

## Moving down under

**Level:** Intermediate and above

**Timing:** 90 minutes plus

**Material needed:** One copy of the worksheets and Vocabulary record per student

**Group size:** any

### Overview

This lesson plan for both pre-experience and in-work business students is based around an original article first published in *Business Spotlight* Issue 5/2009. The article deals with the opportunities and challenges of moving to another country and to another culture for work reasons. It also has a country file which contains information about the people, economy, politics and general situation of New Zealand.

The tasks in the worksheets will encourage the students to not only learn and use new business vocabulary and functional language related to the topics of employment, new beginnings and a country's economy, but also to bring their own professional experiences into the classroom.

The teacher's notes aim to provide suggestions for teaching and learning strategies as well as ideas on how to present the tasks in the classroom, any necessary answer keys and follow-on extension tasks and lesson plans.

### Introduction

The article deals with the opportunities and challenges that may be encountered when moving to another country and to another culture for work reasons. It is written from the personal point of view of a Canadian business woman who moved from Canada to Germany and then on to New Zealand. It specifically introduces vocabulary and phrases that will be useful for the students when talking about employment. There is also a country file which contains a lot of information about the people, economy, politics and general situation of New Zealand.

### Warmer

If possible, the students should discuss the three questions in task 1 in pairs or groups. If you have a one-to-one student then you can discuss the questions together with the student. Set a five-minute time limit for this task but be prepared to let it run on for a while

longer if you notice that the students are interested in the topic and are discussing it in English.

### Skimming for information

The point of this task is two-fold. Firstly to encourage the students to read through the article so that they get the gist of its contents, and secondly to make them aware that one of the main differences between Business English and General English is the vocabulary that is used. The students should underline all the specifically BE related words and short phrases and then compare their decisions with another student. If you think this is a new style of task – one that your students have not attempted before – you could go through the first paragraph together as a group and then ask them to do the rest of the task alone or in pairs.

There may be a certain amount of discrepancy in the students' answers. This is a good thing as it can be then used as a basis for a short discussion about what is Business English specific vocabulary.

### Suggested key:

*job offer, made redundant, unemployment, IT industry, dot.com crisis, lean management strategies, middle-management positions, standard practice, manufacturer, systems, position, profile, economy, economic depression, skilled labour, bureaucracy, fields, telco, publisher, entrepreneurs, author, editor, publishing, agricultural economy, industrial, free-market, global economy, recession*

## Moving down under

### Teaching and learning strategy: Word frequency and corpora

The word *corpus* seems to be making more and more appearances in language teaching and language learning contexts. As well as its association with modern dictionaries and grammar books, teachers may also have become aware of *corpora* (plural) through conferences, workshops and articles. The more frequently a word appears in the English language, the more likely it is to be useful to a learner of the language. Therefore, much work has been done on setting up specialized word banks called Corpora.

One very useful feature of the Macmillan English Dictionary For Advanced Learners is that the most frequent 7,500 words in English are printed in red. These are the target words that any learner who wants to succeed at advanced level should aim for. In order to decide upon these 'red words', the dictionary writers will have made use of word frequency data obtained from corpora. In fact, this is one of the most basic functions of a corpus – to identify the most common words and items that it contains within its texts. For more information and ideas for using corpora in the classroom, go to: <http://www.onestopenglish.com/section.asp?catid=59862>

Specialized Business English corpora and articles about the most frequently used vocabulary in BE can also be found online. Additionally, the most frequently used BE vocabulary may be marked in newer versions of Business English dictionaries. This is what the students should concentrate on learning.

### Summarizing

By answering these questions, students will be able to summarize the main points of the article. After they have answered the questions ask them to work in pairs and retell the article in their own words using only their answers to this task.

#### Key:

1. Munich, Germany to Auckland, New Zealand.
2. Publishing and telecommunications.
3. Her husband's redundancy and the consequent job offer from the manufacturer of navigation and tracking systems.
4. They made friends quickly, most of whom are also immigrants. It was easy to find new jobs.
5. They have both been made redundant since moving to NZ.
6. Ageism (treating older people in an unfair way, for example by not giving them jobs)
7. Parochialism (acting in a provincial way, having only a limited or local view of a situation, the opposite of acting globally)
8. Take the country for what it is, enjoy the beautiful landscapes, huge open spaces and being with warm-hearted people.

### Language

Students should not only learn and record new words, but also the words that go along with them (such as a preceding verb). After the students have matched the two halves of the word pairs they should choose five that they think will be useful to them and write personalized sentences for each collocation.

#### Teaching and learning strategy: Collocations

We use the term *collocation* when we want to talk about words that are frequently found together. Words that are almost always, or at least very often, found together are called *strong collocations*. There are many different kinds of collocation, e.g. verb + noun, adjective + noun, noun + noun, but in every case the students should be encouraged to write their own sentences to give examples of the collocation in context.

