

Worksheet A

A. Pre-reading 1: Discussion

Get students to discuss ideas as a class or in groups and then note their suggestions on the board.

B. Pre-reading 2: Topic-matching

Tell students to underline or highlight the words and phrases that helped them to decide which heading matches which section of the text.

Key:

1. e; 2. b; 3. c; 4. a; 5. d

C. Comprehension check

Check students' answers individually. If they have chosen the distracter, rather than the correct answer, try to explain why it is wrong, using the notes below.

Key:

1. B. The word 'hypercompetitive' refers to the environment, i.e. to the general business situation and not to specific competitors. And there is no reference in the text to there being just 'a few' competitors.
2. A. As in 1, the word 'environmental' refers to the business environment, and not to what we normally refer to as the environment (weather, pollution, etc.). The word 'macro' means 'big' or, in this case, 'the whole business environment' rather than specific parts of it. Elicit the opposite: 'micro'.
3. A. If you hear about a new product by 'word of mouth', it means that ordinary people are talking about it spontaneously: it's the opposite of being shown a product by a sales person or reading about it in an advertisement.
4. B. The expression 'on the edge' means 'at survival level' or 'at a dangerous level'. The expression 'absolute minimum' means 'the lowest level that is possible'. It doesn't mean 'zero', so A is incorrect.
5. A. 'No amount of ... will ...' means 'there is no amount of ... that will be enough to ...'. 'To reverse your fortunes' means 'to recover' (usually through your own efforts). However, the equivalent noun phrase 'a reversal of fortune' can be either something positive or negative (e.g. 'They enjoyed/suffered a reversal of fortune.').

D. Vocabulary 1: Word-building

Explain that the words are listed in the same order as they appear in the text. With stronger students, you could try to elicit the words from the definitions before they reread the text, perhaps by giving them the initial letter and/or number of letters, if necessary

Key:

1. encompass; 2. diverse; 3. proactive; 4. unwise; 5. volumes; 6. depreciating; 7. effectively; 8. scenario; 9. evaluate; 10. substantial

E. Vocabulary 2: Collocation

This activity features some adjective + noun collocations typically used in marketing. When the students have finished the exercise, try to elicit other marketing expressions and write them on the board. Then try to write definitions in the same style as A-G.

Key:

1. c. F: market penetration – the extent to which a product has entered the market
2. d. B: bottom-line performance – a company's profitability
3. b. C: human capital – a company's staff/ personnel
4. g. E: high-risk scenario – a possible dangerous situation in the future
5. f. A: here and now problems – current challenges and difficulties
6. e. G: product and service gaps – parts of the market where a demand is not being met
7. a. D: marketing spend – the amount of money spent on marketing

F. Discussion

1. Students' answers might vary. Encourage them to give examples of specific products or services and to explain how the different reasons in the article (or that they have suggested) could be applied to those products or services.
2. Reasons for not doing research might include a company not having enough time or money to do it, or the information they need might be available from external sources (e.g. market profile reports by trade associations or independent marketing companies, government surveys, etc.). This point is covered more fully in Worksheet B.

G. Webquest

Entering “failed products” or “product failures” into a search engine should give students enough of a starting-point to find the examples they need. Some of the product failures on the internet are quite amusing (e.g. <http://www.growthink.com/content/10-famous-product-failures-and-advertisements-did-not-sell-them>), and these could be made the subject of a lively class presentation). There are good basic models available on the internet for such presentations, e.g. <http://www.slideshare.net/MrMcGowan74/failed-products-presentation>.

Worksheet B

A. Pre-listening

Write students' ideas on the board as they give them to you. Then, as a class, try to agree the correct order. Finally, when they have listened, compare their answers against the stages mentioned in the text.

B. Comprehension

The most important information in this dialogue is the correct sequence of stages in the market research process. This activity checks that students have understood this.

You could put all the stages on separate cards and get them to order them manually.

Key:

1. f; 2. b; 3. d; 4. a; 5. c; 6. g; 7. e

C. Comprehension focus

Explain that all the expressions focused on in this activity are useful when you are explaining a process to someone.

With stronger students, elicit other expressions that can be used to convey the same meaning as some of the functions listed in a-h. For example, b (Making a comparison/analogy) could include:

It's (a bit) like ...

It's similar to ...

It's (just) like when you ...

Think of it as ...

etc.

Write the expressions students suggest on the board

and then get them to practise using them in complete sentences.

Key:

1. g; 2. c; 3. h; 4. b; 5. d; 6. e; 7. a; 8. f

D. Discussion

There is a lot of information about the different techniques mentioned on the internet: entering “focus group” or “questionnaire” is a good starting point.

How much detail you and your students go into will depend on whether the students already have experience of these techniques (either as respondents/interviewees or as researchers).

E. Project

Students can either work individually or in small groups. This is quite a big task, so it is best:

- to decide how many of the five stages can be done in one go;
- to decide which of the stages you want to do in class and which you will set as homework; and then
- to allocate a specific amount of time for each stage.

How you do this will depend on the general level of the students, and the overall amount of class and homework time there is available.