

UNIT 1



Corporate culture

Getting started

1 Work in small groups. Match the sentence beginnings (1–7) with their endings (a–g).

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 My company/organisation has a vision ; | a for example, it doesn't have a dress code . |
| 2 We have an entrepreneurial culture; | b I know where it's going; I share its goals . |
| 3 People in my company are highly competitive; | c the boss is autocratic , and we do as we're told without question. |
| 4 My company is pretty bureaucratic; | d there are lots of regulations and 'correct procedures'. We're encouraged to do things by the book . |
| 5 My company has a supportive culture; | e we battle each other for promotion and for bonuses . |
| 6 My company has a controlling culture; | f when we need them, we're sent on training courses. Every employee has a mentor . |
| 7 My company is quite informal; | g we're encouraged to look for new business and take risks. |

2 Look at the words and phrases in bold above and match them to the following definitions.

- 1 a person who gives another person help and advice over a period of time and often also coaches them in their job *mentor*.
- 2 a set of rules for what you can wear
- 3 aims
- 4 demands total obedience from staff
- 5 extra amounts of money given to you as a reward
- 6 follow the rules exactly
- 7 view of how the company will be in the future
- 8 involving risk-taking



Aspects of corporate culture

Talking point

Discuss these questions in small groups.

- Which of the things mentioned in Exercise 1 on page 10 are typical of your company's/organisation's culture?
- Which would you like to be part of your company's culture? (If you don't work for a company or organisation, talk about one you would like to work for.)

Listening

You will hear four students on an MBA course discussing their companies' cultures.

1 Before you listen, match these words or phrases (1–10) with their definitions (a–j).

- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| 1 cut-throat | a informal meetings |
| 2 back-up | b Internet company |
| 3 get-togethers | c making more efficient |
| 4 sink or swim | d paperwork |
| 5 red tape | e responsible to the government |
| 6 publicly accountable | f standard by which you can judge the success of something |
| 7 streamlining | g fierce; not involving consideration or care about any harm caused to others |
| 8 dotcom | h struggle of individuals in a competitive environment |
| 9 yardstick | i succeed or fail without help from anyone else |
| 10 rat race | j support |



02 2 Look at the list of aspects of company culture in *Getting started*. Listen to the four speakers, and for each one, decide which aspect of their company's culture he/she mentions. Write one number by each speaker. You will not use all the numbers.

Candela: Sonia:
 Henry: Omar:

Task tip

The speakers talk about the subject without using the exact words in the list. You must listen for clues in what they say to decide which is the correct answer.

Vocabulary

02 Complete each of the phrasal verbs below with one or two words (the definitions are given in brackets). When you have finished, check your answers by listening to the conversation again.

- starting *out*... (beginning)
- talk things (discuss thoroughly)
- come ideas and solutions (*produce ideas and solutions*)
- stick (follow, obey)
- up (arrive)
- ahead (*making progress*)
- it boils to (*the essential thing is*)

Speaking

Work in pairs or groups of three. Describe the culture of the company where you work, or a company you are familiar with, using the following procedure.

- Before you speak, plan what you are going to say and select words and phrases from the vocabulary you have studied so far in this unit.
- Speak for about a minute.
- When you are listening to your partner's talk, think of a question to ask at the end of it.

Useful language

I think there are three main aspects to my company's culture: first, there's ...
 Another feature is ...
 Finally, I should say that ...
 So, it's a good place to work, especially because ... /
 I'd prefer it to be more ...

Creating a corporate culture

Reading

1

1 Read this passage fairly quickly and find out:

- 1 who is responsible for influencing the culture within a company.
- 2 how company culture affects a company's performance.
- 3 what weakness many companies have with regard to corporate culture.

2 When you have finished, discuss your answers with a partner.

3 Choose the correct sentence (A–G) from page 13 for each gap in the text (1–6). There is one sentence you will not need.

Company background



Nucor Corporation is the largest steel producer in the United States. It is also the nation's largest recycler.



F. Kenneth Iverson

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR CORPORATE CULTURE?

