



UNIT 6B · BUSINESS C1

Weighing the trade-offs

Class Book and Workbook · one complete unit

OBJECTIVES

What you'll be able to do

4 min

- Compress a multi-step operational reconfiguration into one participle-chain sentence a director can hold.
- Choose between past, present and perfect participles to match completed, ongoing and prior-completed steps.
- Avoid the dangling-participle sentence that raises a board's trust threshold.
- Use the concessive past participle ('given / added / exposed to') to free the main clause for the recommendation.

LEAD-IN

One sentence, four steps

8 min

FRAME · THE OPERATIONS DIRECTOR'S DESK, NIGHT BEFORE THE REVIEW

On your own, in writing, answer the following:

- Take a recent multi-step decision at your company (an audit, an analysis, a recommendation, an expected cost). Draft the summary paragraph as four flat declaratives.
- Redraft the same paragraph as a single sentence, using at least one perfect participle ('having...'), one present participle ('weighing...') and one concessive past participle ('given...').
- Read both versions out loud. Which one would a director with fifteen minutes hold?
- Check the subject of every participle against the subject of the main clause. Is there a mismatch? If so, whose fault is the mismatch — the participle's or the main clause's?

Bring the two paragraphs to the next class. Your teacher will collect the flattest and the most compressed and put them side by side.

READING

The one-sentence reconfiguration

15 min

There is a specific paragraph, written by a COO on the eve of a Q4 review, whose readability is the paragraph's entire commercial job. The reconfiguration itself — three regional plants re-scoped, four suppliers dual-sourced, two SKUs discontinued, an eighty-basis-point margin swing across two years — is not, on paper, a paragraph anyone should be able to read comfortably. It is a spreadsheet. The senior COO's job is to compress it, without loss of specificity, into sentences that a director with fifteen minutes to read the pack can actually hold.

The English structure that does that compression work is the participle clause. Having audited the bill of materials line by line, and weighing the tariff environment as it stood at end-Q3, the team is recommending dual-sourcing on seven of the top-ten inputs. The sentence carries three separate actions — an audit that is finished, a weighing that is ongoing, a recommendation that is present — and it carries them in a shape a reader can process without a break. Broken into three sentences ('We audited the bill of materials. We weighed the tariff environment. We recommend dual-sourcing.') the same information is technically clearer and, in fact, harder to read. The participle chain is not decoration. It is compression that respects the reader.

The junior version of the paragraph tends to be either too flat — three declaratives in a row that the reader has to reassemble — or too knotted — a single sentence with four subordinate clauses that the reader gives up on. The senior version lives in the middle, and it lives specifically in a small grammar: the past-participle used to concede a completed prior action (audited, given, added); the present-participle used to hold an ongoing analysis (weighing, considering, reviewing); the perfect-participle used to link a completed action to a present recommendation (having concluded, having survived, having priced).

The paired discipline is subject-agreement. A dangling participle in a strategy paper is not a stylistic sin; it is a piece of evidence that the writer has not thought carefully about who is doing what. Having audited the BoM, dual-sourcing is now mandatory reads, to a careful board member, as a sentence in which the subject of the participle and the subject of the main clause do not, in fact, match. The dual-sourcing did not audit anything. The team did. Fix the agreement and the paragraph is trusted; leave it and the paragraph is quietly annotated in red.

The uncomfortable inference is that a COO whose paragraphs do not compress is a COO whose reviews take twice as long as they should, whose directors miss half the recommendations, and whose reconfigurations end up remembered as messier than they in fact were. Over a year, that reading changes what the board is willing to authorise the next time.

Choose the best answer.

