

Exit test (General review)

LISTENING

Track 6

Listen to a presentation by Robert Innes, CEO of Talbot Engineering. He's speaking to workers at the opening of a newly-refurbished factory in Leeds, UK. Choose the best answer – a, b, or c – to the questions below.

- 1 What does Innes say about the history of the company?
 - a) The company is more than two hundred years old.
 - b) In the past ten years, the company has changed from being complacent to being competitive.
 - c) It used to be family-owned and that helped create the company culture.
- 2 Who needs to ask if the company is running as smoothly as possible, whether communication with customers is as good as it can be and how services can be improved?
 - a) All of Talbot's employees
 - b) Talbot's management
 - c) Talbot's customers
- 3 What does Innes say he wants to give Talbot's customers?
 - a) The best value for money
 - b) A relationship that lasts years rather than months
 - c) Clear goals
- 4 How does Talbot prefer to work with customers?
 - a) To fill their orders accurately and quickly
 - b) To collaborate on research and development
 - c) To carry out market research on behalf of customers
- 5 What can workers at Daisy Hill expect to see?
 - a) Executive managers who want to understand production processes
 - b) Quality control inspectors who want to see how work is carried out
 - c) Customers who want to see how products are made
- 6 What does Innes say Talbot factors into its production costs?
 - a) The human side of production
 - b) Depreciation of equipment
 - c) Regular pay increases
- 7 How much of its production does Talbot export?
 - a) 14 per cent
 - b) 40 per cent
 - c) 44 per cent
- 8 What can we infer from Innes's mention of China?
 - a) Talbot's main competition will be from Chinese companies.

- b) Talbot hopes to manufacture more cheaply in China for import to the UK.
 - c) Talbot hopes to increase its sales outside of the UK.
- 9 What is the current status of Talbot's production in China?
- a) Some joint ventures have already been set up.
 - b) Several factories have already commenced production.
 - c) A timeline has been established for outsourcing work to Asia.
- 10 What opportunity will some Daisy Hill workers be offered?
- a) The chance to take on middle management jobs in Chinese factories
 - b) The chance to be trained in the latest manufacturing techniques
 - c) The chance to go to China to provide training

LANGUAGE

Find and correct the error in each sentence.

- 11 I don't feel enough confident to stand in front of an audience and answer their questions.

- 12 Which our competition doesn't do is provide good after-sales service. _____
- 13 The training weekend was, all above, a great chance for people to get to know one another.

- 14 Our company has 20 years' the experience of working in a global marketplace in at least 20 different languages. _____
- 15 We've sold about 28,000 units to date, which about 26,000 are still in use. _____
- 16 By experience day-to-day life in one of your target markets, you can really begin to understand your potential customers. _____
- 17 Last Friday, the office lights were left on at the end of the day, so please remember switching them off before you leave this afternoon. _____
- 18 Fred must been a good salesperson when he worked for us because there was a sudden drop in sales revenue after he left. _____

- 19 Even if we'd sold twice as much, it would have made any difference – we'd still be way below the forecasts. _____
- 20 We've run of money out so I'm afraid we may be looking at having to file for bankruptcy. _____
- 21 I'm as ready to finish this project as you are ready. _____
- 22 It's just me or are there a lot of people sitting around trying to look busy? _____
- 23 David is hoping mad about Lucien leaving without giving any notice and taking a job with the competition. _____
- 24 Who Lindy brought to the company was a good eye for design and a lot of international experience. _____
- 25 When you're scheduling the conference, be sure include plenty of time after each session for questions and answers. _____

SKILLS

A Match the questions and statements (26–33) with the best responses (a–h).

