3 RESULTS & ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

3.1 Needs Analysis

Findings of needs analysis would be reported and discussed under four broad main headings:

3.1.1 Purpose and extent of use of English at work

3.1.2 Perception of language needs

3.1.3 Perception of language abilities

3.1.4 Conclusions and implication on syllabus design.

3.1.1 Purpose and extent of use of English at work

The Manager was a 32-year old male of Malaysian nationality. His mother tongue was Teochew and Mandarin; with Bahasa Malaysia and Economics educational background. Even though his English was perceived as upper intermediate, the demands of this new job (he was promoted to the new position of a sales manager about 7 months earlier from the date of this assignment) compelled him to strive towards excellence - and one such area identified was English language / skills. He had seven sales personnel under him, whom he addressed as product experts. He reported verbally and in writing to the national sales manager and occasionally country manager. In line with this, when asked directly whether knowledge of English was a decisive factor for success in his work, he responded that it is THE factor for success. English was the major language of pharmaceutical. It was important for the company as it was internationally linked with its headquarters in the United States. It was also essential for efficient communication within the company between national and occasionally
expatriate American staff. Although many of the workers did not have English as the native language, English was the accepted lingua franca of the work place.

The job of the Manager also entailed him to be proficient and well-versed with product knowledge. He thus needed to be very proficient in his English to read professional brochures, articles, introduce and explain (new) products in meetings and face-to-face interactions. His ‘clients’ were not only his product experts but professional doctors, medical specialists in hospitals and clinics, and pharmacists, mostly private, who preferred to converse in English. Thus, the learner’s setting is mainly intellectual semi-public professional psycho-social in nature.

English also provided the means for the Manager to pursue professional development. This in turn was essential for building his self-confidence and skills in leading his product experts. This would also mean he would be able to ‘keep his job’ and contribute to the growth of his Company. Being entrusted with this managerial position had caused him to be aware of the importance of projecting and maintaining his image. Therefore, he felt that working to excel in his English language / skills would be one of the ways to facilitate his duties.
3.1.2 Perception of Language Needs

In item 9 of Section A in the questionnaire, the Manager was asked to rank the four language skills - writing, listening comprehension, speaking and reading, by assigning the numbers 1 to 4 to each of these skills, 1 being the most important and 4 being the least important based on the conviction of the learner. The result was as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening Comprehension</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The result clearly indicated that the most needed skill for effective job performance was speaking. This was justified by the nature of his job where most of it involved face-to-face oral interaction: he frequently instructed, briefed his product experts; introduced subordinates, presented products to clients and often met to discuss and report verbally and sometimes in writing to his superiors.

Interpretation for ranking listening comprehension skill second could be sought in the fact that instructions, meetings, briefings of new products, etc. were conducted in English.

The Manager was also asked to evaluate the importance of certain listening subskills and speaking subskills. Table 2 summarises the responses:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subskills</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
<th>Important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Listening</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) Following meetings</td>
<td>/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Following discussions on job related matters</td>
<td>/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Understanding instructions</td>
<td>/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) Understanding questions</td>
<td>/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e) Understanding speeches / talks</td>
<td>/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f) Understanding normal face-to-face and telephone conversations</td>
<td>/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Speaking</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Meetings</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) Making formal introductions</td>
<td>/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Arguing or presenting persuasively</td>
<td>/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Giving suggestions</td>
<td>/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) Negotiating</td>
<td>/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e) Conducting formal meetings</td>
<td>/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f) Conducting interviews</td>
<td>/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(g) Presenting oral reports</td>
<td>/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(h) Delivering speeches / talks</td>
<td>/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Information</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) Obtaining information by questioning about general opinions</td>
<td>/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Obtaining information on job-related matters</td>
<td>/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Human / Public Relations</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) Attending to complaints about goods &amp; services</td>
<td>/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Attending to complaints from subordinates on personal matters</td>
<td>/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Entertaining / Conversing with clients</td>
<td>/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Both these categories of listening and speaking subskills were rated as very important and important. This result was congruent with the earlier ranking of listening and speaking skills.

For reading, the Manager selected reading reports, professional journals / articles / brochures and e-mail messages as the three most needed subskills. Again, judging from the fact that most product knowledge came from these 3 main sources, and reports acted as references or instruments for ‘keeping track’ of self-progress and achievement and that of his product experts, the selection was justified. However, comparatively, reading was not rated as important as speaking or listening. In fact, it was rated as the least important. One reason was that progress and sales reports dealt mainly with figures and normally such ‘reports’ were inquired verbally. Thus, in this sense, reports very often served as ‘company procedure’ and not necessarily read. Another reason was that whenever a new product (brochure) was introduced, a meeting would be called where introduction and clarification would be done orally.

It was interesting to note that reading newspapers and magazines was one of the least needed subskills. On seeking clarification, the Manager stated that the 3 selected most important reading activities were more than sufficient and substantial for his needs. He labelled reading the papers and magazines as more for recreational purposes. Contracts and minutes were also selected as the other 2 least important subskills in reading. That could be attributed to the fact that these 2 skills were normally ‘beyond his duty’. This same reasoning most probably applied to writing minutes, contracts and business letters. These 4 tasks were normally undertaken by his superior and the company secretaries.
The three writing skills most emphasised were writing reports, notices and replying e-mails. (It was interesting to note that the Manager perceived e-mail as a form of writing not speaking). As stated earlier, report writing was a common company requirement. Notices were related to meetings and new product knowledge. When asked for his interpretation of memos and how they were different from notices, it was interesting to note that the defined memos as more for disciplinary purposes.

Meanwhile, E-mail was one of the most important sources of current and updated pharmaceutical products and health related information. Such information would aid him in planning his ‘target sales’ with his subordinates and superiors.
3.1.3 Perception of Language Abilities

The Manager was asked (Items 2 & 4, Section B) how much difficulty he had in both speaking in English and understanding spoken English. Responses indicated that the learner felt more confident with listening comprehension while he had some difficulty in the following events related to meetings:

- Giving suggestions
- Negotiating
- Conducting formal meetings
- Presenting oral reports
- Delivering speeches / talks

Further interview revealed that his problems were related to grammar and language which impeded the effectiveness of his rhetorical skills in the areas stated above.

