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voices

LINKING, DEVELOPING AND SUPPORTING ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING PROFESSIONALS WORLDWIDE

216

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Materials reviews

Edited by Sandee Thompson

This edition of *Voices* includes a wide variety of topics to pique everyone's interest. Angela Richardson and Tony Rusinak review business materials for the classroom and Hilary Livingston reflects on a number of essays evaluating the usefulness of monolingual assessment norms when researching multilingualism. I also had the opportunity to review a new Longman dictionary that will be of assistance to students studying for proficiency exams. We hope you will enjoy these books as much as we did!



Sandee Thompson is the Director of Studies at a small school in Atlantic Canada. She is a CELTA tutor and assessor and an IELTS examiner trainer. She received her MA TESL from Birmingham University and is interested in all things task based and learner focused!



It's Your Job

Clarity Language Consultants Ltd., 2010

Software program
Versions: (1) International English (2) North American English (3) International English with Indian HR specialists

ISBN 978 962 960416 5

Designed to help advanced ESL learners succeed in the competitive world of job hunting, Clarity's *It's Your Job* meets its objectives beautifully. This program offers a comprehensive and practical overview of everything from writing a resumé and choosing a career to preparing for an interview. It's also impressively easy to use and navigate.

The program is organised into ten individual units, and allows learners to track and monitor their progress at each stage. The units contain engaging interactive exercises for different learning styles, practical video advice from experienced recruiters in a range of professional fields, and audio recordings of anecdotes from real job seekers. In addition, the key concepts covered in each unit are well organised and presented to the learner in a visually engaging manner.

Among the more exciting features in the program are the practice sections found in each unit. Dynamic, practical, real world examples are presented using a test-teach-test format to help learners effectively develop their job seeking and language skills. Some of the more notable development exercises in this section include answering audio recordings of interview questions in real time, writing effective resumés and covering letters, reading and responding to sample job advertisements, and learning to respond with follow-up emails. A print option within the practice sections of the program also allows for easy monitoring of student work and overall progress outside the classroom.

Using this program provides students with the opportunity to keep track of their scores, check their answers, and even print their results. In this way, they are empowered to take control of their own learning. Additionally, the program provides links to a host of other helpful job-related resources, articles for teachers on how to incorporate ICT into the classroom, and easy access to technical support.

In my opinion, *It's Your Job* will prove a valuable tool for any teacher seeking to integrate vital life skills into their language program. I am thoroughly impressed by this program, and am eager to explore some of the other ICT programs Clarity has to offer.

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Total Business 3

Paul Dummett and Colin Benn

Level: Upper Intermediate

Summertown Publishing, 2010

192 pages

ISBN 978 046 209869 2

My first impression of this book was, 'Wow, this is great; another market leader!' in reference to one of the most popular and respected business course books in the field. That begged the questions: 'Why would or wouldn't I change texts?', 'Would authentic texts from sources like *The Financial Times* be included?', 'Would it have stimulating and challenging topics co-written by top business and TESL professionals?' and 'Would the layout stage the types of challenges that ESLB learners deem valid and motivational?'. I found that to some degree these needs were met; however, there were weaknesses as well.

First of all, the layout is clean, crisp, and image-rich. It also contains a variety of tasteful language stimulating 'clips'. These make for a nice balance with the grammar and vocabulary exercises.

The topics chosen are an equal mix of business theory and culture. I found the business content went into depth in some areas, e.g. 'Negotiating contracts with suppliers'. While this could be troublesome for those not interested in such topics, the business culture sections generated some excellent responses from my students. To add to this, these sections were staged nicely for intermediate students.

If your students are more focused on the academic and written world of business, this book is an excellent option for them. There is an adequate number of grammar specific and writing stages in the units that will help with accuracy standards and the writing genres of the business world. However, if your class is more communication and task oriented then you will probably need to provide supplementary materials.

Being North American and a believer in 'authenticity', I found the audio sections to be a weakness. The tracks are mainly spoken with strong British accents and, like the texts, were full of UK-centric vocabulary and expressions. I also found that some of the tracks were not graded at the same level as the texts. For both of these reasons, it was necessary for me to supplement with other materials.

Overall, I would give this book a strong mark. While some supplementation was required, the content and variety more than made up for its deficits!

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