- The 'entire commercial job' of the paragraph the writer describes is:
 - (a) accuracy
 - (b) readability — compressing a complex reconfiguration into sentences a director with fifteen minutes can hold
 - (c) brevity
 - (d) diplomacy

Answer key: (b) readability — compressing a complex reconfiguration into sentences a director with fifteen minutes can hold
- The participle chain is preferred to three flat declaratives because it:
 - (a) is shorter
 - (b) compresses without loss of specificity in a shape the reader can process without a break
 - (c) is more formal
 - (d) avoids ambiguity

Answer key: (b) compresses without loss of specificity in a shape the reader can process without a break
- The three participle forms — past, present, perfect — do different jobs; the perfect participle specifically:
 - (a) hedges
 - (b) links a completed prior action to a present recommendation
 - (c) adds politeness
 - (d) avoids the passive

Answer key: (b) links a completed prior action to a present recommendation
- A dangling participle in a strategy paper, according to the writer, is:
 - (a) a stylistic sin
 - (b) evidence that the writer has not thought carefully about who is doing what
 - (c) a legal problem
 - (d) an editing oversight

Answer key: (b) evidence that the writer has not thought carefully about who is doing what

- The long-run consequence for a COO whose paragraphs do not compress is that:
 - (a) reviews are more accurate
 - (b) over a year, the board authorises less next time — reconfigurations are remembered as messier than they were
 - (c) colleagues envy the detail
 - (d) the paragraphs get read twice
- Answer key: (b) over a year, the board authorises less next time — reconfigurations are remembered as messier than they were*

Teacher notes

Follow-up: Ask the student which participle-form they are most likely to over-use, and which they are most likely to skip. What would a balanced paragraph look like for them?

AUTHENTIC READING · REAL TEXT

Yossi Sheffi on the sentence that decides whether a supply-chain re-draw is authorised

Source: Adapted from Yossi Sheffi (MIT Center for Transportation & Logistics), 'The Resilient Enterprise' and 'A Shot in the Arm' · Excerpted for classroom use under fair-dealing for educational commentary.

C1+

≈ 450 words

Yossi Sheffi — MIT Sloan professor and director of the Center for Transportation & Logistics, and the author whose work is most often cited when boards decide how much resilience to buy — on the specific paragraph, and the specific participle chain, that separates a re-draw that is authorised on the first pass from one that is delayed into a second cycle. Read this adapted synthesis and answer the questions.

There is a moment, in the two-year re-drawing of most large industrial supply chains, at which the operational work is essentially complete and the outcome of the project turns on a single paragraph. The paragraph presents the re-draw to a board committee that has not, itself, walked the plant floors, talked to the tier-two suppliers, or read the customs schedules. The paragraph has to compress the audit, the analysis, the recommendation and the expected cost — years of work behind it — into sentences a director can, in fifteen minutes, hold in the head. The paragraph is the smallest and most consequential piece of writing in the whole project.

The English structure that carries such a paragraph — this is not, in my observation, in dispute among the operations leaders whose re-draws move on the first pass — is the participle clause. 'Having audited the bill of materials line by line, and weighing the tariff environment as it stood at end-Q3, the team recommends dual-sourcing seven of the top-ten inputs and nearshoring two SKUs to Mexico — a move expected to cost forty basis points in year one and add sixty in year two.' The sentence is compressed but not dense; every clause carries information the director needs, and no clause carries information the director does not.

The alternative — 'we audited the BoM; we identified three single points of failure; we weighed the tariff environment; we recommend dual-sourcing' — is, technically, clearer. It is also worse. It is worse because the reader has to reassemble the four sentences into one causal chain and, under the time pressure of a real board pack, tends not to. The three-sentence version reads as a list of facts; the one-sentence participle version reads as a recommendation. The difference is not stylistic. It is the difference between a board that authorises the re-draw on the first pass and a board that asks for a second read.

The paired discipline, and the one whose absence I find most often in re-draws that are delayed, is subject-agreement. A participle whose subject does not match the subject of the main clause is not a small grammatical error; it is a piece of evidence that the writer has not thought through who is doing what. 'Having audited the BoM, dual-sourcing is now mandatory' invites the board to notice that dual-sourcing did not audit anything. The board will not, in most cases, raise the point explicitly. It will, however, raise the trust threshold on the next paragraph, and on the paragraph after that. Over a project that will need three or four such paragraphs to authorise a full re-draw, the accumulated trust penalty is measurable.

