

# Understanding Corporate Structure

## Table of Contents

- 2 Warm-Up
- 3 Vocabulary Preview A
- 3 Vocabulary Preview B
- 4 Listening 1
- 5 Listening 2
- 6 Listening 3
- 7 Role-Play
- 8 Transcript



## Warm-Up

Match each question to the beginning of the appropriate response.

Then practise asking and answering these questions with different partners.

- |       |                                                                              |                                                                                            |
|-------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| _____ | 1. What company do you work for? What field does your company specialize in? | a) My direct manager is... / I report to...<br>I'm responsible for _____ members of staff. |
| _____ | 2. Approximately how many employees does your company have?                  | b) I work in...<br>I'm a...                                                                |
| _____ | 3. Which department do you work in? What's your job title?                   | c) I work for...<br>We specialize in...                                                    |
| _____ | 4. Briefly explain your duties.                                              | d) We have around _____ employees in total.                                                |
| _____ | 5. How many departments are there in your company?                           | e) We have / There are _____ departments in our company, including...                      |
| _____ | 6. Who's your direct manager? Do you manage anyone yourself?                 | f) My job involves... / My duties include...                                               |

## Vocabulary Preview A

Match the word or phrase with its correct meaning.

- |       |                          |                                                                                                                                |
|-------|--------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| _____ | 1. EdTech                | a) a term used by developers to describe the part of a computer application that the users directly see and use                |
| _____ | 2. start-up              | b) the person who starts a company                                                                                             |
| _____ | 3. founder               | c) to perform work duties that support the running of a business, such as paperwork, organizing meetings, and answering phones |
| _____ | 4. operations            | d) full of activity, energetic                                                                                                 |
| _____ | 5. oversee               | e) a short term for 'educational technology', e.g., computer hardware or software used in schools to support learning          |
| _____ | 6. front end             | f) the total number of people who see an ad or social media content                                                            |
| _____ | 7. deal with admin       | g) to be responsible for, to manage                                                                                            |
| _____ | 8. lively                | h) the day-to-day running of a business                                                                                        |
| _____ | 9. reach ( <i>noun</i> ) | i) available to help or support                                                                                                |
| _____ | 10. on hand              | j) a new company or business                                                                                                   |
| _____ | 11. lead                 | k) a person or company that might be interested in a product, potential customer                                               |

## Vocabulary Preview B

Complete these five questions with one word or phrase from Vocabulary Preview A.

Then discuss the questions with a partner.

1. Would you say your office is a \_\_\_\_\_ place to work?
2. What's the \_\_\_\_\_ normally like on your social media posts?
3. Do you have a colleague at work who is always \_\_\_\_\_ to help?
4. What difficulties might a new EdTech \_\_\_\_\_ face?
5. Who is the \_\_\_\_\_ of your company?

# Listening 1

You will hear an employee describe the organizational structure of her company. Read the first part of the description and discuss the questions with a partner. Listen to the description. Were your ideas correct?

**Extract**

We are a small EdTech start-up. We specialize in creating educational software and apps, mainly for schools, universities, and so on. We have around, oh, 15 employees in total.

