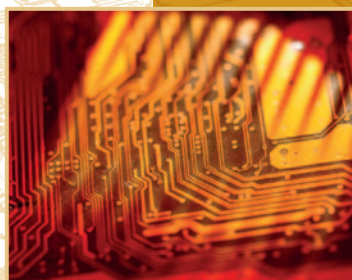


English for Information Technology

2

Vocational English
Teacher's Book



David Hill



ALWAYS LEARNING

PEARSON

Pearson Education Limited

Edinburgh Gate

Harlow

Essex CM20 2JE

England

and Associated Companies throughout the world.

www.pearsonlongman.com

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First published 2012

ISBN: 978-1-4082-5203-1

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Briefing

This unit provides an introduction to the workplace contexts of IT. It ensures that all students using the book, whether experienced in IT or not, have some common shared vocabulary that is used throughout the book. It is a little different from the other units in that it is less technical and thus provides a gentle lead-in to English for IT.

Language is mostly for talking about present routines and situations such as the work of individuals and organisations in IT: the present simple and adverbs of frequency are dealt with, as are imperatives for rules and modal verbs for rules and suggestions.

IT jobs and duties

In this section the focus is on typical IT-related jobs and the duties performed by people holding those jobs. Jobs mentioned here include:

- **Software developer**, otherwise known as **programmer**: this person writes, tests and debugs computer programs, usually as part of a team.
- **Helpdesk supervisor**: this person supervises technical support staff, who may be working in a telephone call centre.
- **Database administrator**: this person designs, develops and maintains databases. Databases are used as part of many kinds of software, as well as online, to store information such as personal details and the data that the program uses. Databases are covered in more detail in Unit 4. A database administrator does not usually do the data entry for databases; rather, the job involves quite a high level of technical skill and is somewhat similar to programming.
- **Project manager**: within an IT context, a project manager co-ordinates projects such as software development or major equipment renewal. He or she is responsible for ensuring that the intended components of a project are finished on time and within budget.
- **Support technician**: this person sets up new computers, installs software and provides help with IT problems. A support technician may provide internal IT support within a company covering a range of IT uses, or may work for a hardware or software vendor and provide

support to external users (business as well as consumer) of the company's products.

- **Systems analyst**: for tailor-made IT solutions such as software written for a specific business need, the systems analyst liaises with the client to understand their requirements and then ensures that the solution is prepared to those specifications.

IT organisations

This section looks at the activities of IT companies, such as manufacturing, designing and selling. Little specialist knowledge of IT is needed; the only general knowledge required is basic knowledge of some well-known IT companies such as Apple, Google and Microsoft, and what they do.

Companies often hold **product launches** to promote new products. These can range from small, local events to major media events. Apple is particularly well known for these. Once a popular product is ready for launch to the public, people sometimes queue overnight outside shops to be one of the first to purchase it.

Most company websites have a **company profile** which gives general information about what the company does.

IT workplace rules

As with the previous section, this requires little technical knowledge. Internet **security** and **passwords** are mentioned in the reading. The only technical word is **alphanumeric**, meaning 'comprised only of letters and numbers and not including spaces or punctuation symbols'.

Meetings

Central to this section is a roleplay of a formal meeting held by videoconference with a chairperson, agenda and minutes being taken.

Videoconferences and **teleconferences** are often used to hold meetings when the participants are in different physical locations. The difference is that with videoconferencing, the participants can see as well as hear each other, while teleconferences only use sound.

Business matters

In this section students complete a job advert, roleplay a job interview and write their own job advert. It applies the key vocabulary and grammar of this unit.

Further reading

Use the following keywords to search the internet for websites which give more in-depth information about the topics covered in this unit: database administrator, systems analyst, Apple, Google, Microsoft.

Teacher's Notes

Warm-up

While quite a lot of vocabulary is introduced in this unit, many of the words are reviewed from Book 1 (for those who are moving from that book). One of the aims of this unit is to bring out IT-specific vocabulary of which the rest of the book assumes knowledge. The unit assumes that students already know the following vocabulary: *software, hardware*.

IT jobs and duties

Speaking

- 1 Ask students to share their previous experience of IT, including both software and hardware, in pairs or small groups. This allows them to get to know something about each other, as well as giving you the opportunity to find out about their prior IT experience and whether there is subject-related expertise that can be drawn upon later, if this is not already known.

Activities throughout this book, including this one, should be varied according to your teaching situation and student needs. For example, it would be useful in this activity for students to have conversations with more than one other student; this could be done by changing pairs every few minutes or by organising this activity as a mingle.

Write vocabulary that you hear students produce on the board. Half-way through or at the end of the activity, ask students who produced the vocabulary to explain the meaning to the others. This will encourage students to learn from each other.

