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Unit

1

Business Kaleidoscope

In this unit you will learn:

☐ **Language Skills**

Reading: What Is Business?

Writing: Business Letters

Listening: Discussing a Weekend Plan

Speaking: Opinions about Online Shopping

Translation: Business Activity

☐ **Grammar Focus**

Present Simple Tense

☐ **Vocabulary**

Business Concept

☐ **Business Communication**

Expressing Opinions



Section I Lead-in

1 Work in pairs. Talk about business activities shown in the pictures below.



- 2 Business activity involves producing and selling goods and services. According to what they produce, businesses can be classified into goods-producing, service-providing or a combination of both.



Goods-producing Business

- * Produce goods that can be seen and touched
- * Produce goods with the use of machines and / or labor
- * Examples:
Manufacturing — Haier Group
Building and construction — China Vanke Co., Ltd

Service Business

- * Provide services that cannot be seen or touched but can be experienced
- * Services are performed when sellers interact with customers
- * Examples:
Travel and tourism — China Travel Service
Retail trade — Gome Group



Classify the following businesses into the correct categories.

travel agency
grocery shop
public transport

bakery
bank
hospital

shoe factory
vegetable farm
coal mine

oil plant
hotel
movie theater

Classification of Businesses

Goods-producing



Service-providing



- 3 Work in pairs. Discuss what type of business you think the following companies are engaged in.



- 4 Work in groups. Make a list of twelve major businesses producing goods or services.



Section II Reading

Introductory Remarks

Business is both an activity, or a set of activities, and a name we give to a special type of organization. Business is concerned with a range of activities that aim at the **production** of **goods** and **services** for sale. A business is an organization that makes goods and services and **supplies** or **sells** them to **customers** and **consumers**. Business activities can be broken down into three types: Primary industry, Secondary industry and Tertiary industry.

Text

- 1 Before you read, work in pairs and discuss these questions.

- 1 What is your understanding of business?
- 2 What role do you think business plays in our lives?

- 2 Read the text below and finish the following comprehensive tasks.

- 1 The term “business” is used in different ways. Name two of these.
- 2 What does the term “business” mean when we talk of “doing business”?
- 3 List the factors of production.
- 4 Explain the flow of money and goods shown in the text.
- 5 In what sense can non-profit organizations and charities be regarded as businesses?

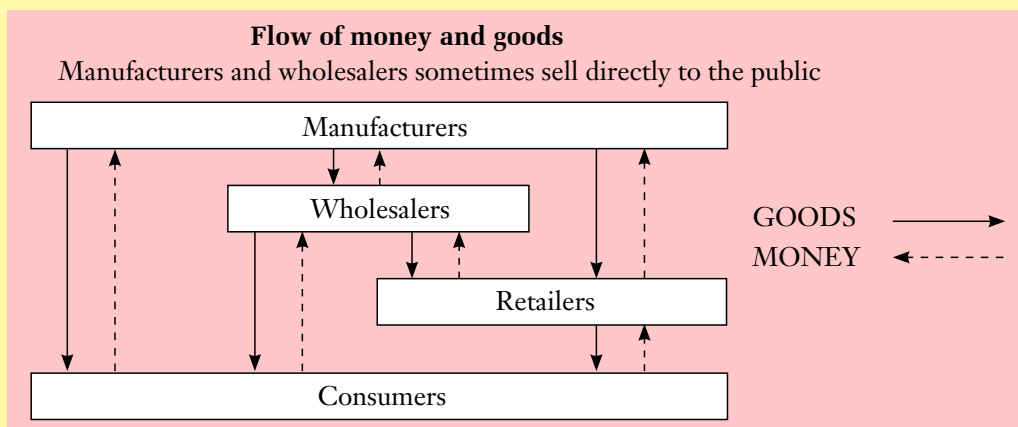


What Is Business?

Business is an important part of our society. We hear about business every day on television and radio. We read about business in newspapers and magazines. We talk about business with other people. “How’s business?” is a common question. In fact, in modern society we are heavily dependent upon organized business activity. The food we eat, the clothes we wear, the cars we drive are all products of organized business activity. We are engaged in business activities every time we exchange our labor for wages and every time we use our wages to buy goods and services. Every time we buy something — whether a car or a mobile phone — we make decisions that help determine the kinds of goods and services which business will provide. Although the subject of business may sound complicated, it is really an everyday part of our lives.

