

# Open C1 English · Unit 15

## Corporate Culture & Leadership

**Grammar:** Comment and stance adverbs (frankly, surprisingly, consequently)

**Pronunciation:** Contractions and reductions in fast speech

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### How to use this study pack

- Study the grammar and vocabulary before attempting the output tasks.
- Use the public site for audio playback; this PDF is the printable study companion.
- Mark answers directly on paper, then return to the online lesson for media-rich practice.
- Keep a separate C1 notebook for rewritten answers, useful collocations and pronunciation notes.

### Unit workflow

Input: reading, listening and media exposure.

Language focus: grammar, vocabulary, idioms and Use of English.

Output: writing, speaking, mediation and realistic everyday communication.

### ¿De qué va esta unidad?

En esta unidad, nos adentraremos en el complejo mundo de la cultura corporativa y el liderazgo. Para un estudiante de nivel C1, no basta con saber "pedir una reunión" o "escribir un email"; el reto consiste en navegar las sutilezas del poder, la diplomacia y la gestión de equipos. Analizaremos cómo se transmiten los valores de una empresa y cómo los líderes utilizan el lenguaje para influir, motivar o incluso corregir sin perder la autoridad. Este es un tema fundamental para profesionales que aspiran a puestos de gestión internacional, donde la comunicación no es solo informativa, sino estratégica.

El mayor desafío en este nivel es el control de los matices. No se trata solo de lo que se dice, sino de la actitud que proyectas. Aprenderás a utilizar adverbios de opinión y de postura para marcar tu posición de manera sofisticada, y trabajarás en la fluidez necesaria para sonar natural en entornos de habla rápida. Dominar estos conceptos te permitirá pasar de un inglés funcional a un inglés de alto impacto, capaz de manejar situaciones de liderazgo con confianza y precisión.

### Objetivos de aprendizaje

- Vocabulary: Master advanced terminology related to corporate values, leadership styles, and organizational structures.
- Grammar: Correctly implement comment and stance adverbs to express nuance, attitude, and logical consequences in professional discourse.
- Listening: Improve comprehension of fast-paced native speech by identifying contractions and reductions in professional discussions.
- Reading: Develop strategies to identify the writer's tone and implicit stance in complex corporate reports and articles.
- Writing: Produce high-level professional texts (such as reports or proposals) using sophisticated cohesive devices.
- Speaking: Practice advanced interactional skills to lead discussions, express disagreement diplomatically, and manage turn-taking.

### Lo que vas a encontrar

- Introduction: Una visión general de los conceptos clave de liderazgo y cultura empresarial.
- Grammar (Comment and Stance Adverbs): Lecciones sobre cómo usar adverbios como *frankly* o *consequently* para expresar tu postura.
- Vocabulary: Un glosario especializado en gestión, ética corporativa y dinámicas de equipo.
- Idioms: Expresiones idiomáticas de negocios para sonar más natural y fluido.
- Reading: Análisis de textos complejos sobre gestión de talento y cultura organizacional.
- Listening: Práctica auditiva enfocada en conversaciones de oficina con hablantes nativos.

- Use of English: Ejercicios de transformación de frases y rellenar huecos con el rigor del examen C1.
- Writing: Tareas de redacción académica y profesional (reports and essays).
- Speaking: Simulaciones de debates y presentaciones de liderazgo.
- Mediation: Ejercicios para sintetizar información de diferentes fuentes y comunicarla de forma efectiva.

## Tiempo estimado

Total: 6 horas

- Introduction: 15 min
- Grammar: 45 min
- Vocabulary: 30 min
- Idioms: 30 min
- Reading: 45 min
- Listening: 45 min
- Use of English: 45 min
- Writing: 60 min
- Speaking: 45 min
- Mediation: 30 min

## Lesson 2: Grammar Focus

### Explicación (en español)

En el nivel C1 Advanced, el uso de los comment and stance adverbs (adverbios de comentario y postura) es fundamental para demostrar sofisticación. Estos adverbios no modifican al verbo directamente en términos de acción, sino que expresan la actitud, la opinión o el juicio del hablante sobre todo el contenido de la frase. En contextos de liderazgo y cultura corporativa, se utilizan para matizar críticas, suavizar órdenes o resaltar resultados inesperados.

A diferencia de los adverbios de modo (como quickly o carefully), que describen cómo se realiza una acción, los stance adverbs actúan como un marco interpretativo. Por ejemplo, si dices "Surprisingly, the CEO resigned", no estás diciendo que el CEO renunció de forma sorprendente, sino que tú consideras que su renuncia fue un hecho sorprendente. Estos adverbios suelen colocarse al principio de la oración (seguidos de una coma) o entre el sujeto y el verbo principal.

Un error muy común entre los hispanohablantes es la traducción literal de estructuras como "Sinceramente, yo creo..." por "Sinceramente, I think...". Aunque es gramaticalmente correcto, en inglés académico o profesional, es más natural usar adverbios como Frankly o Honestly al inicio

para establecer el tono de inmediato. Otro error es confundir la posición: en español solemos poner el adverbio después del verbo, pero en inglés de nivel avanzado, colocarlos al inicio de la frase ayuda a dar énfasis y claridad estructural.

Es importante distinguir entre adverbios de causa/consecuencia (como consequently) y de opinión (como frankly). Mientras que los de opinión marcan la postura personal, los de transición lógica como consequently o therefore conectan ideas de causa y efecto. En el entorno corporativo, dominar este equilibrio permite ser asertivo sin ser rudo, o analítico sin ser demasiado directo.

## Form — estructura

Type |

Function |

Common Examples |

Typical Position |

Stance/Opinion |

Expresses the speaker's attitude or judgment. |

Frankly, Honestly, Surprisingly, Interestingly |

Beginning of sentence (with comma) or after subject. |

Logical/Result |

Shows the consequence of a previous statement. |

Consequently, Therefore, Thus |

Beginning of sentence or after a semicolon. |

Certainty |

Expresses how sure the speaker is. |

Undoubtedly, Certainly, Apparently |

Mid-position (between subject and verb) or beginning. |

## Examples

- Frankly, the new management style is failing to motivate the staff. (Sinceramente, el nuevo estilo de gestión no está logrando motivar al personal.)
- Surprisingly, the company reported a profit despite the global crisis. (Sorprendentemente, la empresa reportó beneficios a pesar de la crisis global.)
- The department lacked clear leadership; consequently, productivity plummeted. (El departamento carecía de un liderazgo claro; por consiguiente, la productividad cayó en picado.)
- Interestingly, the most successful employees are often those who embrace failure. (Curiosamente, los empleados más exitosos suelen ser aquellos que aceptan el fracaso.)
- Undoubtedly, diversity is a key driver of innovation in modern teams. (Sin duda, la diversidad es un motor clave de la innovación en los equipos modernos.)
- The merger was poorly planned; therefore, many positions were lost. (La fusión fue mal planificada; por lo tanto, se perdieron muchos puestos de trabajo.)
- Regrettably, we cannot offer promotions to everyone this year. (Lamentablemente, no podemos ofrecer ascensos a todo el mundo este año.)
- Apparently, the board of directors has decided to restructure the entire division. (Al parecer, la junta directiva ha decidido reestructurar toda la división.)

## Contrast

-

□ The results were surprisingly good, consequently we celebrated. / □ The results were surprisingly good; consequently, we celebrated.

(Error: "Consequently" is a conjunctive adverb and needs a semicolon or a new sentence to connect two independent clauses.)

-

□ I think frankly that we need a new strategy. / □ Frankly, I think we need a new strategy.

(Error: In professional English, placing the stance adverb at the beginning is more natural and impactful.)

-

□ The manager was angry, so he left. Consequently, the meeting was cancelled. / □ The manager was angry; consequently, the meeting was cancelled.

(Error: Using "so" and "consequently" in the same sequence is redundant. Use one or the other.)

-

□ It is certainly a problem. / □ Certainly, it is a problem.

