

## Open C1 English · Unit 02

### Work, Ambition & Success

**Grammar:** Inversion after negative adverbials (rarely, seldom, no sooner)

**Pronunciation:** Word stress in polysyllabic words

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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 del ámbito profesional, la ambición personal y las diversas facetas del éxito. Para un estudiante de nivel C1, este no es solo un tema de vocabulario general; es un terreno donde la precisión lingüística es fundamental. En entornos profesionales de alto nivel, la capacidad de expresar matices sobre liderazgo, ética laboral y trayectoria profesional es lo que diferencia a un usuario competente de uno avanzado. Exploraremos cómo comunicar ambiciones de manera sofisticada y cómo discutir conceptos abstractos sobre el logro y el fracaso.

El mayor reto de esta unidad será el control de la estructura formal. Introduciremos la inversión tras adverbios negativos, una herramienta gramatical avanzada que elevará el registro de tus textos y discursos, dándoles un aire de autoridad y elegancia. Además, trabajaremos con el estrés de las palabras polisilábicas para asegurar que tu fluidez sea natural. Dominar estos elementos es crucial para superar las secciones de Writing y Speaking del examen C1 Advanced, donde el uso de estructuras complejas y una pronunciación precisa son criterios de evaluación clave.

### Objetivos de aprendizaje

- Vocabulary: Master advanced collocations and terminology related to career progression, leadership, and professional achievements.
- Grammar: Correctly apply inversion after negative adverbials (e.g., Never before have I...) to add emphasis in formal contexts.
- Reading: Develop strategies to identify nuance, tone, and implicit meaning in complex professional articles.
- Listening: Improve the ability to follow fast-paced discussions and extract specific information from academic or professional audio.
- Use of English: Refine accuracy in sentence transformation tasks involving inversion and word formation.
- Speaking & Writing: Produce sophisticated arguments and cohesive texts that demonstrate a high level of rhetorical control.

### Lo que vas a encontrar

- Introduction: Una visión general de los temas clave y los conceptos que exploraremos.
- Grammar: Explicaciones detalladas y ejercicios sobre la inversión tras adverbios negativos para dar énfasis.
- Vocabulary: Ampliación de léxico avanzado sobre el mundo laboral, la ambición y el éxito.
- Idioms: Expresiones idiomáticas esenciales para hablar de trabajo y logros de forma natural.
- Reading: Lectura de textos complejos sobre la naturaleza del éxito con preguntas de comprensión tipo examen.

n6. Listening: Ejercicios de escucha con audios de nivel C1 para entrenar el oído a diferentes acentos y velocidades.

- Use of English: Práctica intensiva de Reading and Use of English (Part 2, 3 and 4) enfocada en la gramática de la unidad.
- Writing: Guía paso a paso para redactar ensayos o informes profesionales de alto nivel.
- Speaking: Simulacros de la parte de interacción oral para practicar la fluidez y el uso de estructuras complejas.
- Mediation: Ejercicios para transformar información de un formato a otro (por ejemplo, de notas a un resumen formal).

## Tiempo estimado

Total: 6 horas

- Introduction: 10 min
- Grammar: 45 min
- Vocabulary: 30 min
- Idioms: 20 min
- Reading: 40 min
- Listening: 30 min
- Use of English: 45 min
- Writing: 50 min
- Speaking: 40 min
- Mediation: 30 min

## Lesson 2: Grammar Focus

### Explicación (en español)

La inversión es una técnica de énfasis que consiste en cambiar el orden habitual del sujeto y el verbo auxiliar. En lugar de la estructura estándar (Sujeto + Verbo), utilizamos (Adverbio + Verbo Auxiliar + Sujeto). En el nivel C1 Advanced, este recurso es fundamental para demostrar sofisticación gramatical, especialmente en ensayos académicos o contextos profesionales formales donde queremos resaltar la intensidad de una acción o la rareza de un evento.

La inversión ocurre cuando colocamos adverbios negativos o restrictivos (como never, rarely, seldom, hardly, no sooner) al principio de la oración para dar un impacto dramático. Es importante recordar que, al invertir, el sujeto vuelve a su posición original pero después del auxiliar. Por ejemplo, si la frase normal es "I have rarely seen such talent", la versión con inversión sería "Rarely have

I seen such talent". El significado no cambia, pero el tono se vuelve mucho más formal y enfático. Un error muy común entre los hispanohablantes es intentar traducir literalmente la estructura del español. En español, solemos decir "Rara vez he visto..." (sujeto + verbo), y tendemos a mantener ese orden en inglés. Sin embargo, si mueves el adverbio al principio en inglés, debes invertir el orden. Otro error típico es olvidar el verbo auxiliar (do/does/did) cuando la frase original está en Present Simple o Past Simple. Si la frase es "He rarely works late", la inversión correcta es "Rarely does he work late", no "Rarely he works late".

Finalmente, presta especial atención a las estructuras de tiempo como No sooner... than y Hardly/Scarcely... when. Estas se utilizan para describir que algo ocurrió inmediatamente después de otra cosa. En estos casos, la inversión es obligatoria si el adverbio inicia la frase. Estas estructuras son perfectas para narrar éxitos repentinos o cambios drásticos en el mundo laboral.

## Form – estructura

Tipo de Adverbio |

Estructura |

Ejemplo de estructura |

Negative Adverbial |

Adverbio + Auxiliar + Sujeto + Verbo Principal |

Never have I felt so motivated. |

Past Simple Inversion |

Adverbio + Did + Sujeto + Verbo (base form) |

Seldom did they achieve such goals. |

No sooner... than |

No sooner + had + Sujeto + V3 + than... |

No sooner had he signed the contract than... |

Hardly/Scarcely... when |

Hardly + had + Sujeto + V3 + when... |

Hardly had she started the job when... |

## Examples

- Rarely have I encountered such a dedicated team of professionals. (Rara vez me he encontrado con un equipo de profesionales tan dedicado.)
- Never had she dreamed of achieving such international success. (Nunca había soñado con alcanzar tal éxito internacional.)
- Seldom does a promotion come so easily to someone so young. (Rara vez un ascenso llega con tanta facilidad a alguien tan joven.)
- No sooner had the CEO announced the merger than the stock prices soared. (Apenas el CEO anunció la fusión, las acciones se dispararon.)
- Little did they know that their small startup would become a global empire. (Poco sabían ellos que su pequeña startup se convertiría en un imperio global.)
- Only after years of hard work did he finally reach the top of his field. (Solo después de años de trabajo duro logró finalmente llegar a la cima de su profesión.)
- Under no circumstances should you reveal the company's trade secrets. (Bajo ninguna circunstancia deberías revelar los secretos comerciales de la empresa.)

- Not only did she lead the project, but she also exceeded all expectations. (No solo lideró el proyecto, sino que también superó todas las expectativas.)

## Contrast

-

□ Rarely he has felt so much pressure. / □ Rarely has he felt so much pressure.  
(Error: El sujeto y el auxiliar deben intercambiar posición después del adverbio).

-

□ No sooner he had finished the meeting than the client called. / □ No sooner had he finished the meeting than the client called.  
(Error: El auxiliar 'had' debe ir antes del sujeto 'he').

-

□ Seldom we see such talent in the industry. / □ Seldom do we see such talent in the industry.  
(Error: En Present Simple, se necesita el auxiliar 'do/does' para la inversión).