- | | | | |
|----|--|----|---|
| 26 | I don't suppose you know any good places to eat near here, do you? | a) | You have to weigh up the pros and cons. |
| 27 | I've been based in Singapore for the past three years. | b) | I'm not sure I agree with you there. I think we need to make some of these decisions ourselves. |
| 28 | Let me make sure I understand you correctly. You're saying the Leeds location won't remain open? | c) | If I could just finish what I was saying, I'll talk about that situation in a minute. |
| 29 | Sorry, could I ask you to give me those figures again? | d) | Let's not make any hasty decisions. We need to think this through a bit more. |
| 30 | The best course of action is to get some focus groups together over the coming weeks. | e) | Sure. I said \$49,300 in the first quarter and \$39,030 in the second. |
| 31 | I do think it's important we offer someone the job today. | f) | As a matter of fact, I went to a fantastic curry house last night. |
| 32 | What do you think I should do about accepting the promotion offer? | g) | No, what I meant to say was the Leeds operation will be scaled down. |
| 33 | Sorry to interrupt, I just wonder if | h) | I was there not long ago, actually. |

you're going to tell us what you plan
to do about the situation in Mumbai?

B Complete the sentences with the words in the box.

alternative discussion e-mail point question start thing

- 34 OK, from your _____ of view, we should scrap this idea. Correct?
- 35 You know, a funny _____ happened to me the other day while I was waiting for a client to arrive at my office for a meeting.
- 36 Could you please confirm your order by _____ as soon as possible?
- 37 Let's go round the table once and then open the _____ up.
- 38 Sorry, could you just repeat your _____ because I don't think everyone heard.
- 39 We may have no _____ but to ignore the problem and continue with the project as planned.
- 40 We only have 45 minutes so let's make a _____.

READING

Read the article and choose the best option – a, b or c – to complete the sentences below.

- 41 According to the article, ambition is _____ success in business.
- a) necessary for
 - b) not always important for
 - c) ultimately harmful to
- 42 Most people probably _____ needed to experience the sort of success that strongly ambitious people often achieve.
- a) can't learn the traits
 - b) don't understand what's
 - c) already have the skills
- 43 Cary Cooper believes that strong ambition often _____.
- a) is harmful to children
 - b) leads to failure
 - c) makes people unhappy
- 44 People who have 'healthy' ambition generally _____.
- a) enjoy their work

- b) try a lot of different things
c) pretend to be happy
- 45 Tapping into a healthy ambition is a matter of understanding _____.
a) your past
b) what you really want
c) competition
- 46 Comfort is generally _____ of ambition.
a) a common result
b) the enemy
c) a key motivation
- 47 Less ambitious people tend to take _____ than very driven people.
a) less advice
b) more time decision-making
c) fewer risks
- 48 Finding a job that perfectly matches your skills _____ ambition.
a) isn't a realistic
b) should be your highest
c) will unlock your
- 49 John Drysdale believes that in the past, people tended to view ambition more as a desire for _____ than they do now.
a) hard work
b) money and power
c) respect
- 50 Ambition is useful only if you also have _____.
a) real ability
b) clear earning potential
c) a sound business plan

The careerist: ‘The key to ambition is understanding your motivations’

By Rhymer Rigby

Ambition is an oddity in the workplace toolkit. It varies across cultures and organisations, with some people finding it distasteful, while for others it is the single most important factor in shaping their career. Given that it can sometimes make the difference between success and failure, is it possible to take steps to boost it?

Can I turn myself into a serial entrepreneur or CEO of a dozen companies?

Probably not, says Cary Cooper, Professor of Organisational Psychology at Lancaster University. ‘Really driven people like entrepreneurs who keep doing it again and again usually have a drive that comes from something traumatic in their childhood.’ However, he says, for most people not having this is a good thing. ‘No matter how successful [driven people] are, they’ll never quite believe it and they’ll never be satisfied – their success doesn’t make them happy; they just keep going.’

What about cultivating a more healthy ambition? Instead of looking at obsessives who are working themselves into the ground, you are better off taking your cues from people

who seem to enjoy what they are doing and appear genuinely enthused by it. These people tend to stick with one thing or in one area and their good fortune is usually a mixture of interest and hard work.

So how do I boost my ambition?

‘The key to ambition is understanding your motivations – if you can understand these, that makes sense of everything else,’ says Corinne Mills of Personal Career Management. ‘I was talking to a banker the other day who said he was motivated by money. But actually when we dug around a bit we discovered he was really motivated by security.’