(Note: While the first is correct, the second version is a common way to use "certainly" to express strong agreement or stance in a discussion.)

## Mini-quiz – 10 preguntas

### Part 1: Multiple Choice

-

\_\_\_, the decision to downsize was met with unexpected resistance from the staff.

- a) Consequently
- b) Surprisingly
- c) Therefore

-

The CEO failed to communicate the vision; \_\_\_, employee morale has declined significantly.

- a) frankly
- b) interestingly
- c) consequently

-

\_\_\_, I don't think the proposed budget is realistic.

- a) Frankly
- b) Thus
- c) Regrettably

### Part 2: Sentence Transformation (Rewrite the sentence using the word in brackets)

- The company lost its main investor. As a result, it had to close. (CONSEQUENTLY)
- It is a fact that leadership requires emotional intelligence. (UNDOUBTEDLY)
- I am telling you the truth: the project was a total disaster. (FRANKLY)

### Part 3: Fill in the blanks (Choose the most appropriate word: Interestingly, Regrettably, Therefore)

- We missed the deadline. \_\_\_, we have to pay a penalty to the client.
- \_\_\_, we are unable to approve your request for a remote working arrangement.

- \_\_, the company's turnover rate decreased after implementing the new wellness program.

#### Part 4: Error Correction

- Identify the error: The team worked overtime, consequently they finished the project early.

#### Respuestas:

1. b
2. c
3. a
4. The company lost its main investor; consequently, it had to close.
5. Leadership undoubtedly requires emotional intelligence. (OR: Undoubtedly, leadership requires emotional intelligence.)
6. Frankly, the project was a total disaster.
7. Therefore
8. Regrettably
9. Interestingly
10. Error: Comma splice. Correction: Use a semicolon (;) or a full stop (.) before "consequently". (e.g., The team worked overtime; consequently, they finished...)

### Lesson 3: Vocabulary Lab

## Vocabulario C1 – Corporate Culture & Leadership

30 palabras con definición, traducción, ejemplo y audio.

### paradigm shift //

/ˈpærədɪm ʃɪft/n

Definition: a fundamental change in approach or underlying assumptions.

Traducción: cambio de paradigma

Example: The transition to remote-first operations represented a significant paradigm shift in our corporate structure.

Collocation: a fundamental paradigm shift

- ### empirical //

/ɪmˈpɪrɪkl/adj

Definition: based on observation or experience rather than theory or pure logic.

Traducción: empírico

Example: We need empirical evidence to support the proposed changes to the leadership hierarchy.

Collocation: empirical evidence

- ### inherent //

/ɪnˈhɪərənt/adj

Definition: existing in something as a permanent, essential, or characteristic attribute.

Traducción: inherente

Example: There are inherent risks in decentralising decision-making processes within a global firm.

Collocation: inherent risks

- ### manifest //

/ˈmæɪnfɛst/v

Definition:to display or show a quality or feeling by one's actions or appearance.

Traducción:manifestar

Example:Leadership flaws often manifest themselves during periods of intense market volatility.

Collocation:manifest itself

- ### ubiquitous //

/juːˈbɪkwɪtəs/adj

Definition:present, appearing, or found everywhere.

Traducción:ubicuo / omnipresente

Example:Digital literacy has become a ubiquitous requirement for all management roles.

Collocation:ubiquitous presence

- ### ascertain //

/ˌæsəˈteɪn/v

Definition:to find something out for certain; to make sure of.

Traducción:determinar / averiguar

Example:The board must ascertain the long-term impact of the new sustainability policy.

Collocation:ascertain the facts

- ### corroborate //

/kəˈrɒbəreɪt/v

Definition:to confirm or give support to a statement, theory, or finding.

Traducción:corroborar

Example:The latest employee engagement survey serves to corroborate our internal culture audit.

Collocation:corroborate findings

- ### disseminate //

/dɪˈsemɪneɪt/v

Definition:to spread information, knowledge, or ideas widely.

Traducción:difundir

Example:It is vital to disseminate the new strategic vision across all departments simultaneously.

Collocation:disseminate information

- ### nuanced //

/njuːɑːnst/adj

Definition:characterized by subtle shades of meaning or expression.

Traducción:matizado / con matices

Example:A nuanced understanding of emotional intelligence is essential for modern leaders.

Collocation:a nuanced approach

- ### scrutinise //

/ˈskruːtənaɪz/v

Definition:to examine or inspect closely and thoroughly.

Traducción:escrutar / examinar minuciosamente

Example:Stakeholders will scrutinise every aspect of the merger to ensure cultural alignment.

Collocation:scrutinise details

- ### streamline //

/stri:mlaɪn/v

Definition:to make an organization or process more efficient and effective.

Traducción:optimizar / agilizar

Example:We aim to streamline our recruitment process to attract top-tier talent faster.

Collocation:streamline operations

- ### leverage //

/li:vərɪdʒ/v

Definition:to use something to maximum advantage.

Traducción:aprovechar / potenciar

Example:The CEO plans to leverage AI to enhance productivity across the workforce.

Collocation:leverage resources

- ### incentivise //

/ɪn'sentɪvaɪz/v

Definition:to provide someone with an incentive for doing something.

Traducción:incentivar

Example:The company needs to incentivise innovation to stay ahead of the competition.

Collocation:incentivise performance

- ### oversight //

/əʊvəsaɪt/n

Definition:the action of overseeing something; supervision.

Traducción:supervisión / supervisión

Example:The committee provides oversight to ensure ethical compliance in all leadership decisions.

Collocation:regulatory oversight

- ### accountability //

/əˌkaʊntəˈbɪləti/n

Definition:the fact or condition of being accountable; responsibility.

Traducción:rendición de cuentas / responsabilidad

Example:Promoting a culture of accountability is key to maintaining high performance standards.

Collocation:hold someone to accountability

- ### benchmark //

/ˌbentʃmɑ:k/n / v

Definition:a standard or point of reference against which things may be compared.

Traducción:punto de referencia / estándar

Example:Our diversity metrics serve as a benchmark for the rest of the industry.

Collocation:set a benchmark

- ### mitigate //

/ˈmɪtɪɡeɪt/v

Definition:to make something less severe, serious, or painful.

Traducción:mitigar

Example:Leadership must act quickly to mitigate the impact of the recent restructuring.

Collocation:mitigate risks

- ### consensus //

/kən'sensəs/n

Definition:a general agreement.

Traducción:consenso

Example:The management team reached a consensus regarding the new hybrid work policy.

Collocation:reach a consensus

- ### disruptive //

/dɪs'rʌptɪv/adj

Definition:causing radical change in an industry or strategy.

Traducción:disruptivo

Example:The startup's disruptive technology forced established leaders to rethink their models.

Collocation:disruptive innovation

- ### comprehensive //

/kəmprɪ'hensɪv/adj

Definition:complete; including all or most elements or aspects of something.

Traducción:integral / completo

Example:A comprehensive leadership training programme was implemented last quarter.

Collocation:comprehensive review

- ### buy-in //

/baɪ.ɪn/n

Definition:agreement with and acceptance of a policy or decision.

Traducción:aceptación / apoyo

Example:Without executive buy-in, the new cultural initiatives will likely fail.

Collocation:secure buy-in

- ### bottleneck //

/ˈbɒtlne k/n

Definition:a situation that causes delay in a process or system.

Traducción:cuello de botella

Example:The lack of middle management is creating a significant bottleneck in decision-making.

Collocation:create a bottleneck

- ### agile //

/ædʒaɪl/adj

Definition:able to move quickly and easily; in business, able to respond rapidly to change.

Traducción:ágil

Example:Adopting an agile methodology has allowed our team to pivot during market shifts.

Collocation:agile workflow

- ### burnout //

/bɜːnaʊt/n

Definition:state of emotional, physical, and mental exhaustion caused by excessive stress.

Traducción:agotamiento / burnout

Example:The leadership team is addressing burnout by implementing mandatory mental health days.

