

'It's all to do with the training: you can do a lot if you're properly trained.'
Elizabeth II, British monarch

OVERVIEW

LISTENING AND DISCUSSION

Apprenticeships

READING AND LANGUAGE

Training leaders to connect the dots
Emphasising your point

BUSINESS SKILLS

Clarifying and confirming
Writing: effective e-mails

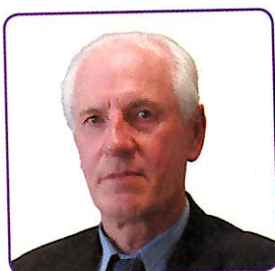
CASE STUDY

Training at Carter & Randall



LISTENING AND DISCUSSION

Apprenticeships




Dr Bernd Atenstaedt

Watch the interview on the DVD-ROM.



A Discuss these questions.

- 1 What courses have you attended recently? Which have been the most rewarding?
- 2 Which format of training do you prefer – in groups, online or individual training with a coach? What are the pros and cons of each?
- 3 Have you ever done a work placement as part of a training programme? If so, how useful was it?

B  CD1.6 What do you think are the benefits of apprenticeships a) for the apprentice, and b) for the employer? Listen to the first part of an interview with Dr Bernd Atenstaedt, Chief Executive of German Industry-UK, and check your answers.C  CD1.7 Listen to the second part of the interview and complete these sentences using no more than four words in each gap.

- 1 About..... per cent of school leavers.....
- 2 The majority of apprentices like to work for....., e.g.....
- 3 Apprenticeship programmes in Germany usually last..... three and a half years, and apprentices..... at the start.
- 4 Apprentices tend to work..... and spend..... doing their vocational training.
- 5 Apprenticeships are well established in Germany: there even exists a..... including various..... for different kinds of professions.
- 6 Germany is proud of the two expressions..... and.....
- 7 They have been in talks with the..... to set up a similar..... in the UK.

D What are the training options for young people in your country?



Brendan, Managing Director



Falak, Master Technician



Rachel, Product Manager



Marieke, graduate

E CD1.8, 1.9, 1.10, 1.11 Listen to four people (Brendan, Falak, Rachel and Marieke) talking about their training experience. Write B, F, R or M for each initial question and answer the second one.

- 1 Who began as an apprentice? What type of apprenticeship was it?
- 2 Who has a university qualification? What in?
- 3 Whose parents weren't happy that he/she was leaving school at 16? Why?
- 4 Who was planning on going to university, but didn't? Why?
- 5 Who has worked in a variety of areas in their industry? Which ones?
- 6 Who has no work experience? Why?
- 7 Who worked abroad as part of his/her training? Where?
- 8 Who mentions the most rewarding thing about the job? What is it?

F Who gives the best advice for embarking on a career? What is it? What advice would you give Marieke?

G Complete the categories with the missing words related to training.

| verb | noun | person |
|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| train | ¹ | / ² |
| employ | ³ | / ⁴ |
| | apprenticeship | ⁵ |
| allow | ⁶ | |
| ⁷ | education | ⁸ |
| intern | ⁹ | intern |
| qualify | ¹⁰ | |
| place | ¹¹ | |
| advise | ¹² | / ¹³ |
| ¹⁴ | graduation | ¹⁵ |

H Complete these paragraphs about two of the speakers in Exercise E, using the correct form of the words in brackets.

Falak looks back on his.....¹ (*intern*) with a great sense of achievement. As a master.....² (*technique*), he is involved in research and.....³ (*develop*). Falak had always had an interest in aviation, so he got in touch with his local careers.....⁴ (*advice*). Falak has obtained several.....⁵ (*qualify*) in aeronautical maintenance and repair. Although he'd completed his apprenticeship, he did further.....⁶ (*train*).

Rachel says being an intern or doing a work.....⁷ (*place*) is a good way of getting some insight into an.....⁸ (*industrialist*), even if you don't always get a monthly.....⁹ (*allow*)! After finishing university, Rachel went on a.....¹⁰ (*graduation*) programme consisting of three different placements. At the end of the training, she was offered.....¹¹ (*employ*) as a sales analyst and now works as a product manager.

I Discuss these questions.

- 1 What advice would you give someone embarking on a career in your field of work or study?
- 2 In Germany, there are 340 recognised trades with apprenticeships. What kind of apprenticeships are the most popular in your country?
- 3 What can be done to encourage young people to take up vocational training?

READING AND LANGUAGE

A Read the anecdote below about the Chinese fridge-maker Haier and answer these questions.

- 1 What lesson did the new boss want his employees to learn?
- 2 How would you react if a manager at your organisation did something similar?

