



APEX ENGLISH

Your voice. Global.

C1 · GENERAL ENGLISH

UNIT 1 · 1B

A job for life?

Theme · People & Belonging



Unit 1 · 1B

A job for life?

Theme: People & Belonging

Learning objectives

- Expand C1 vocabulary related to **work**.
- Use **discourse markers (1): linkers** accurately and idiomatically.
- Read a discursive text and discuss inferences beyond the literal.
- Speak fluently on the unit's theme with a partner or in a small group.

This booklet accompanies the digital lesson at

alunos.apexenglish.com.br/general-c1/1b. Interactive audio, video and drag-and-drop tasks live online; use this booklet in class and to review.

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



Class Book

Warm-up

In pairs, talk for about a minute on each prompt before feedback:

- 1 What comes to mind when you hear the theme **"People & Belonging"**?
- 2 How comfortable are you using vocabulary about **work**? Give one recent example.
- 3 When did you last use — or misuse — **discourse markers (1): linkers**?

Reading

The end of the career ladder

For most of the twentieth century, a career was a straight line: you entered a company in your twenties, climbed a series of predictable rungs, and left it, forty years later, with a gold watch and a pension. That line has been quietly replaced by a zig-zag. According to a recent LinkedIn study, the average professional under 35 will hold twelve or more jobs before turning fifty, and roughly one in three will run at least one 'side hustle' simultaneously.

The reasons are not only economic. Automation and remote work have made narrow specialisation feel risky, and many younger workers now design their careers around portable skills — communication, judgement, learning speed — rather than around a single employer. Loyalty, once the currency of the workplace, has been replaced by a subtler negotiation: I will give you three excellent years; give me, in return, growth, autonomy and a story I can carry into my next role.

Yet the picture is far from uniformly bright. Beneath the polished language of "portfolio careers" and "personal brands" sits a labour market that is, for many, quietly precarious. Gig-economy drivers, freelance designers and adjunct lecturers all report the same paradox: more freedom on paper, less protection in practice. Holiday, sick pay and pensions — quietly built into the twentieth-century job — now have to be reinvented, one contract at a time. Younger professionals have adapted with dark humour, referring to LinkedIn as "the world's longest job interview" and to their side hustles as "financial life-support systems".

Employers, meanwhile, are learning that the old bargain no longer works. The best talent walks — not for a marginally higher salary, but for interesting work, honest feedback and a manager who is not, in the American economist Adam Grant's phrase, "on power-trip auto-pilot". Companies that resist the shift are losing their most portable people first. Those that embrace it — offering four-day weeks, sabbaticals, real learning budgets — are quietly winning a war they never officially declared.

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



Critics argue that this whole shift merely dresses up precarity as freedom; supporters reply that the old 'job for life' was, for most people, less a promise than a trap. The truth, as usual, lies somewhere in the middle: fewer ladders, more lattices; less loyalty, more agency; and a working life that will demand of most of us not one career, but three.

Comprehension — choose the best answer.

1. The traditional twentieth-century career is described as:
(A) a lattice
(B) a straight line
(C) a portfolio
(D) a hustle
2. According to the LinkedIn study, professionals under 35 will:
(A) stay in one company for life
(B) hold at least twelve jobs before 50
(C) avoid all side work
(D) retire at 45
3. 'Portable skills' means:
(A) skills you can take between employers
(B) skills only used in remote work
(C) skills specific to one industry
(D) skills related to travel
4. The writer's tone when describing 'portfolio careers' is best described as:
(A) uncritical praise
(B) polite scepticism
(C) outright rejection
(D) professional pride
5. According to the text, the best talent tends to leave a company because of:
(A) marginally higher salaries elsewhere
(B) boring work and poor management
(C) a lack of side hustles
(D) geographic constraints
6. The writer's overall conclusion is that a modern working life will require:
(A) one long career, well managed
(B) no career at all
(C) not one career, but three
(D) avoiding portfolio work entirely

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



Vocabulary

Focus: **work**

Study these C1 items and their meanings.

portfolio career — a working life made up of several part-time roles instead of one full-time job

side hustle — a small business you run alongside your main job

burnout — physical and mental collapse from prolonged overwork

tenured — holding a permanent position, especially in a university

precarious — insecure and uncertain, without long-term guarantees

to plateau — to reach a level of progress after which further growth stops

to headhunt — to actively recruit someone away from their current employer

gig economy — a labour market based on short-term, task-based contracts

to upskill — to learn additional skills to stay relevant at work

a sabbatical — an extended paid or unpaid break from work, often for study or rest

sought-after — in high demand — the kind of profile employers actively chase

dead-end job — a role that offers no realistic progression or growth

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



Grammar

Focus: **discourse markers (1): linkers**

Study the online lesson notes, then complete the interactive tasks at **alunos.apexenglish.com.br/general-c1/1b**.