-

□ Only then I realized the importance of networking. / □ Only then did I realize the importance of networking.  
(Error: Al usar expresiones de tiempo como 'Only then', se requiere la inversión con el auxiliar 'did').

## Mini-quiz — 10 preguntas

Part 1: Rewrite the sentences using the word in brackets to create an inversion.

- I have never seen such an ambitious entrepreneur. (Never)
- He had hardly stepped into the office when the crisis began. (Hardly)
- They realized they had made a mistake only after the contract was signed. (Only after)

Part 2: Multiple Choice. Choose the correct option (a, b, or c).

-

Rarely \_\_ such a significant breakthrough in our research.

- a) we have seen
- b) have we seen
- c) we saw

-

No sooner \_\_ the promotion than she decided to leave the company.

- a) did she receive
- b) she received
- c) had she received

-

Not only \_\_ the deadline, but they also exceeded the budget.

- a) they missed
- b) did they miss
- c) they did miss

Part 3: Fill in the gaps with the correct form of the verbs in brackets.

-

Little \_\_\_\_ (know) the intern that she would soon become the CEO.

-  
Only when the results were published \_\_\_\_ (do) the team realize their error.

-  
Never before \_\_\_\_ (we / encounter) such fierce competition in this market.

-  
Scarcely \_\_\_\_ (the manager / arrive) when the meeting was interrupted.

Respuestas:

1. Never have I seen such an ambitious entrepreneur.
2. Hardly had he stepped into the office when the crisis began.
3. Only after the contract was signed did they realize they had made a mistake.
4. b) have we seen
5. c) had she received
6. b) did they miss
7. did the intern know
8. did the team realize
9. have we encountered
10. had the manager arrived

### Lesson 3: Vocabulary Lab

## Vocabulario C1 – Work, Ambition & Success

30 palabras con definición, traducción, ejemplo y audio.

### **aspiration //**

/æspə'reɪʃn/n

Definition:A strong desire to achieve something high or great.

Traducción:aspiración

Example:Her professional aspirations include leading a global sustainability initiative by 2030.

Collocation:career aspirations

- ### perseverance //

/pɜ:sə'vɪərəns/n

Definition:Continued effort to achieve something despite difficulties, failure, or opposition.

Traducción:perseverancia

Example:Success in the tech industry requires immense perseverance when facing initial setbacks.

Collocation:demonstrate perseverance

- ### to attain //

/ə'teɪn/v

Definition:To succeed in achieving something that one has worked hard for.

Traducción:alcanzar / lograr

Example:The researcher managed to attain a breakthrough in quantum computing after years of study.

Collocation:attain a goal

- ### unprecedented //

/ʌnˈpreʃɪdəntɪd/adj

Definition:Never done or known before.

Traducción:sin precedentes

Example:The company experienced unprecedented growth due to its new AI-driven business model.

Collocation:unprecedented success

- ### to facilitate //

/fəˈsɪlɪteɪt/v

Definition:To make an action or process easy or easier.

Traducción:facilitar

Example:New digital tools are designed to facilitate seamless remote collaboration.

Collocation:facilitate growth

- ### to implement //

/ɪmˈplɪment/v

Definition:To put a decision, plan, or agreement into effect.

Traducción:implementar

Example:The board decided to implement a more rigorous recruitment process next quarter.

Collocation:implement a strategy

- ### comprehensive //

/ˌkɒmpriˈhensɪv/adj

Definition:Including or dealing with all or nearly all elements or aspects of something.

Traducción:exhaustivo / integral

Example:The CEO provided a comprehensive overview of the company's five-year expansion plan.

Collocation:comprehensive analysis

- ### to cultivate //

/kʌltɪveɪt/v

Definition:To try to acquire or develop a quality, skill, or relationship.

Traducción:cultivar

Example:Mentors help young professionals cultivate the leadership skills necessary for management.

Collocation:cultivate relationships

- ### to strive //

/straɪv/v

Definition:To make great efforts to achieve or obtain something.

Traducción:esforzarse / luchar por

Example:We must strive for excellence in every project we undertake.

Collocation:strive for excellence

- ### to underpin //

/ˌʌndəˈpɪn/v

Definition:To provide a foundation or support for something.

Traducción:sustentar / servir de base

Example:Strong ethical values underpin the entire corporate culture of the firm.

Collocation:underpin the argument

- ### to spearhead //

/ˈspiəhed/v

Definition: To lead an initiative, campaign, or movement.

Traducción: encabezar / liderar

Example: She was chosen to spearhead the new green energy project in Europe.

Collocation: spearhead an initiative

- ### to augment //

/ɔːɡment/v

Definition: To make something greater by adding to it; increase.

Traducción: aumentar / incrementar

Example: The team decided to augment their workforce with freelance specialists.

Collocation: augment income

- ### to jeopardize //

/ˈdʒepədɑːz/v

Definition: To put someone or something into a situation in which there is a danger of loss, harm, or failure.

Traducción: poner en peligro

Example: A single mistake could jeopardize the entire merger deal.

Collocation: jeopardize success

- ### to mitigate //

/ˈmɪtɪgeɪt/v

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

Traducción: mitigar / suavizar

Example: The company implemented new policies to mitigate the risks of remote work burnout.

Collocation: mitigate risks

- ### to thrive //

/θraɪv/v

Definition: To grow or develop well; to flourish.

Traducción: prosperar

Example: Some individuals thrive under pressure, while others find it overwhelming.

Collocation: thrive in an environment

- ### to delegate //

/ˈdelɪgeɪt/v

Definition: To entrust a task or responsibility to another person, typically one who is less senior.

Traducción: delegar

Example: Effective managers know how to delegate tasks to empower their team members.

Collocation: delegate authority

- ### to collaborate //

/kəˈlæbəreɪt/v

Definition: To work jointly on an activity or project.

Traducción: colaborar

Example: The two departments will collaborate to streamline the production process.

Collocation: collaborate closely

- ### to facilitate //

/fə'sɪlɪteɪt/v

Definition:To make an action or process easy or easier.

Traducción:facilitar

Example:The new software will facilitate smoother communication between branches.

Collocation:facilitate communication

- ### to leverage //

/li:vərɪdʒ/v

Definition:To use something to maximum advantage.

Traducción:aprovechar / potenciar

Example:We need to leverage our social media presence to reach a younger demographic.

Collocation:leverage resources

- ### to streamline //

/stri:mleɪn/v

Definition:To make an organization or system more efficient and effective.

Traducción:optimizar / agilizar

Example:The company is looking to streamline its operations to reduce overhead costs.

Collocation:streamline processes

- ### to outpace //

/aʊt'peɪs/v

Definition:To go faster than something else.

Traducción:superar / ir más rápido que

Example:Technological advancements often outpace the development of new regulations.

Collocation:outpace competitors

- ### to jeopardize //

/dʒepədaɪz/v

Definition:To put something at risk.

Traducción:poner en peligro

Example:Lack of investment could jeopardize the long-term viability of the startup.

Collocation:jeopardize stability

- ### to excel //

/ɪk'sel/v

Definition:To be exceptionally good at or proficient in an activity or subject.

Traducción:sobresalir

Example:She continues to excel in her role as a lead developer.

Collocation:excel at something

- ### to pivot //

/pɪvət/v

Definition:To completely change the direction of a business or strategy.

Traducción:pivotar / cambiar de rumbo

Example:The startup had to pivot quickly to survive the shift in market demand.

