

B2–C1

upper-intermediate to advanced

Business Impact 2.3

Modules A, B and C

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Business Impact

This innovative modular business English course covers two levels B1-B2 (intermediate to upper-intermediate) and B2-C1 (upper-intermediate to advanced) in six books (print + digital). Each of the six books comprises three modules, A, B and C. All modules are also available as stand-alone digital modules.

All **A Modules** have a strong focus on **personal encounters**, all **B Modules** focus primarily on **day-to-day business** and all **C Modules** focus on **business results**.

Modules can be chosen individually to suit the level, interests and requirements of classes, allowing full flexibility and control in terms of content and progress.

Welcome to **Business Impact 2.3** **Module A: Crisis management**

Business Impact 2.3.A is the A Module from *Business Impact 2.3*.

This module focuses on **personal encounters in the business world**. In this module you'll work on case studies about crisis management.

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Useful abbreviations & acronyms			91
100 useful business English words			92
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Module B: Negotiations

Business Impact 2.3.B is the B Module from *Business Impact 2.3*.

This module focuses on **day-to-day business**. In this module you'll work on case studies about negotiations.

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Final Milestone			84
Essential phrases			89
Useful abbreviations & acronyms			91
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Welcome to **Business Impact 2.3** **Module C: Modern day entrepreneurs**

Business Impact 2.3.C is the C Module from *Business Impact 2.3*.

This module focuses on **business results**. In this module you'll discuss case studies about modern day entrepreneurs, and consolidate your skills in discussing important issues in English.

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Crisis?

What crisis?

Agenda

- › Small talk: What is a crisis?
- › Case scenario: BrightWave Engineering
- › Accepting responsibility & providing reassurance
- › Avoiding blame & focus on solutions
- › Role play: Applying key strategies in a crisis

"Any deep crisis is an opportunity to make your life extraordinary in some way."

— Martha Beck, author

"In a crisis, don't hide behind anything or anybody. They're going to find you anyway."

— Bear Bryant, former Alabama football coach



"In crisis management, be quick with the facts and slow with the blame."

— Leonard Saffir, PR executive

"YOU'VE MADE A BIG, EMBARRASSING MISTAKE?
DON'T WORRY, ..."

› Small talk

Refer to the quotes and the cartoon above and chat about the following questions in class.

1. What is the message of each quote?
2. Which quote can you identify with most, and why?
3. How might you complete the cartoon caption? (Original caption: p. 11)
4. What point is the cartoon making? How close to reality is this, in your experience?
5. Have you ever made or observed an embarrassing mistake at work? What happened?

› Case scenario

BrightWave Engineering, a multinational company with offices in over 20 countries, is known for fairness, respect and discretion. But when one small mistake went public, the company's reputation was suddenly at risk.

In this session, you will find out what happened and how the BrightWave crisis was dealt with. The example will allow you to assess and develop the language skills necessary when facing similar situations at work.



› Down to business

An attachment with dramatic consequences

Find out how a mistake by a member of staff at BrightWave Engineering led to a crisis within the company.

THE EMAIL

no one was meant to see



The mistake: When HR executive Lucas finally pressed SEND, he felt a wave of relief. But seconds later, panic struck. Instead of a general update, employees received a spreadsheet with confidential salary and bonus details.

The fallout: The reaction was immediate: Chats exploded and inboxes started pinging. Staff were shocked; managers alarmed. Some questioned BrightWave's professionalism; a few threatened to resign or take legal action. Senior leaders were concerned about reputational damage, financial costs and the risk of lawsuits. One thing was certain: The company's credibility was at risk, and restoring trust would require careful handling.

The dilemma: The email came from the shared 'info@' address and nobody wanted to take the blame. Behind closed doors, however, Lucas admitted his mistake to his manager, Emily. She faced a choice: either name Lucas publicly, which would satisfy demands for transparency and fairness, or protect Lucas while focusing on solutions.