1. What departments do you think the company have?

---

---

---

2. What are some job titles that the company employees might have?

---

---

---

3. What are some tasks that the employees might perform?

---

---

---

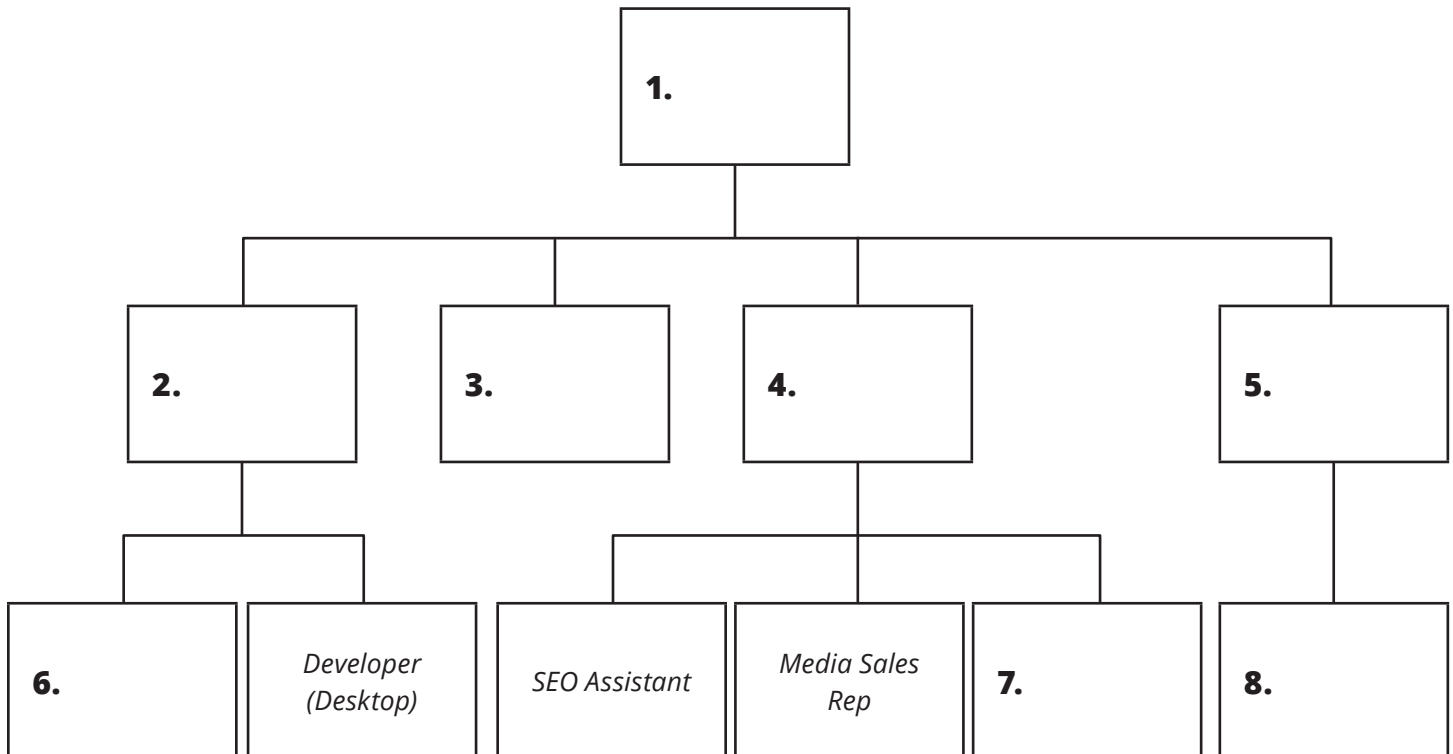
## Listening 2

Add the job titles to the correct place on the company's organogram.  
Some answers have been given.

Then listen to the description again and check your answers.

**Job Titles:**

- Product Lead
- ~~Developer (Desktop)~~
- Graphic Design Team
- Developer (Apps)
- ~~SEO Assistant~~
- Lead Graphic Designer
- Finance / Admin Manager
- Accounts Assistant
- ~~Media Sales Rep~~
- General Manager / Co-Founder
- Sales and Marketing Manager



## Listening 3

### A. True or False?

Decide if these statements are True (T) or False (F).  
Then listen again and check.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Both the company founders take an active role in daily business operations.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Farah manages four staff members.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Most of the company's products are mobile apps.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. According to the speaker, the office environment might affect Gita's work.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. The company finds most of its clients through social media.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Amy's role involves both sales and finance.

### B. Discussion

Work with a partner. Discuss the following question.

Did it sound like the speaker enjoys the job? Explain your ideas.

## Role-Play

### A. Practice

You are the speaker!

- Use the completed organogram and the prompts on the right to help explain the structure of the company to your partner. (Don't worry about the names of the employees.)
- When you finish, switch roles. Listen for any information your partner forgets to include.

#### Prompts:

- small EdTech start-up
- around 15 employees
- no departments
- four senior staff members (They are...)
- The graphic design team report to... (They work closely with...)
- The product lead oversees... (He manages...)
- The finance and administrative manager's duties include...
- The sales and marketing manager manages a team of...

### B. Task

Can you explain how your company is organized?

Step 1: Sketch an organogram of your company's corporate structure.  
If you work for a very large company, you may wish to focus on one department or team.

Step 2: Look back through the activities from this lesson and the listening transcript. Identify some useful phrases to help you explain the details in your organogram.

Step 3: Plan your description. Try to explain both the general structure of the company or department and some tasks performed by individual staff members.

Step 4: Describe your company's corporate structure to your partner.  
Ask your partner further questions based on their information.  
Examples may include:

- Do you think any departments are understaffed?
- Do you think there will be any changes to the company structure in the near future?

## Transcript

1. We are a small **EdTech start-up**. We specialize in creating educational software and apps, mainly for schools, universities, and so on. We have around, oh, 15 employees in total. I work in the graphic design team, although my role involves some programming too. I'm a user experience designer, or UX designer, as we call it.
2. The company is run by our general manager, Laura, who's also a co-**founder**. The other founder doesn't play a big role in our day-to-day **operations**. She just pops into the office now and then.
3. Given our size, we don't really have departments. There are four senior staff members under Laura. There's John, the product lead; Gita, our finance and administrative manager; Ben, who's the sales and marketing manager; and then Farah, the lead graphic designer. There are four of us in the graphic design team, and we all report to Farah.
4. The product lead, John, **oversees** our five main products. We have two mobile apps and three desktop apps. This means John has two developers in his team—one for the mobile apps and the other for desktop OS. The graphic design team work quite closely with the developers. We need to help them understand what we want for the **front end** of the apps—that's what the user, well, sees and uses. We bring our ideas to the developers, and they tell us what will and won't work in terms of programming.
5. Gita, in finance, just does her own thing. She doesn't have any support, so she's usually busy **dealing with admin**. She works from home a couple of days a week—probably to get more done. We have quite a **lively** office atmosphere.
6. Ben manages staff members in the sales team. One is Jay, who is our media sales rep. He does the online promotion for the apps, sharing posts across social media. We find social media sites are our main source of **leads**. That's actually why we hired Diego, who's our SEO assistant. He knows a lot about social media and analyses our promotions to see how well they perform—impressions, **reach**, that sort of thing. We use that information to make changes to our marketing strategy. Diego's with us part-time. He actually works for a couple of other start-ups in the same office space too.
7. Finally, there's Amy, our accounts assistant. The word 'accounts' makes Amy's job sound like a finance role, but that's misleading. Actually, her job involves working with our existing account holders—those that already use our apps. Amy is **on hand** to demo the apps, help clients with using the apps on a daily basis, and promote new add-ons or upgrades to the products. She does a lot! I guess she is kind of our helpdesk, but with a bit of a sales role too.