

## Virtual encounter – when brandividuals and avatars meet

### Teacher's notes

#### Aim

To review grammatical tenses and transform the way we speak to customers

#### What

Creating business avatars

#### Interaction

Pair work

#### 1:1

Student completes both tables and discusses his/her customers with you

#### When to use

Anytime with Part C

#### What you need

Worksheets A and B per student

#### Preparation

Enlarge and copy the worksheets so that there are enough of both for each student.

#### Here's how

- To introduce the task, ask your students' opinion:  
*When marketing your product or service on your website or through social media, is it better to speak to a large group or to an individual?*  
Most people will agree that it is better to speak to an individual. To help them do this, more and more companies interview their customers and poll the results to create a business *avatar* (really, just a visual representation of an individual). In social networking, many companies also create *brandividuals* (a personification of their company – i. e. *we care*).  
Write the following quote on the board:  
*Your résumé is no longer a piece of paper. It's the Google Search results of your name.* (Mike D. Merrill)  
Discuss the quote, especially what this means for businesses.
- Divide the class into two – group A and group B, then further divide each group into pairs and give them their worksheets – worksheets A to pairs in group A and worksheets B to pairs in group B. If the students do not all work for the same organization, ask the class to decide on a business that they are all familiar with (they will need to do some research in this case). Give them time to discuss and answer the questions.  
The answers that the students write require them to use different tenses. Monitor the class as they write and help them with their structures if necessary.
- When students have written their answers, make small groups of four by joining pairs from group A and group B. Ask them to exchange and read each other's worksheets. They should then decide whether they think their brandividuals and avatars make good matches.
- Repeat the exercise, only this time change the roles – students who were formerly group A are now group B and vice versa. Before starting again let them also decide on a new business.
- Finally, ask the class for feedback and discuss whether they think avatars and brandividuals are important to their businesses.

**TIP** Give students a copy of the article *Gartner Says Enterprises Must Get Control of Their Avatars* at [www.gartner.com](http://www.gartner.com).

*Thanks to Calvin Keogh for the inspiration for this activity.*

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### Worksheet A – Your brandividual

*Brandividual – a company personified*

Service you provide:	
Where your customers can see you:	
Say something about your history. When were you founded? What happened after that?	Where are you today? (Location, size, branches, subsidiaries etc.) What are you doing at the moment?
What have you done recently? (Sales, development, new services etc.)	What are your targets? (Where will you be next year/in five years' time?)



### Worksheet B – Your customer avatar

*Avatar – a visual representation*

As a customer I want:	
I use the following social networks:	
Who am I? (age, address, position, hobbies) (location, size, branches, subsidiaries etc.) ... I am not happy/worried about ...	Last year I lived through (political/social/career/family events) ...
Things that have recently changed in my life ...	In the next five years, I will ... When I retire, I will ...