

# THE SALES FORCE

We had a very lively meeting of the sales force today. The Sales Director spent twenty minutes telling us off. First he said he was fed up with getting such shoddy field reports and he threatened to cancel the Christmas bonus. Then he said we were too complacent and he was going to insist on certain rules in the company being obeyed. He would no longer let us stay in first class hotels and he was going to make us account for every minute of our time. He said he would insist on starting all meetings punctually, and would no longer accept people arriving late. 'I can't stand listening to people apologising for being late. I could write a book on all the different excuses I've heard this year. A large percentage of them are suspicious, and I don't approve of people being economical with the truth,' he complained.

He went on to talk about the last sales conference and accused some of us of cheating on our expenses. He absolutely refused to listen when we tried to protest our innocence. 'I don't mind you claiming for normal expenses,' he said, 'but I really object to people claiming for what they're not entitled to. Basically,' he added, 'I'm tired of listening to excuses. The sad thing is,' he went on, 'that you could all be earning a lot more if you didn't spend so much time running round in circles. We can't afford to let our opportunities pass us by. It's no good thinking we'll increase our sales figures without making more effort. If you don't concentrate on improving your results I can't actually imagine any of you getting any commission next month. I've got no intention of wasting any more of my time arranging appointments for you if you're not going to put in the work in the field.'

He finished by saying that he expected us to work a lot harder in future and that he was looking forward to seeing our next set of sales figures. He was prepared to postpone any sackings for the moment as long as we avoided doing anything else to annoy him. Personally, I object to being shouted at, but he certainly succeeded in giving us all something to think about!

**A List the verbs in the text which are followed by a second verb. HIGHLIGHT any prepositions plus the ENDING of the SECOND verb!**

**B Rewrite these sentences, using one of the verbs on your list:**

1. I must have your expense account by Friday.
2. I'm not going to accept any more cheques.
3. I'm sorry I used your computer without asking you.
4. I'm not going to do this report until later.
5. I had to stay in because my father insisted.
6. He told me that Jack stole his watch.
7. I think that legalising drugs would be wrong.
8. He continued his lecture by talking about the war.
9. I'm not going to lend you any more money.
10. It's useless to think that money is not important.
11. I managed to finish the work by Friday.
12. I find it objectionable when people spit in public.
13. I'm going to keep out of trouble.
14. He plays the guitar very well.
15. I worked on my verbs for twenty minutes.

**C Finish off these phrases with a personal comment of your own:**

1. I object to ...
2. I don't approve of ...
3. I usually try to avoid ...
4. I'm going to concentrate ...
5. I'd like to postpone ...
6. Our English teacher makes us ...
7. Our English teacher won't let us ...
8. I'm fed up with ...
9. I don't mind ...
10. Most parents insist on ...
11. I can't stand people ...
12. I'm tired of ...
13. I waste a lot of time ...
14. I spend too much time ...
15. I refuse to ...

**D Transpose into reported speech the Director's actual words in paragraphs 1 and 2.**