

## The butterfly effect

### Teacher's notes

#### Aim

To practise speaking about alternative consequences

#### What

Sentence completion and recognizing conditional clauses

#### Interaction

Teamwork

#### 1:1

The student chooses several strips and then completes the sentences

#### When to use

Any time after task 7 on page 64

#### What you need

One set of strips with unfinished *if*-clauses per group

#### Preparation

Copy and cut up the strips of the worksheet.

#### Here's how

1. Write the following quote on the board: *It's not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change.* (Charles Darwin)

What do the students think this means? How can its message be applied to business?

Point out that even the smallest event can dramatically affect the success of a business for the better or worse. Give the example of the Ford motor company, which in 1913 became the first to introduce an assembly line in industry and subsequently went on to introduce large-scale manufacturing. Explain that this phenomenon is known as the butterfly effect or chaos theory and is often used in business.

2. Divide the class into small groups (ideally 4–5 students). Hand out two or three *if*-clause strips to a group. Each group elects one person to be the *guesser*. The other members of the group draw an *if*-clause strip without showing the guesser. They write three or four clauses to complete the sentence.

**Example:** *If* salesman Ray Kroc hadn't bought a milkshake at the McDonald brothers' restaurant, ...

1. ... McDonald's would not have become so big.
  2. ... we wouldn't have recognized the golden arches.
  3. ... Ronald McDonald would be an ordinary name.
- Guesser: If McDonald's hadn't opened a restaurant, ...

3. Ask the group to read all the newly formed parts of the sentence to the guesser. He/She should then try to think of an *if*-clause that suits all of the group's clauses. When the guesser has made a clause, the rest of the team reveal the original sentence which hopefully will amuse the guesser.

Play this as either a whole class game, or in individual groups. Change the guessers after each strip.

**Explanations:** **1.** Other companies witnessed the rise in Ford's productivity and profit and adopted the 8-hour day. **2.** Manhattan is the commercial and financial centre of the US. **3.** The American Bell Telephone Company later became AT&T, one of the world's largest telephone companies. **4.** Levi Strauss & Co., also known as Levi's, was founded in 1853 when Levi Strauss arrived in San Francisco. **5.** Ray Kroc made McDonald's the most successful fast food operation in the world. **6.** In 1989 Tim Berners-Lee wrote a proposal for the world wide web. **7.** Theo Albrecht and his brother Karl founded Aldi. **8.** Niki Lauda went on to create Lauda Air and NIKI Luftfahrt (flyNiki). **9.** Gillette's company became a global supplier of disposable razors and other toiletries. **10.** The Otto Group is the world's largest mail order company.

#### EXTENSION

Encourage students to read the short story *A sound of thunder* by Ray Bradbury. You'll find a free online version at [www.scaryforkids.com](http://www.scaryforkids.com). Then discuss what the moral of the story is and how this moral can relate to business.

## The butterfly effect

1. If Henry Ford hadn't thought it might be nice to shorten the working week and double the pay of his workers, ...
2. If Native Americans hadn't sold the island of Manhattan to Peter Minuit from Wesel for 24 dollars, ...
3. If Western Union had decided that Alexander Graham Bell's telephone had commercial possibilities instead of dismissing it as a toy, ...
4. If an eighteen-year-old Levi Strauss had decided to stay home in Buttenheim, Bavaria, and not sail to America, ...
5. If salesman Ray Kroc hadn't bought a milkshake at the McDonald brothers' hamburger restaurant, ...
6. If Sir Tim Berners-Lee at Cern hadn't suggested that computers should share different kinds of data "as a web", ...
7. If Anna Albrecht hadn't employed her son Theo in her 35 m<sup>2</sup> grocery shop in Schonnebeck, Essen, ...
8. If Niki Lauda hadn't told his F1 boss that he no longer wished to "drive around in circles" and gone off to start an airline instead, ...
9. If King Camp Gillette hadn't cut himself shaving one morning and decided that there might be a value in throwing his razor away, ...
10. If Michael Otto had shown no interest in his father's shoe catalogue, ...