Questions 5 to 8 of Section B were designed to elicit responses on reading and writing abilities on the learner's selected important activities. The results were as depicted in Table 3:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3 Most Important Reading Activities</th>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>3 Most Important Writing Activities</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E-mail messages</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Replying E-mail</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Journal / Brochures</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Notices</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reports</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Reports</td>
<td>Average</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Perceived Abilities of the Selected 3 Most Important Reading and Writing Activities
As shown above, the Manager felt 'less confident' in writing reports, compared to the rest of the writing subskills. Reading was perceived by the Manager as 'easy' based on his interpretation of reading ability as deriving meaning instead of deciphering grammatical or structural items. Thus he rated himself as good for his selected reading activities.

3.1.4 Conclusion and Implications for Syllabus Design

Looking at the responses across the four language skills, it became clear that the Manager viewed himself as best in listening, then in reading, followed by writing and speaking. Basically, his ability in speech and writing could be summarised in Table 4 below:

*Table 4: Summary of Ability in Speech and Writing*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Speech Rating</th>
<th>Writing Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fluency</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>Below Average</td>
<td>Below Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronunciation</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>-Not Relevant-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>-Not Relevant-</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although the Manager rated his own general ability to use English as distinct from his professional ability as good, he mentioned his needs and desire to achieve 'impeccable speech'. Meanwhile, he attributed his weakness in vocabulary more to technical medical terms (which he could pick up later easily by referring to journals, etc.).
In conclusion, English Language needs of the target learner was beyond the threshold level. As the needs analysis revealed, the target learner belonged to the category of experienced learner. The analysis also revealed concern on the part of the learner not only to be communicatively competent, but to be linguistically competent as well. The learner felt more confident in receptive language - listening and reading, and needs to work on productive language - speaking especially, and writing. The learner did not need the specific vocabulary of his subject area (mainly product knowledge) prior to starting his course. His main needs were on strategies, for example, marketing his company product. In terms of vocabulary then, what he would need was the ability to ‘gloss’ - the technique where teacher would introduce specific terms and where there would be ability to ask questions when an explanation was not given.

In summary, the areas for improvement would be:

(a) specific professional speaking skills for business purposes, mainly that of presentations and negotiations.

(b) specific writing skill, mainly that of writing reports.

(c) grammatical skills (tenses, modals, subject-verb agreement, conditionals, sequences) grammar explanation and pronunciation.

The communicative key or tone which the learner would need to master might be broadly categorised based on his interactors and situations as formal, certain, assertive, discriminating, persuasive and courteous.

Further conversation with the Manager suggested that he was indeed very clear about his needs. He explained that time for a man in his position was indeed very previous. Then, upon paraphrasing what he said, in the event of a course especially
designed for him, and if he got to participate in it, he would want an approach where rules would be made explicit, models or examples precede exercises of grammar embedded in meaningful situations or contexts; and practices of rhetorical and professional skills related to his situations, experiences and possible experiences. That would imply ruling out the discovery learning process (after being explained to the Manager what this approach entailed). He mentioned that such an approach would be more challenging and interesting but time consuming and rather taxing. He would prefer to be 'told’ with reinforcement tasks. This seemed to be confirmed when he ended with this 'motto': “Come, quickly get down to business.”

Thus, upon my interpretation of the questionnaire, and upon what I was told and what I observed, I would propose and / or discuss the following in the next section:

(a) goals or objectives of a possible syllabus for the target learner
(b) criteria for selection and organization of content
(c) language areas which would be the focus in the course design

A possible set of general goals or objectives for the target learner based on my interpretation and observation of his needs could be as listed below:

**Goals / Objectives of Syllabus**

1. To contribute to the intellectual, personal and vocational development of the individual.
2. To develop and maintain a sense of confidence and self-worth.
3. To acquire competence to use English in real-life business
situation and hi-tech computer era.

4. To develop mastery over the English Language at the levels of phonology, morphology and syntax.

5. To develop communicative or professional skills in order to establish and maintain relationships, and solve problems through exchanging information, ideas, opinions, experiences and plans.


The possible main criteria for selection and organization of context is based on:

(i) that which would be needed most immediately by the learner

(ii) that which would have high surrender value, that is, of most use

(iii) that which would be necessary to avoid communication breakdown - leading to 'business failures'.

(iv) that which would be more frequently used by the learner.

The most probable language areas to be focussed in the course design are as follows:

1. **Grammatical Components**

   1.1 Tenses

   1.2 Subject-Verb Agreement

   1.3 Modal Verbs

   1.4 Conditional

   1.5 Sequence / Connectors
2. 'Skills' Structures
   2.1 Argumentation & Negotiation
   2.2 Talks / speeches / Presentation
   2.3 Reports
   2.4 Conducting Meetings

3. Functions of Exposition (Wilkins, Notional Syllabus 1976)
   3.1 Comparison & Contrast
   3.2 Cause & Effect
   3.3 Conditions
   3.4 Results & Consequences
   3.5 Justification
   3.6 Describing Trends & Products

Therefore, based on my interpretation of the data and from the needs analysis, observation and the earlier discussed possible considerations of goals or objectives, criteria for content selection and organization and the language points, I have drawn up a possible syllabus for the target learner. This is also done for ease of impressionistic comparison with the results of the text analysis. The outline of the syllabus is as shown next:
### Unit One: Presentation (1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Language Focus</th>
<th>Skills Work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current Project Progress</td>
<td>Present Simple, Present Continuous</td>
<td>Listening: Project Presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Speaking: Presenting Work Project</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Unit Two: Presentation (2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Language Focus</th>
<th>Skills Work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Product Presentation</td>
<td>Present Simple, Adjectives, Describing Functions, Subject-Verb Agreement</td>
<td>Listening: Presenting new product to sales team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Speaking: Presenting new product to client</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Unit Three: Presentation (3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Language Focus</th>
<th>Skills Work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Future Plan / Work</td>
<td>Future Tenses, Sequences, Modals: May / Might</td>
<td>Listening: Project Briefing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Speaking: Selecting a new sales site</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Unit Four  REPORTING (1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Language Focus</th>
<th>Skills Work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sales Division Achievement</td>
<td>Present Perfect Tenses</td>
<td>Listening: A Manager describing company achievement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Past Simple Tense</td>
<td>Reading: Products that did not sell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Speaking: Reporting on achievements and problems of drug sales.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Unit Five  REPORTING (2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Language Focus</th>
<th>Skills Work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sales Performance</td>
<td>Justification</td>
<td>Writing: Performance Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cause / Effect Connectors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Listening: Reasons for an organization’s economic performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Speaking: Explaining a graph &amp; / or discussing sales figures</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Unit Six  REPORTING (3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Language Focus</th>
<th>Skills Work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ordering Process</td>
<td>Sequences</td>
<td>Writing: Preparing a Flow-Chart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Passive Voice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Speaking: Explaining ordering procedure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

