

Company Types & Structure



1. Revision: job description

7 Look at some expressions people use to talk about their jobs. Complete the expressions in bold using the prepositions in the box.

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- 1 I **report** _____ the IT Director.
- 2 I'm the **Head** _____ Sales.
- 3 I **work closely** _____ the Head of Marketing.
- 4 I **look** _____ the company website.
- 5 I **take care** _____ the export documentation.
- 6 I'm **responsible** _____ coordinating the production team.
- 7 I'm **in charge** _____ the research and development team.
- 8 I **coordinate** _____ all departments to ensure customer satisfaction.

8 Read how two more people at the news organisation describe their jobs. Complete the texts using words from Exercises 6 and 7. Use one word in each gap.

My name's Frances Mullan. I'm the Head of Marketing. I ¹ _____ a small team of two marketing managers and a video producer. Our work ² _____ a variety of marketing strategies to promote the business, including events, social media and printed advertising. I'm in ³ _____ of attracting new customers, retaining existing customers and positioning the business as innovative and creative. I ⁴ _____ directly to the Head of Strategy and Development.

My name's Donovan Parsons. I'm a camera operator and I take ⁵ _____ of the camera equipment. I'm ⁶ _____ for interpreting what the director wants to happen and putting it on screen. I ⁷ _____ closely with other technical departments, such as lighting and sound. My duties also include supervising the work of the camera assistant. We're in a live television environment so we have to make ⁸ _____ we can do the job under pressure.

2. Types of business structures.

Match the types of the companies with their descriptions:

Sole trader (BrE) / Sole proprietor (AmE)	A group of people who work together as equals (eg. : a firm of lawyers or architects), sharing risks and profits.
Partnership	A large company which is listed on stock exchanges; anyone can buy its shares.
Limited Liability Partnership (LLP)	A company operated in a similar way to traditional partnerships, with a benefit of limited liability.
Private Limited Company	A one-person business; the person may describe themselves as « self-employed » (for ex, a shop owner), or « freelancer », who works for different clients.
Public limited company - PLC (BrE) / Corporation (AmE)	A legal entity in its own rights, separated from its owners; its shares are privately owned, usually by a small number of people.

3. Company structure: departments.

C What do the following departments do?

1 In R&D, people research and develop new products.

- | | | |
|-----------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| 1 R&D | 5 Production | 9 Logistics |
| 2 Customer Services | 6 Finance | 10 Public Relations |
| 3 Human Resources | 7 Administration | 11 IT |
| 4 Sales and Marketing | 8 Legal | |

D Match these activities (a–k) to the correct department in Exercise C (1-11). Can you add any other activities to any of the departments?

- | | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|---|
| a) deal with complaints | e) run advertising campaigns | i) keep records |
| b) draw up contracts | f) issue press releases | j) transport goods and |
| c) carry out research | g) operate assembly lines | k) install and maintain systems equipment |
| d) train staff | h) prepare budgets/ accounts | |

4. Look at these examples of company organisation (on the right). What do you think of their advantages/disadvantages?

5. How can you describe these types of organisation using the following words:

bureaucracy centralised decentralised hierarchy innovative promotion



6. Now read these descriptions and see if your ideas were similar.

Tall organisations have lots of management levels. There is generally more bureaucracy and decision-making is slow and centralised in the top levels of the hierarchy (top-down decision-making). A criticism of tall organisations is that they are slow to innovate and therefore are less competitive. However, there are also many opportunities for promotion. Large complex corporations with a lot of staff are typical examples of tall organisations.

Flat organisations are less hierarchical. There are few levels of middle management. Decision-making is more decentralised and therefore quicker. The lines of communication between staff and senior managers are more direct and two-way (top-down as well as bottom-up). Flatter organisations are said to be more creative and innovative. However, with fewer management levels, there are fewer chances of promotion. Managers can have more responsibilities and stress. Start-ups with fewer staff are typical flat organisations.



7. Look at these 2 company profiles (on the right). Do you think they are likely to have a tall or a flat organisation?

8. Listen to a radio discussion with Janet Wood, an organisation consultant. Check your answers in ex.7.

9. Listen again and say if the following statements are true (T) or



false (F). Correct the false statements.

- 1) Organisations with tall structures can change and innovate fast.
- 2) Bob and Genevieve Gore started their company in the 1960s.
- 3) Employees voted to decide who should be the CEO of Gore.
- 4) « Holacracy » is a system without traditional managers.
- 5) All the functions at Zapos are now done by teams.
- 6) The transition at Zappos will take a few months to complete.

10. Choose the correct option. Listen again if necessary.

1. Janet Wood seems a) *critical of hierarchies* c) *sceptical about flat structures*
 b) *positive about hierarchies*
2. Which statement about W.L.Gore is true? a) *Employees work in teams of 30*
 b) *Staff are called associates*
 c) *Nobody in the company has a job title*
3. Which statement about Zappos is true? a) *The company started two years ago*
 b) *Staff work in about 500 teams called circles*
 c) *The lead link of a circle decides what everyone does*
4. What do W.L.Gore and Zappos have in common?
a) *Senior executives are elected by the employees*
b) *Any member of staff can start a new project team*
c) *Staff decide their own roles in a team*

11. Fill in the gaps with the words from the Listening exercise (from the box).

Listening A ▶ Ext 1.01 Complete the extracts from the programme with the words and phrases in the box. Then listen again and check your answers.

bureaucratic decision-making delegated fabric job title join
organisational chart successful

- 1 Well, _____ is generally slow.
- 2 This type of company can be very _____ and inefficient.
- 3 ... there are examples of _____ innovative organisations which do things differently.
- 4 W. L. Gore is probably best known for the _____ Gore-Tex, isn't it?
- 5 Today, the company still has no traditional _____.
- 6 ... she's one of the few people at the company who has a(n) _____.
- 7 Now all the functions of the company have been _____ to teams called 'circles'.
- 8 Staff can either start a new circle or _____ a circle ...