The response: Emily chose to contain the situation. Carefully worded messages were sent, emergency meetings were held and new safeguards were introduced. Gradually, trust was rebuilt and BrightWave's reputation survived intact. But without swift crisis management, the outcome could have been far worse.

1a Read the article and discuss these questions in class.

1. What exactly happened?
2. Who was affected and how?
3. What were the main concerns of colleagues and managers at BrightWave?
4. How did Lucas react? How did his superior, Emily, react?
5. How would you have reacted in Lucas and Emily's position?

1b What's your opinion?

1. Should Lucas have felt personally responsible or was this an organisational risk? Explain why.
2. What was most damaging: the loss of trust, the team's reactions or the data breach itself? Explain why.
3. Have you ever experienced a similar situation? How was it handled?
4. How do you think a similar mistake would be dealt with in your workplace?

Solving the crisis

Find out how the crisis at BrightWave Engineering was dealt with.

A.01 2a Listen to how Lucas's meeting with Emily unfolded after he sent the email. Then discuss the questions in class.

1. What is Lucas worried about?
2. What action does Emily suggest? Do you agree with her proposed way forward?

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In crises, people may exaggerate or catastrophise. Using calm, professional language can neutralise drama and keep the focus on solutions.

A.01 2b Listen again and note the phrases used by Lucas to do the following:

1. to admit blame _____
2. to show that he feels less worried _____
3. to show determination to fix the mistake _____

2c Complete what Emily says. Then suggest different ways of saying the same thing.

1. Let's not _____ things.
2. There's no point _____.
3. It's not the end _____.
4. I'll do my utmost to ensure there are no _____ for you.
5. We won't name you as _____.
6. And you shouldn't _____ that information either.

A.02 3 Emily is leading a team meeting to manage staff reaction. As you listen, tick (✓) which crisis management strategies Emily uses. Then listen again and note the phrases used in each case. Brainstorm alternatives in class and add them to your notes.

Strategy	Phrase(s)
<input type="checkbox"/> Showing understanding	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Focusing on facts, not suppositions	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Avoiding assigning blame	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Minimising damage	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Assigning concrete steps	_____

Role play: Applying key strategies in a crisis

Use the skills and language covered in this session to deal with a similar crisis scenario.

4a Follow the steps below and practise responding calmly and professionally in a crisis.

1. Read the scenario.
2. Choose one of the options and decide on roles.
3. Note useful language from this session that you could use.
4. Practise with your partner/group.
5. Repeat, switching roles and partners/groups.



Enjoy watching this video clip.



Scenario: A printed spreadsheet containing confidential staff information (dates of birth, marital status, appraisal evaluations) has been left at the copier. Employees are concerned about privacy.

Option 1 One-to-one meeting (pairs)

Role A (employee): You made the mistake. Apologise and accept responsibility.

Role B (manager): Stay calm, reassure, outline steps forward.

Useful words / phrases

Option 2 Team meeting (groups of 3–4)

Role A (team members): Express shock and concern; speculate about responsibility.

Role B (team leader): Stop finger-pointing, neutralise drama, focus on solutions.

Useful words / phrases

4b In class. Review your performance. Which role did you find easier? Which required more diplomacy?

› Review and AOB

Review what you have learned in this session.

1. Suggest what you could say to reassure a colleague who has made a serious mistake.
2. Explain the following terms: 'dire consequences', 'to beat about the bush' and 'to jump to conclusions'.
3. Name two strategies that can help minimise damage in a workplace crisis.

› Final feedback

What did you find most useful in this session? Tell the class. Any questions?

CRISIS COMMUNICATION:

WHEN CONFIDENTIAL DATA GOES TO THE WRONG PERSON

Dr P, a medical consultant, regularly emailed correspondence to patients as attachments. However, on one occasion an error occurred. Just as he was about to send an email to Ms M, he realised he had accidentally attached her treatment document to an earlier email sent to another patient.