35
### Unit Seven  MEETINGS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Language Focus</th>
<th>Skills Work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Product Launches - Problems &amp; Solutions</td>
<td>Expressing Opinions Modals: should / could</td>
<td>Listening: Marketing Policy Writing: Planning a new marketing strategy Speaking: Proposing a new strategy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Unit Eight  NEGOTIATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Language Focus</th>
<th>Skills Work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Terms of Sales Present</td>
<td>Conditionals (Making Compromises) Justification</td>
<td>Reading: Stages of a Negotiation Listening: Negotiation Skills Speaking: Negotiating the sale of a drug.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As the syllabus for the target learner suggested, there would be pattern practices within useful, meaningful variations of contexts. This is in line with the behaviourist theory of learning where learning is believed to take place as habit formation. Learners are also thinking beings, and thus are active processors of information. When 'armed' with some sets of structures and rules, problem-solving tasks would be set for the learners where appropriate rules would be selected and used to analyse situations and applied.

The above syllabus has also been constructed along the line of Brumfit’s (1981) approach - *Snakes & Ladders’ Syllabus*. Here, a core ladder of structures ('skills') is intertwined with spiralling snake of related functions and structures. The target learner has also suggested his needs to be aware of underlying structures of texts (skills) and the way language is organised to create the structure. Thus, as the syllabus given above suggests, it has also been influenced by Widdowson’s Discourse Analysis approach in syllabus design. The learner would then learn to be aware of the stages in certain set-piece transactions, associated with his particular specialist field, for example, negotiating the sale of a drug.

Generally, it is a combination of content, skills and method approaches. There would be a structural / situational approach to focus and analyse discourse, grammatical components, functional items and skills. Subsequent reinforcement and practice [which would involve recycling of items] would then be incorporated with task-based approach in the form of the following activities:

1. Activities which would develop rhetorical skills of building up arguments, balancing points of view, putting forward opinions and suggestions.
2. Activities which would analyze and improve the ability to make spoken text coherent (linking & signalling devices, appropriacy, register, consistency & development of theme)

3. Activities which would analyse and improve the business skills of negotiation, presentation and chairing.

Macro Skills

The major proportion of work would be on the speaking macro skill. Other macro skills would be inevitably integrated but the main focus would be on the process and product of learning speaking skills.

Subject-Matter / Topic

Subject matter or topics would be related to pharmaceutical and sales situations. They would assume university or post-graduate level. Most of them would be straightforward, factual and some would involve controversial issues that entail problem-solving.

Course Content Organization

Organization would be around subject-matter related to rhetorical and business skills.

Content Organization Within Course Units

A clear focus on rhetorical and / or business professional skills structure, with related earlier selected and frequent grammatical item (s) and speaking tasks related to arguments, talks / speeches, negotiation, presentation, reports and chairing.
Content Sequence

It would be sequenced from easier to more difficult in the sense that less structures and items would be involved in the initial stages. Later units would provide recycling as well.

Content Sequence Within A Unit

Proposed sequence would be from guided - close to being explicit, to free. And from comprehension of listening / reading / writing tasks to production of mainly speaking activities.

Thus, the needs of the Sales Manager in an international corporate pharmaceutical firm in Malaysia have been analysed and discussed. A syllabus has been proposed to fulfil the learner’s needs. It is worth mentioning that syllabus is an approximate statement of teaching ideal and learning ideal. It can predict very little about what will be learnt. Course design is a ‘negotiated and dynamic process’ (Hutchinson & Waters, 1994). As and when needs change, which practically happen, methods, approaches language items or syllabus should be adjusted and adapted accordingly to fulfil learner’s current needs. Thus, syllabus should just act as compass or guide to address the needs of the learner. And so would it be in the search for a suitable textbook for the learner, which would be dealt with in the next section.
3.2 Text Analysis

The analysis and results of the analysis would be discussed according to similar subheadings as in the proposed syllabus:

A. Text Overview  B. Syllabus  C. Macro-Skill  D. Subject-Matter / Topic
E. Course Content Organization  F. Content Organization within the Course Units
G. Content Sequence  H. Content Sequence Within a Unit
I. Did it Match?

3.2.1 Text I

A. Text Overview

The first in the list was entitled *Longman Business English Usage*. It was claimed to be designed for all who have to or will use English in their professional career. It was said to stress on accuracy, citing that in business, accuracy would be particularly important as misunderstandings lead to inefficiency and would be costly - wasting time, money and effort. It was also said to cater for those with broadly intermediate level of English as coursebook or as a supplement, or on a self-access basis (answer keys were provided for this purpose).

B. Syllabus

Generally, there was a situational / structural approach in the activities or exercises. The focus was on grammar and vocabulary in business contexts. They were based on language in a variety of professional situations that a learner might find ambiguous or difficult. For example, what is the difference between ‘ensure, insure and assure’ or ‘to deal in’ and to deal with’? How does one distinguish ‘a make’, ‘a
brand', or 'a patent' and 'a copyright' or 'advertising, publicity, marketing and public relations'? *Longman Business English* Usage tells you what and how.

C. Macro- Skill

The major proportion of work was on writing and speaking macro skills. But the main focus was on the product - the accurate use of terms and grammatical components.

D. Subject - Matter / Topic

Topics or subject matter in the activities were related to general business English and include sales, etc. They were of levels which call for some proficient reading and general language proficiency to understand the explanations and examples of texts. Most of the subject matter were straightforward and factual. None involved any controversial issues that entail problem-solving.

