2 Workplaces

Snapshot

⚠ TOEIC® Tip

Develop an eye for photos in Part 1 of the test.

Practice putting words to images. First, quickly scan the photos. What English words come to mind? Ask: *Who ... is doing ... what*? Identify the people. Describe the actions. Name the objects.

A Look at the pictures and name the objects you see in each picture. Then identify the workplaces and the jobs associated with them.

B Now make two statements describing each picture.

DISCUSSION

What different places have you worked in?
What did you like / dislike about these places?

Grammar Check 1

Count and non-count nouns

> a   Nouns which have both singular and plural forms are count nouns.
> b   Nouns which have no plural form and which are never preceded by the indefinite article *a* or *an* are non-count nouns.

A   In the paragraph below, five nouns have been <u>underlined</u>. Which category, a or b, do they belong to?

BlueSpace

Imagine an ¹<u>office</u> equipped with embedded ²<u>software</u> that instantly responds to your arrival by adjusting its temperature, lighting and airflow to your preferred settings. It then unlocks sealed ³<u>information</u> on your ⁴<u>computer</u> and then, with overhead lights, announces your ⁵<u>presence</u> to your colleagues.

1   ...*a*...   2   3   4   5   ....

B   Complete the text below, adding the appropriate nouns from the box. You should give plural forms where necessary.

|				
researcher	architecture	furniture	work	person
team	~~result~~	impact	privacy	transition

Bluespace is the ¹....*result*.... of a unique venture between the IBM corporation and Steelcase, a U.S. company that specializes in the design and ².................. of office spaces. Together they have explored the potential for combining office ³.................. and microprocessors to create an intelligent workspace. ⁴.................. at the Bluespace project believe that changes in the nature of ⁵.................. require new solutions and they aim to create an office space which takes account of the ⁶.................. of new information technologies. Today employees do different kinds of work during office hours; sometimes they may need total ⁷.................. but at other moments they may need to work collaboratively in ⁸.................. And the objective of Bluespace is to allow a smooth ⁹.................. between the two environments. As Mark Grenier, vice president of the research department, says, "With Bluespace we're discovering new ways of providing ¹⁰.................. with flexibility and control of their workspace."

Listening 1

A Look at the following selection of complaints from a survey of office working conditions. Which three would you find the most annoying? Discuss your answers with a partner.
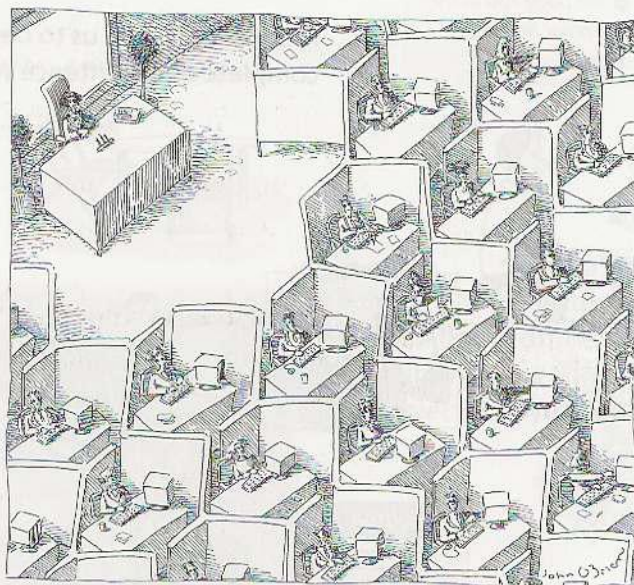
1 The quality of the air is poor. .....J....

2 Temperatures are often too high. ....

3 There are not enough meeting rooms. ....

4 The janitor service is too limited. ....

5 Car parking facilities are inadequate. ....

6 Work areas lack storage space. ....

7 Temperatures are too low. ....

8 There is not enough privacy. ....

9 Computer equipment is unreliable. ....

10 There is too much noise. ....

B Listen to ten questions (A–J). Which complaint does each one refer to? Write your answers in the spaces provided above.

Grammar Check 2

Prepositions of place

A Prepositions help us to describe where things are. Look at the illustrations and complete each sentence with the appropriate preposition from the box.

above	through	toward(s)	under
~~around~~	alongside	against	opposite
within	along		

1 The chairs are arranged ..*around*.. the table.
2 The two people are sitting .... each other.
3 The woman is cycling .... the pathway.
4 The truck is parked .... the motorcycle.
5 The bus is driving .... the bridge.
6 The man is watching the race .... his binoculars.
7 The women are walking .... the exit.
8 No one is allowed .... the perimeter fence.
9 There is a sign .... the door.
10 The ladder is leaning .... the wall.

B In which of the sentences (1–9) above could the following prepositions also be used?

inside ...*8*... beneath .... with ....
beside .... down .... to ....
round .... across from .... over ....

C Choose the preposition that best completes the following sentences.