Collocation:pivot towards

- ### to hustle //

/hʌsl/v

Definition: To work aggressively and energetically to achieve success.

Traducción: esforzarse intensamente / trabajar duro

Example: In the early stages of a startup, you really have to hustle to get noticed.

Collocation: hustle hard

- ### to grind //

/graɪnd/v

Definition: To work hard and repetitively, often in a tedious way.

Traducción: trabajar duro (a veces de forma monótona)

Example: He's been on the daily grind for years, but he's finally seeing results.

Collocation: the daily grind

- ### to crush it //

/krʌʃ ɪt/phrase

Definition: To perform exceptionally well or achieve great success.

Traducción: triunfar / hacerlo de maravilla

Example: She absolutely crushed it during her presentation to the investors today.

Collocation: crush it

- ### to scale up //

/skeɪl ʌp/v

Definition: To increase the size or scale of a business or operation.

Traducción: escalar / ampliar

Example: We are looking for investors to help us scale up our production.

Collocation: scale up operations

- ### to burnout //

/bɜːnaʊt/n

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

Traducción: agotamiento / burnout

Example: Many professionals are facing burnout due to the constant connectivity of remote work.

Collocation: suffer burnout

- ### to side hustle //

/saɪd 'hʌsl/n

Definition: A secondary job or way of earning money outside of one's main employment.

Traducción: trabajo secundario / ingreso extra

Example: Her side hustle in digital design provides a significant portion of her income.

Collocation: start a side hustle

-

## Idioms & expressions — Work, Ambition & Success

### To hit the ground running · neutral

neutral

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

Significado: Empezar algo con mucha energía y de forma inmediata.

Example: As soon as she joined the leadership team, she hit the ground running and redesigned our entire workflow.

- ### To climb the corporate ladder · neutral

neutral

Meaning: To advance within a company to higher levels of authority.

Significado: Ascender en la escala jerárquica de una empresa.

Example: He has spent the last decade climbing the corporate ladder, aiming for a C-suite position.

- ### To go the extra mile · neutral

neutral

Meaning: To do more than what is expected of you in order to achieve success.

Significado: Dar el máximo esfuerzo o hacer más de lo estrictamente necesario.

Example: If you want to be considered for the promotion, you really need to go the extra mile on this project.

- ### To cut corners · neutral

neutral

Meaning: To do something in the easiest, quickest, or cheapest way, often sacrificing quality.

Significado: Tomar atajos o escatimar esfuerzos/recursos, a menudo comprometiendo la calidad.

Example: We cannot afford to cut corners on the security protocols if we want to maintain client trust.

- ### To be at a crossroads · formal

formal

Meaning: To be at a point where a crucial decision must be made that will affect the future.

Significado: Estar en una encrucijada o punto decisivo.

Example: After five years of freelancing, she is at a crossroads: expand her agency or return to a corporate role.

- ### To pull out all the stops · neutral

neutral

Meaning: To make every possible effort to make something successful.

Significado: Hacer todo lo posible o emplear todos los recursos para lograr algo.

Example: The marketing team pulled out all the stops to ensure the product launch went viral.

- ### To be in the loop · informal

formal

Meaning: To be informed about what is happening within a specific group or project.

Significado: Estar al tanto o informado de lo que sucede.

Example: Please make sure to CC me on all emails so that I stay in the loop regarding the budget changes.

- ### To lean into the friction · formal

formal

Meaning: To embrace challenges or difficult situations as opportunities for growth or innovation (Contemporary).

Significado: Aceptar y trabajar con los desafíos o conflictos para generar crecimiento (Contemporáneo).

Example: Instead of avoiding the team's disagreements, the manager decided to lean into the friction to spark new ideas.

- ### Quietly scaling · neutral

neutral

Meaning: To grow a business or career steadily and efficiently without excessive public noise or hype (Contemporary).

Significado: Crecer de forma constante y eficiente sin buscar el ruido mediático o el hype (Contemporáneo).

Example: While competitors focus on flashy marketing, they are quietly scaling their operations through automation.

- ### To optimize for output · neutral

neutral

Meaning: To focus strictly on productivity and results rather than hours spent working (Contemporary/Digital Culture).

Significado: Priorizar la productividad y los resultados sobre el tiempo de trabajo (Contemporáneo).

Example: In our new remote-first culture, we don't track hours; we simply optimize for output.

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## Lesson 5: Reading Practice

### Unit 2: Work, Ambition & Success

#### Reading Lesson: The Myth of the 'Always-On' Professional

#### Reading text

##### H3: The Productivity Paradox: Redefining Ambition in the Age of AI

In the mid-2020s, the traditional concept of professional success is undergoing a seismic shift. For decades, the hallmark of an ambitious individual was their "availability"—the ability to respond to emails at midnight or to demonstrate constant, visible busyness. However, as generative AI begins to shoulder the weight of routine cognitive tasks, the metric for success is shifting from output volume to strategic discernment. We are entering an era where being "busy" is no longer a badge of honour, but a symptom of inefficiency.

The rise of the "asynchronous work culture" has challenged the long-held belief that physical or digital presence equals productivity. In many global firms, the pressure to be perpetually online has led to unprecedented levels of burnout. This has sparked a counter-movement: the rise of the "Intentional Professional." These individuals argue that true ambition lies in the ability to disconnect, allowing for deep, focused work that AI cannot replicate. They posit that constant connectivity actually hinders the very creativity that makes human workers indispensable.

Yet, this transition is not without its detractors. Critics argue that the move towards flexible, asynchronous models risks eroding the social fabric of the workplace. They suggest that without the shared rhythm of a standard working day, mentorship and spontaneous innovation might wither away. There is also the looming concern of "proximity bias," where those who choose to work remotely or on flexible schedules are overlooked for promotions in favour of those who maintain a visible presence in the office.

Furthermore, the integration of AI into the workplace has created a new kind of anxiety. If a machine can produce a perfect report in seconds, what becomes of the junior employee's path to mastery? Historically, ambition was fuelled by the desire to climb a ladder through incremental skill acquisition. If the bottom rungs of that ladder are automated, the path to leadership becomes obscured.

To navigate this, a new set of soft skills is becoming paramount. Emotional intelligence, complex problem-solving, and ethical judgement are becoming the new currencies of success. Success is no longer about how much you can do, but how well you can direct the tools at your disposal. The ambitious professional of 2026 is not the one who works the most hours, but the one who can navigate ambiguity and lead with human-centric values.

Ultimately, we are witnessing a decoupling of "work" from "presence." As we redefine our relationship with labour, we must ask ourselves: is our ambition driven by a desire to achieve, or merely by a fear of standing still? The answer will dictate the future of the global workforce.

## Comprehension – multiple choice (Cambridge Part 5 style)

-

What is the writer's main point in the first paragraph?

- A. AI will eventually replace all human workers.
- B. The definition of success is moving from quantity to quality.
- C. Constant availability is the most important trait in 2025.
- D. Routine tasks are becoming more difficult to complete.

-

According to the second paragraph, what is the "Intentional Professional" advocating for?

- A. Working longer hours to stay ahead of AI.
- B. Eliminating all forms of digital communication.
- C. Prioritising deep focus over constant connectivity.
- D. Moving to a purely asynchronous work model.

-

What is one of the risks mentioned regarding flexible work models?

