

## Lesson description

In this lesson you will prepare for and take part in an appraisal meeting. You will discuss ways of evaluating and rewarding people's performance at work. You will look at language used to give examples in support of opinions and language used to talk about personal strengths and weaknesses.

## Aims

Preparing for and participating in meetings

## Language

- Language of supporting opinions
- Talking about strengths and weaknesses

## Task

In this lesson the task is to prepare for and participate in an appraisal meeting at work.

## Materials

Handout  
Audio U068CEU-1.mp3  
Photocopiable (role-cards for Task)

## Self-study activities

(available on platform)

Listening  
Grammar

Handout activity number:

Language focus 1&2  
Language focus 3

## Suggested running order

Lead-in	Students discuss questions related to work and evaluating performance.
Input	Students discuss what they know about appraisal meetings, then listen to an extract from an appraisal meeting and answer questions.
Language focus	Gapfill exercise focussing on useful language from the listening text and practice activities.
Task	Students prepare for and participate in two appraisal meetings: one as line manager, one as an employee.

## Lead-in

- 1 Ask the students to discuss the questions, encouraging them to develop the answers by exemplifying and justifying. Afterwards, conduct brief all-class feedback.


## Input

- 1 Students discuss what they know about appraisal meetings.

2 Students read the text and discuss the questions in pairs.

1 *Possible pros: promotes reflection and goal-setting; allows both parties to air their views and the employee to bring their achievements to the manager's attention.*

*Possible cons: danger of line manager bias/fixed idea of employee; line manager might control what goals are set; it's a time-consuming process; favours people who can talk themselves up.*

3  Tell the learners that they're going to hear an extract from an appraisal meeting. Have them read questions 1–3 before they listen. Students listen and then discuss the questions with the people around them. Check answers with brief all-class feedback.

## Language focus

1 Ask students to read through the sentences taken from the listening text. Have them work in pairs and guess what the missing word might be in each case.

2  Students listen again to check.

1 overall

5 occasion

9 developed, received

2 say

6 initiative, in

10 focus, skills, at, find

3 aware

7 ways

4 specific

8 terms, improved

3 Tell the students that each sentence contains one mistake, which they should identify and correct.

1 *I find it really difficult to speak in front of large groups of people.*

2 *Last year I succeeded in **passing** my driving test at the fifth attempt.*

3 *Next year I'd like to focus **on** developing my organisational skills.*

4 *One of my strengths is my interpersonal skills; I'm really good **at** interacting with and relating to people.*

4–5 Students complete the sentences about themselves and then discuss what they put with the person next to them.

## Task

1 Tell students that they will take part in two appraisal meeting role-plays in pairs (one as manager, the other person being managed).

Give out the first pair of role-cards A and B from the photocopiable materials and ask them to read through the information. Say that the meeting will be based on this information, but encourage them to add their own ideas as much as they can.

Give them time to prepare, encouraging them to think how they could use some of the expressions looked at in the lesson.

2 Students do the first role-play. Monitor and note good use of language and errors.

3 Distribute role-cards C and D, reversing student roles and pairs if necessary. Give students time to prepare then act out the role-play.

4 Invite feedback. Were they happy with the way the meetings went?

## Review

Feedback on language and review learning objectives.

## Audio script

### Audio 1

F = Fiona, J = John

F So John, looking back over the past 12 months, what would be your overall assessment? Do you think you've had a good year?

J Well, actually, yes, I'd say I've had a pretty strong year. There have been a few challenges along the way, but I think I've overcome them and achieved all the goals that we set last year ... and in some cases exceeded them. As you're aware, we've sold almost 15% more books than we did last year.

F OK, could you give me a specific example of when you've surpassed expectations?

J Right, well on one occasion when we were promoting Jeff Cleese's new book, we followed the standard marketing plan, but I knew that the author was in the country. So I took the initiative and contacted his manager and succeeded in getting Jeff to come to the shop to launch the book. I also contacted local press and we got regional newspaper journalists to come and cover it and even some television news reporters. So lots of free publicity for the branch and the chain generally.

F Yes, that was a tremendous success. And in what ways do you think you've developed professionally since our last meeting?

J Well, in terms of my day-to-day job, I think I've improved in the way I communicate with staff; I'm better at getting my point across clearly so that people understand exactly what I'm asking them to do. That was something commented on in staff feedback. Also in May I attended an evening course on how to make effective presentations and I feel I've really developed in that area. In fact, I received very positive feedback from delegates at a recent conference I spoke at.

F And looking forward, are there any areas that you'd like to develop further?

J I've given that some thought and one area I'd really like to focus on is how to best manage a team. I think I have strong organisational skills and I'm good at creating a sense of team spirit, but I still find it difficult to give negative feedback to staff, even if it's constructive criticism.

F Right, that's something we could look into. I'm sure we'll be able to find a training course which will include that type of thing. Was there anything else you'd like to discuss?

J Well, actually there was. I think I've earned a pay rise. I mean, I know the company's doing well and I think my work has contributed to that success.

F Yes, I do agree that you've led your team well this year, so maybe we could do something there. What kind of figure did you have in mind?

J Well, I was thinking somewhere in the region of 7%. That might seem a lot, but when I look at the market, I think it's fair.

F Hmm, I'm not sure we could manage that, but we may be able to offer you, say, 4% along with some other benefits ...