Most of us have an idea of what a business is: in reality, however, the issue is by no means clear. The word “business” is used in different ways. It is used to describe both an economic process and an enterprise engaged in economic activity.

In economic terms, “business” applies to the process of creating and exchanging economic values (i.e. goods or services produced and exchanged for value) and has been defined as “the purchase and sale of goods or services in an attempt to make a profit”. We use the word this way when we talk of “doing business”. For example, a retail business might buy products from a **wholesaler** which in turn acquires them from a **manufacturer**. At each stage of this process value is added and money exchanged. The retailer in turn sells these products to customers who may be individuals or other firms.



The word also refers to the enterprises or organizations that are engaged in profit making. Expressed more formally, business in this sense is the **institutional** framework that enables the “factors of production”, namely, capital, enterprise, land and labor, to be combined to produce goods and services. Businesses succeed and are profitable when they efficiently meet and satisfy consumer demands.

While we tend to relate “business” to the profit making activity of private enterprises, there is a sense in which any organization concerned with the exchange of economic values could be said to be a business. Though non-profit organizations such as charities and many public sector organizations might not be concerned with profit making, they will certainly be concerned with cost minimization. They will therefore carefully control their expenditure, and their activity in the market place will influence the price at which goods and services are sold.

Business activities are those which are concerned with seeking to meet the needs of customers by providing a product or service that they require. They are often broken down into three types:

- ♦ **Primary** industry
- ♦ Secondary industry (manufacturing and construction)
- ♦ **Tertiary** industry (services)

Primary industries are concerned with taking out raw materials from the ground or using natural resources. They include farming, mining and fishing. Farmers grow and harvest crops and farm livestock, while miners take out coal and oil from the earth.

Secondary industries are concerned with making and assembling products by using raw materials and parts from other industries. They include manufacturing and construction.

Tertiary / service industries are particularly important today. They are concerned with making invisible products — services. Transportation, retailing, finance, tourism are all service industries.

Notes:

wholesaler: person or firm that sells goods (esp. in large quantities) to shopkeepers for resale to the public.

manufacturer: person or firm that makes goods on a large scale using machinery.

institutional: of, from or concerned with an institution.

primary: earliest in time or order of development.

tertiary: third in order, rank, importance, etc; next after secondary.

3 Read the text again and decide if the following statements are true (T) or false (F).

- ☐ 1 The decisions we make every time we buy something will help businesses determine the goods and services to be provided.
- ☐ 2 Nowadays we can hardly live without organized business activities.
- ☐ 3 When we talk of “doing business”, we mean “trying to earn money by buying and selling goods or services”.
- ☐ 4 Business is only related to the profit making activity of private enterprises.
- ☐ 5 Activities of non-profit organizations in the market place will not influence the price at which goods and services are sold.



Section III Language Focus

Vocabulary

1 Match the words from the text with their corresponding definitions.

1 service

2 customers

3 an enterprise

4 consumers

5 an organization

6 goods

a the people who actually use the products of business

b a group of people with a shared purpose

c the people or businesses who buy the goods and services

d tangible items that you can see and touch, such as food, clothing and books

e business company or firm

f useful activities people do for you, such as haircuts, car repairs and legal advice

2 The nouns in the table are from the text. Write out their verb forms.

| NOUNS | VERBS |
|------------------|-------|
| 1 organization | |
| 2 sale | |
| 3 decision | |
| 4 manufacturer | |
| 5 production | |
| product | |
| 6 minimization | |
| 7 farmer | |
| 8 construction | |
| 9 transportation | |
| 10 consumer | |

3 Work in pairs. Replace the words in *italics* with the words used in the text.

- 1 Nowadays we *rely heavily on* (a_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _) organized business activity.
- 2 We *take part in* (a_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _) business activities every time we buy goods and services.
- 3 The subject of business may sound *difficult to understand* (c_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _).
- 4 *In fact* (I_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _), the issue is *not clear at all* (b_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _).
- 5 A retail business might buy products from a wholesaler which in turn *gets* (a_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _) them from a manufacturer.
- 6 They will carefully control their *money spent* (e_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _).