- A. A total loss of productivity across global firms.
- B. The complete disappearance of mentorship opportunities.
- C. An increase in the cost of maintaining remote offices.
- D. Ambition being stifled by too much freedom.

-

In the fourth paragraph, why does the author mention the "bottom rungs of the ladder"?

- A. To suggest that entry-level jobs are being automated.
- B. To explain how junior employees can reach leadership faster.
- C. To argue that traditional career paths are becoming more stable.
- D. To highlight the ease of climbing the corporate ladder today.

-

What does the author suggest about the "new currencies of success"?

- A. They are purely technical skills related to AI.
- B. They involve human qualities that machines cannot easily replicate.

- C. They are becoming less important in a digital economy.
- D. They are only relevant to high-level executives.

-  
What is the tone of the concluding paragraph?

- A. Dismissive of the changes happening in the workforce.
- B. Optimistic about the total elimination of work.
- C. Reflective and questioning regarding the future.
- D. Alarmed by the lack of structure in modern work.

## **Gapped text – missing sentences**

Instructions: Four sentences have been removed from the text. Choose from the sentences A–E to fill the gaps. There is one extra sentence which you do not need to use.

- A. This shift suggests that the old ways of measuring worth are becoming obsolete.
- B. This could lead to a widening gap between those who control technology and those who are controlled by it.
- C. Consequently, the traditional markers of a "hard worker" are being re-evaluated.
- D. Such a change requires a fundamental rethink of how we value human contribution.
- E. This tension between visibility and productivity remains a central debate.

## **Glossary**

- Seismic shift: cambio sísmico/radical
- Hallmark: sello distintivo
- Detractor: detractor/crítico
- To wither away: marchitarse/desaparecer gradualmente
- Looming: inminente/que se avecina
- Paramount: primordial/de suma importancia
- Ambiguity: ambigüedad
- Decoupling: desvinculación/separación

## **Answers**

### **Comprehension**

- B
- C
- B
- A
- B
- C

## Gapped text

(Note: As the gaps were not marked in the text per instructions, the learner must identify the logical placement. Based on the flow:)

\* Gap 1 (End of Para 1): C

\* Gap 2 (End of Para 2): E

\* Gap 3 (End of Para 3): D

\* Gap 4 (End of Para 4): A

(Distractor: B)

## Lesson 6: Listening Lab

### Navigating the Modern Career: Ambition vs. Well-being

Esta actividad de comprensión auditiva se divide en tres partes para poner a prueba tu capacidad de entender detalles, completar información y captar ideas abstractas. Escucha atentamente el audio para responder a las preguntas de opción múltiple, completar las frases y analizar los puntos de vista de los ponentes.

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

# |

Question |

Options |

1 |

What is the primary reason for Speaker 2's hesitation regarding the promotion? |

a) They are uninterested in the increased salary. / b) They fear the workload will disrupt their personal life. / c) They do not feel they have the necessary leadership skills. / d) They are worried about losing their current job stability. |

2 |

How does Speaker 1 describe the nature of the promotion? |

a) As a guaranteed path to professional success. / b) As a way to avoid future stagnation. / c) As a situation with both advantages and disadvantages. / d) As a necessary step for career advancement. |

3 |

What does Speaker 2 mean by 'losing my sense of self'? |

a) Forgetting their original career goals. / b) Losing their personal identity to their professional role. / c) Becoming unable to work with other people. / d) Losing the ability to manage their own time. |

4 |

What was a significant challenge for Speaker 1 when they took a senior role? |

a) Managing the increased workload. / b) Dealing with the pressure of the title. / c) Learning how to delegate tasks effectively. / d) Finding a balance between work and life. |

5 |

What personal struggle does Speaker 2 admit to having? |

a) A lack of professional ambition. / b) A tendency to control everything themselves. / c) Difficulty in making important decisions. / d) A fear of being overlooked by management. |

6 |

What advice does Speaker 1 offer at the end of the conversation? |

a) To focus on the prestige the title brings. / b) To avoid the risks associated with the role. / c) To consider the opportunities the role provides. / d) To prioritise stability over growth. |

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

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

1. Speaker 2 mentions they have been \_ all night due to their worries.
2. Speaker 1 suggests that staying in a current role might lead to \_.
3. Speaker 2 describes the situation as a \_.
4. Speaker 1 admits that in their previous role, they had \_ themselves.
5. Speaker 2 admits they have a tendency to \_.
6. Speaker 1 suggests that taking the position requires stepping out of one's \_.

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

13. What is the main difference between a 'career ladder' and a 'career lattice' according to the narrator?

- a) A ladder is more stable than a lattice.
- b) A ladder is linear, while a lattice allows for different paths.
- c) A ladder is for the younger generation, while a lattice is for seniors.
- d) A ladder focuses on purpose, while a lattice focuses on status.

14. What does 'quiet ambition' involve?

- a) Working hard without seeking recognition.
- b) Defining success based on personal terms and boundaries.
- c) Avoiding all forms of professional competition.
- d) Focusing solely on financial security.

15. According to the narrator, what is a common criticism of 'quiet ambition'?

- a) It might lead to a lack of motivation or complacency.
- b) It is too difficult to achieve in modern economies.
- c) It causes too much stress for employers.
- d) It is only available to those in stable industries.

16. What does Sarah suggest is the main problem with current corporate culture?

- a) The lack of focus on individual KPIs.
- b) The obsession with constant growth and performance.
- c) The absence of clear career ladders.
- d) The high cost of professional development.

17. What point does Mark make during the panel discussion?

- a) Corporate culture is the only factor in mental health.
- b) Individuals must manage their own expectations and comparisons.

- c) Social media has no impact on professional success.
- d) KPIs are the best way to measure growth.

18. How does Sarah describe the impact of current performance structures?

- a) They encourage healthy competition.
- b) They are a systemic issue that reinforces constant striving.
- c) They are designed to protect mental health.
- d) They help individuals achieve a work-life balance.

### Vocabulario clave

- Apprehensive — Apreensivo/a o inquieto/a - Double-edged sword — Arma de doble filo - Stagnation — Estancamiento - Thrive on — Prosperar con / Crecer gracias a - Traction — Tracción / Impulso - Nuanced — Matizado - Complacency — Complacencia / Autocomplacencia - Detrimental — Perjudicial ### Respuestas

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

Part 2: 1. tossing and turning · 2. a sense of stagnation · 3. delicate balancing act · 4. over-stretched · 5. micro-manage · 6. comfort zone

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

### Transcript

Ver transcript completo

#### SEGMENT 1 — CONVERSATION

Speaker 1: So, I was thinking about our chat from last week, regarding the promotion. Are you still feeling as apprehensive about it as you were on Tuesday?

Speaker 2: To be honest, I've been tossing and turning all night. It's not that I don't want the extra responsibility, it's just... I'm worried that the workload might become quite overwhelming, you know? I mean, I value my work-life balance immensely.

Speaker 1: I completely hear you. It's a bit of a double-edged sword, isn't it? On one hand, you get the prestige and the salary bump, but on the other, you're essentially signing away your free time.

Speaker 2: Exactly. And I suppose I've always been someone who thrives on stability rather than constant upward mobility. I don't want to reach the top of the ladder only to realise I've lost my sense of self in the process.

Speaker 1: That's a very insightful way of putting it. But, wouldn't you say that staying in your current role might eventually lead to a sense of stagnation? Like, you might feel overlooked if you don't show that drive for advancement.

