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Cuts



When we talk about a four letter word in English we are usually referring to a swear word, but this particular noun, also has very negative connotations. This is particularly the case in times of economic crisis and financial doubt. Cuts are something we 'face', and they always sound ominous! Cuts are often decided by those at the top will affect those at the bottom.

Here are some expressions linked to cuts…

To get the axe.
To be given to chop.
To cut off funding.
To be cut out of something.
Cut it out!

To cut someone off when they are talking.
To cut to the chase.
Cut the crap!
To feel cut up about something.
A cut of meat.

ACTIVITY ONE

Think up some answers…

- Find some examples of things that are being cut in France as a country in order to face the economic crises?
- Give example of companies currently cutting jobs.
- Give examples of other ways companies save money to reduce spending .

ACTIVITY TWO

Put together an **argument**…



Using the following linking words explain how each of the above cuts affects people.



Essentially
Basically
Clearly
Obviously
Realistically
Ultimately

Therefore
However
Although

Furthermore

On the one hand
On the other hand

This means that
This results in
The affect of that is…
This affects people in several ways..

First of all, secondly…

In conclusion
At the end of the day
So, when all is said and done
In the end
So, the result is that…

ACTIVITY THREE - Phrasal Verbs. *Do you remember what a phrasal verb is?*

It's a verb plus a preposition, which changes the meaning of the verb. The good news is that phrasal verbs give us many different ways to use verbs. Therefore lot's of new words.

The bad news is that they can be a little confusing. The solution is to pay attention as soon as you see a verb used with a preposition and to write them all down and learn them as you **come across** them. **Here's an example with CUT:**

To cut across
To cut back
To cut down
To cut through
To cut up
To cut off
To cut out
To cut in

Try to use these different phrasal verbs in sentences.

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ACTIVITY FOUR - **Put** the phrasal verbs **back** into their places in the text.

Company directors have to …….. to more and more difficult decisions. As the government …….. new plans to patch up the economy with new taxes, companies can only survive by ……..the extra expense to their clients and ……..on working hours. The pressure on retail businesses to ……..their prices is immense. This means the only way they can ……..on spending is by reducing working hours. This is particularly the case in France, where the new socialist government has actually increased the cost of working hours by ……..the previous governments amnesty on social charges for overtime. As families also ……..on spending, sales in certain sectors reach an all time low resulting in massive …….. for example in the automobile industry. Consumers ……..even more on spending as they fear for their jobs and their future and we are all ……. our governments to make the right decisions to stop the whole economy from completely ……!

cutting down	**calling off**	**falling apart**	**passing on**
keep down	**lay-offs**	**counting on**	**puts together**
cut back	**face up**	**cut down**	

ACTIVITY FIVE - Listen to the song and answer the questions. Read the questions first so that you know what to listen for. **The River – Bruce Springsteen.**

1. What were his expectations when growing up?
2. Where did he meet his wife?
3. Why did he get married?
4. How old was he when he got married?
5. How do we know he was politically active?
6. Where did they like to go, to relax and what did they do there?
7. How did they get there?
8. Why did he lose his job?
9. How is his relationship with his wife now?
10. What state is the river in now?
11. What haunts him?
12. What's this song about in your opinion?

ACTIVITY SIX – ***Bad News…*** In English we usually start bad news sentences with one of the following expressions:

- I'm afraid that…
- I'm sorry to say that…
- I'm sorry to have to inform you that…
- I'm going to have to ask you to…

With your partner or teacher act out one of these situations:

1. You inform your employees that there will be job cuts and you explain why.
2. You announce to your boss that you have decided on strike action and explain why.
3. You tell one of your employees that you have to cut their hours and explain why.

ACTIVITY SEVEN – Watch the video and explain what happens.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gpwzuCDBi6I

You're Fired!

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ACTIVITY EIGHT – You can't fire me!
With your partner or teacher act out a conversation where your boss tries to fire you but you try make it impossible! You have to use as many of these phrasal verbs as possible: (You can refer to the list of phrasal verbs for definitions).

Mess up	To think over	To turn on
Find out	To set up	To turn up
Back up	To hold up	To cut out
Bring up	To look into	To give up
Get back at	To make up	To look out
To end up	To put up with	
To get away with	To think back	
To get over	To sort out	
To work out	To work out	

ACTIVITY NINE – **Read and summarize** one of the articles (alone or with your **team**) and **then re-tell the story** to the rest of the group/to your teacher in the form of an **interview**. (Ask questions to Michael Gill or Lauren Kaye.) (In a group lesson a third of the team should read both articles and **compare and contrast the two different stories**.)