There are two other very important ways to boost your drive: ‘You need to start to take risks,’ says Ms Mills. ‘Ambitious people do not just sit in the same job. Apply for new positions, network and really get yourself out of your comfort zone.’

Risk-taking is something that virtually all ambitious people do far better than also-rans. Finally, you should not make excuses. Rather than moaning about your lot, you need to look at whatever it is you are doing and do the best you possibly can.

For example, if you wait for the perfect role for your talents, you will wait forever.

Is ambition all about money and power?

John Drysdale, Managing Director of Momentum Executive Development, says he is witnessing a shift in the way people view ambition. ‘Of course people still work hard but they’re seeing ambition less in terms of just money and power. You want to get to the top but you want people to respect you, too. I think the paradigm is shifting – particularly as we’re currently looking at the consequences of too much uncritical ambition.’

Is an extra dose of ambition all I need to revitalise my career?

No. While talent without ambition can be cute, ambition without talent results in the kind of tragi-comic mini-megalomaniacs you see booted out of *The Apprentice* in early rounds. It is probably best to think of it as a catalyst that makes your other attributes perform better – but the raw material needs to be there first.



WRITING

You represent a firm of market research consultants which is proposing to carry out research into Internet use in East Africa for the producer of a very low-cost, Internet-ready palmtop computer (the client company). Look at the informal notes and draw up the first part of a proposal in three paragraphs (200–250 words), with subheadings as shown. You do not need to specify details such as costs and deadlines for the work.

Background	Aims	Methods
<p>Reasons for growing Internet access in East Africa (primarily Kenya):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Undersea fibre optic cable recently connected in Mombasa, Kenya 2) Wholesale Internet access prices have dropped radically, meaning more net-based business will become possible 3) Refurbished PCs donated to African schools may have created a growing core market of computer-literate people <p>Client requests analysis of the cities of Mombasa and Nairobi in order to develop a strategic marketing plan</p>	<p>Client needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear understanding of Kenyan market + factors influencing demand • Forecast for next five years • Which area most important? Compile database for each. 	<p>Collect quantitative + qualitative data – establish current patterns, future trends</p> <p>Use several different analysis techniques to draw up profile of existing users, how they use computers/the Internet</p> <p>Provide basis for strategic model – help client develop marketing plans, target potential users</p>

SPEAKING

You are going to have a speaking test that will last 15 to 20 minutes. There will be two parts.

Part A: You will prepare a short (five-minute) presentation, give the presentation and then answer questions about it.

Part B: You will role-play a networking situation at a conference.

A Choose one of the topics below and prepare a short presentation. You should begin with a suitable introduction, divide the information into about three main parts and end with a conclusion. You have 15 minutes to prepare.

- 1 Make a presentation about your own first impressions of a company, product or service. Provide a short background to the company, product or service, then explain the factors that created your first impression. Explain which good points should be preserved and areas in which you think the first impression could be improved.
- 2 Make a presentation about a job: either the job you have or one you would like to have. Describe the job in terms of current employment trends. What flexibility does the job allow? Does it involve working with 'virtual' teams that are geographically spread out? Does it involve working with both regular employees and short-term contract staff or consultants?
- 3 Make a presentation about any online aspect of your company's business. If your company actively does business online, explain how the business works: how the product or service is marketed, how orders are taken and filled, etc. If your company doesn't do business online, explain what function any online presence serves and explain why the company isn't well-suited to online business or how the company could make use of the Internet.

B Imagine you are at a conference waiting for a talk about doing business across cultures to begin. You decide to strike up a conversation with the person sitting next to you. Think of a topic you can introduce to get the conversation going and try to maintain the flow for about five minutes.

