



Business phrasal verbs

Lesson code: 11ID-L6CF-4QMN

INTERMEDIATE

 American English

1 Reading

In pairs, read the two conversations below.

Conversation A

- A:** Patrice **mentioned** an interesting idea at yesterday's meeting. She said we should **reduce** our online advertising expenses by creating a company blog on our website.
- B:** Really? How would that work?
- A:** Well, there are many benefits. People will **unexpectedly find** our blog articles on the internet and we will get more visitors to our website.
- B:** I see. And they will **learn** more about our company and we might get some new clients. What are the other benefits?
- A:** Well, our existing clients will be able to **stay informed about** our latest activities and promotions. The blog will be our new customer relations channel.
- B:** Great. But who will write the articles?
- A:** All our top managers and specialists.
- B:** That will **consume** a lot of their time.
- A:** Yes, it will. But in the end, it will be worth it.

Conversation B

- A:** Patrice **brought up** an interesting idea at yesterday's meeting. She said we should **cut down on** our online advertising expenses by creating a company blog on our website.
- B:** Really? How would that work?
- A:** Well, there are many benefits. People will **come across** our blog articles on the internet and we will get more visitors to our website.
- B:** I see. And they will **find out** more about our company and we might get some new clients. What are the other benefits?
- A:** Well, our existing clients will be able to **keep up with** our latest activities and promotions. The blog will be our new customer relations channel.
- B:** Great. But who will write the articles?
- A:** All our top managers and specialists.
- B:** That will **take up** a lot of their time.
- A:** Yes, it will. But in the end, it will be worth it.

Which conversation sounds more formal? Which sounds more natural?



2 Practice

Now complete the questions below with the phrasal verbs from Conversation B in the correct form.

1. How do you _____ the latest news in your industry? (*stay informed about*)
2. How do customers _____ about your company? (*learn*)
3. Have you ever _____ something you thought you had lost? (*found unexpectedly*)
4. Which tasks _____ a lot of time in your work? (*consume*)
5. How does your company _____ expenses? (*reduce*)

Ask and answer your partner the questions, then report your answers to the class.

3 Common phrasal verbs in business

In pairs, look at the sentences below. Match the phrasal verbs to their meaning without using a dictionary. Try to discover their meaning from the context.

1. I get along with all my coworkers. I don't have a problem with anyone.
2. I can't meet you on Wednesday. Can we put off the meeting till Friday?
3. I'm afraid I have to call off our meeting. I'm really busy today.
4. I'm sorry to hear that the goods didn't arrive. I'll look into it right away.
5. I usually try to catch up on overdue tasks at the end of the week.
6. In order to make everything legal, the lawyers decided to draw up an agreement.
7. Don't show up late for the meeting! The boss won't be happy.
8. The internet connection wasn't working, so I had to do without email for a day.
9. James has to deal with outside partners as part of his job as a project coordinator.
10. I still have a lot of work to finish up.

- a. arrive
- b. cancel
- c. complete
- d. do something that you did not have time to do earlier
- e. find out what happened
- f. have a good relationship with
- g. manage without something
- h. postpone
- i. prepare (a contract, etc.)
- j. talk to or meet someone as part of your job



4 Find someone who ...

Now complete the questions:

1. Do you sometimes _____ things _____ until the last minute?
2. Have you ever had to _____ something important at work?
3. Have you ever _____ late for a meeting? What happened?
4. Do you _____ customers as part of your job?
5. Do you need to _____ contracts in your work?
6. Do you usually _____ overdue tasks at the beginning or the end of the week?
7. Have you ever _____ an important meeting at work? What happened?

One-to-one and small classes: Work with a partner. Ask and answer the questions. Find out more information.

Larger classes: Ask your classmates the questions and find a person who fits the sentences on the next page. Report your findings to the class.

5 Homework and review

Write 10 original sentences about you using any of the phrasal verbs from this lesson.

You must review the phrasal verbs from this lesson in order to remember them. Write down the more difficult phrasal verbs in a notebook and try to study them at least once a week.



Find someone who ...

_____ sometimes puts things off until the last minute.

_____ had to do without his/her _____ at work.

_____ showed up late for a meeting because

.....

_____ deals with customers as part of his/her job.

_____ had to call off an important meeting because

.....

_____ needs to draw up contracts in his/her work.

_____ usually catches up on overdue tasks at the beginning of the week.

_____ usually catches up on overdue tasks at the end of the week.



1 Reading

The aim of this exercise is to demonstrate that phrasal verbs can be said or written in a different way, usually as a Latinate one-word equivalent (e.g. consume = take up) or as a phrase (unexpectedly find = come across). Learners of English tend to prefer the non-phrasal verb equivalent. However, as the dialogues show, they often sound formal like in Conversation A.

2 Practice

Students first complete the questions individually. Go through the answers. The second part of the activity can be adapted for all learning environments. In a one-to-one or Skype-based lesson, simply ask your student the questions. If the students belong to the same company, they can use 'our company' instead of 'your company'.

1. keep up with
2. find out
3. come across
4. take up
5. cut down on

3 Common phrasal verbs in business

1. f 2. h 3. b 4. e 5. d 6. i 7. a 8. g 9. j 10. c

4 Find someone who ...

Have the students complete the questions individually or in pairs. Go through the answers. The second part of the activity can be adapted for a variety of classroom situations. In a large class of diverse job positions, hand out page 4. Have the students stand up and ask each other the questions. Tell them that they cannot have the same name written down more than twice during this activity. If nobody fits a particular sentence, they should write 'Nobody'. Do some feedback on the exercise, asking what the students discovered about each other.

In a smaller class or one-to-one, students ask and answer the questions in pairs. Encourage or ask follow-up questions, especially after negative answers, e.g. 'So who do you deal with in your work?', 'So who is responsible for drawing up contracts?'

1. put off
2. do without
3. showed up
4. deal with
5. draw up
6. catch up on
7. called off

5 Homework and review