Business Spotlight

20 key skills for the 2020s
Time to “skill up”!
What are the key competencies that you need in order to be successful when working internationally in the 2020s? This is the question that Bob Dignen addresses in his latest Business Skills article. In this issue of Business Spotlight Plus, we provide you with exercises on this topic (pp. 8–11). We also look at how you can present your proposals effectively at work (pp. 6–7) and at how to avoid gender bias in your writing (pp. 12–13). We have a special focus on the vocabulary of digital marketing in English (pp. 18–19), the subject of our latest Skill Up! booklet. As always, you will find exercises for both listening comprehension (p. 15) and reading comprehension (pp. 16–17). And there’s a short test on all these topics (pp. 20–21).

Ian McMaster
A formal occasion

In English on the Move (p. 62), we present the vocabulary you will need when preparing for a formal occasion. You can practise the language and learn some new expressions here.

1. The invitation

Below is part of a formal invitation. Complete the letter by underlining the correct options.

Dear Mr and Mrs James

You are (A) cordially/kindly invited to our annual charity gala (B) ceremony/event at the East Side Ballroom on Saturday, 13 June 2020, at 7 p.m.

We will enjoy a (C) three-course/three-dish meal followed by the presentation of a number of (D) awards/rewards.

The entrance to the ball is free, but we ask you to give (E) exceedingly/generously to our foundation.

After dinner, there will be dancing, with music (F) playing/provided by the Starlight Quartet.

Dress: Black (G) jacket/tie (H) RSPB/RSP by 31 May 2020

2. Getting dressed

Complete the sentences below by using six of the eight words from this list.

chic | costume | cufflinks | dinner | fitting | gown | hanger | suit

A. Have you seen my silver ______________ for my shirt?
B. My dress is in the wardrobe on a ______________.
C. I decided to wear my floor-length ______________.
D. I’ve never seen you in a ______________ suit. I especially like the bow tie.
E. You look very ______________ in that dress.
F. I need to find some matching ______________ jewellery.
3. Talking about clothes

Choose the word or phrase that means the same as each description.

A. looking untidy
   1. scruffy   2. scurvy

B. so attractive that people notice
   1. eye-catching   2. eye-watering

C. wear elegant and formal clothes
   1. dress down   2. dress up

D. very loose fitting
   1. baggy   2. bulging

E. not made for a specific person
   1. off the peg   2. off the cuff

F. not covering the shoulders; without a strap
   1. unstrapped   2. strapless

G. worn very thin
   1. threadbare   2. threaded

4. At a party

Match the idioms (A–F) with the sentences (1–6) that have a similar meaning.

A. She had a whale of a time.   1. She spoils the fun.
B. She’s the life and soul of the party.   2. We should organize a party.
C. Let’s throw a party.   3. She had a great time.
D. Let your hair down.   4. She had a wild time.
E. She’s a party pooper.   5. She’s the centre of attention.
F. She painted the town red.   6. You should relax and have fun.

A–E; B–F; C–D; D–E; E–D; F–C
These exercises are based on the article “Hike-rodosing” (Names & News, p. 9) and on an audio file that you can listen to online.

1. Three questions

Listen to the audio file and choose the right answer to these questions.

A. Why are people taking tiny doses of psychedelic drugs?
   1. to remind them of the 1960s
   2. to improve their creativity and performance at work
   3. to make them healthier

B. What is “hike-rodosing”?
   1. a coaching session, followed by a long walk to find magic mushrooms
   2. a meandering walk with a therapist who is high
   3. a coaching session in the woods while on psychedelic drugs

C. How much does it cost to be coached by Paul Austin?
   1. between $1,000 and $2,000 for three months
   2. between €900 and €1,800 for three months
   3. between $1,000 and $2,000 per month

2. True or false?

Listen again and decide whether the statements below are true or false.

A. Austin teaches his clients to take the same amount of drugs as people did in the 1960s.
   True False

B. Austin thinks that walking and taking drugs help the coaching process.
   True False

C. You have to sign up for at least three months of coaching.
   True False

3. Alternatives

Listen to the recording and find a word or phrase that means the same as the following.

A. not excited or interested:

B. return to popularity again:

C. improve the quality of something:

D. make a firm promise to do something:
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