Dr P immediately contacted the unintended recipient asking for confirmation that the attachment had neither been opened nor read, and requesting that it be deleted at once. Shortly afterwards, the patient confirmed that Ms M's data had been deleted unopened. Dr P then informed Ms M of the incident in the following email.

Subject: FYI: Error in recent correspondence

Dear Ms M,
I am writing to let you know that your recent treatment document was accidentally sent to another patient. I apologise for the error. You can rest assured that the document was deleted unread by that patient. Please let me know if you have any concerns.
Kind regards,
Dr William P

Dr P believed the matter had been resolved, but a week later he received a formal complaint from Ms M. She expressed distress about the accidental disclosure, and concern that her personal treatment details might have been shared more widely or that other sensitive information might have been exposed.

Dr P contacted his lawyer for guidance on how to respond. He then drafted the following conciliatory email to address Ms M's concerns.

CONFIDENTIAL

Subject: Response to your complaint

Dear Ms M,
Thank you for raising your concerns. I am genuinely sorry for the distress this situation has caused and would like to reassure you that I am dealing with your complaint with the utmost seriousness.

When sending recent correspondence, your treatment letter was inadvertently attached to an email intended for another patient. As soon as I realised the mistake, I contacted the recipient and obtained confirmation that the document had been deleted without being opened or read. I then informed you of the incident.

To minimise the risk of similar errors in the future, I have reviewed my procedures for sending patient information and introduced additional safeguards to ensure that both attachments and recipients are carefully checked before sending.

If you feel it would be helpful, I would be glad to arrange a meeting to discuss any remaining concerns or questions.

Once again, please accept my sincere apologies for this incident. I hope I have been able to reassure you of my commitment to protecting your confidentiality.

Kind regards,
Dr William P

Dr P is currently awaiting Ms M's reply.

1 Number the events in the correct chronological order from 1–7.

- a) ___ Dr P contacts his lawyer for guidance.
- b) ___ Dr P sends a brief email to Ms M informing her of the error.
- c) ___ Dr P mistakenly attaches Ms M’s treatment letter to an email to another patient.
- d) ___ Dr P drafts and sends a conciliatory email addressing Ms M’s concerns.
- e) ___ Dr P contacts the other patient and explains what has happened.
- f) ___ The patient confirms that Ms M’s data was deleted without being read.
- g) ___ Ms M expresses distress and sends a formal complaint.

2 Dr P’s legal adviser provided a checklist for writing a conciliatory response. Which items did Dr P follow in his second email (✓)? Which didn’t he follow (X)?

- a) Express sincere apology and show that the complaint has been taken seriously.
- b) Explain what happened and how the error occurred.
- c) Specify limits of data breach (e.g. only treatment details, no other personal data).
- d) Include confirmation that the data was not accessed and has been deleted.
- e) Outline steps to prevent further breaches.
- f) Offer a meeting to discuss any concerns and resolve the complaint.

3 Find examples of conciliatory expressions in the second email that express the following:

- a) to apologise: _____
- b) to reassure/build trust: _____
- c) to describe corrective action: _____
- d) to explain preventative measures: _____
- e) to offer further support: _____

4 Draft Ms M’s reply to Dr P after the first email. Follow the steps below.

- a) Write the email reply yourself, based on information in the text. Use polite assertive language to express concern and ask for reassurance.
- b) Now use an AI tool to generate a reply, using the same information from the text.
- c) Compare the versions. Note useful language and produce a final version.

5 Optional extra: Use an AI tool to draft Ms M’s reply to Dr P’s second email. Before creating prompts, consider the following questions. Be prepared to share and compare your drafts in the next session.

- › How conciliatory should the style be? Can this approach go too far?
- › Is Ms M satisfied or dissatisfied with Dr P’s response?
- › Would Ms M like a meeting with Dr P or is this not necessary?
- › Is further action required or is the matter now closed?

Original cartoon caption, page 6: “You’ve made a big embarrassing mistake? Don’t worry, in about 187 years nobody will talk about it anymore.”