The more personalized their sentences are, the more likely they it is that they will remember and use the new vocabulary. For more information and lesson ideas for teaching collocations go to:

<http://www.onestopenglish.com/section.asp?catid=59862&docid=155421>

#### Key:

<i>job offer</i>	<i>economic depression</i>
<i>make redundant</i>	<i>booming economy</i>
<i>rising unemployment</i>	<i>skilled labour</i>
<i>middle-management positions</i>	<i>rags-to-riches story</i>
<i>standard practice</i>	<i>public institutions</i>

### Writing

Read through the country file on New Zealand with the students. Teach any new vocabulary by providing examples from the country you teach in or the country you come from. Then get the students to work alone, in pairs or in small groups to produce a similar file for their own country. If the students all come from the same country you may want to allocate them different countries to write about so that they won't all be presenting the same information in the next task.

The students can produce their country file in whatever format they prefer, e.g. PowerPoint, a poster, or on a flip chart, but they should consider that they will need to present their file to the rest of the group in the next task.

## Moving down under

### Presenting

The students should now present their findings to the rest of the class. You might want to set a time limit on this task too, e.g. five minutes per presentation, so that each group has time to present. Make sure that everyone in the group says something during the presentation.

### Extension tasks

1. The vocabulary table already contains some of the employment related words from the article – these lines need completing. Encourage the students to write the vocabulary that they underlined in task 2 into the chart along with related words.
2. The students could discuss and then write helpful information and advice for people from other countries who might be intending to move to the students' country for work purposes. This task would provide a good chance to revise modal verbs.

### More about employment

For follow-up lessons on the same or related topics go to the following lesson plans in the Business Skills Bank on onestopenglish:

Chance and opportunity: <http://www.onestopenglish.com/section.asp?docid=156547>

Getting and losing jobs: <http://www.onestopenglish.com/section.asp?docid=156740>

The business world 2010: <http://www.onestopenglish.com/section.asp?docid=148671>

## Moving down under

### Introduction

The article deals with the opportunities and difficulties involved when moving to another country and to another culture for work reasons. It specifically introduces vocabulary and phrases useful when talking about employment. There is also a country file which contains information about the people, economy, politics and general situation of New Zealand.

### 1 Warmer

Discuss these three questions in pairs or in small groups.

1. Have you ever spent time in another country for work purposes?
2. Would you consider moving to another country for work? Why/why not?
3. If you could move anywhere in the world for work purposes, where would you go and why?

### 2 Skimming for information

Underline all the words in the main article (not the country file) that you consider to be specific to Business English.

*Example:* In the sentence: *In Germany, my husband had been made redundant for the second time in three years,* you should underline the word redundant.

## Moving down under

### Moving down under

by Nerida Frost

Four years ago Nerida Frost decided to move from Germany to New Zealand with her family. In this article she explains how their life has changed.

The four years since we moved to Auckland, New Zealand, have passed quickly. Yet at the same time, it often feels as if we've always lived here. We had been living in Munich for 15 years when a job offer convinced us to take our two children and move down under. In Germany, my husband had been made redundant for the second time in three years. Unemployment was rising. The IT industry hadn't recovered from the dot.com crisis and lean management strategies were reducing middle-management positions. In addition, since the mid-1990s, it was standard practice to put older workers out to pasture. We were not optimistic about him finding another job.

When Navman, a New Zealand manufacturer of navigation and tracking systems, contacted my husband about a position that fitted his profile perfectly, we didn't think twice about moving to the other side of the world. Navman was a New Zealand success story. Like the New Zealand economy, it was booming. This was very encouraging after years of economic depression in Germany. It was also encouraging to see that, in this country desperate for skilled labour, age was not a factor.

We've never looked back. I now realize we had a huge portion of luck. We thought we were making an informed decision, whereas we actually knew very little about everyday life here. Having few expectations meant at least that we had fewer disappointments. Some friends, for example, mistakenly assumed that there would be less bureaucracy here than in Germany. And some South Africans expected the climate to be warmer!

We made good friends very quickly, which undoubtedly helped us to settle in so easily. Most of our friends are also new immigrants. Clearly, being a long, long way from home brings people together.

It has not all been smooth going. Both my husband and I have been made redundant since moving here. Luckily, we found it relatively easy to find new jobs in our fields. My husband is now working for a brand-new telco, and I am working for a publisher again.

Life here is so different from life in Europe. It is a great place for families, because it is very safe. Yet, at the same

time, children can still experience real adventure. Like most Aucklanders, for example, we are only minutes away from a beach where you can surf and sail. Also, because the population is so small, if you are good at something and work hard at it, you can achieve recognition and success more easily. There are many Kiwi entrepreneurs with rags-to-riches stories.