FT

Creative destruction

by Ben McLannahan

Call it the legend of the sledgehammer. In 1985, the Qingdao Refrigerator Factory, a small enterprise in China's Shandong province, was in trouble: sales were slipping, customer complaints were high and rising.

The new boss, Zhang Ruimin, a 36-year-old economist dispatched from the municipal government, decided to take a

stand. Lining up 76 fridges found to be defective, he demolished one with a sledgehammer, then ordered the shocked staff to destroy the rest.

The tale has probably been embellished in the telling, but it speaks volumes of Mr Zhang's determination. A quarter of a century on, the Chairman and CEO has transformed the biggest

fridge-maker in Shandong into the biggest fridge-maker in the world. Along the way, he has broadened the portfolio: Haier sells more domestic appliances than any company in 19 product categories in China, and is the world's fourth-largest white-goods group by sales.

B Read the article below about Haier and discuss these questions.

- 1 What is Haier's approach to executive education?
- 2 What are the benefits of this approach?

FT

Training leaders to connect the dots

by Don Sull

Firms navigating through turbulent markets face many challenges. One of the most daunting, however, is how to develop their executives to manage effectively the range of diverse threats and opportunities that volatile markets generate. And how to provide this executive education in a way that offers good value for money and time.

The Chinese appliance maker Haier has risen from a nearly bankrupt collective enterprise 25 years ago to one of the most successful companies in China. Haier's leaders have done many things well, among them setting up a productive system of formal executive education designed to produce versatile general managers that Haier can deploy against a range of possible opportunities or threats.

When I visited Haier's headquarters in Qingdao a few years ago, I interviewed the faculty that ran their training centre, as well as many executives who participated in the company's programmes. Every Saturday morning, all Haier's senior executives based in China (totalling more than 70) attend a weekly training session. What training, you may



ask, could possibly justify half a day of Haier's 70 most senior leaders every week?

Executives bring current problems or opportunities to these sessions and work in teams of six to eight to discuss their individual challenges, explore possible solutions and discuss how best to implement proposed changes. Faculty mixes executives from different functions, business units and provinces to increase diversity of viewpoints and periodically rejigs the teams to keep them fresh. During the week, executives experiment with proposed solutions and report results back to their teammates in later sessions, discuss what worked and did not and explore ways to refine their actions.

This approach to executive education confers several benefits. First, it enables managers to understand interactions between various parts of the organisation and spot opportunities for productive collaboration. Second, ongoing exposure to the issues faced by different parts of the business helps executives to connect the dots to understand Haier's situation as a whole, rather than looking at the market through the window of their own silo. Third, this approach builds general management skills by helping executives hone the skills to recognise and deal with a range of challenges.

These courses are anything but 'academic', in the pejorative sense of 'divorced from practice'. Faculty coaches provide tools and functional training closely linked to the challenges and opportunities at hand. They also help the executives refine their action plan, devise practical ways to track progress and facilitate mid-course correction.

A downturn provides an ideal opportunity for companies to rethink how they can get the most value for their investment in executive development.

C Complete these summary sentences. Read the article again if necessary.

- 1 Haier's executive education involves training general managers to deal with ...
- 2 The writer of the article interviewed ...
- 3 More than 70 of Haier's senior managers take part ...
- 4 Executives on the programme discuss possible solutions to problems and then ...
- 5 Executive teams are mixed up regularly on the course to ...
- 6 Two of the main outcomes are that managers can better understand ...
- 7 Participants become more versatile as they learn to face different challenges ...
- 8 The coaches think of ways to check progress; they provide correction and ...

D Match these words or phrases in *italic* from the article (1–10) to the correct definition (a–j).

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 periodically <i>rejigs</i> the teams (lines 45–46) | A) understanding something only from your own position and not that of others |
| 2 <i>confers</i> several benefits (line 54) | B) record the development of something or someone over time |
| 3 <i>spot</i> opportunities (lines 57–58) | C) chance to experience new ideas and ways of looking at things |
| 4 <i>ongoing exposure to</i> the issues (lines 59–60) | D) arranges in a different way |
| 5 <i>connect the dots</i> (lines 61–62) | E) too theoretical |
| 6 <i>looking ... through the window of their own silo</i> (lines 63–65) | F) brings/offers |
| 7 helping executives <i>hone</i> the skills (line 67) | G) notice something, especially when it is difficult to see |
| 8 in the <i>pejorative sense</i> (line 71) | H) with a negative meaning |
| 9 <i>divorced from practice</i> (line 72) | I) improve/refine |
| 10 <i>track</i> progress (line 78) | J) realise that something is related to something else |

E Discuss these questions.

- 1 How could you adapt Haier's approach to training to make it work in your organisation? What issues would you have to overcome?
- 2 How can colleagues learn from their team-mates rather than relying on a trainer?