Now check your answers against the text.

4 Complete the passage using words from Exercises 1 and 2 in the correct form.

One of the main reasons businesses are set up is to 1_____ and sell goods and services. This is fine for the 2_____ and 3_____ who want those 4_____ and 5_____, or products. There are many types of businesses. Manufacturers produce 6_____ from raw materials or with component parts. Retailers act as middlemen in 7_____ goods produced by 8_____ to consumers.

Grammar

Present Simple Tense

❖ **Present simple tense** is used to describe both habits and / or routines and general facts or the truth.

❖ **Which sentence below refers to**

- 1 a permanent state or situation?
- 2 an action that happens regularly, repeatedly or all the time?
- 3 a future event based on a timetable?
- 4 a timeless truth?

- a We hear about business every day on television and radio.
- b Business is an important part of our society.
- c Services are things that people do for you.
- d We tend to relate “business” to the profit making activity of private enterprises.
- e I have important business to do tomorrow.

❖ **We also use the present simple for thoughts and feelings.**

- e.g. I like it.
I know you are right.
I think you are an excellent saleslady.



Most of us have little difficulty in our use of the present tense. Two kinds of errors, however, are made often enough to deserve these words of caution:

- 1 Remember that, unlike nouns, the verb form ending in “s” is likely to be singular. Note carefully the endings of verbs that have third-person subjects.

Singular

She *knows*

He *understands*

Kevin *writes*

Plural

They *know*

They *understand*

They *write*

- 2 Do not put a verb in the past tense simply because another verb in the same sentence happens to be in the past tense. Use the present tense to express an idea that continues to be true.

DON'T USE: What did you say your name *was*?

USE: What did you say your name *is*?

DON'T USE: She told me that she *didn't* like red color.
 USE: She told me that she *doesn't* like red color.

- 5 Robert Stanway works for an advertising company. Read about Robert's day, and fill in the table below, using the verbs in brackets in their correct forms.

A Day in the Life...

Mr. Robert Stanway usually 1 _____ (get up) very early — at about 6 o'clock. He 2 _____ (have) breakfast with his wife, and then 3 _____ (leave) for work at 7:15. He 4 _____ (go) to work by train, and 5 _____ (get) to the office just before nine.

"When I 6 _____ (arrive) at the office, I always 7 _____ (check) my email. I 8 _____ (get) a lot of messages from our overseas offices. Then I usually 9 _____ (have) a meeting with my team from 11 to 12 o'clock," says Mr. Robert Stanway.

Mr. Stanway 10 _____ (have) lunch in the office cafeteria at 12. The food 11 _____ (be not) very good, but it's cheap. After lunch he sometimes 12 _____ (meet) clients, or 13 _____ (write) reports.

He usually 14 _____ (finish) work at about 6 o'clock and 15 _____ (get) home about an hour later, and 16 _____ (have) dinner with his family.

In the evening, Mr. Robert Stanway 17 _____ (help) his children with their homework, and 18 _____ (watch) television with his wife.



Translation

- 6 Translate the following sentences into English.

- “商务”是指生产、购买和销售商品及服务活动。
- 这家公司主要从事汽车销售。(be engaged in)
- 所有企业都对盈利感兴趣吗?(make a profit)
- 他们的产品不能有效满足消费者的需求。(meet the needs of)
- 这个部门的主要业务与售后服务有关。(be concerned with)



Section IV Business Writing

Business Letters

Effective communications are essential to the successful operation of a business. There are mainly two kinds of communications: written communications and oral communications. Compared with oral communications, written communications provide a permanent record of the communication and can be referred to later. Also, written communications can be used to send longer and more complex information or instructions.

The main types of written communication used in business are:

- ▶ Letters
- ▶ Reports
- ▶ Notices
- ▶ Faxes and emails
- ▶ Memoranda, or memos
- ▶ Telephone messages

Business letters are an important means of communication. They are used for external communications with customers, suppliers, government and other outside agencies. Sometimes letters are also used for communications between an employer and an employee on personal matters. Business letters tend to be formal in style and language.