Collocation:prevent burnout

- ### top-down //

/tɒp 'daʊn/adj

Definition:relating to a system where decisions are made by people in authority and passed down.

Traducción:descendente / de arriba hacia abajo

Example:A top-down approach to management often stifles creativity in modern tech firms.

Collocation:top-down management

- ### bottom-up //

/ˌbɒtəm 'ʌp/adj

Definition:relating to a process where decisions are made by the lowest levels of an organisation.

Traducción:ascendente

Example:We are moving towards a bottom-up culture to empower our junior employees.

Collocation:bottom-up approach

- ### game-changer //

/ˈɡeɪm,tʃeɪndʒə/n

Definition:an event, person, or factor that much changes the way something is done.

Traducción:algo que cambia las reglas del juego

Example:The new remote-work policy was a total game-changer for our talent retention.

Collocation:real game-changer

- ### on the same page //

/ɒn ðə seɪm peɪdʒ/phrase

Definition:to have the same understanding or to agree with others.

Traducción:estar en la misma sintonía / de acuerdo

Example:Before we present to the board, let's make sure we are all on the same page.

Collocation:get on the same page

- ### low-hanging fruit // (n (idiom))

/ˌləʊ 'hæŋɪŋ fru:t/

Definition:tasks or goals that are easily achieved.

Traducción:objetivos fáciles de alcanzar

Example:Improving our internal communication is low-hanging fruit for increasing morale.

Collocation:target low-hanging fruit

- ### vibe check // (n (slang/informal))

/vaɪb tʃek/formal

Definition:an assessment of the emotional atmosphere or social energy of a group.

Traducción:evaluación de la energía/ambiente

Example:The HR team conducted a quick vibe check to see how the team felt about the merger.

Collocation:perform a vibe check

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## Idioms & expressions — Corporate Culture & Leadership

### To lead from the front · neutral

neutral

Meaning: To guide a group by taking the most difficult or active role yourself.

Significado: Liderar con el ejemplo / Tomar la delantera.

Example: The CEO doesn't just issue memos; she leads from the front by working alongside the dev team during crunch periods.

- ### To foster a culture of accountability · formal

formal

Meaning: To create an environment where individuals take responsibility for their own actions and results.

Significado: Fomentar una cultura de responsabilidad.

Example: To scale the startup successfully, we must foster a culture of accountability from day one.

- ### To be in the loop · neutral

neutral

Meaning: To be informed about a particular situation or project.

Significado: Estar al tanto / Estar en el círculo de información.

Example: Please ensure the regional managers are kept in the loop regarding the new sustainability protocols.

- ### To hit the ground running · neutral

neutral

Meaning: To start a new job or project with great energy and immediate effectiveness.

Significado: Empezar con fuerza / Empezar a tope.

Example: We need a project manager who can hit the ground running without needing extensive onboarding.

- ### To touch base · neutral

neutral

Meaning: To briefly contact someone to update them or check progress.

Significado: Ponerse en contacto brevemente / Hacer un seguimiento rápido.

Example: Let's touch base on Friday to see if the quarterly targets are within reach.

- ### Quietly scaling · neutral

neutral

Meaning: (Contemporary) Growing a business or team steadily and sustainably without aggressive public marketing or sudden disruptions.

Significado: (Contemporáneo) Escalar de forma orgánica/silenciosa (crecimiento sostenido sin ruido mediático).

Example: While our competitors are burning VC cash on hype, we are quietly scaling our user base through organic engagement.

- ### To lean into the friction · formal

formal

Meaning:(Contemporary) To embrace conflict or difficult challenges as a way to drive innovation or growth rather than avoiding it.

Significado:(Contemporáneo) Afrontar/aprovechar la fricción (en lugar de evitar el conflicto).

Example:Instead of smoothing over every disagreement, the leadership team decided to lean into the friction to spark more creative solutions.

- ### Async-first mindset · neutral

neutral

Meaning:(Contemporary) A leadership approach that prioritises asynchronous communication (email, recorded video, docs) over real-time meetings to allow for deep work.

Significado:(Contemporáneo) Mentalidad de 'asincronía primero' (priorizar comunicación no sincrónica).

Example:With our global team spread across six time zones, adopting an async-first mindset has been crucial for our productivity.

- ### To move the needle · neutral

neutral

Meaning:To make a significant or noticeable difference in a situation.

Significado:Marcar la diferencia / Lograr un impacto significativo.

Example:The new marketing strategy is fine, but it doesn't really move the needle on our market share.

- ### To drill down · formal

formal

Meaning:To examine something in great detail to find the root cause or specific information.

Significado:Analizar a fondo / Profundizar en los detalles.

Example:We need to drill down into the data to understand why the retention rate dropped last month.

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## Lesson 5: Reading Practice

### Unit 15: Corporate Culture & Leadership

#### ### The Empathy Paradox: Leadership in the Age of Algorithmic Management

The landscape of corporate leadership has undergone a seismic shift in the mid-2020s. As artificial intelligence moves from a peripheral tool to the very backbone of operational decision-making, the traditional definition of a "manager" is being dismantled. We are witnessing a transition from hierarchical command to what sociologists call 'algorithmic management', where data-driven insights dictate workflows, productivity metrics, and even promotion eligibility. In this high-tech environment, a profound question emerges: is human leadership becoming obsolete, or is it more vital than ever?

For decades, corporate culture was defined by physical presence and visible authority. However, the hybrid models that became permanent post-2023 have decoupled leadership from oversight. Managers no longer watch over shoulders; they monitor dashboards. This shift has created a vacuum in emotional intelligence. While an algorithm can identify a dip in output or a deviation

from a project timeline with surgical precision, it cannot grasp the nuance of employee burnout or the subtle friction within a creative team.

Critics argue that the over-reliance on data-driven leadership is eroding the 'human element' that fosters long-term loyalty. When culture is reduced to KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) and engagement scores, the intangible bonds of trust—the bedrock of any successful organisation—begin to fray. A leader who relies solely on metrics risks becoming a mere administrator of tasks rather than a visionary. This detachment can lead to a 'transactional culture', where employees feel like replaceable components in a vast, digital machine rather than valued contributors.

Conversely, proponents of the new era suggest that algorithmic tools actually liberate leaders to focus on higher-level strategic thinking. By automating the mundane aspects of resource allocation and scheduling, leaders can theoretically dedicate more time to mentorship and psychological safety. The challenge, however, lies in the execution. If the data is used to micromanage, the result is a toxic, high-pressure environment. If used to empower, it could usher in a new era of autonomy.

As we navigate 2025, the most successful organisations are those that strike a delicate balance. They use technology to inform decisions but rely on human empathy to implement them. Leadership is no longer about having all the answers; it is about asking the right questions and managing the human impact of technological shifts. The leaders who thrive will be those who can navigate the tension between efficiency and empathy.

In the end, the goal of corporate culture should not be to mirror the efficiency of a machine, but to harness it to serve human potential. As the lines between human agency and automated oversight continue to blur, the ability to lead with authenticity will become the ultimate competitive advantage. Those who fail to recognise that people are more than just data points will find themselves leading hollow organisations, struggling to retain talent in an increasingly discerning global market.

### **Comprehension – Multiple Choice**

1. What is the writer's main point in the first paragraph?
  - A. AI has made traditional management styles completely ineffective.
  - B. The role of a leader is being redefined due to technological integration.
  - C. Hierarchical structures are being replaced by more efficient algorithms.
  - D. Decision-making is becoming more objective thanks to new tools.
2. In the second paragraph, what does the author suggest about the shift to hybrid work?
  - A. It has made it easier for managers to monitor their staff.
  - B. It has removed the need for traditional oversight methods.
  - C. It has caused a significant decline in employee productivity.
  - D. It has made emotional intelligence less relevant in the workplace.
3. According to the third paragraph, what is a risk of a purely data-driven culture?
  - A. It leads to an increase in the cost of operational decision-making.
  - B. It makes it difficult for employees to understand their KPIs.
  - C. It can weaken the foundational trust within an organisation.
  - D. It prevents leaders from being able to make strategic decisions.
4. How do proponents of algorithmic management view the role of technology?
  - A. As a way to replace the need for human managers entirely.
  - B. As a tool that allows leaders to focus on more meaningful tasks.
  - C. As a method to ensure all employees are treated equally.
  - D. As a necessary evil to maintain productivity in hybrid models.
5. What does the writer imply about the "most successful organisations" in 2025?
  - A. They prioritise technological efficiency over all other factors.
  - B. They have successfully replaced human managers with AI.

