles ...
- 3 if you learned more about their experiences ...

**9b** Read the sentences. Rewrite the underlined clauses using these prepositions and a participle.

by before on without

- 1 Because I do not know your area of expertise, I cannot suggest a good topic for the talk.
- 2 When you arrive, please report to reception.
- 3 When you sign the form, you show that you agree to the terms of business.
- 4 We can discuss the agenda for the meeting before we meet.

**10** 21st CENTURY OUTCOMES

You are going to write a formal letter to a colleague or another professional person. Think about a situation where you need to ask someone to do something for you. Use the prompts below or your own ideas. Write 150–200 words.

- inviting someone to participate in a training programme or conference you are running
- asking someone to comment on a proposal or something you have written
- asking someone for their help in setting up a meeting or a conference

**11** Work in pairs. Exchange your letters. Use these questions to check your partner's letter.

- Does the letter follow the correct format?
- Does it use the right structure, covering the points mentioned in the brief?
- Is it written using an appropriate register?
- Are participles used correctly?

# Communication activities

## Unit 10.3 Exercise 10, page 112

It is difficult to predict what Generation Z will be like. It is tempting to think that, as they have been brought up with digital media, they will be like Generation Y, but more so – hyperconnected, wanting instant gratification, etc. Certainly, the use of digital media will mean a more distracted generation whose attention flips easily from one thing to another. This will probably be true of their work habits too. The omnipresence of technology in their lives will also make them used to change and open to new ideas. Their Generation X parents will be less indulgent than the previous generation and will teach their children to be tough and independent. As a result, many will aspire to be entrepreneurs, and organizations will have to find outlets for their entrepreneurial tendencies. Early evidence suggests that, more than Generation Y, they will regard having a lot of money as a measure of success. But Generation Z children will also grow up in a world of uncertainty and have to face serious global threats like resource shortages, economic instability and climate change. So it is difficult to predict whether they will feel insecure or confident about their futures. One thing we can be sure of is the words of Roger Allen: 'In case you're worried about what's going to become of the younger generation, it's going to grow up and start worrying about the younger generation.'

## Unit 10.4 Exercise 2, page 114

'... you can look back and see how the little pieces fit into the big pieces of life, and life is a complete puzzle. Only when you get to be this age can you see it, and that's the joy and the excitement of it. They [younger designers] can't put themselves in the shoes of the elderly. People who design for the elderly think they need jewelled pill boxes or pink canes. We need functional equipment.'

## Unit 11 Exercise 3a, page 119

Possible answer: 'I tried to look at where the kind of learning we do in schools came from.'

## Unit 11.3 Exercise 1, page 124

Look at these words for thirty seconds. Then cover the list and write down the words you remember.

memory	remember	train	relative	boots
average	access	disaster	image	absorb
guest	cultured	visualize	password	wardrobe

## Unit 11.4 Exercise 3, page 126

Advice you would give someone who has been thrown in at the deep end in a new job:

- 1 Don't keep your head down, meet the challenge head-on.
- 2 Find out what the company's real priorities are.
- 3 Make friends quickly and build a supportive network.
- 4 If you are really concerned about doing something wrong, ask someone for guidance (at least for the first few weeks).

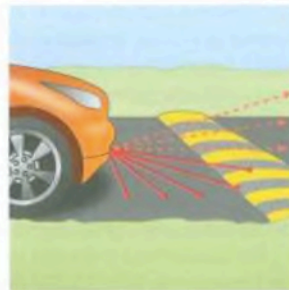
## Unit 11.4 Exercise 8, page 127

**Format:** the way a piece of writing is arranged on the page (addresses, date, main body).

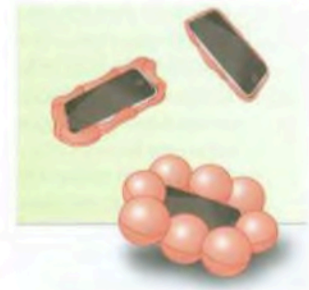
**Structure:** the main elements that are included and how they are organized to good effect.

**Register:** the tone and degree of formality of the letter (formal / informal, direct / indirect, friendly / detached).

## Unit 12.2 Exercise 10, page 133



1 a speed bump warning system



2 a mobile phone airbag case



3 a glow in the dark bicycle



4 a USB cup warmer

## Unit 12.4 Exercise 2, page 136

- 1 How can you stop a pan of pasta from boiling over when you heat it?  
Answer: Place a wooden spoon across the top of the pan.
- 2 How can you tell if an old battery you find lying around has any charge left in it?  
Answer: Drop the battery onto a table from about fifteen centimetres. Compare how much it bounces with the bounce of a new battery. If it bounces a lot, it is empty.
- 3 How can you avoid shutter lag (the delay between pressing the shutter button and the picture actually being taken) on a camera?  
Answer: Half depress the shutter button and hold it down. This will make the camera adjust its focus ready to take the photo instantly when you depress the button fully.