How should a director think about the “corporate culture” of the company on whose board he or she serves? Consult a management text on organizational culture and you’ll find a chapter or more of definition which boils down to something like “a pattern of shared basic assumptions.” Peter C. Browning, dean of the business school at Queens University, North Carolina says: “Every organization has a culture which manifests itself in everything from entrepreneurship to risk-taking all the way down to the dress code. **1**” In some cases, it can do both. Recall how IBM’s insular, conservative culture first helped the company soar to success—and then nearly destroyed it before a new CEO, Louis Gerstner, arrived in 1993 and saved the company.

Browning considers corporate culture an important part of a board’s responsibilities. And he’s not alone. In a recent survey, an overwhelming majority of directors say that culture has a powerful effect on their company’s ethics, risk-taking, and bottom-line performance. **2** Furthermore, 79% say they believe a board can alter a company’s culture.

Even so, many directors are less comfortable dealing with issues of corporate culture than they are with more easily quantified concepts like profitability or market share. Says Edward Lawler, a professor at the University of Southern California: “**3** An understanding of corporate culture is one of the main things missing on boards, but they really need it if they’re going to monitor what’s going on inside the corporation.”

So what should directors be doing to evaluate corporate culture, and what actions can they take to influence it?

Peter Browning’s favorite example is Nucor, the steel company. Nucor’s culture, which he describes as “extraordinarily powerful, effective, and unique,” can be traced back to the values and vision of its legendary founder, F. Kenneth Iverson. The Nucor story—of an egalitarian, collaborative, high-performing business that’s been consistently profitable in a notoriously tough industry—has been recounted in dozens of newspaper and magazine articles and books: **4** Although the company earns \$6.3 billion in revenues and has 9,900 employees, it has fewer than 60 people in management. There

are no company cars or corporate jets. The company offers four-year scholarships to children of employees to help them pursue higher education or vocational training after high school. When business is slow, Nucor reduces hours but doesn’t make workers redundant. There’s a highly effective incentive program. **5** Ditto for the shareholders: Nucor’s total return to investors last year was 37.9%, better than almost two-thirds of the other companies in the Fortune 500.

To ensure that Nucor’s collaborative, trusting culture continued, Browning recounts how he “went out and visited innumerable factories. I walked around, talked with people on different shifts.” Then he made sure the other non-executive directors did the same. **6** “It was important for the board to get to know the culture so that we could support the next generation of management as they move forward, while preserving the values that really distinguish this company,” Browning says.

From Corporate Board Member

- A The result is that employees have come to trust management and share its vision.
- B And having a supportive culture can produce surprising gains in terms of productivity.
- C CEO, Daniel R. DiMicco, answers his own phone and email and shares an assistant with CFO, Terry Lisenby.
- D Most boards are poorly equipped to deal with their organization's corporate culture, because their staffing is not right.
- E The entire board now goes once every year to a mill or plant and spends two days observing operations and talking to workers and managers.
- F When asked to rate its importance for these issues on a scale where 1 equals "greatly affects" and 10 means "no effect", the respondents ranked corporate culture at 2.
- G It can be a very powerful influence for good, or it can get companies in lots of trouble.

Task tip

Look at the clues in the sentences, e.g. in **A**, what has caused the result that is mentioned? In **F**, what does *these issues* refer to?

Vocabulary

Match these words and phrases from the text (1–7) with their definitions (a–g).

- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| 1 board | a dismiss employees, so they no longer have a job |
| 2 bottom-line performance | b group of people appointed to manage a company |
| 3 revenues | c money earned from sales |
| 4 make workers redundant | d people who own shares in a company |
| 5 shareholders | e set periods of time when people work, e.g. 6 a.m. to 2 p.m. |
| 6 return | f the amount of profit on an investment |
| 7 shifts | g whether the company makes a profit or a loss |

Grammar workshop

Defining and non-defining relative clauses

1 Read these five extracts from the text. Find and underline the five relative pronouns.

- How should a director think about the "corporate culture" of the company on whose board he or she serves?
- Consult a management text on organizational culture and you'll find a chapter or more of definition which boils down to something like "a pattern of shared basic assumptions."
- Every organization has a culture which manifests itself in everything from entrepreneurship to risk-taking all the way down to the dress code.
- An understanding of corporate culture is one of the main things missing on boards, but they really need it if they're going to monitor what's going on inside the corporation.
- Nucor's culture, which he describes as "extraordinarily powerful, effective, and unique," can be traced back to the values and vision of its legendary founder, F. Kenneth Iverson.