E. Course Content Organization

Instead of around chapters, the book offered 130 alphabetic entries - more than fifty were points of grammar (highlighted in bold) while the remaining entries consisted of business terminology.

F. Content Organization within the Course Units

In many cases, an exercise (normally cloze passages and sentence completion) accompanied the brief grammatical explanations. Similarly, business terms were defined and accompanied by explanations on usage. Exercises and practices were normally in writing and speaking tasks (often at word [cloze passages] and sentence level) and
occasionally reading tasks (by underlining, or True/False or choosing appropriate expressions/terms comprehension questions).

G. Content Sequence

Each grammatical and language item involved was explained and practised in the entries itself. Thus in that sense there was not really any content sequence from easier to difficult or less to more, nor was there any recycling provision.

H. Content Sequence Within a Unit

If each entry was considered a unit, the sequence was that of very explicit explanation to guided exercises. There were very task-based activities. For examples, there was one based on a picture on pp. 135 (Appendix B) and another on a transcript of conversation on pp. 215 (Appendix C). Activities were mainly from comprehension of reading to mainly writing and some speaking activities.

I. Did It Match?

Commendable was the use of rather authentic materials and/or practice. See for example on page 135 again (Appendix B). Authentic business situations were brought in, thus in this sense meeting the needs of the Manager who wanted activities related to his business experiences and possible experiences.

It was rather interesting to see some comic illustration on the use of terms. For example:
(Taken from pp. 37)

But sometimes, some were more for comic purpose rather than authentic illustration.

See for example the comic taken from page 43:

*Bull, bear or stag?*

Anyway, I doubt these illustrations would actually appeal to the Manager. His motto was basically "Get down to business" and I supposed, 'serious' business of learning Business English.

That besides, did the textbook actually match the needs of the learner? Firstly, there was no focus on the needed macro learning skills of speaking nor on business professional skills like negotiating or presenting, etc. There was no evidence of any problem-solving tasks involving controversial issues or problems encountered in the Company. There were some straightforward ones like the use of charts and reporting. However, even then there were no exercises for entry 57 on Graphs, Tables, Charts
and Diagrams (Pictograph). The entry consisted of just a brief explanation on the pros and cons of each type of chart. A bar chart would be found for example, on an early entry 33, but it was for practice on comparison terms - in the form of True / False comprehension questions and a cloze passage. And a table for example, in entry 17 was used for practice on amounts - terms related to amounts ranging from 'exactly' to 'almost' to 'roughly', etc.

Reportings were confined to grammatical explanation and practice of reported speech. And I thought that some of the practices on rhetorical writing and speaking skills were rather 'tall orders'. For example, there was a writing task on page 215 (Appendix C). The instruction was to "write suitable minutes for circulation to all concerned" based on a transcript of a conversation of a meeting. The only input was earlier practices of reported speeches (which were not even relevant nor contributive for writing the minutes) and an model of a minutes which asked the learner to "look at the way the verbs in italics (reported speech) are used". There were no input for the learner on the format, type of language, how to illicit main ideas, etc. Thus, how does the learner how to write minutes? Anyway, this area was not within the needs of the Manager.

And lastly, there was no provision of recycling. In fact, there were instances when the learner might need to refer to later entries to understand and carry out activities in the earlier entries. Take for an example, entry 61 on "If". The grammatical items were brought under sub-headings:
Learners did not learn the tenses earlier. The learner would have to look to later P alphabet entries for cross-references on the tenses.

Therefore, I doubt that even if the learner were to go through the whole book, he would be able to remember and apply the business terms and grammatical items in his particular situation. The focus had been on accurate grammatical and business items, in fact, more than the points required by the learner. There was no focus on the teaching of professional cognitive skills where grammar points and business terms, together with the skills, armed the learner to analyse and carry out his tasks in business successfully.

At best, the book could act as a reference or guide, a sort of dictionary rather than "a survival kit" and only when the target learner encounter certain problematic, ambiguous business terminologies. Most grammar points with their brief explanations would be already familiar to the learner. And what was the criteria of selection of the grammar points and language items? The search went on to Text 2.

3.2.2 Text 2
A. Text Overview

The next book, instead of "grammar & business terms" focus was rather like on the other end of a continuum. The focus was on fluency in communicative settings, namely gathering, processing and sharing information (which was claimed to indirectly foster objectivity, accuracy and conciseness in expressions). Business English Recipes + A creative approach to business English was claimed to be an attempt to dispel the
preconceived image of business persons as middle-aged, austere, serious, etc. and to provide training for success in today’s business world by making learning pleasurable for the stressful, pressured business world people. These were done through emphasis on creative thinking, problem-solving, team-building, games and simulation in opposed to traditional vocabulary list and grammar-based business English coursebooks. It was also claimed to be for teachers who are looking for new ideas and supplementary materials, for business and commerce students and professional who know their own limitations in English and their specific job-related linguistic needs and ability. It was said to be viable for group or one-to-one version and different levels of English.

B. Syllabus

It had an activity / task-based interactive learner-centred approach. It left room for the process of negotiation in contextual / situational skills acquisition. For examples, dealing with telephone anxiety on pp. 23 (Appendix D) and public speaking skills in presenting, and problem-solving skills to solve the hypothetical question of where to invest and why 150,000 US dollars left by an uncle who had died as on pp. 21 (Appendix E). The first chapter included a type of ‘loop input technique’ which enabled the learner to be aware of their own learning styles and needs which in turn, enabled negotiation of course content using feedback dialogue too in the form of listing or keeping diaries. Activities thus appealed to the cognitive skills of the learner as well.

C. Macro Skills

Each of the seven main chapters had different main learning skills focus. For example, the main focus in Chapter 4 - Business Communication in Writing was writing skills, in Chapter 5 - Using Authentic Business Documents, reading skills and
Chapter 6 - *Gathering Information Through Listening*, listening skills while in Chapter 3 - *Business Communication on the Phone*, speaking skills, Chapter 7: *Business Strategies*, deals with professional or communicative skills of negotiating, presenting, problem-solving, decision-making, discussing and instructing and even observing for intonation, gestures, facial expressions, etc. Other skills were often integrated to facilitate the main learning skills of either one or two of reading, writing, listening and speaking skills. For example, reading in other chapters besides that of Chapter 5 - *Using Authentic Business Documents* were mainly confined to reading instructions on worksheet for an activity. See for examples, page 56 (Appendix F) or a questionnaire on pp. 70 (Appendix G) or a reminder sheet on pp. 68 (Appendix H) [not actual authentic business related texts]. The functions of expositions such as comparing / contrasting, justifying (giving reasons), describing, conditions were the focus of some sub-units in the chapter. The only grammatical components which were focussed were personal adjectives, past tense, basic tenses, prepositions and conditionals, each only once.

