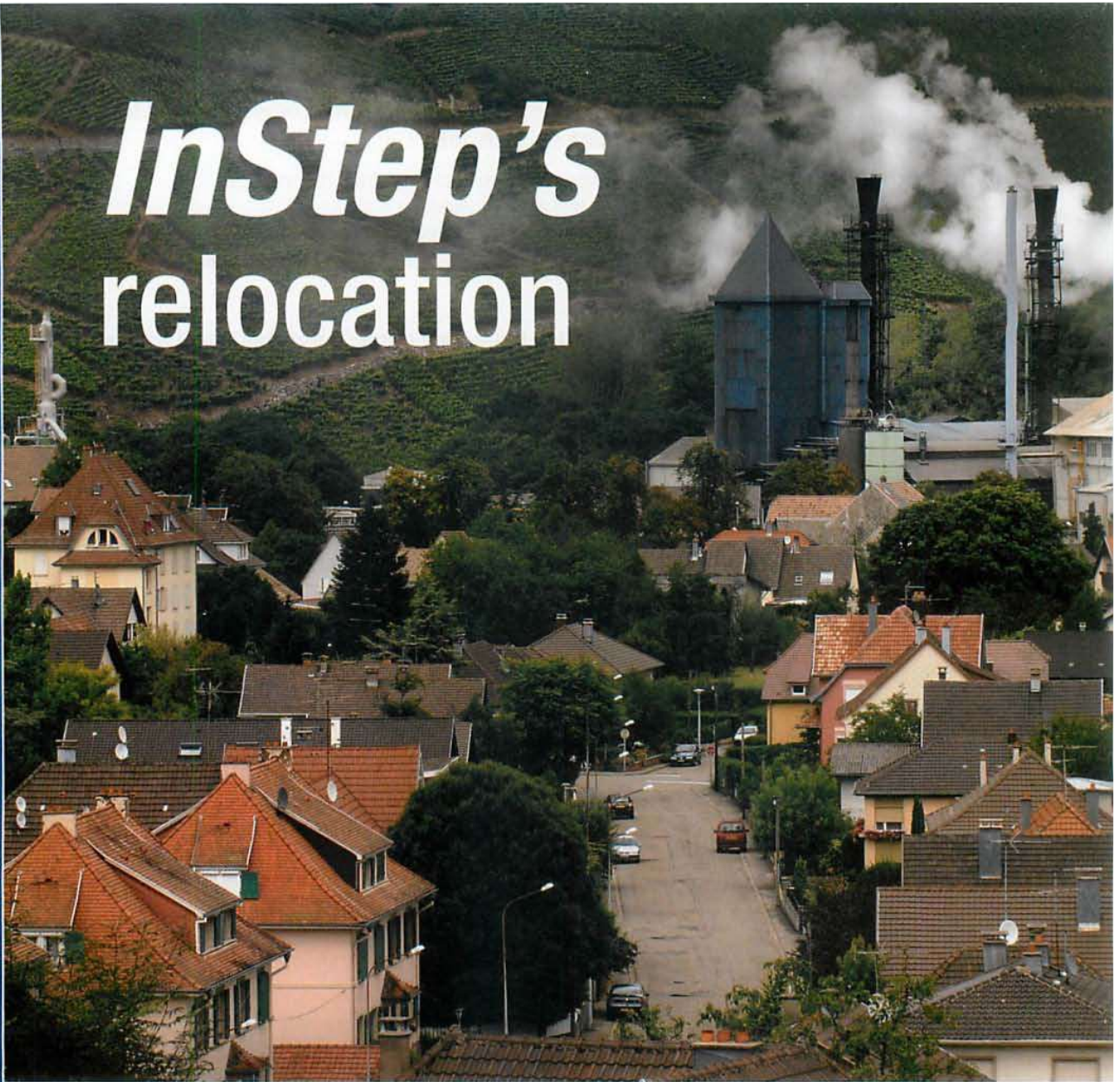


# 4 Case study

## *InStep's* relocation



**A US-based shoe manufacturer must decide whether to relocate the head office of its European subsidiary, InStep, from Paris to a small industrial town 120 kilometres away.**