Speaker 2: I suppose that's a valid point. I wouldn't want to be seen as lacking ambition, but I also don't want to be a workaholic. It's a delicate balancing act, really.

Speaker 1: It really is. I remember when I took that senior role last year. I thought I could handle everything, but I quickly realised that I had overstretched myself. I had to learn to delegate, which, as you know, was quite a hurdle for me.

Speaker 2: See, that's where I struggle. I have this tendency to micro-manage, even when I'm not the one in charge. I find it hard to let go of control.

Speaker 1: Well, that's something you can work on. If you do take the position, it might actually force you to develop those leadership skills. It's about stepping out of your comfort zone.

Speaker 2: You're right. I suppose I've been playing it a bit too safe. I need to weigh up the risks against the potential rewards more objectively.

Speaker 1: Precisely. It's not just about the title; it's about what that title allows you to achieve.

#### SEGMENT 2 — MONOLOGUE

Narrator: Welcome back to 'The Modern Professional'. Today, we are delving into a concept that has been gaining significant traction in recent years: the shift from traditional career ladders to what experts call 'career lattices'. For decades, the standard definition of success was linear. You started at the bottom, you climbed the rungs, and you eventually reached the executive suite. It was a clear, albeit exhausting, trajectory.

Narrator: However, we are seeing a fundamental shift in how individuals perceive ambition. For many, particularly the younger generation entering the workforce, success is no longer synonymous with a higher job title or a more impressive office. Instead, there is an increasing emphasis on autonomy, purpose, and flexibility. People are increasingly questioning whether the pursuit of vertical promotion is actually worth the psychological cost. Is it truly success if you are perpetually stressed and disconnected from your personal values?

Narrator: This brings us to the concept of 'quiet ambition'. This isn't about lack of drive; rather, it's about a more nuanced approach to professional life. It involves setting boundaries and defining success on one's own terms, rather than adhering to societal expectations. It's about finding fulfillment in the work itself, rather than just the status it confers. While some critics argue that this mindset could lead to complacency, proponents suggest it actually fosters more sustainable and meaningful careers.

Narrator: Of course, we must acknowledge that this is a privilege often reserved for those in stable industries. For many, the pressure to climb is not a choice but a necessity for financial security. Yet, even within those constraints, the conversation is changing. We are seeing more discussions about 'portfolio careers'—where individuals combine multiple roles and income streams—as a way to achieve a different kind of professional freedom.

Narrator: As we move forward, the definition of a 'successful career' will likely continue to evolve. The challenge for both employers and employees will be to navigate this landscape. How can organisations foster ambition without causing burnout? How can individuals pursue their goals without sacrificing their well-being? It is a complex puzzle, but one that is essential to solve in our rapidly changing global economy.

#### SEGMENT 3 — PANEL DISCUSSION

Speaker 1: Welcome to our final panel of the day. We are discussing the intersection of ambition and mental health. We have Sarah, a corporate strategist, and Mark, a freelance consultant. Sarah, let's start with you. Do you think the corporate culture's obsession with constant growth is inherently toxic?

Speaker 2: I wouldn't go as far as to call it 'inherently toxic', but I do think it can be incredibly detrimental if left unchecked. The pressure to constantly perform, to always be 'on', can lead to widespread burnout. However, I believe the issue lies in how we define growth. If growth is only measured by KPIs and bottom-line figures, then yes, it can become quite unhealthy.

Speaker 3: If I could just jump in there, I think we need to look at the individual's role in this as well. While corporate culture sets the stage, we also have a responsibility to manage our own expectations. If we constantly compare our own progress to the curated success stories we see on social media, we are setting ourselves up for failure.

Speaker 1: That's a fair point, Mark. But isn't it true that the system itself is designed to encourage that constant comparison?

Speaker 2: Exactly. It's a systemic issue. The way performance reviews are structured, the way bonuses are distributed—it all reinforces this idea that you must always be striving for more, regardless of the cost to your mental health. We need to move towards a culture that rewards sustainable productivity rather than just raw output.

Speaker 3: I agree to an extent, but I also think we shouldn't romanticise the idea of 'balance' too much. Ambition is a powerful motivator. It drives innovation and progress. The goal shouldn't be to eliminate ambition, but to channel it in a way that is healthy and constructive. We need to teach people how to be ambitious without being self-destructive.

Speaker 1: So, how do we actually achieve that? How do we bridge the gap between professional drive and personal well-being?

Speaker 2: I think it starts with transparency. Employers need to be honest about workload expectations, and employees need to feel safe enough to voice their concerns without fear of retribution. We need to normalise the conversation around mental health in the workplace.

Speaker 3: And on an individual level, I think it's about developing emotional intelligence and setting clear boundaries. We need to learn to decouple our self-worth from our professional achievements. If we can do that, we can pursue our ambitions with a much healthier perspective.

Speaker 1: A complex issue indeed, but a vital one. Thank you both for your insights.

## Lesson 7: Use of English

### 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.

In today's highly competitive job market, many professionals find that constant self-improvement is (1) \_ to achieving long-term success. While some people are driven by (2) \_ ambition, others seek a better work-life balance. It is often (3) \_ to realize that true professional growth requires both talent and (4) \_. For those aiming for leadership roles, the ability to manage (5) \_ situations is essential. However, the (6) \_ of high-pressure environments can lead to burnout if not managed correctly. Success is not just about reaching the top; it is also about the (7) \_ of maintaining integrity throughout one's career. Ultimately, a (8) \_ approach to one's goals is often the key to overcoming obstacles.

- ESSENTIAL
- UNRELENTING
- COMMON
- PERSEVERANCE
- UNPREDICTABLE
- INTENSITY
- IMPORTANCE
- STRATEGIC

### 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. He had hardly started his new role when he was promoted. | NO

- \_\_\_\_\_ly had he started his new role when he was promoted.
2. I seldom have such a great opportunity to lead a team. | SUCH
- \_\_\_\_\_ an opportunity to lead a team do I have.
3. She rarely encountered such professional resistance before. | DID
- \_\_\_\_\_ such professional resistance before.
4. We had just finished the meeting when the CEO arrived. | SOONER
- \_\_\_\_\_ had we finished the meeting than the CEO arrived.
5. They little realized how much the industry would change. | DID
- \_\_\_\_\_ how much the industry would change.
6. He had never seen such a dedicated workforce. | NEVER
- \_\_\_\_\_ such a dedicated workforce had he seen.

### Answer key

- No sooner
- Such
- Seldom did she
- No sooner
- Little did they
- Never before

## Lesson 8: Writing Workshop

Unit 2: Work, Ambition & Success

### Writing: The Proposal

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

Topic: Professional Development and Employee Retention

Your company has noticed that many ambitious employees are leaving to seek promotions elsewhere. The Board of Directors has asked you to write a proposal outlining how the company could implement a new professional development programme to encourage staff to stay and grow within the organization.

In your proposal, you should:

- \* Suggest specific ways employees can develop new skills.
- \* Explain how these changes would benefit the company in the long term.
- \* Propose a method for monitoring the success of the programme.

Write your proposal in 220-260 words in an appropriate style.