D. Course Content Organization

Organization was around the subject matter or topics related to language and business skills. It started with Chapter 1: *General Techniques*, basically a needs analysis chapter involving various learning skills; Chapter 2: *Presenting Information*, mainly speaking and listening focus; Chapter 3: *Business Communication on the Phone*, speaking skills focus; Chapter 4, *Business Communication in Writing*, writing skills focus; Chapter 5: *Using Authentic Business Documents*, reading skills focus; Chapter 6: *Gathering Information through Listening*, listening skills focus and lastly Chapter 7: *Business Strategies*, professional skills focus.
E. Content Organization Within Course Units

If each chapter was considered a unit, there were thus varied sub-units or sub-
chapters in each chapter. They ranged from 6 in Chapter 1, 16, 9, 9, 17, 13 and 13 in
Chapter 7. They were generally of the situational syllabus type:

For examples:  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-Chapter</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>My last trip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>The executive parking lot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.14</td>
<td>The job interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>The instruction manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.13</td>
<td>Letters to the Editor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There were also of skills-type syllabus:

For examples:  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-Chapter</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>Let me introduce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>Outgoing call strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>Incoming call strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>Translation Game</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>Visual interrogation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>Listening Strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.13</td>
<td>Listening to Discourse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.13</td>
<td>Creative thinking</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

F. Content Sequence

The content was generally sequenced according to skills - the first was to gauge
the needs and English level, and learning styles of the learner, followed by 2 chapters
which emphasized on listening / speaking skills, next on writing, then, reading, then
listening and finally cognitive or professional / communicative skills of solving
problems, making decisions, thinking, etc.
G. Content Sequence Within the Unit

There was no one particular organization, because the sub-units meet different English levels and may be for practice of either one or occasionally more skills communicative / professional skills and / or functions, structures (asking, answering questions, describing, etc.). However, each chapter normally started with grammatical components / functional items and in this sense it could be said to be sequenced from easier to more difficult. For Chapter 4 on Writing, There was 'Vocabulary Building' before embarking on 'cognitively' more difficult language, functional or learning skills that indirectly might and might not use the earlier learnt grammatical components and functions. Recycling is not explicitly mentioned. Again, later sub-chapters might or might not recycle the exact grammatical functions or communicative skills.

And each sub-unit or sub-chapter consisted of a complete task by itself where generally a framework structured the task. For examples, the framework might come in the form of a checklist as on pp. 21(Appendix H), instruction sheet on pp. 54 (Appendix I) or oral instruction to open / individual / pair or group discussions. It proceeded from initial guided production in the form of illicited written and / or oral responses and occasionally receptive skills of comprehension, to production of listening / reading / writing / speaking tasks and at times through trial and error.

H. Did it Match?

One area that could match was guided tasks to see the learner through the process of acquiring the productive (speaking) and professional skills. No doubt most of the tasks provided ample opportunities for the learner to practise his business skills of negotiating, persuading and presenting. The structures of strategies required for Units1, 2, 5, 6, 7 and 8 could possibly be fulfilled by the text focus on presenting, explaining,
justifying, proposing strategy and negotiating. However, they were not drug or sales related. The business skills were also mostly not pharmaceutical nor 'sales manager' in nature. There were also no focus in the textbooks on reporting or marketing strategies (Units 4 and 7 respectively in the proposed syllabus). Thus, most of the units in the proposed syllabus for the Manager were not met.

There were also ample opportunities to discover 'rules', for example, the dos' and don'ts' for a successful negotiation as on pp.117 (Appendix J) but these latter activities might take time. And as the needs analysis revealed, time is a crucial factor for the Manager. He would want to pick up skills in as little time as possible. It further called for expertise on the part of the teacher in business, as well, to confirm the findings of the learner in the discovery or it would be frustrating and time-consuming when the learner became unsure of his 'discovery'.

Lacking in the book was the explicit explanation and use of grammatical items and functional components. There were some occasions when the awareness of the need of certain grammatical components were raised, for example on pp 83 (Appendix K) on spelling, and functions of confirming, asking, describing and clarifying but there were no references provided. The Manager needed explicit explanation of how some functions especially grammatical structures could be used in his communicative/professional skills.

Thus, the textbook, Business English Recipes - A creative approach to business English, as it claimed, would be best used for teachers of business-orientated English courses who are looking for creative, new supplementary materials and I noticed, especially for the development of professional skills. There were, of course,
some useful tasks that creative learners given time and opportunities could adopt to their own situations. But it was unfortunate that the textbook generally did not supply the input and awareness of some language and skills structures or rules. In conclusion, in the area of business skills, the book provided more than needed but at the same time more specific needs were not met. The search continued with Text 3 next.

3.2.3 Text 3

A. Text Overview

*Business English Teacher's Resource Book* was claimed to be for elementary to advanced level business professionals and business studies students in multi or monolingual background. It could also be used in one-to-one or in groups, in intensive or extensive language or in-company courses. The book was actually a collection of photocopiable framework activities.

B. Syllabus

The activities seemed to portray the key feature of the process / method approach. The worksheets provided the framework to illicit situations, language forms and structures from the learners. Teacher observation notes enabled the teachers to observe and classify language errors or language relevant to the tasks / skills, that need to work on, for example, language of reporting relationships for the topic under Section, 2, Unit 8 *Company Structure*, and language of presenting visual information in Section 3, Unit 25 - *Graphs and Charts*. In this sense too, the focus of the textbooks was on functional and language skills. These approaches enabled negotiations between learners and teachers.
C. Macro Skills

The major proportion was on production skills of writing and speaking. Writing was mostly confined to notes, of corrected language (written in their personal language files worksheet) and writing notes or maybe in paragraphs (not explicitly specified) in advising (eg. How to talk with your boss), suggesting (eg. Ways in building up a new team), justifying (eg. A training plan for newcomer in the company) (Appendix L) which were then presented orally. The receptive skill of listening or/and even writing itself were used to facilitate the production of speaking skills.

