


UNIT 4 ➤ Disruptors

Lesson 4.1 Disruptors in business

VIDEO A  4.1.1 Read the sentences and decide if they are *true* (T) or *false* (F). Watch the video again to find evidence for your answers.

- 1 It's always agile start-ups that introduce disruption, new ideas and technologies.
- 2 The number of disruptions today is a major factor in the life of companies.
- 3 The biggest impact that smartphones have had is on the market for consumer cameras.
- 4 The music business made an assumption about customers that helped them to make use of the disruption in the industry.
- 5 Car producers use apps to let people know where their nearest dealers can be found.
- 6 Low-cost airlines are credited with winning new customers who want to travel short distances.
- 7 The traditional long-haul airline market has taken on ideas from the low-cost airlines.
- 8 If companies take the right steps, they will be able to protect their business against any disruptions that occur in the market.

Vocabulary B Match the sentence halves. There are two extra endings you do not need.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 For many years, the legacy airlines | a have had an effect on the lifespan of companies. |
| 2 The music industry has become more and more fragmented, | b to become a disruptor in the market. |
| 3 The car industry is offering a novel approach to customers needing transportation | c partially due to the embrace of file sharing. |
| 4 Rapid changes in technology throughout the business landscape | d an opportunity to change their image, gain new customers and keep those they already have. |
| 5 Being able to return a car to a dedicated parking place | e from how it was several decades ago. |
| 6 Low-cost airlines have displaced many of the traditional ones | f because people do not want to pay for it any longer. |
| 7 The way people consume music today is very different | g makes it easier for customers to take part in car sharing. |
| 8 By repositioning themselves, companies can create | h in order to keep from losing business to disruptive forces within their industry. |
| | i have been a mainstay of the business. |
| | j within the short-haul and business markets. |

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Lesson 4.2 Disruptive innovation

Reading A Read the article on page 40 of the coursebook again. Choose the correct option in *italics*. According to the article:

- 1 The term 'disruptive' is *given to / used by* companies which have good ideas.
- 2 The term 'disruptive innovation' describes products and services which started small and replaced those which were *better known / more expensive*.
- 3 The hard disc drive was considered disruptive because it *made personal computers popular / replaced computers*.
- 4 Both Encarta and Blockbuster might have stayed in business if *they had made more use of digital technology / competitors had not entered the market*.
- 5 A company that has proved to be an important disruptor *may / doesn't usually* struggle to keep their customers.
- 6 One of the factors that affects how well a new start-up will do is how *quickly competitors react / lucky competitors are*.

Grammar B Match the sentence halves.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 Given that some inventions were not successful when they were launched, | a who would you take with you? |
| 2 Let us assume that in thirty years' time driverless cars will be very common, | b we wouldn't have suggested it. |
| 3 Were they to advertise more intensively on the internet, | c do you think we should take a chance on this one? |
| 4 Just imagine you were planning a business trip, | d had been on time, but it was delayed by over an hour. |
| 5 I wish the train | e if only the economy had stayed strong. |
| 6 What if we had switched to personal computers in the office years ago | f at the weekly management meeting. |
| 7 We would have made a lot of money, | g what areas of the economy do you think will be most affected? |
| 8 Had we known that the idea had been tried out already, | h do you think it would have meant success for the company? |
| 9 Speculating for a moment that we had been first to market with this idea, | i their sales would probably increase among millennials. |
| 10 I wonder if my boss mentioned my performance | j and hadn't continued using a mainframe? |

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Lesson 4.3 Communication skills: Finding solutions

Useful language **A** Complete the sentences with the correct form of the phrases in the box.

a bit off the wall crunch time lag behind pitch in
plough money into tap into throw up tiered

- 1 We have a _____ pricing system; the bigger the quantity of the order, the cheaper the unit price.
- 2 All the team members are cooperative and always _____ with their ideas.
- 3 Many universities try to _____ the financial resources of their alumni.
- 4 Investors are _____ office developments in the city.
- 5 Car companies face _____ as sales continue to decline in the sector.
- 6 The huge increase in social media _____ a lot of concerns about user privacy.
- 7 Logical thinkers sometimes find it hard to come up with ideas that are _____.
- 8 Our university has been _____ our competitors in preparing students for the global workplace.

