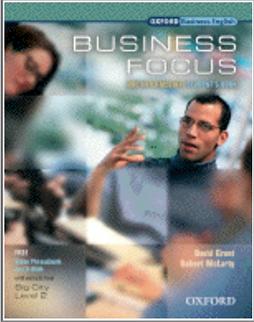


Business Focus Pre-intermediate Student's Book

Author:	David Grant & Robert McLarty (2004)		
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Pages	ISBN	Price	
Pp 142	0-19-438548-5 (paper)	£16.25	

One of the major difficulties of teaching business English is connecting students' English knowledge with practical communication issues in their jobs. Business Focus Pre-intermediate Student's Book addresses the problem by engaging lower-level English learners into abundant communicative exercises and activities that are aimed to help them use essential vocabulary, grammar and expressions confidently in various business scenarios. As its text and listening materials are based on British English, the book might be most useful for business professionals who are interested in British English or a European business environment.

The most prominent feature of this book is its five-part structure. The book consists of ten units with each unit divided into five parts. Each part focuses on one aspect of business English: vocabulary, grammar, expressions, communication skills and business issues. The first three parts, Focus on Words, Focus on Grammar, and Focus on Expressions provide students with important vocabulary, grammatical rules and the expressions that they need to use in order to communicate in the real business world. Various input and output activities in these sections are designed for this purpose. Some typical exercises and activities include matching pictures with words or phrases, listening to an interview and writing down specific vocabulary or expressions, reading an article and answering questions, responding to different communication situations using the target expressions as well as role-plays. Specific instructions on role-plays are kept in Information Files at the end of the book. In addition to these exercises and activities, students are often asked to reflect upon their own work experience and talk about their lives as employees, customers or end-users.

Focusing on building students' communication abilities rather than linguistic accuracy, the book does not give explicit lengthy instructions on vocabulary, grammatical rules or expressions. Instead, it provides a summary of key words, grammar and expressions presented in small pink boxes at the end of each section. However, if students encounter any new words in the text, they can look them up in the Glossary at the end of the book. In the same way, if students want to read more about a particular grammatical issue, they can consult Language Reference, also at the end of the book. Besides 16 grammatical topics, including present, past, and future tenses, countable and uncountable nouns, comparatives and superlatives, 1st and 2nd conditional, and modals of obligation and permission, Language Reference also contains six topics of useful language and expressions, which are useful for students' role-plays and other output activities.

The fourth part of each unit, Focus on Communication, requires students to produce cohesive written or spoken passages while participating in task-based activities, such as writing emails to confirm an appointment, conversing in a small talk with colleagues, giving a short presentation or discussing a topic in a meeting.

The last part of each unit, Focus on Business Issues, expands the main topic of each unit by addressing more specific business issues, such as making good business contacts, entertaining clients, and choosing the right job. This part requires students to integrate the vocabulary, grammar, and expressions they have learned in previous parts to understand and talk about various business issues.

At the end of each unit, a short End-of-Unit quiz is included. Students can use it to test their knowledge of the vocabulary, grammar, and expressions they have just learned. Besides Language Reference, Glossary, and role-play files as described above, one can also find two other appendices, an Irregular Verb List and Tapescript of all the listening activities at the end of the book.

In general, the organization of this book is cohesive and easy to follow. The language knowledge taught in the first three parts provides solid foundations for students to participate in more challenging communicative activities in Focus on Communication and Focus on Business Issues. The summaries of key words, grammar and expressions at the end of each unit and the appendices at the end of the book give students appropriate support for their self-study and review.

The materials used in this book closely relate to the real business field. The book uses examples of famous companies, such as Xerox, Gap, and Yahoo. It also covers current topics in the business world, such as "doing business in different cultures," "the paperless office," "teleworking," and "speed-dating." The book tries to expose students to a variety of English materials including graphs, notes, minutes, advertisements, and job interviews that are common in a work place. Some materials used in the book are authentic; they are selected from English newspapers, magazines or the Internet. Some

materials were adapted in order to suit the English level of the target readers. The listening materials were recorded for readers of the book particularly; however, the speech sounds natural and reflects real-life situations. The overall appearance of the book is also pleasant with user-friendly display of materials. Each part of a unit and appendix is labeled to help readers search for specific information.

Along with this book, there is a free video phrasebank including video clips of workplace interactions, a collection of useful email phrases, and a unit-by-unit audio wordlist. The picture quality of the video and the sound quality of the audio wordlist are excellent. In addition, free online resources including interactive exercises on vocabulary, grammar and expressions, supplementary reading materials, and language games are also available to anyone who wants to learn more. Teachers can also find free teaching materials including handouts and extra activities on the course webpage. With its rich supplementary materials, Business Focus Pre-intermediate Student's Book is ideal for ESL and EFL learners as well.

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