D. Subject Matter / Topic

Topics were funnel-like - ranging from the broad and general international business scenes, narrowing down to organizations and finally to individual themes - relationship with others and self-management. The subject-matter ranged from straightforward and factual (eg. presenting a control cycle; pp 60; description of an ideal colleague/subordinate/boss at work; pp. 69; and methods of coping with stress; pp. 84. (Appendix M) to problem-solving issues (eg. identifying a specific quality problem at work; pp. 47; identifying communication at work, presenting and discussing solutions; pp. 67) (Appendix N).

They seemed to cater for no particular particular level as there was no prescribed language input for the tasks (although some, as the author claimed, because of more abstract language required for the topic, the elementary level had been excluded from the task description).
E. Course Content Organization

The content was divided into 5 sections, starting from general to individual themes. Under each sections was related units of subject matter and / or skills in working with people. In Section 1, for example entitled The Business World, there were subject matters such as "The market", "The future of business", "Cultural differences in business", etc. while in Section 4, there were skills subjects such as "Working with your boss", "Motivating people"; "Working in a team", "Training", etc.

F. Content Organization Within the Course Units

The content within the sections allowed a clear final focus of certain skills areas and tasks such as presenting summarised visual information, making predictions, narrating past experiences or functional tasks such as describing people, teams, products and services, feelings, attitudes and responses, stating aims and procedures, cause and effect (Appendix O with 'examples highlighted').

G. Content Sequence (throughout the book)

There was no obvious criteria of sequencing, but generally, each section started with more factual subject matter to more analytical ones. For example, in Section 2: the first unit was on company structure and later moved on to SWOT analysis. No doubt language items were recycled but obvious recycling was confined within the units. There were no clear explicit instructions for the reinforcement or use of language areas or skills across the units.
H. Content Sequence Within A Unit

Each unit was 'complete' by itself. It was generally sequenced into four stages. The first stage entailed guided initiating and eliciting relevant information through questions, worksheets or instructions. Stage 2 was a communicative task where learners work in groups or pairs again within structured framework. It was a follow-up task where students exchange information and discuss various issues raised. In Stage 3, teachers would work with students on good language use and language errors. The teacher would be actually providing a structured feedback; after monitoring and picking up the language used in Stage 2 using observation sheet and after classifying and deciding on which relevant language area to focus using the Classified Observation sheet. Learners recorded teachers' comments and suggestions or notes in their personal language files worksheet which would be used as reference in Stage 4 - Transfer, another relevant follow-up task.

Stage 4 - Transfer activity made use of the language discussed in Stage 3, thus in this sense, reinforced one or many of the language lexical (vocabulary) and / or structural (grammatical), functional (discourse), conceptual or phonological items.

It was thus sequenced from easy to difficult as firstly, learners in the initial stage or task complete a worksheet on a theme chosen by the learners themselves based on their own experiences, information or ideas. Secondly, the technique used was generally that guided / framework activities throughout except for the last task, the transfer stage where learners would be given more freedom in consolidating learning by practising a learner-chosen situation illicitated by the instruction in the transfer stage.
I. Did it Match?

For one, the textbook would most likely to work well with higher level learners as success would have to depend on BOTH the learner’s ability to contribute actively to discussions and on their competence in dealing with the unfamiliar contexts introduced by fellow learners. The Manager, I foresee most probably would not encounter many problems in these areas as he was considered to be at the advanced level of language competence and he had been in the business line (before he was promoted to the position of Sales Manager) ever since he graduated. He would have had many business related experiences, information and ideas. So in this sense, the book would match.

For another, the textbook incorporated learning of new ideas in an accessible format. This approach would appeal to an inquiring mind who like the discovery process learning. But as discussed earlier, the Manager due to some constraints and preferences would prefer not to adopt this method.

Not all the units in the book would be relevant to the Manager. In fact, most of the subject matters were not needed by the Manager. As advocated by the author, those units which would be of greatest relevance to the leaner had to be identified by a needs analysis hence the inclusion of this area in the beginning of the text. And even Unit 17 "What do managers do?" could be adopted as part of the process of needs analysis for the Manager.

Hence Unit One of the proposed syllabus - with the final skills work of presenting work progress could be met by Unit 13 Aims and Objectives. The tasks in this unit culminated in a final transfer-task of preparing and repesenting what the project was, its aims and how they could be achieved, thus complimenting the skills work of Unit One. However, there were no explicit models for example, to show how to present a work project - what were the presentation skills involved in making
presentations interesting and effective', for example?. Earlier tasks in each unit were
aids in preparing the content but not on (presentation) skills unless this was brought up
in the form of a feedback session after the presentation. The latter could actually be
done depending on the teacher.

Unit 2's main task of Presenting a new product and Unit 3 of Presenting /
Justifying selection of a new sales site as future plan / work (in the proposed syllabus)
were not provided under any of the themes in the unit. There were tasks involving
describing and presenting but not for company product. The future plan in the textbook
in Unit 41 Career Development was confined to preparing and presenting personal
action plan rather than for the company as required by the Manager.

Learners would discover how to chair meetings in Unit 23: Participating in
meetings and to improve meetings in Unit 22: Meetings, while in Unit 24: Problem-
Solving, the tasks culminated by dealing with identification of a problem, possible
solutions and justification, and recommendations for a course of action. In Unit 27:
Planning, there were teachers' notes on planning techniques for comparison with
learners' results from transfer task and especially relevant to the Manager if the chosen
subject of discussion was planning a new marketing strategy. All these tasks combined
would be complimentary to Unit 7 of the proposed syllabus requirement of the
Manager. But of course, the teacher would have to formulate different questions to be
related to the subject matter of product launches in the tasks.

Unit 25: Graph & Charts might meet the needs of Unit 6 - Preparing a flow
chart and explaining using the chart if in the discussion group, they chose to work on
the topic "Ordering Process".

