At work

It’s where many of us spend more time than anywhere else. ANNA HOCHSIEDER presents language to talk about your work and your workplace.

What do you do?

I work for a company that produces packaging materials. It’s a family business with about 100 employees, from unskilled factory workers to top positions in management. I have worked my way up from a part-time job in the warehouse to head of marketing.

Our company has been named employer of the year twice. It offers a generous benefits package, with up to six weeks’ paid annual leave and a retirement plan. Other perks include a subsidized canteen and in-company childcare. Sixty per cent of our staff are women.

We have a system of flexitime. Employees clock in and out using a chip card. Most of our administrative staff have regular nine-to-five jobs, while some of the blue-collar jobs involve shift work. Only one or two people work from home. As this is a rural area, many people commute long distances, so we’ve introduced a carpool system.

I spend most of my working day sitting at my desk, but I always try to make time for a coffee break to chat to my colleagues.

And how about you? What do you do?
**Exercise 1**

Match the words on the left (A–F) with those on the right (1–6) to form compound nouns used on page 48.

| A. an open-plan | 1. staff |
| B. an assembly | 2. office |
| C. a family | 3. package |
| D. administrative | 4. job |
| E. a blue-collar | 5. line |
| F. a benefits | 6. business |

**Exercise 2**

Study the picture on page 48 and answer the questions below.

What do you call...

A. a machine that records how much time employees spend at work? ____________________________

B. a machine from which you can buy drinks or snacks? ____________________________

C. an area from where goods are loaded on and off lorries? ____________________________

D. the area in a factory where products are made? ____________________________

E. a small part of a large office separated from the rest of the office? ____________________________

F. a piece of office furniture that is used for storing documents? ____________________________

**Exercise 3**

What’s missing? Complete the following sentences with words from page 48.

A. Our childcare facility is **s**... , so employees have to pay only a very small fee.

B. Our **b**... include free health insurance and a generous retirement plan.

C. One of the **p**... of my job is that I get a company car.

D. I work **f**... , so I can start and finish work when I want — within limits.

E. We have a free company bus for employees who have to **c**... long distances.

**Jobs and work**

*Work* is an uncountable noun, so don’t say “a work”. To talk about the work you do regularly in order to earn money, use *job*. Here are some adjectives that are often used with “job”, “position” and “work”:

- part-time/full-time
- temporary/permanent
- highly skilled/skilled/semi-skilled/unskilled
- low-paid/well-paid

**Answers**

1. A–2; B–5; C–6; D–1; E–4; F–3
2. A. a time clock
   B. a vending machine
   C. a loading bay
   D. the shop floor
   E. a cubicle
   F. a filing cabinet
3. A. subsidized
   B. benefits
   C. perks
   D. flexitime (UK; N. Am.: flextime)
   E. commute

**Spotlight**

VOCABULARY

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