2 Decide which relative pronouns above could be replaced with *that*.

> page 26 (Defining and non-defining relative clauses)

Talking point

Discuss these questions in small groups.

- Why is it important for a company to have a strong corporate culture?
- What sort of culture would work best for you?
- What aspects of corporate culture do you think can have a negative effect on performance?
- What things can managers do to change the corporate culture of the company where they work?

Task tip

- Before you start discussing, take a little time to think about what you want to say.
- You can talk in general, but try to give examples from your knowledge and personal experience, too.
- Make sure that everyone in your group has a chance to express their opinions.

UNIT 2



Leaders and managers

Getting started

1 Read each of these things people said about their business leaders or managers (1–8) and match them with one of the qualities or skills listed in the box (a–h).

1 'Amongst other things, she has this tremendous ability to see how things could be in the future, and how the organisation should develop.'

2 'He's just great at producing new, unusual ideas, things other people would never have thought of.'

3 'I really like the fact that he gives us all plenty of responsibility. We all feel so empowered.'

4 'I'd say one of his strong points is his ability to get down to the nitty-gritty; nothing is so minor that it escapes his attention.'

5 'One thing I have to say about him is that he has excellent people skills; he can handle even the most awkward member of staff.'

6 'One thing she's particularly good at is problem-solving. You know, in our line of work we seem to go from crisis to crisis, but she seems to be able to get everything running smoothly again.'

7 'She has a totally practical approach. I mean, she doesn't just sit in her office theorising. She rolls up her sleeves and gets down to work with the rest of us.'

8 'She's just excellent at getting her ideas across. To give you just one example ...'

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| a A hands-on approach | e Good interpersonal skills |
| b Ability to delegate | f Originality |
| c Attention to detail | g Trouble-shooting skills |
| d Good communication skills | h Vision |

2 Discuss the following questions in small groups.

- Which of the above skills or qualities do you think are necessary for business leaders, which for managers and which for both? (Write 'L' for leader, 'M' for manager or 'B' for both by each of them.)
- Add three other skills or qualities to the list and say whether they are more necessary for leaders, their managers, or both.

Great leaders and great managers

Reading

Company background

Started in 1971, the Virgin Group operates in a wide range of markets, from music to finance and travel.



- Before reading, discuss in small groups what you know about Richard Branson and Virgin.
- Skim the web page very quickly (in two or three minutes) to find out what qualities Branson has which make him a good leader.

→ leader of Virgin

Richard Branson – the founder and owner of the Virgin Group, an empire of 350 companies that includes Virgin Atlantic airlines as well as ventures in other industries like telecommunications, trains, cosmetics and credit cards – says his goal is to turn Virgin into ‘the most respected brand in the world’. Branson’s skill as a brand builder is one of the reasons underlying his longevity as a business leader.

It is difficult to separate the success of the Virgin brand from the flamboyant man behind that brand. He travels the world weekly, reinforcing his good-natured, visible, jet-setting, billionaire reputation – a reputation like the reputation of the companies he owns. ‘Generally speaking, I think being a high-profile person has its advantages,’ he says. ‘Advertising costs enormous amounts of money these days. I just announced in India that I was setting up a domestic airline, and we ended up getting on the front pages of the newspaper. The costs of that in advertising terms would have been considerable.’

What is the most important quality of a good leader? ‘Being someone who cares about people is important,’ he says. ‘You can’t be a good leader unless you generally like people. That is how you bring out the best in them.’

How does a man who owns 350 companies get it all done? Branson places enormous value on time-management skills. As chairman of a large group of firms, Branson says he spends about a third of his time on trouble-shooting, another third on new projects, both charitable and business, and the last third on promoting and talking about the businesses he has set up. ‘As much as you need a strong personality to build a business from scratch, you must also understand the art of delegation,’ says Branson. ‘I have to be good at helping people run the individual businesses,

and I have to be willing to step back. The company must be set up so it can continue without me.’

In order for this process to work, employees must be happy. Branson says his philosophy of ‘look for the best and you’ll get the best’ helped him build an empire recognised for its young, fun culture. ‘For the people who work for you or with you, you must lavish praise on them at all times,’ Branson says. ‘It’s much more fun looking for the best in people. People don’t need to be told where they’ve slipped up or made a mess of something. They’ll sort it out themselves.’ Branson feels strongly that if an employee is not excelling in one area of the company, he or she should be given the opportunity to do well in a different Virgin Group job. Firing is seldom an option.