Unit 26: Controlling and Monitoring included initial task of illiciting methods of
monitoring actions and the standards set for an objective. The communicative task
practises explaining how adjustment of actions, standards and objectives. Although the sequencing of task might need to be changed, this unit could meet the skills work of Units 4 and 5 of the proposed syllabus. But if the teacher failed to pick up the structure of business oral reports and some reporting skills and just focus on the grammar and functions, the Manager could be deprived of this area of need. However, the "art of negotiation" of Unit 8 of the proposed syllabus was not dealt with in the textbook.

Finally, the book did not provide the grammatical components or language structures needed to carry out a task successfully. Such provision would have to depend on learners' observed weaknesses and on the teachers from other sources. And if such areas were explicitly included, and based on the earlier discussion on the relevance of the units, the book could have almost perfectly met the needs of the Manager.

In conclusion, so far, 7 out of 41 units in this book, Business English Teacher's Resource Book, provided the greatest match" but not, especially the book as a whole, the perfect match to the needs of the Manager. The search had to move on to Text 4.

3.2.4 Text 4

A. Text Overview

The book Case Studies in International Business English was claimed to be for high intermediate to advanced ESL / EFL learners with interest or are pursuing academic business studies and for business people who wanted to improve their English. Cases selected were those facing large or small companies from developed to less developed countries and in main industries. The aim of the textbook was to get learners to think as decision makers for company decisions.
B. Syllabus

The book was generally of situational / contextual syllabus. The main focus was on problem-solving and exploitation of the experiences of the learner. It assumed a critical approach to analyse a wide spectrum of international business situations in different countries and recommend appropriate courses of actions to solve the issues raised.

C. Macro Skills

The major proportion of work were on the receptive skills of reading and production skill of speaking. Under the reading skills, the learner would learn strategies of skimming, scanning for identification of main ideas, locating key facts and for detailed information which would be responded to either in writing or orally. Speaking would be confined to pre-reading and post-reading stages, during research work and discussion on key issues.

D. Subject Matter / Topic

Subjects or topics revolved round international themes of expansion strategies (fertilizers), increase profitability, foreign-exchange risk, cultural differences in business practices (bribery versus consultation fees), marketing strategies (cookies product), bargaining / negotiation strategy in government-business relationships (for joint venture), overcoming financing alternatives (for research lab), determining location, viability and structure or type of office to establish (bank / Pcs in a foreign market) and issues related to supply, production and distribution of (PVC pipeline) product, potential problems with purchasers - competition, logistics, budgeting and management (issues of taxes versus profitability) and strategies to improve firm conditions (US auto
manufacturer). [The examples / situations in parenthesis were the ones dealt with in the textbook].

E. Course Content Organization

Generally, course content was organised according to business problems in strategies, marketing, finance, international trade and cross-cultural management.

F. Content Organization Within Course Units

A clear focus on creative, analytical and thinking skills. Earlier pre-reading exercise activated students' background knowledge to provoke essential issues from the case of each chapter or unit. This would help facilitate reading comprehension which would in turn further facilitated discussion of key issues. New related vocabulary necessary for the case study was also introduced before speaking / writing tasks at the end of the units. Such tasks were related to functions of explanations, making recommendations, negotiations and presentations.

G. Content Sequence

There was no obvious sequence nor provision of recycling in later units. Each unit was used independently and was entirely free-standing.
H. Content Sequence Within A Unit

It was sequenced according to the following subheadings:

- Pre-reading
- Introduction (Reading)
- The Case (Reading)
- Comprehension Questions
- Vocabulary Development
- Critical Thinking
- Research Question
- Case Analysis

Such sequence eased the learners into the analysis of cases which involved information gathering, making recommendations, role-play, chairing, etc. Activities thus were sequenced from comprehension reading tasks to production of mainly speaking activities. They were guided. All cases in the units led to discussion, presentation which would mirror actual business tasks. Most activities would require business expertise, information background in finance and investment.

I. Did it Match?

Topics / subject matter were at the advanced authentic level related to general business experiences and information background on finance, investment, etc. These might not be a problem for the Manager as he was of Economics background and he had been in business line ever since he graduated. However, most of the topics in the text were not related to pharmaceutical nor sales situations. In addition, the task-related to the financing alternatives for research facility in Chapter 6, The Bell South Case, pp. 68 - 71 (Appendix P), could be but just one relevant aspect for Unit 7 of the proposed syllabus (proposing a new marketing strategy in product launches). The issues of marketing strategies were dealt with in Chapter 4: The Monster Chomp Cookies case but the product involved cookies, not drugs! which might require very different
marketing strategies. Thus, the issues discussed in Chapter 4 might not be relevant for
the objective of Unit 7. Negotiation was confined to government-business relations,
confined to bargaining strategies for a joint venture in The West African Electric case,
in Chapter 5 of the textbook. Here again, such strategies might not be relevant for
negotiating the sales of a drug (Unit 8 of the proposed syllabus). Other issues of foreign
exchange risks, cultural differences, etc. were not the immediate current needs of the
Manager.

And no doubt the speaking skills were focussed and there were guided activities
which entail problem-solving and controversial issues. However, the language portion
of the chapter was simply to present words or expressions to be used for subsequent
tasks. It did not contain explicit grammatical explanations and reinforcement exercises
which were the requirements in the proposed syllabus of the Manager. Thus, the
textbook Case Studies in International Business English did not, as a whole, match
the language / learning needs of the Manager.

3.2.5 Text 5

The search ended with a final attempt on another different book, perhaps one
that could be said somewhere in the middle of the continuum of explicit grammatical /
functional approach to the negotiation / process approach with no explicit focus at all in
the grammatical functions.

And the search would end partly because of time and mainly because I am quite
convinced by now that there would be no one textbook which would a perfect match
for the needs of the Manager. This final attempt would I believe confirm this.
A. Text Overview

Business Objectives was one in a series of editions which comprised Student's Book, Teacher's Book, Workbook and Cassette. The textbook analysed here was Student's Book. I had earlier analysed one Teacher's Book. There was no introductory chapter in the book, but the cover indicated that it won the first place of the English Language Prize of The Duke of Edinburgh, awarded by the English Speaking Union in 1991.

