

PLACEMENT TEST FOR UNiCert BUSINESS ENGLISH LEVEL III

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The following test consists of 3 parts: verb grammar, reading and word grammar. Please spend 30 minutes answering the 50 questions. You can't expect to get all correct, so answer quickly and then bring the filled out papers to the first class.

GRAMMAR (20 points)

Please fill in the blanks to complete the following sentences with the correct forms and tenses of the verbs in parentheses. Possible correct responses will include the following tenses: present, present and past continuous, simple past, present and past perfect, future tenses, as well as conditional and passive forms of verbs!

Cindy Evans (1) _____ (work) for a well-known German car manufacturer. She (2) _____ (take) her first position with the company in March 1998, so she (3) _____ (work) at the company for six years.

When her former boss retired in March 2002 she (4) _____ (offer) his position as regional sales director for Eastern Europe. At the time she took this new job, she (5) _____ (be) with the company for four years.

Every day after arriving at work, Cindy (6) _____ (read) her e-mail from 9:00 until about 10:00 a.m.. Right now it is 9:15 a.m., so we can assume that Cindy (7) _____ (read) her mail. While she

(8) _____ (read) yesterday, she (9) _____ (get) three phone calls; so far this morning she (10) _____ (get) only one call.

That call was from her assistant, Lenny. He (11) _____ (call) to remind her of a 9:30 appointment with George Cook, an important customer. If Lenny (12) _____ (call), she probably would have forgotten it.

Then, just as she was closing her e-mail, she (13) _____ (see) a message from Mr. Cook's secretary canceling the appointment. Looking at her watch she said. "Wow, that's great! It looks as though I

(14) _____ (have) time to finish reading my mail after all." By the time she went to her 10:00 meeting with the sales reps, she (15) _____ (read) every message in her IN BOX and she (16) _____ (delete) about 150 pieces of spam!

Tomorrow Cindy (17) _____ (not be) in the office because she has to attend a conference in Prague. Her

train (18) _____ (leave) at 7:00 a.m. If she (19) _____ (miss) that one, she can catch the next one at 7:30. She had wanted to go by plane, but the early flight to Prague was already overbooked. If any seats had been available, she (20) _____ (book) a seat on the plane..

READING

In 1997, Siemens bought the power generation equipment operations of Westinghouse in the US. To find out how successful this acquisition has been, read the article and then do the exercises that follow.

Siemens generates goodwill in North America

Football has immense power to link up people from disparate nations, as the World Cup illustrated. Siemens, the world's biggest engineering group, realised this when working out how to make a success of an important North American takeover.

The German company organised football matches between *blue-collar operatives* from plants on both sides of the Atlantic, to help smooth its \$1.5bn acquisition of the power generation equipment operations of the Westinghouse industrial *conglomerate*.

The deal in 1997 gave Siemens, for the first time, a strong US platform for selling electricity generation equipment, and has been a *crucial* step in the long-term drive by Heinrich von Pierer, Siemens' chief executive, to increase the company's North American revenues.

Siemens' diplomatic approach to integrating Westinghouse *sheds light on* the strategies companies may require to succeed with large cross-border deals. It *highlights ways to combat* some of the potential problems in implementing US/German mergers, as exemplified by the difficulties in bringing together the Daimler-Benz and Chrysler car groups to form DaimlerChrysler in 1998.

The problems with this \$38bn merger have been linked to the intentions of Jurgen Schrempp, DaimlerChrysler's chairman, *to relegate* Chrysler to divisional status, so making it harder for different parts of the enlarged business to share ideas and technologies. According to Joerg Matthiessen, a consultant who assisted Siemens on the Westinghouse acquisition, the German company tried hard to avoid a confrontational approach that can create 'winners and losers' in such marriages. "Siemens showed a willingness to listen," says Mr Matthiessen.

Randy Zwirn, a former Westinghouse executive who is now head of Siemens' US power equipment operations, says Siemens executives were alive to the possibility that the Westinghouse people in the partnership could feel they were inferior. Siemens *made a commitment* right from the start that it would be a merger of equals.