A business letter usually consists of seven major parts, i.e. letterhead, date, inside address, salutation, text, complimentary closing and signature. Besides, there are some additional parts of special importance, such as reference line, subject line, enclosure, carbon copy, etc

Writing Tips for An English Letter

- Make the letter clear and simple.
- Keep it short and to the point.
- Focus on the recipient's needs.
- Use simple and appropriate language.
- Re-read and revise it.
- Check spelling and grammar.

1 Work in pairs. Read the letter below and point out the elements contained in the letter.

2 Supposing you were Ms Ling Peng, the secretary of the Exhibition Center. Write back to Mr. Richard Johnson. In your letter, you should:

- ▶ Express thanks for the inquiry;

- ▶ Answer the question in detail;
- ▶ Express the desire to establish the business.



The letterhead may also contain the company logo and email address.

Phillips & Henderson Ltd

Lincoln House, 146 Dean Street
Westbury-on-Thames
London, W1D 3HB
Tel: 672534XX Fax: 672835XX

To avoid confusion, it is a common practice to write months in words.

14th June, 2009

The inside address is the recipient's address. Add job title if appropriate.

Ms Ling Peng
The Secretary
Modern Homes Exhibition
Exhibition Center
Manchester, MC1 3BE

When you don't know the name of the reader:
Dear Sir or Madam

Dear Ms Ling Peng:

For a business letter it is a good idea to put the topic of the letter as a heading.

Re: Prospectus

Use the pronoun we when writing for your company. This is more formal than I.

As we are particularly interested in having a stand at next year's Modern Homes Exhibition, we should be grateful if you would kindly send us a copy of the prospectus as soon as it is available.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Complimentary closing.

Yours sincerely

Sign the letter with your first and second names above your typed name and position.

Richard Johnson

Richard Johnson
Marketing Manager



Section V Listening & Speaking

Expressing Opinions

Listening

- 1 Eric, Michael, Emily and Laura are now discussing a plan for the coming weekend. Listen carefully. Answer the following questions and write down their opinions on the plans for the following weekend.



- 1 What are the two suggested plans for the following weekend?
- 2 Have they come to an agreement on the plan? If not, what will they do?
- 3 Listen again. Find out if they are for or against the plans indicated in the table below. Give reason(s) if possible.

| | Plans for the Weekend | | Reason(s) |
|---------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-----------|
| | Going for a picnic | Having an evening party | |
| Laura | | | |
| Michael | | | |
| Emily | | | |
| Eric | | | |

Communication Skills

❖ Asking for Opinions

- ▶ What do you think (of...)?
- ▶ What are your ideas?
- ▶ Do you have any thoughts on that?
- ▶ What's your opinion?
- ▶ How do you feel about...?

❖ Giving Opinions

- ▶ In my opinion,...
- ▶ It seems to me that...
- ▶ If you ask me,...
- ▶ I feel / believe / guess / suppose...
- ▶ From my point of view...
- ▶ As far as I'm concerned...
- ▶ Personally, I think...

❖ Agreeing with an Opinion

- | | |
|---|--|
| <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center; margin-right: 10px;"> Formal Informal </div> <div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Absolutely! ▶ Definitely! ▶ Naturally! ▶ I'll say! ▶ I think so, too. ▶ Of course. ▶ That's for sure. </div> </div> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ I agree with you (completely)! ▶ You're (absolutely) right! ▶ I feel the same way. ▶ I couldn't agree more. ▶ That's exactly what I was thinking. ▶ You can say that again. ▶ You bet. |
|---|--|

❖ Disagreeing with an Opinion

If you don't agree with someone's opinion, direct disagreement may seem impolite, especially in formal situations. You may want to soften your disagreement with an added phrase. You will probably want to tell the reasons for your opinion.

- | |
|--|
| <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center; margin-right: 10px;"> Impolite / Strong Polite / Soft </div> <div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ I (totally) disagree. / I don't agree with you. ▶ I don't think so. / You must be joking! ▶ I'm afraid I have to disagree. ▶ I hate to disagree / say this, but... ▶ I agree in a way, but on the other hand,... ▶ I see what you mean, but... ▶ You could be right, but don't you think that...? ▶ I understand your opinions / feelings, but... </div> </div> |
|--|

- 2 Talk in small groups. Choose words for these sentences and add words to express your opinions. Listen to your classmates' opinions, agree or disagree, and tell your reasons.