- C. They integrate data with human-centric leadership.
  - D. They focus on remote work to reduce operational costs.
6. What is the overall tone of the text regarding the future of leadership?
- A. Pessimistic about the role of humans in the corporate world.
  - B. Dismissive of the importance of emotional intelligence.
  - C. Cautionary, yet highlighting the importance of human qualities.
  - D. Enthusiastic about the total automation of management.

### **Gapped Text – Missing Sentences**

Instrucciones: Lee el texto completo y decide qué frase (A-E) encaja mejor en cada hueco. Ten en cuenta que solo hay 4 huecos pero hay 5 opciones.

- A. This shift in focus could potentially lead to a crisis of engagement.
- B. However, this data-driven approach can often feel cold and impersonal.
- C. Consequently, the need for human intervention has diminished significantly.
- D. This allows for a more nuanced approach to talent management.
- E. Such a transition requires a fundamental rethinking of authority.

### **Glossary**

- Seismic shift (cambio sísmico/radical)
- To dismantle (desmantelar)
- much as Nuance (matiz/sutileza)
- To fray (deshilacharse/debilitarse)
- Bedrock (cimiento/base fundamental)
- Mundane (mundano/rutinario)
- To usher in (dar paso a/marcar el inicio de)
- Discerning (juicioso/con criterio)

### **Answers**

#### Comprehension

- B
- B
- C
- B
- C
- C

#### Gapped Text (Suggested order for the gaps in the original text)

Note: As the gaps were not marked in the text per instructions, here is the intended placement for the teacher's key:

Gap 1 (Para 1): E

Gap 2 (Para 2): B

Gap 3 (Para 3): A

Gap 4 (Para 4): D

(Distractor: C)

## Lesson 6: Listening Lab

### Navigating Corporate Dynamics: Leadership and Culture

Esta actividad de comprensión auditiva se divide en tres partes para poner a prueba tu capacidad de análisis. Deberás responder a preguntas de opción múltiple, completar frases con palabras exactas del audio y seleccionar la respuesta correcta basada en el debate final.

#### Part 1 – Conversation (questions 1–6)

# |

Question |

Options |

1 |

What is the primary cause of the friction mentioned by Speaker 1? |

A complete lack of authority among mid-level managers. / A lack of clarity regarding roles and responsibilities. / The decision to re-centralise the management structure. / A sudden decrease in the company's quarterly engagement. |

2 |

How does Speaker 1 describe the current state of the departments? |

They are working too closely together without enough autonomy. / They are operating as separate entities with little cohesion. / They are too focused on the executive team's oversight. / They are struggling with a lack of innovative spirit. |

3 |

What does Speaker 2 suggest might happen if silos become too entrenched? |

The company will lose its collaborative spirit. / The hierarchy will become too rigid to manage. / Top talent will immediately leave the organisation. / The company will be forced to re-centralise. |

4 |

Why is Speaker 1 concerned about the current misalignment? |

It might lead to an increase in bureaucratic oversight. / It could result in the loss of high-performing employees. / It will cause the company to lose its competitive edge. / It will make the annual report look inaccurate. |

5 |

What is Speaker 1's proposed solution to the current issues? |

To return to a fully centralised management model. / To eliminate the mid-level management layer entirely. / To refine the framework and establish clear accountability. / To prioritise innovation over the existing corporate culture. |

6 |

What metaphor does Speaker 2 use to describe the need for alignment? |

A delicate balancing act on a tightrope. / A slippery slope leading to chaos. / Everyone rowing in

the same direction. / Bridging the gap between two different worlds. |

## **Part 2 – Monologue: sentence completion (questions 7–12)**

Complete each sentence with 1–3 words from the recording.

1. The speaker was quite \_ by the recent survey results.
2. Mid-level managers are feeling \_ due to the new structure.
3. The speaker notes that the current situation is a \_.
4. The company risks losing talent if there is a \_ between values and reality.
5. The manager suggests that the current situation is a \_.
6. Without a shared vision, the team is just \_.

## **Part 3 – Panel discussion (questions 13–18)**

13. What is the narrator's view on the relationship between leadership and management?

- They are mutually exclusive concepts that cannot coexist.
- Management is more important than leadership in modern business.
- An effective leader should also possess managerial competence.
- Leadership is merely a subset of effective management.

14. According to the narrator, what is the primary focus of management?

- Driving an organisation forward in a volatile market.
- The maintenance of order and operational stability.
- Shaping the culture and inspiring employees.
- Defining the ultimate destination of the company.

15. What happens when a manager tries to lead without having a clear vision?

- They become highly efficient and productive.
- They focus too much on the grand vision and cause chaos.
- They become micromanagers who stifle innovation.
- They successfully balance the needs of the team.

16. What is the risk of a leader who focuses only on a grand vision?

- They will become too reactive to market changes.
- They might create chaos and cause disillusionment.
- They will lose their ability to manage budgets.
- They will be seen as too bureaucratic.

17. What does the narrator suggest is the modern demand for professionals?

- A return to the traditional 'command and control' model.

- The ability to focus solely on operational realities.
- The development of a dual capability in both areas.
- A shift towards more rigid and bureaucratic oversight.

18. How does Sarah define an 'authentic' corporate culture?

- A culture that can be designed through a set of values.
- A culture that is driven solely by profit-making goals.
- A culture where values are reflected in actual actions and decisions.
- A culture that prioritises work-life balance above all else.

### Vocabulario clave

- Taken aback — Sorprendido / Desconcertado - Remit — Ámbito de competencia / Funciones - Slippery slope — Pendiente resbaladiza (situación que puede derivar en algo malo) - Misalignment — Desalineación / Falta de coordinación - Mutually exclusive — Mutuamente excluyentes - To galvanise — Galvanizar / Impulsar / Motivar - To conflate — Confundir / Fusionar dos conceptos - Prerequisite — Requisito previo ### Respuestas

Part 1: 1. A · 2. A · 3. C · 4. C · 5. A · 6. A

Part 2: 1. taken aback · 2. quite adrift · 3. slippery slope · 4. misalignment · 5. delicate balancing act · 6. spinning their wheels

Part 3: 13. A · 14. A · 15. B · 16. C · 17. D · 18. A

### Transcript

Ver transcript completo

#### SEGMENT 1 — CONVERSATION

Speaker 1: So, I was looking over the quarterly engagement survey results this morning, and frankly, I'm a bit taken aback by the feedback regarding the new management structure.

Speaker 2: Taken aback? Is it really that much of a departure from what we expected? I thought the whole point of the decentralisation was to foster a sense of autonomy.

Speaker 1: Well, in theory, yes. But it seems we've inadvertently created a sort of power vacuum. Instead of feeling empowered, the mid-level managers are feeling quite adrift, to be honest. They're not sure where their remit ends and where the executive team's oversight begins.

Speaker 2: I see. So, it's not so much a lack of authority, but rather a lack of clarity?

Speaker 1: Precisely. It's that ambiguity that's causing the friction. There's this growing sentiment that the corporate culture is becoming increasingly fragmented. You have different departments operating as if they were entirely separate entities, with virtually no cohesion.

Speaker 2: That's a slippery slope, isn't it? If the silos become too entrenched, we'll lose that collaborative spirit that defined us in the first place. I suppose we ought to have anticipated that a shift in hierarchy would cause some growing pains.

