

# 72 Working life

## 1 Working conditions

Read the sentences and then put the phrases in green into the correct list below:

1. I work very long hours.
2. It isn't very well-paid.
3. I get a company car.
4. I get six weeks' paid holiday.
5. They've got a good pension scheme.
6. I'm on a pretty good salary.
7. I'm hoping to get promoted next year.
8. I can do overtime if I like.
9. You can work your way up quite quickly.
10. They run a system of flexi-time.
11. I get a regular pay rise.
12. I get private health insurance.
13. They've said I can go part-time after I've had my baby.
14. I'm taking a few days off next week. The kids are off school.
15. I'm ambitious. I want to move up the career ladder.
16. They give us a bonus at Christmas.

**Money**

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 .....  
 .....  
 .....

**Hours**

.....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....

**Benefits / Perks**

.....  
 .....  
 .....

**Promotion**

.....  
 .....  
 .....

**Holiday**

.....  
 .....

*Benefits are extras you get from your employer in addition to your salary. Perks is an informal word for benefits – "A company car is one of the perks of the job."*

## 2 Talking about your job

These sentences describe what you like or dislike about your job. Match the beginnings and endings:

1. I hate having to attend
2. I love meeting
3. I wish I didn't have to do
4. I run my own business. I really enjoy being
5. I hate having to deal with
6. I get on really well with
  - a. so much boring paperwork.
  - b. my own boss.
  - c. new people.
  - d. difficult customers.
  - e. so many meetings.
  - f. all of my colleagues except one.

*If you own your own business, you are self-employed. You can also say, "I'm my own boss."*

## 3 Describing your job

Decide whether the words in green express a positive (P) or negative (N) idea:

1. My job's so boring. It's the same thing day after day.
2. It's so repetitive. I just sit there all day filling in forms.
3. It's very satisfying to know that you've helped somebody through their exams.
4. Knowing that I might have saved somebody's life is very rewarding.
5. I find it very challenging. It requires a lot of concentration and determination.
6. This job's so stressful. It's making me ill.
7. I wish I could do something glamorous like acting or modelling.
8. It's a very friendly place to work. All the staff were really helpful when I joined the firm a couple of months ago.

*All of the people who work for a company are the staff; the people who work with you are your colleagues. You can refer to people in another department as "Our marketing / finance / security people".*

## 4 Job satisfaction

Here are some things you might look for in a job. Match the beginnings and endings:

1. I need to be doing
  2. I like to know that I'm helping
  3. It's important to feel that I'm
  4. I need to be given
  5. I don't want to be stuck
  6. I don't want to find myself doing
- a. part of a team.
  - b. behind a desk all day.
  - c. the same thing day in day out.
  - d. something useful.
  - e. responsibility.
  - f. people.

If you work, tick (✓) the statements that are true for you in exercises 2, 3 and 4.

## 5 Problems at work

Use these words to complete the news item below:

strike    union    low pay    rejected  
resigned    increase    demanded    crisis

### NURSING IN CRISIS

The Government and nurses are no nearer reaching agreement over a new pay deal. Tina Jenkins, leader of the nurses' (1) . . . . ., has warned the Government that the union may call a 24-hour (2) . . . . . unless the Government improves the 2% pay (3) . . . . . currently on offer. Earlier this week nurses (4) . . . . . the offer and (5) . . . . . an increase of at least 5%. Mrs Jenkins said this afternoon that long hours and (6) . . . . . were forcing nurses out of the profession. Last year alone, thousands of nurses (7) . . . . . from their jobs, leaving many hospitals in a state of (8) . . . . .

Strike can be used as a verb or with 'go':

Teachers have voted to strike.

Miners have voted to go on strike.

## 6 Job or work?

Complete the sentences with work or job:

1. I'm a bit nervous. I'm starting a new . . . . . next week.
2. I hear you're a lorry driver. I bet that's hard . . . . ., isn't it?
3. I'm looking for part-time . . . . . A full-time . . . . . would be too much for me at the moment.
4. I didn't really want to go back to . . . . . after I had the baby.
5. I'm sorry, I can't stop now. I've got a lot of . . . . . to do.
6. Judging by the car he drives, I'd say he's got a pretty good . . . . .
7. I'm hoping to find some casual . . . . . while I'm at college – working in a bar or a shop.
8. I want to do something a bit different. I wouldn't like a regular nine-to-five . . . . .

What is the easy grammatical way to do this exercise? Did you notice it?

## 7 Job or career?

Complete the sentences with job or career:

1. Jack started as the office junior. Now he's MD. He's had a very successful . . . . .
2. I work in advertising. The pay's pretty good but there isn't much . . . . . security.
3. I'd go mad if I had to do a dead-end . . . . . like working on a supermarket checkout.
4. Ronaldo was the best footballer in the world until a bad knee injury ended his . . . . .
5. Don't you think you should stop travelling and get yourself a steady . . . . . ?
6. Janet's planning a . . . . . in politics when she leaves university.
7. I'd go back to teaching if I could find someone to . . . . .-share with.

What's more important to you – money or job satisfaction?