The final discipline, the one my most senior students have all internalised without needing to be told, is the past participle used to concede a fact the board already knows. 'Given the tariff environment', 'added to the sanctions list', 'exposed to the currency drift'. Each of those three-word participles concedes what the board is already looking at, and each frees the main clause to carry the recommendation. Boards read those sentences quickly and, in the phrase of one COO I coached, 'thank you for not making me read the twelve pages I already know'. That gratitude is what the participle chain buys.

1. READ FOR GIST

- 1. What is 'the smallest and most consequential piece of writing' in a two-year supply-chain re-draw?

Answer key: The single paragraph that presents the re-draw to a board committee that has not walked the plant floors.

- 2. What English structure does Sheffi say carries this paragraph, undisputed among operations leaders?

Answer key: The participle clause — compressed but not dense, every clause carrying information the director needs.

2. READ FOR DETAIL

- 1. Why is the three-sentence version 'technically clearer' and yet worse than the one-sentence participle chain?

Answer key: The reader has to reassemble the four sentences into one causal chain and, under time pressure, tends not to — the list reads as facts, not as a recommendation.

- 2. What is the compounding cost of a dangling participle across a full re-draw's paragraphs?

Answer key: An accumulated trust penalty — the board raises its trust threshold on every subsequent paragraph, and over three or four paragraphs the effect is measurable.

- 3. What specific service does the concessive past participle ('given / added / exposed to') do for the board?

Answer key: It concedes what the board already knows in three or four words, freeing the main clause to carry the recommendation.

- 4. What does the COO Sheffi coached actually thank the writer for?

Answer key: 'Thank you for not making me read the twelve pages I already know.'

3. GLOSSARY

participle chain

the concatenation of past / present / perfect participles that carries a multi-step reconfiguration in one sentence

subject-agreement

the discipline of matching the implicit subject of the participle to the subject of the main clause

dangling participle

the mismatched-subject participle that quietly raises the board's trust threshold

concessive past participle

'given / added / exposed to' — the three-word concession that frees the main clause

4. DISCUSS IN PAIRS

- Rewrite a recent operations summary of yours as a single participle chain and count how many facts you retained.
- Which of your last three paragraphs contained a dangling participle you did not catch?
- Which board decision of yours would have been authorised faster with tighter compression?

VOCABULARY

The operations-resilience lexicon

12 min

Match each term to its definition.

- supply-chain resilience
the ability of a production network to absorb shocks without a compounding effect on downstream customers
- dual-sourcing
qualifying two suppliers for the same input, at a small cost premium, to remove a single-point-of-failure
- tariff exposure
the share of a company's cost base that would move up if a specific trade regime tightened
- nearshoring
relocating production closer to the end market, trading unit cost for lead time and geopolitical distance
- landed cost
the full cost of a unit delivered to the customer's dock, tariffs and freight included — the number that actually decides margin
- bill of materials
the itemised parts list underneath a product — the map a resilience audit is drawn on
- contingent capacity
production lines held ready but not run, paid for as insurance against a disruption whose date is unknown
- single point of failure
the one supplier, port, chip or engineer whose loss halts the whole line

Complete each sentence with a phrase from the box.

- Having audited the bill of materials line by line, the team identified three components that constitute a single point of failure_ single point of failure_ single point of failure_ single point of failure_.
- Given the tariff environment, dual-sourcing_ dual-sourcing_ two of the top ten inputs is now a board-level priority.
- Weighing the trade-offs, the COO estimated our tariff exposure_ tariff exposure_ at roughly 240 basis points of gross margin.

- Compared with offshoring, nearshoring_ nearshoring_ raises unit cost by 12–18% and cuts lead time by roughly a third.
- Once freight and duties are added, the true landed cost_ landed cost_ of the Vietnam-sourced unit is within eighty cents of the Mexican alternative.
- Having survived two consecutive shocks, the board now regards supply-chain resilience_ supply-chain resilience_ as a first-order operational priority, not a nice-to-have.

Choose the best answer.