In New Zealand, one can escape many of the things one doesn't like about Europe, such as ageism. But one has to be prepared for other irritations, such as a certain amount of parochialism, particularly when dealing with public institutions. Ambitions to improve the system, much like trying to improve a husband or wife, will prove frustrating. It is far better to take New Zealand for what it is – a country of beautiful landscapes, huge spaces and warm-hearted people. Then you will be pleasantly surprised, again and again.

#### Did you know?

- Over the past 20 years, New Zealand has changed from being an agricultural economy to being an industrial, free-market, global economy.
- The economy fell into recession in 2008.
- Every New Zealander is descended from an immigrant. The Maoris arrived 600 years ago, followed in the 19th century by immigrants from the UK. Immigrants from the Pacific Islands started to come in the 1960s, and the 1980s saw many immigrants from Asia. New Zealand is now made up of people from over 145 different countries.

Nerida Frost, originally from Canada, lived in Germany for more than 20 years before moving to New Zealand. She works as an author and editor, primarily in children's educational publishing.

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## Moving down under

### Country file: New Zealand

#### GENERAL

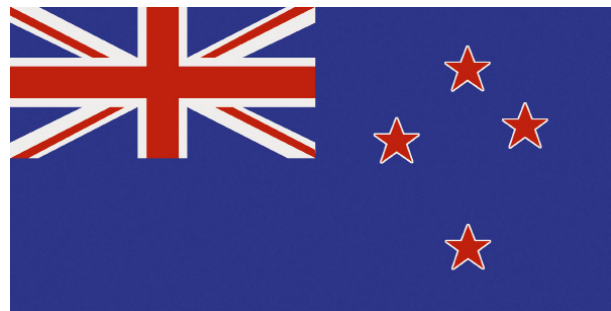
**Official name:** New Zealand  
**Nationality:** a New Zealander, a Kiwi (colloquial)  
**Capital:** Wellington 381,900 (June 2008 est.)  
**Major cities:** Auckland 1,313,200, Christchurch 382,200, Hamilton 166,100 (June 2008 est.)  
**Official languages:** English (spoken by 98% of the population), Maori (4.3%), New Zealand Sign Language (0.6%)  
 Country telephone code: +64  
**Time zone:** New Zealand Standard Time (NZST) = Central European Time (CET) +10 hours  
**Currency:** 1 New Zealand dollar = 100 cents (€1.00 = NZD2.23)  
 For general information:  
[www.immigration.govt.nz](http://www.immigration.govt.nz)

#### POLITICS

**Head of state:** Queen Elizabeth II, represented by Governor-General Sir Anand Satyanand  
**Head of government:** Prime Minister John Key, National Party (since November 2008)  
**Type of government:** parliamentary democracy and member of the Commonwealth  
 Official government website:  
<http://newzealand.govt.nz>

#### ECONOMY

**GDP:** US \$116.6 billion (2008 est. at PPP)  
**GDP per head:** US \$27,900 (2008 est., at PPP)  
**GDP real annual growth:** 0.2% (2008 est.)  
 Inflation (consumer prices): 4.3% (2008 est.)  
**Unemployment rate:** 4% (2008 est.)  
**Import partners:** Australia 20.7%, China 13.4%, US 9.7%, Japan 9.5%, Singapore 4.9%, Germany 4.7% (2007)  
**Export partners:** Australia 22%, US 11.5%, Japan 9.2%, China 5.3%, UK 4.6% (2007)



#### PEOPLE

**Population:** 4,213,418 (2009 est.)  
**Population growth per year:** 0.93% (2009 est.)  
**Population mix:** European 69.8%, Maori 7.9%, Asian 5.7%, Pacific Islander 4.4% (2001 census)  
**Age structure:** 0–14 years: 20.7%; 15–64 years: 66.5%; 65 years and over: 12.8% (2009 est.)  
**Main religions:** Anglican 14.9%, Roman Catholic 12.4%, Presbyterian 10.9%, Methodist 2.9%, Pentecostal 1.7%, Baptist 1.3%, other Christian groups 9.4% (2001 census)

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## Moving down under

### 3 Summarizing

Answer the questions to summarize the article.

1. Where did the author and her husband move from and where did they move to? Name the cities and the countries.
2. In which fields do Nerida and her husband work?
3. Which chain of events led the Frosts to decide to move to New Zealand?
4. What factors made settling into their new lives easy?
5. What factors made settling into their new lives difficult?
6. Which *-ism* has the author not experienced in NZ?
7. Which new *-ism* does she find annoying in NZ?
8. What advice does Nerida give to anyone who might be considering moving to NZ?

### 4 Language

Match the collocations to make useful Business English word pairs from the article. Then write a sentence of your own for at least five of the collocations.

job	redundant
make	economy
rising	labour
middle-management	story
standard	offer
economic	positions
booming	institutions
skilled	practice
rags-to-riches	depression
public	unemployment

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### 5 Writing

Read through the country file on New Zealand. Work alone or with other students and produce a similar file for your own country.

### 6 Presenting

Present your country file to the rest of your class.