#### 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 ser fácil de escanear visualmente. Divide el contenido según los puntos solicitados en el enunciado.
- **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 ideas (e.g., Furthermore, In light of this, Regarding). Esto mejora la cohesión.
- **Hedging (Lenguaje cauteloso):** En propuestas profesionales, no uses afirmaciones absolutas. En lugar de "This will work", usa "This is likely to result in..." o "It could be argued that...". Esto demuestra madurez lingüística.
- **Evaluación de ideas:** No te limites a listar ideas; evalúalas. Explica el porqué de tus sugerencias y cómo se conectan con los objetivos de la empresa.
- **Time management:** Dedicar 5 minutos a planificar la estructura, 35 minutos a escribir y 10 minutos finales a la revisión (especialmente ortografía y gramática).

## 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**

Proposal for an Internal Professional Development Programme

Introduction

The aim of this proposal is to outline a strategy to improve employee retention by fostering professional growth within the company. Currently, our firm faces a turnover rate of 15% among ambitious mid-level staff, primarily due to a perceived lack of advancement opportunities.

Skill Development Initiatives

To address this, it is suggested that the company implements a dual-track development programme. Firstly, we could offer subsidised advanced certifications in leadership and technical specialisms. Secondly, a formal mentorship scheme should be established, pairing junior talent with senior executives. This would allow for the organic transfer of expertise and provide clear career pathways.

Benefits to the Organisation

Implementing these changes would yield significant long-term advantages. By investing in our current workforce, we cultivate loyalty and reduce the high costs associated with external recruitment. Furthermore, a more highly skilled team will enhance our competitive edge in the market, ensuring that our internal talent is capable of meeting future industry challenges.

Monitoring Success

To evaluate the effectiveness of this programme, it is recommended that we conduct bi-annual engagement surveys. Additionally, tracking the internal promotion rate and turnover statistics will provide quantitative data on whether staff are choosing to grow within the company rather than seeking opportunities elsewhere.

Conclusion

In conclusion, while the initial investment may be substantial, the long-term benefits of retaining top-tier talent far outweigh the costs. It is highly recommended that the Board approves this initiative to secure the company's future success.

## Marking checklist

- Content: ¿Has respondido a todos los puntos de la tarea? (Sugerencias, beneficios y método de evaluación).
- Communicative Achievement: ¿El tono es formal y profesional? ¿Has usado el formato de proposal (subtítulos)?
- Organisation: ¿Las ideas fluyen de forma lógica? ¿Has usado conectores para unir párrafos y secciones?
- Language: ¿Has usado vocabulario avanzado (e.g., yield, subsidised, turnover rate) y estructuras gramaticales complejas (e.g., passive voice, conditionals)?

## Vocabulario para Writing & Speaking

Expression |

Español |

Useful C1 example |

career progression |

progresión profesional |

Career progression depends on both skill and timing. |

a demanding workload |

una carga de trabajo exigente |

A demanding workload can affect motivation. |

to take on responsibility |

asumir responsabilidad |

Managers must take on responsibility for their teams. |

professional fulfilment |

realización profesional |

Professional fulfilment is not always linked to salary. |

to meet expectations |

cumplir expectativas |

Employees are often under pressure to meet expectations. |

a competitive environment |

entorno competitivo |

A competitive environment can be stimulating. |

long-term ambition |

ambición a largo plazo |

Long-term ambition should be balanced with wellbeing. |

to reach one's potential |

alcanzar el propio potencial |

Good mentoring helps people reach their potential. |

## Speaking – describe & compare

Compara estas dos imágenes. En tu respuesta, debes describir las diferencias en los entornos laborales, las actitudes de las personas y las distintas formas de alcanzar el éxito. Debes hablar durante aproximadamente dos minutos.



speaking

### Useful phrases

- In the first image, we can see... – En la primera imagen, podemos ver... - In stark contrast to the first scene... – En marcado contraste con la primera escena... - It appears as though the woman is... – Parece como si la mujer estuviera... - One could argue that this represents... – Se podría argumentar que esto representa... - While the first setting is quite tranquil... – Mientras que el primer entorno es bastante tranquilo... - The second image depicts a much more... – La segunda imagen representa un... mucho más - Judging by her expression, she seems... – A juzgar por su expresión, ella parece... - Both images touch upon the concept of... – Ambas imágenes abordan el concepto de... - There is a noticeable difference between... – Hay una diferencia notable entre... - It is highly likely that they are... – Es muy probable que ellos estén... - Whereas the left side suggests autonomy... – Mientras que el lado izquierdo sugiere autonomía... - This might imply a sense of... – Esto podría implicar un sentido de...  
### Pronunciación

En inglés, el acento de palabra (word stress) es crucial para la fluidez. En palabras polisílabas relacionadas con el trabajo, como 'ambition' (am-BI-tion) o 'professional' (pro-FES-sion-al), el acento suele recaer en una sílaba específica. Si colocas el acento en la sílaba incorrecta, puede dificultar la comprensión. Practica identificar la sílaba tónica en palabras largas para sonar más natural.

### **Model answer**

Both images illustrate different facets of professional life and ambition. In the first picture, we see a young woman working in a serene, minimalist home office. She appears deeply focused, suggesting a sense of autonomy and the modern trend of remote work. The atmosphere is tranquil, which might imply that her version of success is tied to work-life balance and personal peace.

In stark contrast, the second image depicts a high-pressure corporate boardroom. Here, a group of professionals is engaged in what looks like a heated debate. Unlike the solitary focus of the first woman, this scene is characterized by collective energy and intense interaction. It represents a more traditional, fast-paced corporate environment where success is often measured by teamwork, competition, and hitting targets in a bustling atmosphere.

While the first setting suggests a more self-driven, solitary path to achievement, the second highlights the collaborative yet stressful nature of corporate climbing. Ultimately, both images capture different ways of pursuing professional goals: one through quiet concentration and the other through dynamic, social engagement. It is interesting to consider which environment would be more conducive to long-term productivity.

## **Lesson 10: Mediation Task**

### **Mediation**

Basándote en la información proporcionada, escribe un correo electrónico dirigido a tus compañeros de equipo para informarles sobre esta oportunidad. Debes utilizar un registro profesional pero motivador, resumiendo los puntos clave y explicando cómo podrían participar.

#### **Texto original (español)**

La empresa 'Global Vision' ha anunciado un nuevo programa de desarrollo profesional para sus empleados. Este programa incluye mentorías personalizadas con directivos de alto nivel y la posibilidad de financiar certificaciones internacionales especializadas. El objetivo es fomentar el crecimiento interno y preparar a los futuros líderes de la compañía. Sin embargo, la participación es voluntaria y los empleados deben presentar una propuesta de proyecto que demuestre cómo su formación beneficiará directamente a su departamento actual. El proceso de selección comenzará el próximo mes.

## Imagen de apoyo



mediation

## Estrategias clave

- Identificar la idea principal y los detalles relevantes del texto original.
- Adaptar el tono del mensaje al público objetivo (compañeros de trabajo).
- Transformar la información de un anuncio formal a un formato de comunicación interna.
- Utilizar conectores de transición para dar fluidez al texto (e.g., 'Furthermore', 'In addition').
- Evitar la repetición innecesaria y parafrasear el contenido original con vocabulario C1.
- Asegurar que la estructura del mensaje sea clara (saludo, cuerpo, cierre).

## Audiencia de destino

your colleagues

## Respuesta modelo (English)

Subject: Exciting Professional Development Opportunity at Global Vision

Dear Team,

I am writing to share some exciting news regarding a new professional development programme recently announced by the company. As we are all striving to advance our careers, I believe this could be a significant opportunity for us to grow professionally.