Motivational strategies extend to innovative ideas. The key to encouraging innovation within the Virgin ranks, suggests Branson, is to listen to any and all ideas and to offer feedback. Employees often leave companies, he reasons, because they are frustrated by the fact that their ideas fall on deaf ears. Interaction between employees and managers is fundamental.

Branson has developed a level of trust with his top managers by setting the direction and then stepping back to let them navigate. ‘I come up with the original idea, spend the first three months immersed in the business so I know the ins and outs, and then give chief executives a stake in the company and ask them to run it as if it’s their own,’ explains Branson. ‘I intervene as little as possible. Give them that, and they will give everything back.’



From <http://www.knowledge@wharton>

3 Read the text again and check that you have understood the main points by choosing the best answer, A, B, C or D, to these questions.

- What is Branson’s business aim?
 - To diversify Virgin’s activities
 - To make Virgin a global company
 - To survive longer than other business leaders
 - To enhance Virgin’s brand image
- What, according to Branson, is the business advantage of being well known?
 - It is easier to establish new ventures.
 - It saves money on publicity.
 - He is offered special advertising rates.
 - It makes his brands easily recognisable.
- What, for Branson, is the key to managing his workload?
 - Being continuously involved at all levels of the enterprise
 - Concentrating on problem-solving
 - Making his companies independent of him
 - Continually expanding his empire

- How, according to Branson, can you ensure optimum performance from staff?
 - By having an enjoyable corporate culture
 - By pointing out your employees’ mistakes
 - By dismissing incompetent workers
 - By telling people that they are performing well
- Why, says Branson, do many businesses lose good employees?
 - Managers do not listen to employees’ suggestions.
 - Managers do not know how to communicate with staff.
 - Managers do not encourage innovation.
 - Managers do not delegate.
- How does Branson optimise performance from his CEOs?
 - By giving them specialist training
 - By giving them a financial interest in the company
 - By giving them a three-month trial period
 - By offering them innovative ideas

Vocabulary 1

2

Find words or phrases in the text which mean the following.

- 1 someone who establishes an organisation (para. 1)
founder.
- 2 a new activity, usually in business, which involves risk or uncertainty (para. 1)
- 3 which are real but not immediately obvious (para. 1)
- 4 very confident behaviour (para. 2)
- 5 from the beginning (para. 4)
- 6 say a lot of nice things about (para. 5)
- 7 made a mistake (para. 5)
- 8 dismissing (para. 5)
- 9 completely involved (para. 7)
- 10 the detailed or complicated facts (para. 7)
- 11 share or financial involvement in a business (para. 7)

Talking point

Discuss these questions in groups of three.

- How much of Branson’s leadership style do you think is a question of personality, and how much is a question of technique?
- Which things do you most admire about Branson’s leadership style?
- Would you like to work for him?

Listening

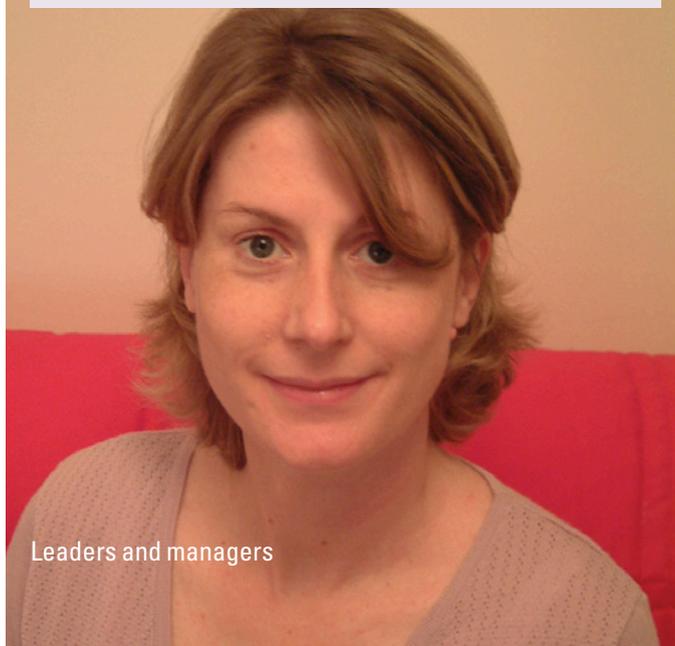
- 03 Listen to Rachel Babington, Head of PR at Disney Channel UK, talking about leaders and managers. Complete the notes at the top of the next column, using up to three words in each gap.