Michael Gill

Michael Gates Gill was a creative director at J. Walter Thompson Advertising, where he was employed for over 25 years. He lives in New York within walking distance of the Starbucks where he works and is the author of "How Starbucks Saved My Life: A Son of Privilege Learns to Live Like Everyone Else."



Make a leap with faith rather than huddle in fear is the single most important piece of advice I can give to anyone seeking a job.

The other day a woman I had known when I was a top advertising guy came into my Starbucks store while I was sweeping up. I was singing a little tune when she stopped me. "Why are you so happy?" she asked me. I told her the truth: "This is the greatest job I ever had."

She looked at me with surprise. I am just as surprised that a job I would never have considered has helped me create a whole new kind of life I really love.

When I was fired from my six-figure job I spent precious time trying to get another position at the same level in the same profession. It was not until I was virtually broke and happened to sit down next to a young woman who was a store manager and was eager to hire someone that my luck began to change.

"Would you like a job?" she asked. "Yes," I answered without thinking. Not thinking is key to getting your next job. If I had thought about it I would never have wanted to trade my Brooks Brothers suit for a green apron serving others. Yet my new job gave me a chance to re-create my life in many wonderful ways I would never have imagined.

One example: Because it is a part time job I got a full time life. After opening my store at 5:30 am I leave at noon, and the afternoon and evening are mine. Time can be spontaneous. I can go for walk. Spend time with my children. I would never have written my book without the time my new job offered me. I would also never have found a simpler life, without the strain of keeping up a high-status lifestyle, if I hadn't been forced to lower my standard of living to match my new hourly wage. I leapt at a chance to take a job I never would have "thought" was right for me, and I've never been happier.

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Lauren Kaye

Like many people in the legal, City and financial industries, Lauren K aye, 33, was made redundant last year. In her case, the news came in August and she has spent the time since working in a very different environment

"I had a feeling I would get made redundant, but I didn't know for sure. I was working as a media lawyer in London and the company had just been taken over. I'd been working there for three years and I loved my job. It was August and I'd just been off sick. Then, on my first day back, I found out I didn't have a job any more.

"It was a total shock, but then within a week I'd booked a flight to Central America. That's what credit cards are for. I thought to myself: I'm 33, I don't have any ties and I don't have to find a new job; I can use this as an opportunity to do something totally different.

"Anyone with a job like I had – in the City or for a law firm – should have a plan B that they'd like to do if they get made redundant. I did, so when it happened I knew it was time to put it into action. I had been skiing last March for the first time and I really enjoyed it but had thought to myself that I would never be able to get that good if I only did it once a year. So it seemed like the perfect opportunity to spend a chunk of time in the mountains. The job I ended up getting was to work the forthcoming ski season with Crystal – the same company I'd been on holiday with.

"It was really sunny during the week while I was organising everything, so I spent the days sunbathing in Regent's Park. I stayed in London for the whole of September, going away on breaks with friends. I'd already planned a week in St Tropez. My feet did not touch the ground.

"Within a week of not working I couldn't imagine how people had time for a full-time job. Every day there was someone to meet for lunch or something to do; it was the best few months. I did a two-week French course and then I went to Central America for five weeks. I flew to Nicaragua and travelled around Costa Rica and Panama – it was something I'd always wanted to do.

"When I got back I had a week in London putting away my summer wardrobe and getting out my winter stuff. Then it was time to head to the mountains. I arrived in Les Arcs in early December to begin working as a rep and it's fantastic. It's like nothing I've ever done before. I'm not normally someone who likes the cold or early mornings but when I get up at 6am and see the view of the sun coming up over Mont Blanc, it seems worth it.

"Six months ago I was working at a computer all day, every day. The stuff that's happened has given me an opportunity and who knows what I'll be doing this time next year; I've got no idea. Everyone back home thinks I will take another law job, but to be honest I don't really know, because once you're off the hamster wheel, you don't want to get back on. I did enjoy my life but it was very conventional, whereas now I realise what else is out there. You get ground down by living in London with the stress of daily life, but then all of a sudden you remember how to smile every day. The people I worked with are some of my best friends and they say they're very jealous when I email them now – it's good to keep in touch with old colleagues. I feel like my health has improved massively even though I'm working hard, because I'm not stressed.

"If one of my friends got made redundant tomorrow, the first thing I'd say is don't panic. The worst thing to do is to jump straight back into getting another job – it's better to see it as an opportunity to do something you've never done before. It's also important not to see it as a rejection of you personally, because it's not. Trying not to get cross with the people who've put you in that position is also crucial, partly because there's no point, but also because they've actually given you a chance. I know lots of people are married with kids and wouldn't be able to do this, but if you're given the opportunity to try something different, you should just take it."

'What doesn't kill you makes you stronger.