Speaker 1: It's more than just growing pains, though. If we don't address this misalignment between our stated values and the actual day-to-day reality, we risk losing our top talent. People don't just leave jobs; they leave cultures that feel inconsistent.

Speaker 2: I take your point. We can't just preach 'innovation and agility' in the annual report and then impose a rigid, bureaucratic oversight that stifles everything. So, what's the way forward? Do we need to re-centralise?

Speaker 1: I wouldn't go that far. Re-centralising would be a step backwards. I think we need to refine the framework. We need to establish clear lines of accountability without sacrificing the flexibility we've worked so hard to implement. It's a delicate balancing act, really.

Speaker 2: A delicate balancing act indeed. It's about finding that sweet spot between autonomy and alignment. We need to ensure everyone is rowing in the same direction, even if they're in different boats.

Speaker 1: Exactly. We need to bridge the gap between the vision at the top and the execution on the ground. Otherwise, we're just spinning our wheels.

#### SEGMENT 2 – MONOLOGUE

Narrator: Good morning, everyone, and welcome back to 'The Leadership Lab'. Today, we're delving into a concept that is often misunderstood, yet remains fundamental to any successful enterprise: the distinction between leadership and management. Now, before you jump to conclusions, I want to clarify that I'm not suggesting these are mutually exclusive. In fact, a truly effective leader must possess a degree of managerial competence. However, the nuances between the two are where the real magic—or the real trouble—happens.

Narrator: Traditionally, management has been associated with the maintenance of order. It's about processes, budgets, resource allocation, and ensuring that the wheels of the organisation keep turning smoothly. It is, by its very nature, reactive and operational. You manage a situation, you manage a project, you manage a budget. It's about stability and predictability. While absolutely essential for the survival of any firm, management alone is insufficient to drive an organisation forward in a volatile market.

Narrator: Leadership, on the other hand, is something quite different. It is proactive. It is about vision, about inspiration, and about navigating the complexities of human emotion and motivation. A leader doesn't just manage tasks; they shape the culture. They don't just follow a roadmap; they define the destination. Leadership is about influence, not just authority. It's about being able to galvanise a group of individuals towards a shared purpose, even when the path ahead is shrouded in uncertainty.

Narrator: The problem arises when we conflate the two. When a manager tries to lead without vision, they become a micromanager, stifling innovation and causing frustration among their teams. Conversely, when a leader focuses solely on the grand vision without any regard for the operational realities, they risk creating chaos and disillusionment. The organisation becomes a place of lofty ideals but zero execution.

Narrator: In the modern corporate landscape, where change is the only constant, the demand for leadership over mere management has never been higher. We are seeing a shift away from the traditional 'command and control' model towards more transformational approaches. We need leaders who can foster psychological safety, encourage risk-taking, and navigate the intricacies of diverse, global teams. The challenge for today's professionals is to develop that dual capability: the ability to manage the present while simultaneously leading the way into the future.

#### SEGMENT 3 – PANEL DISCUSSION

Speaker 1: Welcome to our final panel of the day. We're discussing the ethics of corporate culture. Joining us are Dr. Aris, a sociologist, and Sarah, a Chief Human Resources Officer. Let's dive straight in. Sarah, you've often spoken about the importance of 'authentic' corporate culture. Is that even possible in a profit-driven environment?

Speaker 2: That's a bit of a loaded question, isn't it? But I'll bite. I believe authenticity is not just possible; it's a prerequisite for long-term success. You can't manufacture a culture. You can certainly design a set of values, but if those values aren't reflected in how decisions are made and how people are treated, the culture will be perceived as hollow. It's about integrity. If your culture claims to value work-life balance but then rewards those who work eighty hours a week, your 'authentic' culture is a myth.

Speaker 3: I have to interject there. While I agree with Sarah that integrity is vital, we must be

careful not to romanticise corporate culture. At its core, a corporation is a vehicle for economic activity. To suggest that it must also be a source of profound personal meaning can be quite dangerous. It can lead to an intrusive culture where the boundaries between professional and personal lives become dangerously blurred.

Speaker 1: That's a provocative point, Dr. Aris. Are you suggesting that we should aim for a more detached, purely transactional relationship between employer and employee?

Speaker 3: Not necessarily 'transactional' in a pejorative sense, but certainly more bounded. We need to recognise that employees are whole people with lives outside of work. When companies try to build a 'family' culture, it often becomes a way to manipulate employees into going above and beyond under the guise of loyalty. It can be a way to bypass healthy professional boundaries.

Speaker 2: I see where you're coming from, but I think that's a rather cynical view. A strong, positive culture can provide a sense of belonging and purpose that is genuinely beneficial to mental well-being. It's not about manipulation; it's about creating an environment where people feel valued and motivated. Of course, there is a risk of exploitation, but that's a failure of leadership, not a flaw in the concept of culture itself.

Speaker 1: So, it seems we have a tension between the desire for meaningful engagement and the need for professional boundaries. How do we navigate this without falling into the traps of either total detachment or total immersion?

Speaker 3: I think the key lies in transparency and respect for autonomy. A healthy culture should be based on mutual respect and clear expectations, not on emotional entanglement.

Speaker 2: And I would argue that the goal should be engagement, not just mere compliance. We need to build cultures that are robust enough to withstand the pressures of business while still being human-centric. It's a difficult tightrope to walk, certainly, but it's the only way forward.

## Lesson 7: Use of English

Unit 15: Corporate Culture & Leadership

### Part 1 – Word formation

Instructions: Read the text below. Use the word in CAPITALS at the end of some of the lines to form a word that fits in the gap in the same line.

The modern workplace is undergoing a period of profound \_\_\_ as traditional hierarchies give way to more collaborative models. (TRANSFORM)

Many leaders now realise that fostering a sense of \_\_\_ is essential for long-term employee retention. (LOYAL)

The CEO's \_\_\_ approach to decision-making was initially met with skepticism by the board members. (DECIDE)

Without a clear sense of purpose, a company's mission statement can become \_ and lose its impact. (EFFECT)

Effective leadership requires the \_ to adapt to rapidly changing market conditions. (ABLE)

The \_ of the new management style was evident in the sudden rise in productivity. (SUCCESS)

A lack of \_ between departments often leads to redundant tasks and wasted resources. (COOPERATE)

The company's \_\_\_ reputation was built on years of ethical business practices. (REPUTE)

## Part 2 – Key word transformations

Instructions: Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence, using the word given. Do not change the word given. You must use between three and six words, including the word given.

1. I must be honest, the merger was a complete disaster for the junior staff. FRANKLY  
 \_\_, the merger was a complete disaster for the junior staff.
2. The company's profits fell, so they had to implement a hiring freeze. CONSEQUENTLY  
 The company's profits fell; \_\_, they had to implement a hiring freeze.
3. It was unexpected that the charismatic leader resigned so suddenly. SURPRISINGLY  
 \_\_, the charismatic leader resigned so suddenly.
4. I am telling you the truth when I say that the board is divided. FRANKLY  
 \_\_, the board is divided.
5. The project failed because they didn't plan well. CONSEQUENTLY  
 They failed to plan well; \_\_, the project failed.
6. It was a surprise to everyone that the startup became a unicorn in one year. SURPRISINGLY  
 \_\_, the startup became a unicorn in one year.

## Answer key

### Part 1

- transformation
- loyalty
- decisive
- ineffective
- ability
- success
- cooperation
- reputable

### Part 2

- Frankly speaking
- consequently
- Surprisingly
- Frankly speaking
- consequently
- Surprisingly

## Unit 15: Corporate Culture & Leadership

### Writing: The Proposal

### Task (Cambridge C1 Advanced, Part 2)

Context:

You work for a multinational corporation that has recently seen a decline in employee morale and an increase in staff turnover. The Board of Directors has requested a proposal outlining how to improve the company's internal culture and leadership style to retain top talent.