The programme focuses on fostering leadership through personalised mentorship from senior executives and offers financial support for international certifications. This is a fantastic way to enhance our expertise and prepare for future leadership roles within the company.

To participate, we must submit a project proposal demonstrating how the chosen certification will add value to our current department. Please keep in mind that while participation is voluntary, the selection process begins next month.

I highly encourage everyone to consider this opportunity. If you are interested, let's discuss our potential project ideas so we can prepare strong applications. It would be great to see our team represented in this initiative.

Best regards,

[Your Name]

## Lesson 11: Podcast Guide

### Podcast Guide – Work, Ambition & Success

Escuchar podcasts auténticos es fundamental en el nivel C1 para acostumbrarse a la velocidad natural, los modismos y los diversos acentos que no aparecen en los libros de texto. En esta guía, encontrarás recursos seleccionados para desafiar tu comprensión auditiva y ampliar tu vocabulario profesional y académico.

#### Recommended podcasts (3 total)

##### #### 1. BBC: Desert Island Discs

- Level & accent: British (various), C1 appropriate: Yes.
- Recommended episode: Any episode featuring a high-achieving entrepreneur or industry leader (e.g., episodes featuring business figures or creative icons).
- Why it's useful for C1: Este podcast es ideal para entender la narrativa personal y cómo se describe el éxito y el fracaso de forma sofisticada. Te permite escuchar una amplia variedad de acentos británicos en un contexto de entrevista íntima.
- 5 key phrases to listen for:

To reach a turning point (Llegar a un punto de inflexión)

- To climb the corporate ladder (Ascender en la escala jerárquica)
- A sense of accomplishment (Sentimiento de realización/logro)
- To be driven by (Estar motivado por/impulsado por)
- To weather the storm (Superar un periodo difícil)

##### #### 2. TED Talks Daily

- Level & accent: Mixed (Global), C1 appropriate: Yes.

- Recommended episode: Search for "The psychology of ambition" or "Work-life balance".
- Why it's useful for C1: Los ponentes suelen utilizar una estructura lógica muy clara, lo cual es excelente para aprender a organizar ideas complejas. El vocabulario es académico pero accesible, perfecto para el examen de Listening de Cambridge.
- 5 key phrases to listen for:

To strike a balance (Lograr un equilibrio)

- To push the boundaries (Desafiar los límites)
- A double-edged sword (Un arma de doble filo)
- To reap the rewards (Cosechar los frutos/recompensas)
- To be at a crossroads (Estar en una encrucijada)

#### 3. The Inquiry (BBC World Service)

- Level & accent: British / International, C1 appropriate: Yes.
- Recommended episode: Episodes discussing the future of work, AI in the workplace, or global economic shifts.
- Why it's useful para C1: Este podcast presenta debates rápidos y argumentos densos que requieren una atención máxima. Te ayudará a entrenar la capacidad de seguir hilos argumentativos complejos y abstractos.
- 5 key phrases to listen for:

To disrupt the industry (Transformar/alterar disruptivamente una industria)

- To be fraught with difficulty (Estar plagado de dificultades)
- The implications of... (Las implicaciones de...)
- To shape the future of... (Moldear el futuro de...)
- To hold someone accountable (Hacer que alguien rinda cuentas)

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

- Escucha por capas: No intentes entender cada palabra a la primera. La primera escucha debe ser para captar la idea general (gist); la segunda, para los detalles específicos.
- Anticipación léxica: Antes de dar al play, lee el título o la descripción. Predice qué vocabulario relacionado con "ambición" o "trabajo" podrías escuchar para preparar tu cerebro.
- Identificación de marcadores discursivos: Presta especial atención a las palabras que conectan ideas (however, nonetheless, consequently). Estas son las señales que te indican hacia dónde va el argumento.
- Notas selectivas (Notetaking): No escribas frases completas. Utiliza palabras clave, símbolos o esquemas mentales para registrar puntos importantes sin perder el hilo de la conversación.
- Enfoque en la entonación: En C1, el significado a menudo reside en la entonación. Observa cómo el hablante usa el énfasis para mostrar ironía, sorpresa o importancia.
- Shadowing (Sombreado): Si escuchas una frase que te parece especialmente elegante o útil, pausa el audio e intenta repetirla imitando exactamente la entonación y el ritmo del hablante.

## Follow-up task

Para maximizar el aprendizaje, completa este proceso tras escuchar un episodio:

- **Vocabulary Extraction:** Identifica 5 expresiones o colocaciones (collocations) que no conocías. Escríbelas en tu cuaderno junto con su significado y una oración original creada por ti.
- **Summary Writing:** Escribe un resumen de entre 150 y 200 palabras sobre el tema principal del podcast. Intenta utilizar al menos 3 de las frases nuevas que has aprendido.
- **Critical Reflection (Speaking):** Grábate en el móvil hablando durante 2 minutos sobre tu opinión respecto al tema tratado. ¿Estás de acuerdo con el ponente? ¿Cómo se aplica esto al mundo laboral actual? Escucha tu grabación para detectar errores de pronunciación.

## Lesson 12: Media Guide

### Cine & Series – Work, Ambition & Success

Utilizar contenido audiovisual auténtico te permite exponerte a registros lingüísticos complejos y modismos que no suelen aparecer en los libros de texto. Para alcanzar el nivel C1, no basta con entender la trama; debes analizar la estructura gramatical y la intención comunicativa de los personajes.

#### Recommended title

- **Title:** Succession (HBO/Max), 2018–2023
- **Accent/dialect:** Primarily American (Mid-Atlantic/High-society), with various international accents in business settings.
- **Why it's perfect for C1:** This series is a masterclass in high-level business English, power dynamics, and sophisticated insults. The vocabulary density regarding corporate strategy, family legacy, and ambition is immense, providing the perfect playground for advanced learners to master nuance and subtext.
- **Episodes to start with:** Season 1, Episodes 1–3.

#### Language focus

-

"He has seldom shown such a blatant disregard for the company's ethics."

Vocabulary note: Blatant /'bleɪ.tənt/ (descarado, flagrante).

- **Grammar spotlight:** This sentence uses a standard structure, but to achieve C1 level, we can apply inversion. If we move the negative adverbial to the front, it becomes: "Seldom has he shown such a blatant disregard..." (Note the subject-verb inversion: has he instead of he has).

-

"No sooner had the merger been announced than the stock price plummeted."

Vocabulary note: To plummet /'plʌm.ɪt/ (caer en picado, desplomarse).

- **Grammar spotlight:** This is a classic example of inversion after negative adverbials to show immediate succession. The structure is: No sooner + had + subject + past participle + than...

-

"Rarely do we see such a ruthless pursuit of power within a single family."

Vocabulary note: Ruthless /'ru:θ.ləs/ (despiadado/a).

- Grammar spotlight: When we start a sentence with Rarely, the auxiliary verb must come before the subject. This adds a formal, dramatic emphasis typical of high-level written and spoken English.

### **Viewing task (active watching)**

- Vocabulary Log: Note down at least 10 new words or collocations related to business, power, or emotions per episode.
- Register Analysis: Identify moments where characters switch from "corporate speak" (formal) to "family arguments" (informal/aggressive). Note the differences in word choice.
- Inversion Hunt: Listen for any instance where a character uses a negative or restrictive adverbial (e.g., Never, Seldom, Rarely) to emphasize a point. If you don't hear one, try to rewrite a sentence you heard using inversion.
- Oral Summary: After the episode, record yourself on your phone summarising the main conflict of the episode in 3 sentences using at least one piece of new vocabulary and one inverted sentence.