Exit test Answer key

LISTENING (10 MARKS)

1 c 2 a 3 b 4 b 5 c 6 a 7 b 8 c 9 a 10 c

LANGUAGE (15 MARKS)

- 11 ~~enough confident~~, confident enough
12 ~~Which~~, What
13 ~~all above~~, above all
14 ~~20 years' the experience~~, 20 years' experience
15 ~~which~~, of which
16 ~~experience~~, experiencing
17 ~~switching~~, to switch
18 ~~must been~~, must have been
19 ~~would~~, wouldn't
20 ~~of money out~~, out of money
21 ~~you are ready~~, you are
22 ~~It's~~, Is it
23 ~~hoping~~, hopping
24 ~~Who~~, What
25 ~~sure include~~, sure to include

SKILLS (15 MARKS)

- 26 f 27 h 28 g 29 e 30 b 31 d 32 a 33 c
34 point
35 thing
36 e-mail
37 discussion
38 question
39 alternative
40 start

READING (10 MARKS)

41 b 42 a 43 c 44 a 45 b 46 b 47 c 48 a 49 b 50 a

WRITING (15 MARKS)

See Examiner's notes.

MODEL ANSWER TO WRITING TASK

Proposal to carry out research into Internet use in Kenya

Background

Internet access in Kenya has recently increased greatly. There are three main reasons for this. One is the recent connection of an undersea fibre optic cable in Mombasa. The second is the resulting drop in the price of wholesale Internet access in the region, which will mean more net-based business will soon be possible. The third is the growing core market of computer-literate people who understand the benefits of computer and Internet use. The client has requested a detailed analysis of the cities of Mombasa and Nairobi that will help them develop a strategic plan for marketing their low-cost palmtops in Kenya.

Aims

- To provide a clear understanding of the Kenyan palmtop computer market
- To identify the factors influencing future demand
- To forecast the market penetration of Internet-ready palmtops into Kenya over the next five years
- To identify the areas with the greatest strategic importance to the client company
- To compile a database for each area

Methods

Both quantitative and qualitative data will be collected to establish current patterns of Internet/computer use, as well as future trends. We will analyse this data, using several different techniques. This data will enable us to draw up a profile of existing users showing how they use their computers and the Internet. It will also provide the basis for a strategic model that will help the client prepare detailed marketing plans and target potential users.

SPEAKING (15 MARKS)

See Examiner's notes.

EXIT TEST

Track 6

I'd like to welcome you today to the newly-refurbished Daisy Hill Factory which you're going to get up and running over the next ten days.

At Talbot, it's not so much what we do as how we do it. There's a culture of excellence in this company. The firm is no longer owned by the Talbot family but for half of the nineteenth and most of the twentieth century it was. The Talbots didn't believe in standing still and, in a highly competitive market, there's no room for complacency. We've always actively looked for ways of improving, have always asked 'Is our organisation running as smoothly as it should? Could we do more to improve the dialogue we have with our customers? Could we improve services?' Those are the questions we have to keep answering to keep moving forward and those are questions that we think everyone in the company should be thinking about every day. Often the best ideas for how to improve efficiency have come from the men and women on the factory floor because you're the ones who really know what's going on.

So where is Talbot going? What's the goal we're all trying to reach? We have three main targets that we're always trying to hit. One is to develop and maintain long-standing relationships with our customers. We have to work closely with them or we can't develop products for them. The best work often comes from two companies sharing ideas and expertise rather than a client just coming to us with an order to make something. In fact, that's one way we differentiate ourselves in the market: the way we involve customers in our R and D. This means you can expect frequent visits from clients so they can see what we're doing and how we're doing it.

Another target we never lose sight of is the need to manage production costs, keeping in mind that people are a huge part of that. As our equipment gets older and becomes less efficient we at times need to move production from one factory to another. The key to managing the human side of this is not to show up one day and say 'Sorry, we're closing your assembly line next week, you have to leave.' We're often looking ahead ten years to equipment replacement and this sort of planning helps us manage the human resources angle of closures.

The third target we have is to become more multinational. Currently, 40 per cent of our sales go outside the UK. But there are huge markets out there. Look at China. There are more than a billion people there, some of whom could be using our products in ten years' time – if we play our cards right. Part of the plan is to build plants in India and China. We already have joint ventures with local partners and more are in the planning stages. Does this mean eventually outsourcing your jobs to Asia? No, it doesn't. We have expertise here in the UK that we are committed to maintaining. Some of you will have the opportunity to work for periods of time in our new facilities abroad as part of training up workers there in our culture of excellence.