Task:

Write a proposal for the Board of Directors. In your proposal, you should:

- \* Analyse the current issues regarding corporate culture.
- \* Suggest specific leadership training or structural changes.
- \* Explain how these changes will benefit the company's long-term goals.

Word count: 220–260 words.

### Tips (en español)

Para este tipo de tarea, sigue estas estrategias para asegurar una puntuación alta:

- **Structure:** Utiliza subtítulos claros para cada sección. Un proposal no es un ensayo; debe estar organizado de forma lógica para que el lector encuentre la información rápidamente.
- **Register:** Mantén un tono formal y profesional. Evita contracciones (use do not instead of don't) y lenguaje coloquial. Dirígete a la junta directiva con respeto pero con autoridad.
- **Linking:** Usa conectores de transición para guiar al lector entre la identificación del problema y la solución (ej. Furthermore, In light of this, Consequently).
- **Hedging (Lenguaje cauteloso):** En propuestas profesionales, no afirmes cosas de forma absoluta. Usa verbos modales (would, could, might) para sugerir que tus ideas son recomendaciones, no imposiciones.
- **Evaluación de ideas:** No te limites a listar problemas. Cada sugerencia debe estar vinculada a un beneficio tangible para la empresa (ROI, productividad, retención).
- **Time management:** Dedica 5 minutos a planificar la estructura, 35 a escribir y 10 a revisar. En el C1, los errores gramaticales de "distracción" pueden bajar tu nota drásticamente.

### Useful language

# |

Expression |

Español |

Audio |

1 |

What immediately stands out is... |

Lo que destaca enseguida es... |

|

2 |

At first glance, the scene appears to... |

A primera vista, la escena parece... |

|

3 |

Whereas the first image suggests..., the second one points to... |

Mientras que la primera imagen sugiere..., la segunda apunta a... |

|

4 |

There is a striking contrast between... and... |

Hay un contraste marcado entre... y... |

|

5 |

The people seem to be dealing with... |

Las personas parecen estar lidiando con... |

|

6 |

It is highly likely that... |

Es muy probable que... |

|

7 |

One could infer that... |

Se podría inferir que... |

|

8 |

This might reflect a broader issue: ... |

Esto podría reflejar un problema más amplio: ... |

|

9 |

Although the setting is different, both images convey... |

Aunque el contexto es distinto, ambas imágenes transmiten... |

|

10 |

The overall impression is one of... |

La impresión general es de... |

|

11 |

This would be a useful example of... |

Esto sería un ejemplo útil de... |

|

12 |

I would argue that the second image feels more... |

Diría que la segunda imagen resulta más... |

|

## Model answer

To: The Board of Directors

From: [Your Name], HR Manager

Subject: Proposal for Enhancing Corporate Culture and Leadership

#### Introduction

The purpose of this proposal is to outline strategies to address the recent decline in employee morale and the rising turnover rate within the company. This document suggests actionable changes to foster a more engaging corporate culture.

#### Current Issues

It has become evident that the current top-down leadership style has created a disconnect between management and staff. Employees report feeling undervalued, which has led to a lack of engagement. Furthermore, the absence of clear career progression paths is a significant factor in the loss of high-performing talent.

#### Proposed Solutions

To mitigate these issues, it is suggested that the company implements a "Leadership Development Programme" aimed at middle management. This training would focus on emotional intelligence and collaborative leadership, shifting the culture from authoritative to inclusive.

Additionally, introducing a flexible working policy and a structured mentorship scheme would demonstrate a commitment to employee well-being. While these changes require an initial investment, they would likely lead to higher retention rates.

#### Expected Benefits

Should these measures be implemented, the company can expect a more motivated workforce and a stronger employer brand. By fostering a culture of trust and professional growth, we will be better positioned to attract and retain top-tier talent, ultimately securing our long-term competitive advantage.

#### Conclusion

In conclusion, addressing the leadership gap is vital for our stability. It is recommended that the Board approves the initial phase of the leadership training immediately to halt the current trend of staff departures.

## Marking checklist

- Content: Have you addressed all three bullet points from the task? Is the information relevant to the Board of Directors?
- Communicative Achievement: Is the tone appropriately formal? Does the proposal follow the correct format (headings, clear purpose)?
- Organisation: Are the ideas logically sequenced? Do you use effective cohesive devices (linking words) to connect paragraphs and ideas?
- Language: Have you used advanced vocabulary (e.g., mitigate, authoritative, mentorship) and complex grammatical structures (e.g., should these measures be implemented)? Are there any errors in spelling or punctuation?

## Lesson 9: Speaking Lab

### Speaking — describe & compare

Compara estas dos imágenes. Describe las diferencias en el entorno de trabajo y lo que sugieren sobre la cultura corporativa y el liderazgo en cada caso. Debes hablar durante 2 minutos.



speaking

### Useful phrases

- At first glance, it appears that... — A primera vista, parece que... - The two settings stand in stark contrast to one another. — Los dos entornos contrastan fuertemente entre sí. - One could infer that the leadership style is quite hierarchical. — Se podría inferir que el estilo de liderazgo es bastante jerárquico. - In much the same way as... — De la misma manera que... - Conversely, the second image depicts... — Por el contrario, la segunda imagen representa... - It is highly likely that the atmosphere is quite formal. — Es muy probable que el ambiente sea bastante formal. - While the first scene suggests rigidity, the second implies... — Mientras que la primera escena sugiere rigidez, la segunda implica... - There seems to be a palpable sense of... — Parece haber una sensación palpable de... - This is a far cry from the traditional approach seen in... — Esto dista mucho del enfoque tradicional visto en... - One might assume that productivity is driven by... — Uno podría suponer que la productividad es impulsada por... - The visual cues suggest a shift towards... — Las pistas visuales sugieren un cambio hacia... - In stark contrast to the formal setting, we see... — En marcado contraste con el entorno formal, vemos... ### Pronunciación

Para sonar más natural y fluido en el examen, practica las contracciones (e.g., 'it's' instead of 'it is') y las reducciones en el habla rápida (e.g., 'gonna' instead of 'going to', o 'wanna' instead of 'want to'). En el nivel C1, esto ayuda a mantener el ritmo, pero asegúrate de no perder la claridad. Practica cómo las palabras se conectan (connected speech), como cuando una palabra termina

en consonante y la siguiente empieza en vocal.

### **Model answer**

Both images depict professional environments, yet they represent diametrically opposed corporate cultures. In the first image, we see a traditional boardroom, which suggests a highly hierarchical and formal leadership style. The heavy mahogany furniture and the rigid posture of the executives imply a top-down approach where authority is clearly defined. One could infer that decision-making is centralized and strictly regulated.

In stark contrast, the second image depicts a modern, open-plan workspace. This setting is a far cry from the formality of the first; instead, it suggests a more collaborative and egalitarian culture. The casual attire and the presence of beanbags and plants imply that the company values creativity and employee well-being. While the first scene suggests a focus on tradition and structure, the second implies a more agile and flexible approach to leadership.

Ultimately, while the first environment might foster discipline, the second seems designed to encourage innovation through interaction. It is highly likely that the first company relies on strict protocols, whereas the second likely promotes a flatter organizational structure where input is encouraged from all levels.

## **Lesson 10: Mediation Task**

### **Mediation**

Escribe un correo electrónico a tus compañeros de equipo resumiendo los cambios propuestos en la cultura corporativa. Debes explicar los puntos clave del nuevo modelo de liderazgo y cómo afectarán al día a día del equipo, manteniendo un tono profesional pero motivador.

#### **Texto original (español)**

Nuestra empresa está cambiando su cultura corporativa para fomentar un liderazgo más horizontal. Queremos eliminar las jerarquías estrictas y permitir que los empleados de todos los niveles propongan ideas directamente a la dirección. Además, implementaremos un sistema de horarios flexibles para mejorar el equilibrio entre la vida laboral y personal. El objetivo es que cada miembro del equipo se sienta empoderado y responsable de su propio trabajo, no solo como un ejecutor de tareas, sino como un líder en su área. Estos cambios entrarán en vigor el próximo mes.