F Why is the ability to emphasise important in business communication? Find examples in the article for each of these techniques.

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| 1 Using lists of three | 4 Using interesting or extreme adjectives |
| 2 Using superlative forms | 5 Emphasising a negative statement |
| 3 Using two contrasting ideas | |

➡ Language reference: *Emphasising your point* page 128

G Your HR Manager has asked you to write for your organisation's intranet about a successful training course you have attended. Use some of the techniques from Exercise F to emphasise your points. Write 100–120 words and include the following:

- the outcome(s) of the training and why it has been successful;
- why you would recommend it for others;
- suggestions for any follow-up, e.g. further training.

BUSINESS SKILLS

Clarifying and confirming



A CD1.12, 1.13 Listen to two telephone conversations about the staff induction day at Ashley Pharmaceuticals. What is the purpose of each call? Which conversation is more formal, and why?

B Look at the expressions in the Useful language box below. Which of the expressions would you probably use with someone a) you know well, and b) you don't know so well?

C CD1.12 Listen to the first conversation again. What techniques does each speaker use to check or confirm the information they hear? Match each of the techniques (1–3) to the phrases (a–f).

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 Echoing/rephrasing what was said | A) So, you didn't receive the programme we e-mailed you? |
| 2 Using questioning intonation to check information | B) Can I just check that? Did you say half past nine? |
| 3 Asking a direct question for confirmation | C) And the room was ...? |
| | D) So, that's B15, thanks. |
| | E) And it doesn't matter if I haven't got a copy of the programme? |
| | F) Sorry, could you give me your name again? |

D CD1.13 Listen to the second conversation again. How does the relationship between the speakers affect how they check, confirm and correct information?

E Role-play a phone call. Use appropriate techniques to check, confirm and correct information.

Student A: See below. Student B: Turn to page 149.

Student A

You are Mel Van Der Horst, the Training Manager at Ashley Pharmaceuticals. You have planned a series of courses with a freelance trainer. You now want to finalise the details and make some changes. Look at your notes and phone the trainer. Check and confirm the details, including the fees.

| Course title | No. of participants | Date |
|--|---------------------|------------------------------|
| Organisational skills | 26 | 15 May (half day, p.m.) |
| Leadership skills | | 17 May (full day) |
| <i>Cancelled, not enough interest. Replace with Effective communication? Numbers and date to be confirmed.</i> | | |
| Assertiveness training | 30 | 23 May (half day, p.m.) |
| Team building | 21 | 30 May (full day) |

| Fee schedule | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| | Half day (3 hours) | Full day (6 hours) |
| Up to 12 participants | \$900 | \$1,600 |
| Up to 20 participants | \$1,500 | \$2,800 |
| Up to 30 participants | \$2,200 | \$4,300 |

USEFUL LANGUAGE

CLARIFYING PHRASES AND QUESTIONS

- Would you mind repeating that / going over that again for me?
- Sorry, could I ask you to give me those details again?
- Could you explain/clarify what you meant by / when you said ... ?
- And the date was ... ?

CONFIRMING PHRASES AND QUESTIONS

- So that's nine o'clock on Thursday, then.
- Let me see if / make sure I understood you correctly. You're saying ...
- Is that right/correct?
- Can I just check that?
- I'd just like to confirm that.

CORRECTING MISUNDERSTANDINGS

- No, I meant to say that / what I meant was ...
- Not quite, it's ...
- Well, actually, what I said/meant was ...
- Not exactly, I said/meant that ...

Writing: effective e-mails

F Read these e-mail writing tips. Do you agree with them? What other tips would you add? What do you think are your own strengths and weaknesses when writing e-mails?

- 1 Make sure that the language is clear and concise.
- 2 Keep the sentences and paragraphs short, so your message is easy to read.
- 3 Maintain a polite tone. Even in the briefest messages include an opening greeting and a polite ending, e.g. *Best wishes*.
- 4 Use a subject header that relates to the content of the e-mail. Don't leave it blank.
- 5 Get to the point quickly. Emphasise key information and any action that is required.
- 6 Show consideration for the recipient and make requests politely, e.g. *I realise this is a busy time for you, but could you ...*
- 7 Give all the relevant background information that the recipient will need.
- 8 Personalise your e-mail to establish a good rapport, even if you have never met the recipient in person.
- 9 Proofread your message. Check that your spelling and grammar are correct.
- 10 Think about the impression your writing style will give the recipient.