1 The employee lounge is located on the third floor just .... the water cooler.
   a towards b around c through d opposite
2 In the event of a power failure employees should remain .... their offices until advised that it is safe for them to leave.
   a alongside b beside c inside d round
3 Turn left, walk .... to the end of the corridor, my office is the last one on the right.
   a over b against c through d down
4 The fire door leads .... an emergency staircase.
   a to b beneath c over d with
5 The underground parking lot has two levels. The top one is reserved for staff but visitors can use the one .... it.
   a above b along c beside d below
6 Instructions on emergency procedures are posted at eye level .... the elevator door.
   a under b beside c within d round

⚠ **TOEIC® Tip**

Watch out for preposition forms that refer to both place and time.

*It took them **over** two hours to install.*
*We should be arriving **around** five.*
*Royalties are not payable **beyond** the period of the agreement.*

Here are some others:

before	to	from
by	under	after

Listening 2

A Make a list of the objects that you would find in an office for each of the following categories.

1 paperwork: <u>faxes, envelopes</u>
2 publications: ....
3 office supplies: ....
4 electrical equipment: ....
5 personal items: ....

B Look at the picture of Alison's office. Which of the objects can you see?

C Listen to Alison describing her office. Where does she keep the following things?

1 invoices: <u>in-box tray</u>
2 price lists: ....
3 personal items: ....
4 customer files: ....
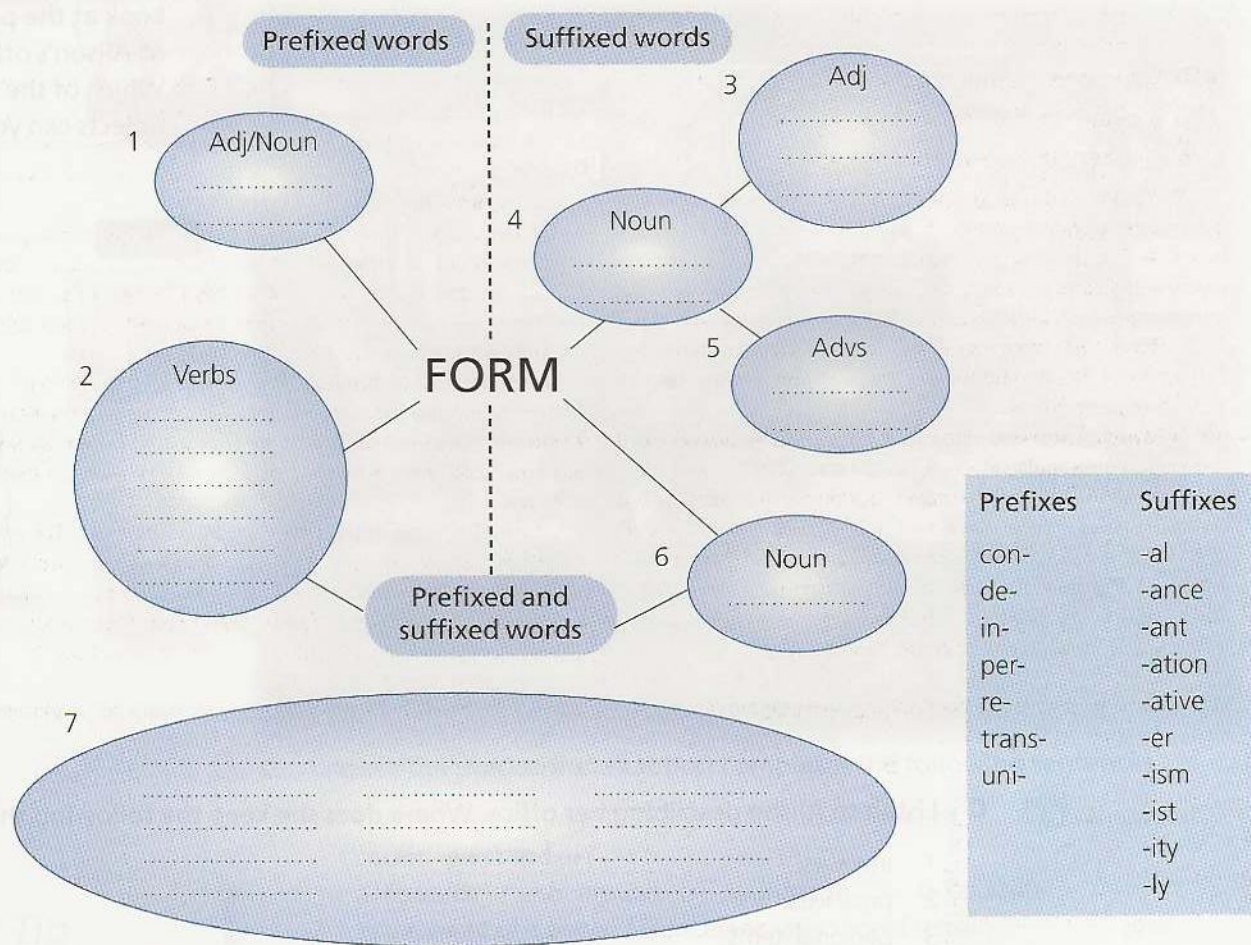5 printer cartridges: ....