## Imagen de apoyo



mediation

### **Estrategias clave**

- Identificar las ideas principales del texto original y eliminarlas redundancias.
- Adaptar el registro de un anuncio informativo a un correo electrónico profesional.
- Utilizar conectores de transición para dar cohesión al resumen (e.g., 'Furthermore', 'In addition').
- Parafrasear el vocabulario original para demostrar un nivel C1 (e.g., 'empoderado' -> 'empowered').
- Organizar la información de manera lógica: introducción, puntos clave y conclusión.
- Asegurar que el tono sea apropiado para la audiencia (compañeros de trabajo).

### **Audiencia de destino**

your team members

## Respuesta modelo (English)

Subject: Important updates regarding our new corporate culture

Dear Team,

I am writing to share some exciting updates regarding the upcoming changes to our corporate culture, which are set to take effect next month. The company is moving towards a more horizontal leadership model to foster greater innovation.

Essentially, the goal is to dismantle traditional hierarchies, allowing for a more collaborative environment where employees at all levels can contribute ideas directly to management. This shift aims to empower each of us to take greater ownership of our roles, acting as leaders within our own spheres of expertise rather than merely following instructions.

Furthermore, to support this transition, the company will introduce flexible working hours to promote a better work-life balance. This initiative is designed to ensure we remain productive while maintaining our personal well-being.

I believe these changes will significantly enhance our collaborative spirit and individual autonomy. I look forward to discussing how we can best implement these new practices within our own team during our next meeting.

Best regards,

[Your Name]

## Lesson 11: Podcast Guide

### Podcast Guide — Corporate Culture & Leadership

Escuchar podcasts auténticos es fundamental en el nivel C1 para acostumbrarse a la velocidad natural, los modismos y los diferentes acentos que no aparecen en los libros de texto. En esta unidad, utilizaremos audios reales para que aprendas a navegar conversaciones complejas sobre gestión de equipos y ética empresarial.

#### Recommended podcasts (3 total)

##### #### 1. TED Talks Daily

- Level & accent: Mixed (Global English), C1 appropriate: Yes.
- Recommended episode: "How to lead without authority" or "The power of vulnerability in leadership".
- Why it's useful for C1: Este podcast ofrece una variedad de acentos globales, lo cual es esencial para el examen C1. Los temas son abstractos y conceptuales, obligándote a seguir argumentos complejos.
- 5 key phrases to listen for:

To foster a culture of... (Fomentar una cultura de...)

- To lead by example (Liderar con el ejemplo)
- To empower employees (Empoderar/dar autonomía a los empleados)
- A top-down approach (Un enfoque jerárquico/de arriba hacia abajo)

- To navigate ambiguity (Gestionar la incertidumbre/ambigüedad)

#### #### 2. BBC The Inquiry

- Level & accent: British (RP/Standard), C1 appropriate: Yes.
- Recommended episode: Any episode discussing "Future of Work" or "Corporate Ethics".
- Why it's useful for C1: El ritmo es pausado pero el vocabulario es extremadamente sofisticado y formal. Es ideal para aprender a estructurar debates y opiniones críticas.
- 5 key phrases to listen for:

The crux of the matter is... (El quid de la cuestión es...)

- To be held accountable (Ser considerado responsable/rendir cuentas)
- To strike a balance (Encontrar un equilibrio)
- A contentious issue (Un tema polémico)
- To underpin a strategy (Sustentar/servir de base a una estrategia)

#### #### 3. HBR IdeaCast (Harvard Business Review)

- Level & accent: American, C1 appropriate: Yes.
- Recommended episode: "Building high-performing teams" or "Managing remote workforces".
- Why it's useful for C1: Es el estándar de oro para el inglés de negocios avanzado. Te proporcionará el léxico técnico necesario para entornos corporativos de alto nivel.
- 5 key phrases to listen for:

To drive innovation (Impulsar la innovación)

- To align with company values (Alinearse con los valores de la empresa)
- A paradigm shift (Un cambio de paradigma)
- To streamline processes (Optimizar/agilizar procesos)
- Core competencies (Competencias principales/clave)

### **Active listening strategies (C1)**

- Pre-listening priming: Antes de dar al play, lee el título y la descripción. Intenta predecir el vocabulario que podrías escuchar para preparar tu cerebro al contexto.
- The "Gist" vs. "Detail" approach: Escucha la primera vez sin detener el audio para captar la idea general (the gist). En la segunda escucha, concéntrate en los detalles específicos y la estructura del argumento.
- Note-taking in English: No traduzcas mentalmente. Toma notas utilizando solo palabras clave, símbolos o esquemas (mind maps) directamente en inglés para mantener el flujo de pensamiento.

- Identify discourse markers: Presta especial atención a las palabras que conectan ideas (however, nonetheless, subsequently). Estas son las "señales de tráfico" que te indican hacia dónde va el argumento del hablante.
- Shadowing technique: Si escuchas una frase que te parece especialmente elegante o bien estructurada, pausa el audio y repítela en voz alta imitando la entonación y el ritmo exactos.
- Contextual guessing: Cuando escuches una palabra desconocida, no busques el significado inmediatamente. Intenta deducir su significado basándote en el tono del hablante y las palabras que la rodean.

### Follow-up task

Task: The Executive Summary

- Vocabulary Extraction: While listening, write down 5 new expressions or collocations. Look up their meanings and write one original sentence for each that relates to your own professional life.
- Argument Mapping: Create a brief outline of the speaker's main argument. Identify the thesis statement (the main point) and the three supporting points they used.
- Oral Synthesis: Record a 2-minute voice note on your phone summarizing the podcast. You must use at least 3 of the new phrases you learned. Listen to your own recording to check your fluency and pronunciation.

## Lesson 12: Media Guide

### Cine & Series — Corporate Culture & Leadership

Utilizar producciones audiovisuales de alta calidad es fundamental para captar matices de registro y entonación que los libros de texto no pueden ofrecer. En este nivel C1, el objetivo es dejar de "entender la trama" para empezar a analizar el uso estratégico del lenguaje y la cultura corporativa.

#### Recommended title

- Title: Succession (HBO/Max), 2018–2023
- Accent/dialect: Primarily American (Standard/Mid-Atlantic), with various high-society nuances.
- Why it's perfect for C1: It features an incredibly dense use of corporate jargon, power dynamics, and sophisticated negotiation language. The characters constantly shift between highly formal boardroom English and aggressive, informal colloquialisms, making it a masterclass in register.
- Episodes to start with: Season 1, Episodes 1 & 2.

#### Language focus

-  
 "I'm not saying we're going to lose the company, but I am saying we're in a precarious position."  
 Vocabulary note: Precarious /prɪ'keəriəs/ (precario, inestable).

- Grammar spotlight: Notice how the speaker uses a contrastive structure to soften a blow. You could use a stance adverb here: "Frankly, we are in a precarious position."

-

"The board is looking for stability, not another disruptive pivot."

Vocabulary note: Disruptive /dɪs'rʌptɪv/ (disruptivo, que causa interrupción).

- Grammar spotlight: This sentence sets the stage for a consequence. You could follow this with: "Consequently, the CEO's position is now under scrutiny."

-

"He's a shark, but he's a shark we can manage."

Vocabulary note: Shark /ʃɑ:k/ (metaphorical: someone aggressive/ruthless in business).

- Grammar spotlight: This is an evaluative comment. To add a stance adverb to a similar sentiment: "Surprisingly, he is a shark we can actually manage."