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



Speaking

- 1 Tell a partner about a personal experience connected to **people & belonging**. Aim for at least two minutes without pausing.
- 2 Compare cultures or generations on this topic. Use at least three items from the *work* list.
- 3 Discuss: *Is it possible to be objective about people & belonging?* Justify your view.

Writing

Write 220–260 words on: **“People & Belonging — what has changed in the last twenty years?”** Use at least four items from the vocabulary list and one structure from the grammar focus (*discourse markers (1): linkers*).

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



Workbook

Home practice

Complete on your own; check answers in class.

1. After eighteen months without a break, he was hospitalised for _____.
(A) a plateau
(B) burnout
(C) a headhunt
(D) the gig economy
2. As a _____ professor, she cannot legally be dismissed without serious cause.
(A) precarious
(B) tenured
(C) headhunted
(D) portfolio
3. She was _____ by a rival firm during a conference.
(A) plateaued
(B) tenured
(C) headhunted
(D) burnt out
4. His growth _____ in year three; the role stopped teaching him anything new.
(A) plateaued
(B) headhunted
(C) tenured
(D) hustled
5. Weekend photography began as a _____ and slowly became her main income.
(A) burnout
(B) tenure
(C) side hustle
(D) plateau

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class

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Workbook · 1B. A job for life?

Home practice · work & discourse markers · answer key included



Class Book

Full lesson · in-class material



Workbook

Home practice · with answer key

VOCABULARY

10 min

1 · Modern work — choose the best word

1. After eighteen months without a break, he was hospitalised for ____.

a. a plateau

b. burnout ✓

c. a headhunt

d. the gig economy

2. As a ____ professor, she cannot legally be dismissed without serious cause.

a. precarious

b. tenured ✓

c. headhunted

d. portfolio

3. She was ____ by a rival firm during a conference.

a. plateaued

b. tenured

c. headhunted ✓

d. burnt out

4. His growth _____ in year three; the role stopped teaching him anything new.

a. plateaued ✓

b. headhunted

c. tenured

d. hustled

5. Weekend photography began as a _____ and slowly became her main income.

a. burnout

b. tenure

c. side hustle ✓

d. plateau

Score: 5 / 5

Try again

GRAMMAR

10 min

2 · Complete with the correct linker

WORD BANK — DRAG OR TAP, THEN TAP A GAP

however

moreover

consequently

despite

in short

1. The interview went badly; **consequently** , she was not shortlisted.
2. The role pays well. **moreover** , the international travel is a bonus.
3. It is a demanding job. **however** , hundreds apply every year.
4. **despite** _ his lack of formal qualifications, he was promoted first.

5. **in short**_, a portfolio career is a strategy, not an accident.

Score: 5 / 5

Try again

GRAMMAR

10 min

3 · Combine into one formal sentence

1. *The salary is good. On the other hand, the hours are brutal.*

Hide answer

The salary is good; however, the hours are brutal.

2. *She works hard. Because of this, she was promoted twice in a year.*

Hide answer

She works hard; consequently, she was promoted twice in a year.

3. *He has no diploma, but the company hired him anyway.*

Hide answer

Despite having no diploma, the company hired him.

4. *The report is short and it is clear.*

Hide answer

The report is short; moreover, it is clear.

VOCABULARY +

8 min

4 · Workplace phrasal verbs

DRAG THE MEANING ONTO THE WORD

Reset

to accept a new responsibility or role

to leave a senior position voluntarily

to advance in a company from a junior position

to fail to keep up with a schedule or a competitor

to give something formally to a person in authority (e.g. your notice)

to hand in

to give something formally to a person in authority (e.g. your notice)

Hide answer

to give something formally to a person in authority (e.g. your notice)

to take on

to accept a new responsibility or role

Hide answer

to accept a new responsibility or role

to step down

to leave a senior position voluntarily

Hide answer

to leave a senior position voluntarily

to work your way up

to advance in a company from a junior position

Hide answer

to advance in a company from a junior position

to fall behind

to fail to keep up with a schedule or a competitor

Hide answer

to fail to keep up with a schedule or a competitor

LISTENING

10 min

5 · A career-change confession

Listen to a mid-career professional explain why she resigned from a corporate job to open a small bakery.

▶ 0:00 / 0:00   

1. Which single moment triggered her decision?

Hide answer

A birthday spent working through the weekend to hit a quarterly target.

2. What does she miss most about the corporate world?

Hide answer

The health insurance and the intellectual challenge of large problems.

3. What has surprised her most about running a bakery?

Hide answer

How physically demanding it is — she sleeps better but hurts more.

WRITING

20 min

6 · Formal email (140–170 words)

Write a formal email to your manager requesting a four-day working week. Use at least four discourse markers and two work-vocabulary items from this lesson.

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