### **Similar titles**

- The Devil Wears Prada (2006): Excellent for high-pressure professional environments and sophisticated vocabulary.
- Industry (BBC/HBO, 2020–present): Perfect for contemporary British/International business English and fast-paced dialogue.

## The Late-Night Grind



everyday\_scene

En esta escena, observamos a una profesional trabajando fuera de su horario habitual, lo que refleja la dedicación necesaria para alcanzar el éxito. La imagen sirve para debatir sobre la ambición, el equilibrio entre vida laboral y personal, y el coste de perseguir metas profesionales elevadas.

### Preguntas para hablar (Speaking practice)

- Describe what is happening in this photograph and the atmosphere it conveys.
- How would you interpret the woman's facial expression and her current situation?
- In your opinion, is it necessary to 'burn the midnight oil' to achieve significant success in life?
- Compare the lifestyle shown in this image with the typical work culture in your own country.
- Some people believe that extreme ambition leads to burnout. To what extent do you agree?

## Unit review – Work, Ambition & Success

Al finalizar esta unidad, deberías ser capaz de utilizar estructuras gramaticales avanzadas, como la inversión, para dar énfasis a tus opiniones sobre el entorno laboral. Asimismo, habrás ampliado tu léxico especializado para discutir conceptos abstractos como la ambición, la ética profesional y el éxito corporativo con el registro adecuado para un nivel C1.

En esta revisión, pondrás a prueba tu capacidad para transformar frases complejas y utilizar colocaciones precisas. El objetivo es que dejes de usar un lenguaje básico y empieces a demostrar la sofisticación necesaria para aprobar el examen de Cambridge C1 Advanced.

### Grammar consolidation

#### Part 1: Sentence Transformation

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.

-  
I had just entered the office when the fire alarm went off.

SOONER

No \_\_\_\_\_ the office than the fire alarm went off.

-  
He rarely goes to those high-level networking events.

SELDOM

\_\_\_\_\_ to those high-level networking events.

-  
You must not leave the building under any circumstances.

NEVER

\_\_\_\_\_ the building under any circumstances.

#### Part 2: Error Correction

Identify and correct the error in each sentence.

- Seldom I have seen such a dedicated team of professionals.
- No sooner had he finished the presentation when the CEO interrupted him.
- Rarely we encounter such significant challenges in our current role.

#### Part 3: Controlled Rewriting

Rewrite the following sentences starting with the word provided to create an inverted structure.

-  
I had never witnessed such a rapid rise to the top of the corporate ladder.

NEVER

\_\_\_\_\_.

-  
He had hardly started his new job when he was promoted.

HARDLY

\_\_\_\_\_.

-  
You little realize how much pressure this position entails.

LITTLE

\_\_\_\_\_.

-  
We had scarcely reached our sales targets when the market crashed.

SCARCELY

\_\_\_\_\_.

## Vocabulary activation

### Part 1: C1 Collocations

Complete the sentences using the correct form of the words in bold: STAKE, DRIVE, REACH, BREAK, CLIMB.

- After years of hard work, she finally managed to \_\_\_\_\_ the corporate ladder.
- He has a tremendous \_\_\_\_\_ to succeed in the competitive tech industry.
- The company has high \_\_\_\_\_ in the new project, so they cannot afford to fail.
- It was a much-needed \_\_\_\_\_ through in the industry for the young entrepreneur.
- We are working tirelessly to \_\_\_\_\_ our annual targets.

### Part 2: Word Formation

Use the word in capitals to form a word that fits in the gap.

- AMBITIOUS: His \_\_\_\_\_ to lead the company was evident from day one.
- REWARD: The \_\_\_\_\_ for such a high-pressure job is often a significant salary.
- RELIABLE: We need someone with a high level of \_\_\_\_\_ to manage the accounts.
- SUCCESS: The \_\_\_\_\_ of the merger depended on careful negotiation.

### Part 3: Register Choice

Choose the most appropriate word to complete the formal sentence.

- The board of directors decided to \_\_\_\_\_ (dismiss / fire) the CEO due to poor performance.
- It is essential to \_\_\_\_\_ (uphold / keep) the highest standards of professional integrity.
- The company is looking to \_\_\_\_\_ (expand / grow bigger) its operations into Asian markets.

## Integrated skills task

Source Text: The Myth of the Work-Life Balance

In the modern corporate landscape, the concept of "work-life balance" is often treated as a holy grail. However, many high-achievers argue that true success requires a period of intense, unbalanced dedication. They suggest that the pursuit of excellence is incompatible with a perfect equilibrium between professional and personal spheres. While this perspective is controversial, it highlights a fundamental tension: can one reach the pinnacle of their career without making significant personal sacrifices? Critics argue that this mindset leads to burnout and undermines long-term productivity, yet the drive for status remains a powerful motivator in global markets.

Writing Task

Instrucciones: Basándote en el texto anterior, escribe un ensayo (180-220 palabras) donde expresas tu opinión sobre si el éxito profesional requiere necesariamente el sacrificio de la vida personal. Debes usar un registro formal y utilizar vocabulario avanzado de la unidad.

## Speaking checkpoint

Responde a estas preguntas de forma oral, asegurándote de utilizar estructuras de inversión y vocabulario de nivel C1 para demostrar tu competencia.

- Compare: Compare the advantages of being a specialist in one field versus being a generalist in the modern job market.
- Speculate: How might the concept of "success" change for future generations due to the rise of remote work and AI?
- Evaluate: Evaluate the impact of intense professional ambition on mental health and social structures.
- Justify: Some people believe that a high salary is the only true measure of professional success. To what extent do you agree?
- Compare: Compare the work culture in your country with that of a different country you are familiar with.
- Speculate: If a person achieves great wealth but has no personal relationships, can they truly be considered "successful"?

## Self-assessment rubric

Criterion |

Needs work (B2/Low C1) |

Solid (C1) |

Exam-ready (C1+/C2) |

Accuracy |

Frequent errors in complex structures. |

Good control; errors are rare and do not impede meaning. |

Highly accurate; sophisticated use of inversion and grammar. |

Range |

Uses basic vocabulary and simple sentence structures. |

Uses a wide range of vocabulary and varied sentence types. |

Demonstrates a wide range of sophisticated, precise language. |

Fluency |

Hesitations occur when attempting complex structures. |

Speaks at length with natural flow and controlled hesitation. |

Smooth, effortless delivery even with complex topics. |

Task Achievement |

Answers are too short or do not address the prompt. |

Fully addresses the task with appropriate development. |

Provides nuanced, insightful, and highly developed responses. |

## Answer key

Grammar consolidation

1. Sooner had I entered
2. Seldom does he go

3. Never must you leave
4. Seldom have I seen
5. than he interrupted (or: No sooner had he finished... than...)
6. Rarely do we encounter
7. Never had I witnessed such a rapid rise to the top of the corporate ladder.
8. Hardly had he started his new job when he was promoted.
9. Little do you realize how much pressure this position entails.
10. Scarcely had we reached our sales targets when the market crashed.

Vocabulary activation

1. climb
2. drive
3. stake
4. breakthrough
5. reach
6. ambition
7. reward
8. reliability
9. success
10. dismiss
11. uphold
12. expand