B. Syllabus

The core syllabus was that of structural/functional approach in all the 16 units of the book. However, the sixteenth unit incorporated the communicative skills/professional skills of negotiation by incorporating the task on "What makes a good negotiator". The other units were basically provision of appropriate structure and functions and controlled grammar practice, information-gap and role-play tasks. Some were challenging in the sense that the tasks appealed to the learner's business experiences. For example, on page 54, part 2 Unit 6 on Socializing, the rubrics read:

"When you meet people for the first time, it's nice to find you've got things in common. Work with a colleague. Do you both play golf? Do you both have the same number of children? Find 5 things you've got in common".

Or another in Unit 9: Describing Trends on page 87 which read:

"Draw a graph representing something connected with your work, for examples:

- seasonal sales trends
- annual turnover
- raw materials prices
- number of employers

......take turns......present....Explain what they represent. Give reasons for the changes.

(Appendix Q)
C. Macro Skills

The focus of each unit was on at least 2 of the 4 language skills of listening, reading, speaking and writing. It intended to develop language skills - words, phrases or expressions to handle situations or functions.

D. Subject Matter / Topic

Topics / subject matter were related to a variety of situations that business people would generally come into contact with or do. For examples, there were company related situations or performance such as Company Presentation, Product Description, Reporting, Describing Trends, Company Results, Comparing Alternatives, Systems and Process; people oriented situations and management such as Socializing, Making Arrangements, Travels, Telephoning, etc.

The rubrics and activities / subject matters in the textbook seemed to suggest that they were of the intermediate level. There were more straightforward and factual subjects. For example, see page 13 (Appendix R) where you just needed to write a profile of yourself. There were very few involving controversial issues that entail problem-solving. One example could be found on page 122 in Unit 13: Business Travel where you were asked to discuss and decide proposals and argue the case for introducing changes to a system of work.

E. Course Content Organization

The organization was around subject matter related to situations / functions.
F. Content Organization Within Course Units

There was a clear focus on language skills with selected grammatical items and/or expressions, words, phrases and/or functions. Language skills tasks were related to varied business situations.

G. Content Sequence

There was no obvious sequence of content. Each unit was designed to be used independently but there were rare occasions when recycling happened. For example, the task on page 77 in Unit 8: *Making arrangements* (Appendix S) incorporated the skills of telephoning found in Unit 2. But the task did not explicitly draw the attention of the learner to the skills learnt in Unit 2.

Grammar notes on use, examples and formation and a glossary were included in the appendix to be referred to (at times explicitly told to) for grammatical exercises in the units.

H. Content Sequence Within A Unit

Each unit generally moved according to the following sub-topics (in bold):

- **Presentation**
  
  Generally involved listening and completing a listening task and acting out the conversation.

- **Language Work**
  
  Grammatical items exercises and/or functional phrases or structures, for examples of inviting (pp. 72), asking suggestions/confirming (pp. 73) often in situational contexts in either sentence and/or paragraph levels.
Skills Work

There were 2 to 3 guided tasks. Phrases, stimulus and/or questions, lists, examples served as guides to practise the one language skill focussed in each task. Such tasks vary from straightforward. See for example pp.140 (Appendix U) to tasks that entail cognitive skills in solving problems. See earlier example of pp. 87 (Appendix Q). When the skill focussed was on reading, there were more grammatical and/or vocabulary practice to facilitate comprehension and discussion. See for example, pp. 150-151 (Appendix V).

Thus the content within the unit was sequenced from guided and from comprehension of mainly listening tasks to production of at least 2 language skills.

I. Did it Match?

The content sequence and those within the units were quite matching to the learner’s. There were instances of recycling. There were guided activities and comprehension to aid in production of many speaking activities.

The needs analysis of the Manager suggested pattern practices within useful, meaningful variations of contexts. And when armed with some sets of structures and rules, the learners would carry out problem-solving task where appropriate rules would be selected, used to analyse situations and applied. Generally, the textbook was of such approach. The language was made explicit with models or examples which preceded exercises embedded in meaningful situations or contexts.

However, that earlier structures, rules, etc and problem-solving tasks involved only helping the learner prepare the content rather than guiding the learner to also acquire the professional/communicative skill. Thus, for example, in Presentations,
what was required would also include the stages involved in presentations, the Dos' and Don'ts, etc. Unit 3: *Company Presentation* of the textbook no doubt explicitly provided some vocabulary and grammatical items (present continuous tense, use of the verb 'have'), however, the chapter did not teach you *how* to present. Rather, the learner was guided through the use of graphic stimulus and and worksheet to illicit and organize information. It stopped short of "*How to Present*". Thus, it did not meet the professional / communicative skills requirement of the Manager. Similarly for the professional skills of reporting and meeting.

For Unit 8: *Negotiations* of the proposed syllabus, there was an attempt in Unit 16: *Negotiations* of the textbook to address the professional / communicative skills of negotiation. However, it was limited to reading and comprehending a passage on "What are good negotiators like?" and it was given AFTER other skills work tasks. Thus, such skills or knowledge did not serve the purpose of equipping the learner to carry out the earlier speaking task to negotiate the sale / purchase of a new machine. There was an earlier task though in dealing with the stages of negotiations.

Many of the units in the textbook were related to the subject matter required by the Manager, for example, work project (Unit 5), product description / presentation (Units 3, 4), sales achievement (Unit 9), etc., but none related to drugs. At the same time there were many that were not relevant, for examples, personal profile (Unit 1), making appointments (Unit 8), hotel's marketing policy (Unit 7), social conversations (Unit 6), cross-cultural contacts (Unit 13), writing advertisement (Unit 14), etc.

Occasionally, the textbook might have taken into consideration the tone in which a leaner would need to master in communication. There was an occasion though, on page 144, Section 2 where the activity drew attention to the explicit meaning of the
sentences found in the dialogue in Section 1. (Appendix W). However, the rationale for that activity was unclear. Did it mean that the phrases in Section 2 or Section 1 were not appropriate? And why? Did it mean that phrases in both sections could be used? Or was Section 2 just a comprehension exercise to check understanding? Or was it related to the communicative key of the phrases used? Anyway, under Language Focus, the text often provided some phrases to be used, but it did not provide any rationale or examples of unsuitable phrases for explicit consideration of tone or communicative key of the utterances.