Extra activity

If there has not yet been an opportunity to carry out a proper needs analysis, ask students to mingle (or work in pairs/groups) and write down answers from other students to some of these questions, chosen according to appropriateness to your teaching situation, in a table:

What is your name?

Why are you doing this course?

Why is this course important to you?

What do you want to learn in this course?

Alternatively, the questions and table could be handed out in written form. If appropriate to your teaching situation, consider asking students to complete it in their own language so that lack of English ability isn't a barrier to completeness and accuracy.

Listening

Extra activity

If students are relatively confident with English or have some prior work experience in an environment involving IT, they could be asked to brainstorm, in pairs or small groups, IT jobs and the duties associated with each, as a lead-in to Activities 2 and 3.

- 2 ▶ 02 Students listen to people describing their jobs and match the jobs to the speakers' pictures.

1 software developer 2 helpdesk supervisor
3 project manager 4 support technician
5 database administrator 6 systems analyst

- 3 Students listen again and complete verb-noun collocations describing the duties and tasks that the people mention.

1 a team 2 a problem 3 for 4 after
5 software 6 the problem/a problem/
problems 7 databases 8 databases
9 specifications

Pronunciation

- 4 The focus here is on stress (and, consequently, rhythm) within the collocations in the previous activity. In pairs or small groups, students first predict where the stress lies – from prior experience with English and their memory, conscious or otherwise, of the recording.

Depending on your class, this would be an appropriate place to discuss the pronunciation of weak forms, in other words, how to produce an unstressed syllable and how to produce stress (make the syllable longer, slightly louder and change to a different pitch).

1 supervise a team 2 have a problem
3 be responsible for IT projects 4 look after
computers 5 install software 6 diagnose
the/a problem/problems 7 design databases
8 maintain databases 9 write specifications
for software

Vocabulary

- 5 In pairs, students make new collocations using the verbs in Activity 3. Encourage them to think of as many collocations as they can that might work, and check with you whether they do.

Suggested answers

supervise people/[any job title]
be responsible for a team/computers
look after databases/a team
install databases/software
design software/databases
maintain computers

Speaking

- 6 Students now use collocations from Activity 3 (and possibly 5) to describe what the people in Activity 2 do in their jobs.

Suggested answers

- 1 A software developer writes software.
- 2 A helpdesk supervisor is responsible for/supervises/looks after a team.
- 3 A project manager supervises people/projects.
- 4 A support technician looks after computers/installs software/diagnoses problems.
- 5 A database administrator looks after/is responsible for/installs/designs/maintains/writes databases.
- 6 A systems analyst supervises software developers/writes specifications.

- 7 In small groups, ask students to think of other IT-related jobs and tasks associated with those jobs. Also ask them to share ideas about which jobs they would or would not like to do, giving reasons.

Suggested answers

website administrator, website developer, network technician, e-commerce specialist;
A website developer develops/maintains/looks after/tests websites.
Answers to the other parts of the question will depend on students' own personal opinions.

Listening

- 8 ▶ 03 Students now listen to an IT worker (Robert) talking to his new manager about his job. Ask them to listen and guess which person is the manager. During this initial gist listening, they simply check their prediction and decide what Robert's job title might be.

Robert is a support technician. (Similar job titles, such as technician or support staff would also be acceptable.)

- 9 Ask students to look at the sentences with tick boxes. They then listen again and tick the items that happen regularly ('usually happen') in Robert's work routine.

1, 2, 3

- 10 Students now put the phrases in the box in the correct place in the sentences in Activity 9. Depending on your class, you could ask students to do this in pairs before listening. This activity provides a 'way in' to the language focus on expressing frequency.

- 1 Robert generally checks emails./Generally, Robert checks emails.
- 2 Robert usually has emails waiting for him.
- 3 Robert normally visits people at their desks./Normally, Robert visits people at their desks.
- 4 Sales people occasionally have problems./Occasionally, sales people have problems.
- 5 From time to time, Robert attends meetings./Robert attends meetings from time to time.
- 6 Robert hardly ever visits other companies.

Language

The Language box focuses on two language points useful for talking about jobs and their associated duties: adverbs of frequency and adverbial phrases of frequency (called 'time expressions' here). Students at this level are likely to have encountered these points before, so for most, this will be review.

For reference, here are some points that go beyond the information in the Language box. Teachers should use their discretion about whether to cover the third point, to avoid overloading students with information.

Adverbs of frequency normally go before the main verb (as stated in the Language box). However, a significant exception to this is where the main verb is *be*, when they go after the main verb (for example, *He is usually late.*).

Some common student mistakes are: mixing up *hardly* and *hardly ever* (for example, *I hardly arrive early* instead of *I hardly ever arrive early.*) and mixing up *almost* and *almost always* (for example, *I almost work hard* instead of *I almost always work hard.*). Both of these can cause significant