Company background

Disney Channel is a cable TV network run by The Walt Disney Company and started in 1983.



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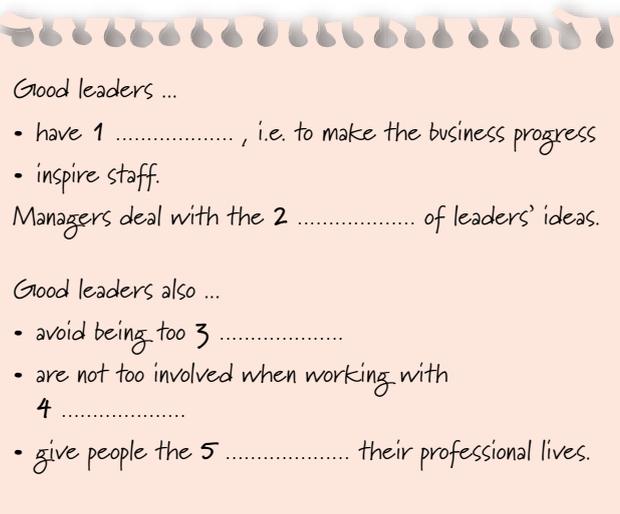


16 Leaders and managers

Task tip

Before you listen, read through the notes and predict:

- what type of information you will need in each gap
- what type of words (nouns/adjectives, etc.) you will need.



Grammar workshop

As or like?

Study the examples from the text about Richard Branson (a–d) and say which one includes *as* or *like* in a sense that ...

- 1 means ‘he is that thing’ (e.g. a brand builder)
 - 2 means ‘for example’ or ‘such as’
 - 3 means ‘similar to’
 - 4 is included in an expression which means ‘and also’
 - 5 can be used with adjectives or adverbs as a form of comparison
- a ... an empire of 350 companies that includes Virgin Atlantic airlines **as** well **as** ventures in other industries **like** telecommunications, trains, cosmetics and credit cards ...
 - b Branson’s skill **as** a brand builder is one of the reasons underlying his longevity **as** a business leader.
 - c ... reinforcing his good-natured, visible, jet-setting, billionaire reputation – a reputation **like** the reputation of the companies he owns.
 - d **As** much **as** you need a strong personality to build a business from scratch, you must also understand the art of delegation.

➤ page 27 (Some meanings of *as* and *like*)

Vocabulary 2

Match these management expressions (1–7) with their definitions (a–g).

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| 1 time management | a direct management of staff |
| 2 quality management | b how a company tries to control its brands and brand image |
| 3 line management | c level between senior management and junior management |
| 4 middle management | d managing systems in a company so that each department works effectively and produces products of the required standard |
| 5 brand management | e process of dealing with difficult situations |
| 6 crisis management | f process of assessing and measuring possible dangers and evolving strategies to deal with them |
| 7 risk management | g the skill of administering your time so as to work effectively |

Managing staff

Talking point 1

Discuss these questions in small groups.

- What things can managers do to get the most from their staff?
- What typical mistakes do managers make when managing staff?

Listening

You will hear Rachel Babington talking about empowerment.

- 1 Before you listen, work with a partner and predict what she might say to complete the notes below.
- 2 Listen and complete the notes on what she says, using up to three words for each space.

Talking point 2

Work in groups of three or four.

Your local Chamber of Commerce has asked you to investigate ways of motivating staff in local companies in order to produce a happier, more effective and more productive workforce. Study these ways managers can motivate staff:

- performance pay and bonuses
- annual performance reviews/appraisal
- competitions for new ideas
- empowerment
- working in teams
- regular training

- 1 What are the advantages and disadvantages of each?
- 2 Add two or three more to the list.
- 3 Which would you recommend companies in your area to adopt and which would you ignore?

Empowerment

Workers empowered by:

- deciding their job's **1**
- being given **2** of their job.

Changes in management style

In last ten years, management has only changed at a **3**

Managing people

People need:

- **4** in the future to work towards
- reasonable work pressures
- a **5** to help them progress.