Example:

A: If you ask me, you'd better not buy anything on credit because it costs more.

B: I feel the same way, but on the other hand, sometimes I don't have enough cash.

I should(n't) always try to save money

You ought / (don't) have to compare prices

You'd better (not) buy anything / everything on credit

because...

Speaking

Sample Dialogue: Opinions about Online Shopping

Andrew: What's your opinion about online shopping?

Claire: I love online shopping. In my opinion, shopping online is a tendency. You can buy cheap goods and some other goods you may not find in your city.

Andrew: I'm with you on that and I think it saves you a lot of time and energy.

Claire: Exactly.

Brady: You guys could be right, but don't you think that online shopping is not safe and secure?

Claire: I see what you mean, but I have never had any problem.

Brady: As far as I'm concerned, I don't really trust many of the websites.

Andrew: Well, yes, I suppose you're right. Honestly, e-business in China is only in its infant period.

Brady: And I'd like to point out that China's credit system is still quite backward.

Claire: Well, maybe.

Andrew: What's your advice?

Brady: Just be careful! You must ask every detail about the goods, otherwise you might be cheated.

- 3 Make statements in which you give your opinion on the following topics. Your partner(s) will agree or disagree with you. Follow up with a reason for your agreement or disagreement. Then switch roles.

Example:

A: In my opinion, working part-time is good for college students.

B: I'm afraid I have to disagree. From my point of view,...

Topics

- Most lucrative profession
- College pressure
- Starting your own business
- The problem with advertisements
- Most pressing environmental problem in China

Section VI Business Etiquette

Do's and Don'ts in USA

- ▶ Offer a firm handshake, lasting 3–5 seconds, upon greeting and leaving. Maintain good eye contact during your handshake. If you are meeting several people at once, maintain eye contact with the person you are shaking hands with, until you are moving on to the next person.
- ▶ Good eye contact during business and social conversations shows interest, sincerity and confidence.
- ▶ Good friends may briefly embrace, although the larger the city, usually the more formal the behavior.
- ▶ Introductions include one's title if appropriate, or Mr., Ms, Mrs. and the full name.
- ▶ Business cards are generally exchanged during introductions. However, they may be exchanged when one party is leaving.
- ▶ A smile is a sign of friendliness, and in rural areas you may be greeted with a “hello” rather than a handshake.
- ▶ Ask permission to smoke before lighting a cigarette or cigar. Due to health concerns, you may or may not be given permission.



Review 1-3



Section I Vocabulary Review

- 1 The words below are all key words from Units 1, 2 and 3. Match each word to correct definition.

Vocabulary

- | | | |
|--------------|---------------|----------------|
| 1 product | 5 competitor | 9 management |
| 2 market | 6 partnership | 10 industry |
| 3 enterprise | 7 profit | 11 venture |
| 4 business | 8 goal | 12 shareholder |

Definition

- a project or undertaking, esp a commercial one where there is a risk of failure
- b (branch of) manufacture or production; commercial undertaking that provides services
- c object of one's effort; target
- d state of being a partner or partners, esp in business
- e goods produced by a firm, country, etc
- f control and organization of a business, etc
- g amount of money gained in a business
- h business company or firm
- i area, country, section of the population, etc to which goods may be sold
- j buying and selling (esp as a profession); commercial establishment, firm, shop
- k owner of shares in a business company
- l person who competes

- 2 Match a word on the left with a word on the right to make word partnerships.

- | | |
|-------------|-------------|
| 1 make | a staff |
| 2 take | b a company |
| 3 start | c a goal |
| 4 supervise | d a plan |

- | | |
|------------|---------------|
| 5 do | e development |
| 6 meet | f a profit |
| 7 write | g values |
| 8 hold | h demand |
| 9 hire | i business |
| 10 create | j actions |
| 11 reach | k shares |
| 12 promote | l a venture |



Section II Grammar Review

1 Read the text and choose the correct tense for the verbs in brackets.

John Smith 1 _____ (leave) working for a company of builders two years ago and 2 _____ (make a success) of it on his own. John 3 _____ (make) high quality, custom-built tables, chairs and beds. “Lots of people 4 _____ (move) away from cheap stuff and back to really well built, solid wood — and they 5 _____ (be) willing to pay for it.” John 6 _____ (not try) to compete with the large manufacturers — they are cheaper and better at making standardized furniture.