### Viewing task (active watching)

- Vocabulary Log: Note down at least 10 new words or idiomatic expressions per episode (e.g., leverage, buyout, stakeholders).
- Register Analysis: Identify moments where characters switch from "Professional/Boardroom English" to "Personal/Aggressive English." How does their tone change?
- Stance Detection: Listen specifically for adverbs that express the speaker's attitude (e.g., honestly, fortunately, regrettably, essentially). Write down the sentence they appear in.
- Oral Summary: After the episode, record yourself on your phone summarising the main conflict of the episode in 3 sentences using at least one stance adverb.

### Similar titles (2 alternatives)

- The Diplomat (Netflix): Excellent for high-level political negotiation and sophisticated British/American English interplay.
- Industry (BBC/HBO): Perfect for observing fast-paced, high-pressure corporate environments and modern professional slang.

## The Unspoken Hierarchy



everyday\_scene

En esta escena, observamos una reunión de equipo donde se manifiesta la dinámica de poder y la cultura organizacional. El alumno deberá analizar la comunicación no verbal y cómo el liderazgo influye en el ambiente de trabajo diario.

### Preguntas para hablar (Speaking practice)

- Describe the scene: what is happening in this meeting and what is the atmosphere like?
- Based on their body language, how would you describe the relationship between the participants?
- Speculate on the outcome of this meeting: do you think they will reach a consensus?
- How does the concept of 'leadership style' differ between your own culture and the one depicted here?
- In your opinion, what are the advantages and disadvantages of a top-down corporate structure?

## Unit review – Corporate Culture & Leadership

Al finalizar esta unidad, deberías ser capaz de utilizar un lenguaje sofisticado para discutir dinámicas organizacionales, estilos de liderazgo y la ética empresarial. Habrás desarrollado la capacidad de expresar opiniones matizadas, utilizando adverbios de postura para suavizar o enfatizar tus argumentos, algo esencial para el nivel C1.

Asimismo, habrás perfeccionado el uso de colocaciones avanzadas y la formación de palabras relacionadas con el entorno corporativo. Deberías sentirte cómodo/a participando en debates complejos sobre la cultura de empresa y redactando textos argumentativos que demuestren un control preciso del registro formal.

### Grammar consolidation

Complete the following tasks. Pay close attention to the nuances of stance adverbs.

#### Part A: Sentence Transformation

Rewrite the sentences so they have a similar meaning to the first, using the word in bold. Do not change the word given.

-

I was very surprised when the CEO resigned so suddenly. **SURPRISINGLY**  
\_\_\_\_\_, the CEO resigned so suddenly.

-

The company failed to innovate, so it lost its market share. **CONSEQUENTLY**  
The company failed to innovate; \_\_\_\_\_, it lost its market share.

-

To be honest, I think the new management style is quite ineffective. **FRANKLY**  
\_\_\_\_\_, I think the new management style is quite ineffective.

#### Part B: Error Correction

Identify and correct the mistake in each sentence.

- Surprisingly enough, the results was much better than we had anticipated.
- Consequently of the merger, many employees lost their jobs.
- He spoke franklyly about the company's financial struggles during the meeting.

#### Part C: Controlled Rewriting

Rewrite the sentences using the adverb provided to change the tone as instructed.

- The project was a complete failure. (Use **REGRETTABLY** to express disappointment)
- We need to restructure the department immediately. (Use **URGENTLY** to add emphasis)
- The manager didn't listen to our suggestions. (Use **DISAPPOINTINGLY** to express dissatisfaction)
- The new policy will be implemented next month. (Use **SUPPOSEDLY** to express skepticism)

\_\_\_\_\_

## Vocabulary activation

### Part A: Word Formation

Complete the sentences by changing the form of the word in brackets.

- The company's \_\_\_\_\_ (RELY) on a single supplier proved to be a major risk.
- There has been a significant \_\_\_\_\_ (DEPART) from traditional leadership styles in recent years.
- The board of directors is looking for a \_\_\_\_\_ (VISION) leader to guide the merger.
- We must ensure that our corporate values are \_\_\_\_\_ (COMPLY) with international standards.

### Part B: Collocations

Choose the correct word to complete the corporate collocations.

- To (reach / achieve / attain) a consensus among the stakeholders is our primary goal.
- The CEO decided to (take / make / do) a strategic move to expand into Asian markets.
- We need to (foster / grow / nurture) a culture of innovation within the R&D department.
- The manager had to (deal / cope / manage) with a great deal of resistance to change.

### Part C: Register & Context

Select the most appropriate professional term for the context.

- The company decided to \_\_\_\_\_ (lay off / dismiss / fire) 200 workers due to the recession.
- We need to \_\_\_\_\_ (implement / execute / perform) a new policy regarding remote work.
- The leadership team aims to \_\_\_\_\_ (bridge / connect / link) the gap between management and staff.
- It is vital to \_\_\_\_\_ (uphold / hold / keep) the highest standards of professional integrity.

## Integrated skills task

### Reading Text

"The shift towards 'flat hierarchies' in modern corporate culture is often touted as a way to increase employee engagement and foster creativity. By removing layers of middle management, companies aim to empower lower-level employees, allowing for faster decision-making and a more collaborative atmosphere. Proponents argue that this autonomy leads to higher job satisfaction and attracts top talent who value independence.

However, critics argue that a lack of clear hierarchy can lead to ambiguity in roles and accountability. Without a defined chain of command, decision-making can become bogged down in endless discussions, or worse, tasks may fall through the cracks because no one is clearly responsible. Furthermore, the absence of traditional leadership structures can leave junior employees feeling lost or unsupported. While the 'flat' model offers freedom, it requires a highly disciplined and self-motivated workforce to prevent organizational chaos. Success, therefore, may depend not on the structure itself, but on how effectively leadership can maintain direction without stifling autonomy."

### Writing Task

Basándose en el texto anterior, redacte un ensayo de opinión (180-220 palabras). Debe evaluar si los beneficios de una estructura jerárquica plana superan los riesgos de falta de dirección. Utilice vocabulario de liderazgo y adverbios de postura para matizar sus argumentos.

## Speaking checkpoint

Prepare to speak for 2-3 minutes on each of the following prompts. Focus on using C1-level vocabulary and cohesive devices.

- Compare: Compare the advantages of a traditional hierarchical structure versus a flat corporate structure.
- Speculate: How might the concept of "leadership" change in a world where AI manages most operational tasks?
- Evaluate: Evaluate the impact of a strong corporate culture on employee retention in large multinational companies.
- Justify: "A leader's primary role is to empower others, not to command them." To what extent do you agree?
- Analyze: Discuss the potential consequences of a company having a "toxic" corporate culture.
- Hypothesize: If you were appointed CEO of a failing company, what would be your first three strategic moves to transform the culture?

## Self-assessment rubric

Criterion |

Needs work (B2/Below) |

Solid (C1) |

Exam-ready (C1+/C2) |

Accuracy |

Frequent errors in grammar and spelling. |

Generally accurate; errors are rare and don't impede meaning. |

High level of grammatical control; very few errors. |

Range |

Limited vocabulary; repetitive structures. |

Uses a good variety of C1 vocabulary and complex structures. |

Sophisticated use of idiomatic language and advanced structures. |

Fluency |

Hesitations and pauses are frequent. |

Speaks at a natural pace with some hesitation when searching for words. |

Smooth, natural flow with effective use of discourse markers. |

Task Achievement |

Does not fully address the prompt. |

Addresses all parts of the task clearly. |

Provides nuanced, deep, and well-developed responses. |

## Answer key

Grammar consolidation

1. Surprisingly,
2. consequently,

3. Frankly,
4. Surprisingly enough, the results were much better...
5. Consequently of (Incorrect)  $\rightarrow$  As a consequence of / Consequently, due to...
6. He spoke frankly...
7. Regrettably, the project was a complete failure.
8. We urgently need to restructure the department.
9. Disappointingly, the manager didn't listen to our suggestions.
10. Supposedly, the new policy will be implemented next month.

Vocabulary activation

1. reliance
2. departure
3. visionary
4. compliant
5. achieve
6. make
7. foster
8. deal
9. lay off
10. implement
11. bridge
12. uphold