G To what extent does this e-mail follow the advice in Exercise F?

| | |
|----------|--|
| From: | Al Gardiner |
| Subject: | FYI Database training via teleconference |

Dear Caroline and Markus,

I'm writing to confirm what we agreed during our discussion about the training earlier today. Markus is responsible for leading the first session and he will send the agenda to participants. The main task of the session is to determine what the staff already know about the database and decide how many days of training are required. Markus should briefly explain the course objectives. I have attached these here. He can then interview each participant, finding out what their individual needs are. The time and date of the second session need to be agreed with the participants. It is my understanding that Caroline will be responsible for preparing and leading the second session. BTW I suggest that Caroline also introduces herself in the first session.

I'd be very grateful if you could confirm that these details are all correct.

Best wishes,

Al

H Look at these two situations and write an e-mail in response to each one. Decide which e-mail needs to be more formal and which can be less formal. Use some expressions from Exercise G to help you.

- 1 You work for a company where everyone is on first-name terms. You've heard something about a Staff Development Day on 14 May; you might like to attend, but you don't have any details about the event (e.g. focus, activities, length, participants, trainer(s) and location). You also have a meeting scheduled for that morning. Write to Pat Fischer, the Human Resources Manager, asking for more information. Find out if you need to attend the whole day. Remember to include a subject line.
- 2 You manage a team of 10 staff. You are organising interviews for the annual staff appraisals to discuss employees' performance and professional development. Send an e-mail to the team about this topic and ask them to reply, giving you three options for dates and times (in order of preference) when they can attend a session of about 90 minutes next month. Attach a staff feedback form to complete and return to you within 14 days. Remember to include a subject line.

Training at Carter & Randall

A large multinational is looking for a fast and efficient way of training its globally dispersed sales staff in the use of new technology

Background

Based in Cleveland, Ohio, US, and with operations in over 100 countries, Carter & Randall (C&R) is one of the world's leading consumer-goods companies. Its brand portfolio contains hundreds of household names.

The company's sales representatives play a crucial role in C&R's success. In this fiercely competitive market, they are the public face of the company with retailers, and need to provide excellent customer service. The company also relies on its sales force for timely market information about product sales, customer buying habits and competitor activity.

CD1.14 – 1.17 Listen to some of the UK and Ireland sales team and take notes about their training needs. In what ways is C&R's training programme working well? If you were the Director of Sales, what would your priorities be for the coming year?



Amy Cheng,
graduate recruit



Charlie Turner,
Sales Representative



Kamal Satinder,
Regional Manager



Jessica Armstrong,
Regional Manager

Read this press release on C&R's intranet. What new challenge does the Director of Sales now face?

G10 mobile software for retail sales force

We have selected G10 Corporation's mobile technology solutions to maximize the productivity of our retail sales force.

The G10 mobile software runs on a PDA-style device, enabling our retail sales reps to manage and plan visits, execute in-store audits and analyze their performance. The software also allows us to electronically manage and distribute sales activities, and access results in real-time.

"C&R is always looking for solutions for its needs that will improve the company's products and services. The automated field solution will increase productivity, reduce costs, and ultimately benefit our customers," said Larry Bramson, C&R's Business Solutions Manager.

Implementation in the US, Western Europe, and Latin America will shortly be underway.

Task 1**Clarifying and confirming**

Work in pairs. Read your information and prepare for a meeting to discuss how to implement training for the new G10 software. Remember to check and confirm what is said at the meeting.

Student A: You are the Director of Sales (UK and Ireland). Read your information below.

Student B: You are the IT Project Manager (UK and Ireland). Turn to page 149.

Student A: Director of Sales (UK and Ireland)

- How long and what form should the training take? Sales reps need to be out on the road as soon as possible, and they get easily bored sitting in a training room.
- How can over 200 sales reps all over the UK and Ireland be trained up in a short period of time?
- Who should provide support post-training, and what documentation should there be?

Task 2**Devising a training programme**

Work in small groups. You are representatives from the Sales, IT and HR departments. Devise a training programme for the sales force in the UK and Ireland.

- What are your top three priorities?
- What are the goals and desired outcome of the training?
- Which training should be done by a) peers, b) line managers, c) the IT department, and d) external training companies?
- What training can be on a short, intensive basis? What extensive training is needed?
- Which training should be done a) face to face, b) online, and c) in a blended learning package? What are the pros and cons of these options?
- How will the training be evaluated?

Breaking news

It is two months later. Turn to page 149 and find out what has happened.

Watch the Case study commentary on the DVD-ROM.

**Writing**

You are the Director of Sales (UK and Ireland) for C&R. Write a covering e-mail to your colleagues thanking them for their input and summarising the main points you agreed in your meeting to devise a training programme. Say that you have attached a detailed training programme. Mention the goals, desired outcomes and evaluation of the training. Ask your colleagues to contact you if they have any queries or comments.

→ Writing file page 145