ACTIVE PRACTICE

Work with a partner. **Student A** should refer to the picture of the office on page 168 and **Student B** to the picture on page 169. Not all of the items are in the same positions in both pictures. Describe where the objects are in your picture using prepositions of place. How many differences can you find?

Vocabulary Builder

Word families

Some families of words include the same one-syllable root form. When prefixes are added to the beginning and / or suffixes to the end of such words, they take on different meanings. Complete the diagram for the word *form* by:

A adding prefixes and suffixes from the box to circles 1–6.

B adding combinations of both prefixes and suffixes to circle 7.

Prefixed words   Suffixed words

1 Adj/Noun
....
....

3 Adj
....
....

4 Noun
....

2 Verbs
....
....
....

FORM

5 Advs
....
....

6 Noun
....

Prefixed and suffixed words

7
....
....
....

Prefixes	Suffixes
con-	-al
de-	-ance
in-	-ant
per-	-ation
re-	-ative
trans-	-er
uni-	-ism
	-ist
	-ity
	-ly

C Complete the sentences with a word from the completed diagram in an appropriate form.

1   Dr. Vincenzo is the .....*former*..... Vice President of our local Chamber of Commerce.
2   Participants in the gala evening are reminded that they must wear .... dress.
3   The cabin crew will be issued with new .... next month.
4   Application .... can be downloaded directly from our website.
5   Our .... in meeting key market targets has been disappointing.

D Choose one of the words below and use a dictionary to make a word family diagram.

draw   present   quest   sign   move   employ

Viewpoint

7 A What does the title tell you about the article? Read the first sentence. What additional information do the keywords give you about the content of the text?

Little Brother sees into your cubicle

By Joan Fleischer Tamen
South Florida Sun-Sentinel

The next time you log on at work, the boss could be gathering data to see what you've been up to.

Computer technology can document, analyze, measure, and monitor almost every aspect of an employee's performance. It can count keystrokes per minute, as well as clock your workday like a punch card. It can track distractions such as time spent at an eBay auction or a naughty cyber site.

Software can even show managers what employees are saying over instant messages, or how much time they're spending on the phone.

In Florida, a secretary was fired this year after bosses cited "excessive personal use of company equipment."

Her employer had installed software that monitored outgoing phone calls and recorded the phone numbers, call durations, and to whom they were placed. The secretary had made 300 personal calls during a three-month period, according to the plaintiff's attorney, who won the case and obtained unemployment benefits for her client.

With studies showing that the average worker spends 75 minutes a day surfing the Internet, and with managers pressured to squeeze more out of their staffs, using technology to monitor employees is big business.

A survey on employee surveillance found that three-fourths of major U.S. firms record and review their workers' communications. And about half of companies polled said they had fired or disciplined employees for violating the company's computer policies.

Miami lawyer Mark Cheskin says he has used computer records to defeat an employee who sued for overtime pay. "Someone can claim they're working 12-hour days, but an electronic record can track tardiness, your coming and going, and when you're at your desk," said Cheskin.

Inexpensive technology is spurring the growth of employee monitoring, according to the Privacy Foundation in Denver. Critics such as Frederick Lane, attorney and author, say most workers would be shocked to know how vulnerable they are.

"It really raises the question of the relationship between employer and employee," said Lane. "Does the information that the company can gather outweigh the psychological impact on the employee who feels they can never take a break because a whole host of 'Little Brothers' are watching?"

B Now read the whole article and choose the best answer to the following questions.

1 Why was the Florida secretary dismissed?
   a She made personal telephone calls.
   b She visited too many websites.
   c She spent too much time away from her desk.

2 What percentage of major U.S. firms monitor employee communications?
   a 75 %   b 50%   c 12%

3 The market for employee monitoring software is expected to grow because:
   a employees are less productive.
   b the Internet is expanding.
   c surveillance software is cheaper than before.

DISCUSSION

Does the use of high-tech surveillance equipment violate an individual's right to privacy? What are the potential abuses of surveillance technology?

Listening 3

When people communicate in the workplace, most of the time they are talking about things that are directly connected to their jobs. The list in A below gives some examples of this type of communication.

Haven't I seen you somewhere before?

Yeah, we work in the same office.

A Complete the list using an appropriate verb from the box below.

| ~~request~~ | review | discuss | suggest | assign | issue | express |

1 request   information
2 .... instructions
3 .... tasks
4 .... performance
5 .... changes
6 .... opinions
7 .... problems

B Now listen to three short conversations (A–C) between employees. Which of the items above (1–7) do they illustrate? Write the letter (A–C) next to the correct item.

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the Franklin Institute

Worried about Campus Security?

Voice your concerns at an information session on video surveillance.

Tuesday, Oct. 10 at 7:00 p.m.

BRADLEY CONFERENCE ROOM

Communication

Safety screening

The Franklin Institute provides technical education and training to students and professionals. Recently there have been a number of security incidents involving theft of equipment and personal belongings and unauthorized entry. As a result the Institute is now reviewing security procedures and is considering installing a closed circuit video surveillance system. An information session has been organized to address the question of whether or not video surveillance should be introduced.

Choose one of the role cards on pages 168–169 to help you prepare for the meeting.