

1. Discuss the questions.

- What project(s) are you working on right now?
- What might go wrong when working on a project?
- Do you draft a contingency plan (aka Plan B) for every project?
- When a project ends, do you have a meeting to discuss what went well and what went wrong?



2. Read a short dialogue from a final project meeting and underline all the conditional sentences.

Peggy: Who would like to start?

Manuela: I can! So, all in all, I think we've done pretty well. But, of course, there are some things worth pointing out. During our next project, we definitely need to read the project brief more carefully. As you all know, this time we didn't and because of this, we faced some serious problems. For example, if we hadn't missed the functionality requirement described in the last point of the brief, we wouldn't be working on it now.

John: Yeah, I agree with you. What I would also like to add is that we have to work on setting achievable milestones. I feel that we are sometimes a little over-optimistic. If we were more realistic when planning projects, we would have achieved all of the project's goals on time.

Peggy: Sure, that's something we need to work on, but, let's face it, it's not easy to change personality. Nevertheless, there is one more thing I want to discuss. We need to remember that every project is a joint effort by the whole team and not just one person. For sure, we need to give thanks to you, Manuela. I feel that if you weren't such a good team player and hard worker, we wouldn't have done so well.

Mixed conditionals for Business English

Manuela: Oh, come on, we all did our best! Next time, we just need to spend more time on a contingency plan because it could really save our lives! This time, however, we didn't have any, and that's why we had so many delays. If we had had a complete and well-thought-out Plan B, we could just celebrate our success now and not be thinking about how we are going to finish the project in just a week.

John: You're right Manuela! It should give us some food for thought.

3. Study the table below and choose the correct words (*present* or *past*) in the rule sections.

MIXED CONDITIONALS

SAMPLE SENTENCES

- If we hadn't missed the functionality requirement described in the last point of the brief, we wouldn't be working on it now.
- If we had had a complete and well-thought-out Plan B, we could just celebrate our success now and not be thinking about how we are going to finish the project in just a week.

THE RULE

We use *if + past perfect, would/could/might + infinitive* to talk about PRESENT/PAST results of a hypothetical situation or condition in the PRESENT/PAST.

SAMPLE SENTENCES

- If we were more realistic when planning projects, we would have achieved all of the project's goals on time.
- If you weren't such a good team player and hard worker, we wouldn't have done so well.

THE RULE

We use *if + past simple, would/could/might + have + past participle* to talk about PRESENT/PAST results of a PRESENT/PAST situation or condition.

4. Complete the sentences with the correct form of the verbs in brackets.

- a) If we (leave) earlier, we (sit) on the plane now.
- b) If you (be) so lazy, you (finish) your task by now.
- c) We (be) in a better financial position now if you (not reject) that job.
- d) If he (not steal) money from the company, he still (work) for us.
- e) If you (not have) such a good memory, we (not find) that place again.

5. Rephrase the sentences using mixed conditionals.

EXAMPLE:

You didn't finish your work on time because you are a procrastinator.

If I weren't such a procrastinator, I would have finished my work on time.

- a) You were late for a kick-off meeting. Now, you don't know the details of the project.
- b) You should be participating in a business meeting now, but you are not. Your taxi didn't come on time.
- c) You are a really good worker. You got promoted.
- d) You don't know German well enough. You didn't get a new job because the company's language is German.

6. The teacher will give you some cards. Choose one, finish the sentence so that it is a mixed conditional sentence and continue the story by giving two or three more sentences. Then, choose another card and repeat the process.

EXAMPLE: If he hadn't stolen money from the company...

If he hadn't stolen money from the company, he would still work for us.

Unfortunately, he was too greedy and that made him a criminal. I really miss Stan. Actually, he was such a nice guy. I wonder whether he will ever find a job again in finance.