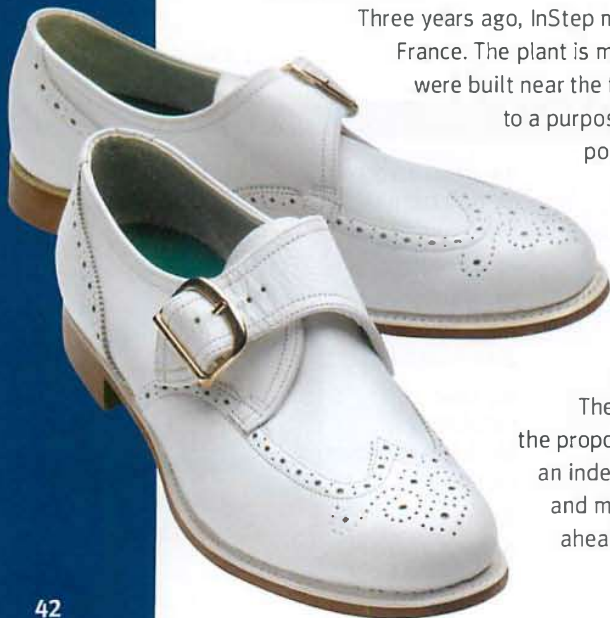
### **Background**

Three years ago, InStep moved its factory to Beauchamp, a small, industrial town in northern France. The plant is modern with new equipment. A large warehouse and distribution centre were built near the factory. InStep is now considering moving staff from the Paris office to a purpose-built, six-storey building in the same town. Beauchamp has a population of 25,000, with a high proportion of young people. The relocation, if it goes ahead, will create employment opportunities for local inhabitants.

**How do you think staff will react to the proposed relocation?  
What reasons might some staff have for opposing the relocation?**

### **A 'getting to know you' meeting**

The Vice-President of the parent company has come to Paris to discuss the proposed relocation with two senior managers from the Paris subsidiary and an independent relocation consultant. This group will discuss the relocation and make a recommendation to the Board of Directors on whether to go ahead with the relocation or not.



**Task**

Work in groups of four. Take one of these roles.

- Student A: Vice-President, parent company  
 Student B: Senior Manager, Paris subsidiary  
 Student C: Senior Manager, Paris subsidiary  
 Student D: Management Consultant  
 (an independent adviser)

As you do not know each other well, you all meet for social reasons in the Paris subsidiary's boardroom. The purpose of the meeting is to get to know each other better. Use your knowledge of social English to create a warm, friendly atmosphere.


### A communication from the Vice-President, parent company

Read the message from the Vice-President. Discuss the questions. How do you think staff will react to this message? Do you think the benefits described by the Vice-President will persuade staff to accept the relocation? Why? / Why not?

#### MESSAGE FROM THE VICE-PRESIDENT TO ALL STAFF

A decision concerning the proposed relocation to Beauchamp will be made in the near future. The relocation offers our company significant benefits:

- The reduction in costs will boost our profits.
- The town council in Beauchamp has offered us tax incentives to relocate to their town.
- The relocation will result in improved working conditions and better communication.

 **CD1.30** Four members of staff are discussing the proposed relocation. Listen and note down the worries some staff have about moving away from Paris. Compare your notes with a partner.

**Task**

You are members of the Management Committee. Work in groups. Take one of these roles.

- Student A: Vice-President, parent company:  
role card page 135
- Student B: Manager A: role card page 141
- Student C: Manager B: role card page 144
- Student D: Independent Management Consultant:  
role card page 144

- 1 Read your role cards and prepare for the meeting.
- 2 Hold the meeting. Consider the advantages and disadvantages of relocating to Beauchamp.
- 3 Argue in favour of or against the relocation.
- 4 Decide whether or not to recommend relocation to InStep's Board of Directors. If necessary, vote. The Vice-President has the deciding vote if you cannot reach agreement.

### Writing

As the Vice-President, write an e-mail to InStep's CEO, informing him of your decision concerning the relocation, with your reasons.

→ Writing file page 127

Watch the Case study commentary on the DVD-ROM.