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Lesson 4.4 Business skills: Reporting and planning

Useful language **A** Hugo Macron has moved from Paris to Chicago to join an international project installing new IT software. Read his notes about his experiences. Use the notes and expressions from this lesson to write an email from Hugo to his colleagues back in Paris. Add details of your own if you like.

lots of great experiences / lots of changes in me as a person

still struggling with English / no time for English lessons before leaving for the US

apartment is good / too far away from work

at moment things going well / hoping all software installed soon / project should be back on schedule end of this month

biggest insight / openness and acceptance of different cultures

developed myself lots / but emotionally tough



Dear all,

I hope you are all well. Here is an update on my life in the States.

I am enjoying Chicago. It's been great. ...

B Complete the sentences with the idioms in the box.

across the board
building a platform for the future
food for thought
it's been a steep learning curve
it sent mixed messages
people are over the moon
we have really shot ourselves in the foot

- 1 I think that launching the new leadership programme on the same day as announcing the cost-cutting measures was not the greatest idea, because _____.
- 2 We were so tough in the last negotiation that a key supplier has decided it doesn't want to work with us any more. I'm afraid that _____.
- 3 **A:** How do people feel about the news that we've just negotiated a new major client?
B: I would say _____.
- 4 It was a long negotiation because we had to consult with so many stakeholders. At the end of the day, I think we managed to get clear agreement _____.
- 5 I think the deal we negotiated last month is great for the company and gives me a lot of confidence looking forward. I think we are really _____.
- 6 We stopped the negotiation early on day one because we had so many new ideas from the customer that we needed time alone to discuss things. Some of the ideas were a bit crazy, but a lot of them provided real _____.
- 7 The process we have been through has been very tough. We had to change a lot. I'll admit, _____.

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Lesson 4.5 Writing: Supply chain choices

Useful language **A** Match the words and phrases in the left-hand column (1–8) with the words and phrases in the right-hand column (a–h) that have a similar meaning.

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| 1 however | a as a result / so |
| 2 therefore | b on the whole / overall |
| 3 in general | c as regards / with reference to |
| 4 in relation to | d nevertheless / even so |
| 5 in particular | e one disadvantage is that / the downside is that |
| 6 of course | f in reality / actually |
| 7 on the minus side | g clearly / obviously |
| 8 in fact | h above all / most importantly |

B Use words and phrases 1–8 in Exercise A to complete the sentences. More than one answer might appear possible for some sentences. Where that is the case, read the whole sentence, think about the meaning and see if the word or phrase could fit better in another sentence.

- 1 We are getting to the point where we will need to review our suppliers in Eastern Europe. _____, I don't think we should make any big changes until next year.
- 2 We are getting to the point where we will need to review our suppliers in Eastern Europe. _____, our plant in Hungary has quite high defect rates.
- 3 We need to look at several factors when deciding who should be our new supplier. _____ performance, features and reliability, it is clear that supplier A would be the best choice.
- 4 We need to look at several factors when deciding who should be our new supplier. Supplier A is very strong on performance, features and reliability, but _____, they are much more expensive than supplier B.
- 5 _____, supplier A has been a good business partner for us over the years, although on the specific issue of responding flexibly to changes in our order levels, supplier B has also been very good.
- 6 _____ it's clear that supplier A has good quality and a good price, but on the other hand, supplier B has one big strength – they always respond flexibly to last-minute changes in our order levels.
- 7 Supplier A has a reputation for being a difficult negotiating partner. _____, this is a little unfair as they are simply trying to get the best deal for themselves – just as we are.
- 8 Supplier A has a reputation for being a difficult negotiating partner. _____, make sure you prepare very well before the first meeting and speak to colleagues who have negotiated with them before.