John 7 _____ (have) a full order book for the next six months. Sometimes he even 8 _____ (feel) a bit short of hands. Without doubt, he 9 _____ (take on) extra help to solve the problem. But it 10 _____ (not be) always like that. John is the first to tell you that there 11 _____ (be) many problems in the first few months and that he often 12 _____ (work) harder and 13 _____ (take) home less money than in his old job.

2 Complete the sentences below, using the words from the box in their correct forms.

| | | | | |
|-----------|--------|-------------|------|----------|
| produce | sell | provide | open | refer to |
| introduce | enable | manufacture | grow | rely on |

- At the beginning, Michael Dell _____ computers directly to customers.
- Labor _____ the use of mental or physical work to produce goods.
- Samsung _____ an MP3 player two years before Apple.
- Many economists are now talking about possibility that China _____ by about 8 percent in 2009.
- A manufacturer or a manufacturing company _____ products.
- The company _____ for business in the USA in 2008, with its head office in New York.
- Our program _____ you with invaluable training for a unique career.
- The company started business and _____ ballpoint pen.

- 9 Business people _____ email as an important form of communication with co-workers and customers.
- 10 The new product to be developed _____ the company to increase its market share.



Section III Business Review

Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow.

In the 21st century, many people make a distinction between the “old economy” and the “new economy”.

The old economy is made up of the businesses that have been around for a long time. These businesses make products and services that we are familiar with — construction companies like Vanke, retailers like Wal-Mart, oil companies like Sinopec, chemical companies like Sinochem.

From the late 1990s onwards we saw the development of what was termed the “new economy”. The new economy is a knowledge- and idea-based economy. Companies in the new economy are heavily involved in e-commerce (buying and selling things over the Internet), such as Alibaba.com, which is the world’s largest marketplace for global trade and the leading provider of online marketing services for importers and exporters. Other famous new companies are Amazon, the online bookseller, and Taobao.com, the biggest C2C (consumer to consumer) shopping website in China.

In 1999 many people were trying to buy shares in the .coms, hoping to make a lot of money quickly. But soon people realized that many of the new businesses were not going to make much profit in the short period.

However, what has happened is that companies in the old economy have moved into Internet trading. Many big companies today not only buy their supplies over the Internet, but also advertise and sell their products over the Internet. Most large companies have set up their own websites for e-commerce.

Questions:

- 1 Put the businesses in the box below under the correct headings.

Wal-Mart Amazon Sinochem Alibaba.com Vanke Sinopec Taobao.com

| Old Economy | New Economy |
|-------------|-------------|
| | |

- 2 Add more businesses into the table above.

- 3 Work in pairs. Discuss the differences between new businesses and old businesses.
- 4 When did the new economy began to develop?
- 5 Why did many people invest in the new business in 1999? And what happened?
- 6 How do the old businesses become involved in e-commerce?



Section IV Communication Skills Review

- 1 Write a company profile for Haier Group Company using the notes below. Write the company profile in simple language.

Name of company: *Haier Group*

Year of establishment: *1984*

Head office: *Qingdao, China*

Chairman and CEO: *Zhang Ruimin*

Number of employees: *Over 50 000*

Business activities:

Manufacturing household appliances, communication appliances, kitchenware, and IT products; domestic wholesale and retail; import & export.

Products / services:

refrigerators, air conditioners, washing machines, dishwashers, gas cookers, microwave ovens, televisions, DVD players, mobile phones and computers.

Main markets: *China, USA, Japan, Europe*

Annual sales: *Over \$17.8 billion in 2008*

- 2 Work in pairs. Present a company.

Student A: Read the company profile of Haier Group, and then present Haier Group Company.

Student B: Prepare some questions about Haier Group, and then ask Student A about it.

- 3 Translate the following sentences into English.

- 1 在现代社会，人们越来越依赖于信息。
- 2 我们公司主要经销各种电子产品。
- 3 我们想和贵公司探讨一下在中国建立一家工厂的可能性。(set up)
- 4 企业只有有效满足顾客的需求，才能取得成功并且盈利。(make profits)
- 5 中国的市场具有很大的潜力。(potential)