UNIT 3



Internal communications

Getting started

1 Discuss these questions in small groups.

- Which of the methods in the box do you use most often for communicating with colleagues?
- Does your choice depend on ...
 - who you are communicating with?
 - the purpose of the communication?
 - something else?

email
 one-to-one interview
 memo
 meeting
 handwritten note
 notice on the notice board
 suggestion box
 article in the in-house magazine
 informal chat
 phone call



2 What methods from Exercise 1 would you use to communicate each of the following inside a company?

- Informing office staff of a visit by senior managers (you are the office manager).
- Reminding staff about the annual meeting to discuss the sales budget and sales targets next Wednesday morning.
- Asking for staff suggestions on ways in which production could be streamlined.
- Informing a manager that his present job is being transferred to another office in another city (you are the human resources director).
- Communicating the need for better timekeeping to unpunctual staff (you are the team leader).
- Informing staff about changes in the way they will work (you are the managing director).
- Asking your assistant to address envelopes and send letters (he's out at the moment and when he comes back, you'll be in a meeting).

Internal messages

Reading

1 Read the four internal messages (a memo, an email, a note and a notice) on page 19. Decide which of these statements (1–8) refers to which message (A–D).

- Could you deal with this urgently?
- Employees can arrange how they want to put this change into effect.
- I realise my colleagues are making a considerable effort.
- I've got a technical problem.
- It's important to keep costs within the agreed limits.
- This is where you can find further information.
- We want to be able to check the types of problems our clients are having.
- Working practices will undergo some reorganisation.

A memo

Memo

To: New Product Development Team
From: Max Fauré
Subject: Timekeeping

Dear all,

I've noticed in the last few weeks that a number of team members have been arriving late for work and, as a result, arriving late for our daily team meetings. This unfortunately means that:

- the meetings themselves start late and as a consequence, we don't have time for all the items on the agenda
- valuable time is wasted while latecomers are updated on discussions and decisions.

I'm very aware of the hard work and long hours you are all putting in on this project, so, rather than speaking to the individuals concerned, I would ask you all to please make an extra effort with timekeeping. This will help to ensure that the project finishes on time and within budget.

Many thanks,
 Max

B email

To: Jennifer Lang
From: Mohammed Aziz
Subject: Our phone conversation

Hi Jenny,

Good to talk to you on the phone this morning, and thanks for your useful ideas. Here's a summary of what we decided. Let me know if you disagree or understood something different from the points below:

- Customer-service staff to work half an hour more Mon–Thurs and have Fri p.m. free in lieu.
- Members of existing staff to organise rota amongst themselves so that there is one member of staff on duty on customer service desk on Fri p.m.
- I will advertise and recruit one more part-time post to provide extra cover at peak times.
- Staff to keep a computerised record, from now on, of all customer queries and complaints and the action they have taken.

BW
 Mohammed

C note

Carl,

Sorry – no time to speak to you – directors' meeting starting in 3 mins. Can't get my printer to work – pls cd you print out the envelopes for these letters on yr printer and post the letters asap? Thanks,
 Janice

D notice

IMPORTANT

Visit from Haneul Corporation

As you will already know, we are engaged in important negotiations for a contract to supply Haneul Corporation. As a result of this, a group of senior managers from the Haneul Corporation will be visiting our offices on Wed 29 and Thur 30 April. The visit will include meetings with the board of directors and the marketing department. We shall also be showing them round the offices and the production facilities during the course of the two days, so they will be meeting staff on an informal basis. I'm sure you will all make them feel very welcome.

The provisional programme for their visit, which you can find on the Intranet under Forthcoming Events, will include coffee and a chat on Thursday morning from 10.00 to 11.00. Please let my PA, Melanie Ehlers, know if you would like to attend.

Many thanks
 Manfred Schüller
 CEO

2 Work in pairs. Read these statements (1–7) about the style and match them to the messages (A–D). Some statements refer to more than one message.

- 1 None of these messages is written in a very formal style, but this is the most formal.D....
- 2 Some of the sentences in these messages are not complete sentences.
- 3 There are some abbreviations in these messages.
- 4 These messages use bullet points.
- 5 This is the only message which does not have a subject heading.
- 6 This message contains informal punctuation.
- 7 This type of message does not need to be addressed to anyone.