Siemens managers did their best to make the 8,000 people who came into the German company from Westinghouse feel culturally assimilated. Football matches -- together with ice hockey tournaments and kart-racing sessions -- were fixed up between teams of employees from Germany and from the US and Canada.

At a KWU (Siemens Power Generation) plant in Berlin making gas turbines, after intensive English lessons, roughly two-thirds of the 1,600 employees have a decent understanding of the language, compared with 10 per cent four years ago. Without these efforts, regular discussions between workers in Berlin and those at a second large Siemens gas turbine plant -- which was formerly part of Westinghouse, and is in Hamilton, Ontario -- would have stood little chance of succeeding.

As part of these interchanges, in recent years 10–15 per cent of Berlin's employees have visited their *opposite numbers* in Hamilton during a 12-month period, with a similar proportion of the Canadian plant's 900 staff making the trip the other way.

The efforts have been focused around swapping ideas involved in the complex job of building gas turbines. The two sets of workers from Berlin and Hamilton have *pooled ideas* on some of the hundreds of individual processes important in gas turbine construction.

Wolf-Dietrich Kreiger, KWU's head of gas turbine manufacturing, says the sharing of ideas has led to big gains in efficiency. This year, the Berlin and Hamilton plants between them are expected to make 115 gas turbines, compared with 36 in 1997-98. "Without the co-operation I believe we would not have been able to increase the total to more than about 80," says Mr. Kreiger.

from the Financial Times

Reading comprehension

Based on the information in the article, say whether the following statements are true (T), false (F) or there is not enough information in the text (N) to be sure.

1. Siemens already had contact with the power generation operations of _____ Westinghouse through inter-company football matches before it acquired part of the _____ the US company.
2. The aim of organising the football matches was to help the takeover go smoothly.
3. Before the acquisition of part of Westinghouse, Siemens was already major player in the US market.
4. Siemens modelled its approach to the merger on that of Daimler-Benz and _____ Chrysler.
5. German companies tend to be too confrontational in their dealings with acquisition targets.
6. The acquisition of part of the Westinghouse business by Siemens was considered a merger of equals.
7. After the acquisition, other sporting events between the two companies were organised.
8. The English lessons at the KWU plant in Berlin were organised to facilitate communication with employees at the former Westinghouse plant in Canada.
9. 10-15 per cent of the KWU employees at the Berlin plant went to Canada to _____ study English.
10. Most of the interchange between employees in Berlin and Hamilton has been for _____ football matches.

Vocabulary in context

Look at the words in *italics* in the article. Try to guess their meaning from the context, then match them to the definitions below.

1. People who do the same job but in another company
2. To combine the ideas from two groups
3. To emphasise or draw attention to something
4. Very important, essential
5. Employees who work in a factory or on an assembly line
6. To make a promise to do something
7. To fight or struggle against something negative
8. A large company that has activities in many different business areas
9. To make something easier to understand by giving information about it
10. To put down to a lower level

Word Grammar

A. Fill each gap below with the best choice from the following words.

do get make put take

1. Companies are in business to _____ profits.
2. Thanks for the meetings. It's been a pleasure to _____ business with you.
3. They decided not to go ahead with that acquisition. It was too big a risk to _____.
4. I'm afraid I didn't understand what you said. Can you _____ it another way?
5. He's unhappy with his internship, but it was the only one he could _____.

B. Without changing the meaning, substitute one of the choices given for each numbered and underlined word and phrase in the short text below.

Directors of the company have agreed to a sell-out, but the shareholders are far from happy. The offer is based on a share price of \$8.50, but analysts (6) suggest that the company (7) should be valued at \$14 to \$15 a share. The company went public at \$24 in 1996, but the price has (8) fallen considerably since then, reaching a (9) minimum level of \$4 last Dec. Shareholders believe that the offer is (10) inadequate, and that a better deal could be found.

6. a. believe b. recommend c. say d. tell
7. a. worth b. is worth c. is worthy d. is worthwhile
8. a. dropped b. fell down c. lowered d. rocketed
9. a. deep b. ditch c. low point d. minimum
10. a. cheap b. inexpensive c. too deep d. too low