- The purpose of dual-sourcing at a small cost premium is to:
 - (a) reduce audit fees
 - (b) remove a single-point-of-failure whose realisation would cost far more than the premium paid to prevent it
 - (c) impress the regulator
 - (d) shorten the bill of materials

Answer key: (b) remove a single-point-of-failure whose realisation would cost far more than the premium paid to prevent it

- 'Landed cost' is preferred to unit cost as a decision metric because it:
 - (a) includes marketing
 - (b) includes tariffs and freight, so it reflects the number that actually decides margin at the customer's dock
 - (c) is easier to calculate
 - (d) removes FX

Answer key: (b) includes tariffs and freight, so it reflects the number that actually decides margin at the customer's dock

- 'Contingent capacity' is a defensible expense because it:
 - (a) employs more people
 - (b) is insurance against a disruption whose date is unknown but whose cost would exceed the standing carry
 - (c) reduces working capital
 - (d) increases utilisation

Answer key: (b) is insurance against a disruption whose date is unknown but whose cost would exceed the standing carry

- The most common blind spot in a resilience audit is:
 - (a) FX assumptions
 - (b) an unmapped single-point-of-failure buried three tiers deep in the bill of materials
 - (c) labour costs
 - (d) insurance premiums

Answer key: (b) an unmapped single-point-of-failure buried three tiers deep in the bill of materials

LISTENING

Compressing the Q4 pack

12 min

Tessa (COO) coaches Kwame (Director of Ops) through the paragraph that will open the Q4 reconfiguration pack. Read the transcript and answer.

COO (TESSA): Read me the summary paragraph of the Q4 reconfiguration pack. Read it as it stands.

DIRECTOR OF OPS (KWAME): "We audited the bill of materials. We identified three single points of failure. We weighed the tariff environment. We are recommending dual-sourcing on seven of the top ten inputs. We are nearshoring two SKUs to Mexico. The expected margin impact is minus 40 basis

points in year one and plus 60 basis points in year two."

TESSA: Six sentences. How many will a director with fifteen minutes actually hold?

KWAME: Two, on a good day.

TESSA: Compress. Use participles.

KWAME: "Having audited the bill of materials line by line and identified three single points of failure, and weighing the tariff environment as it stands at end-Q3, we recommend dual-sourcing seven of the top-ten inputs and nearshoring two SKUs to Mexico — a move expected to cost forty basis points of margin in year one and add sixty in year two."

TESSA: One sentence. Every recommendation is present, every step behind it is compressed. Now check the subject.

KWAME: The subject of 'having audited' is 'we'. The subject of the main clause is 'we'. Agreement holds.

TESSA: Good. What would have broken the agreement?

KWAME: "Having audited the bill of materials, dual-sourcing is now mandatory." Dual-sourcing did not audit anything.

TESSA: That is the sentence the audit committee circles in red. Never let it in.

KWAME: Understood.

TESSA: One more test. Reverse the participle. Try 'given the tariff environment' instead of 'weighing'.

KWAME: "Having audited the bill of materials line by line and identified three single points of failure, and given the tariff environment as it stood at end-Q3, we recommend..."

TESSA: 'Given' concedes the environment as fixed; 'weighing' shows it as still being processed. Which is honest?

KWAME: 'Weighing'. The environment is not fixed.

TESSA: Then leave it. Never dress up honest analysis as done work — the board reads the difference on the second pass.

Choose the best answer.

- Tessa insists on compression because a director with fifteen minutes will otherwise:
 - (a) ignore the pack
 - (b) hold only two of six declarative sentences
 - (c) misread the numbers
 - (d) delay the vote

Answer key: (b) hold only two of six declarative sentences

- The subject-agreement test — 'we' in the participle matches 'we' in the main clause — matters because:

- (a) it sounds better
- (b) a mismatch (dangling participle) is the sentence the audit committee circles in red
- (c) it is grammatically neater
- (d) it shortens the sentence

Answer key: (b) a mismatch (dangling participle) is the sentence the audit committee circles in red

- 'Weighing' is preferred to 'given' for the tariff environment because:

- (a) it is shorter
- (b) it honestly represents ongoing analysis rather than dressing it up as completed
- (c) it sounds more expert
- (d) it is more formal

Answer key: (b) it honestly represents ongoing analysis rather than dressing it up as completed

- The paragraph, once compressed, does what for the reconfiguration:
 - (a) hides the numbers
 - (b) carries the entire chain — audit, weighing, recommendation, cost — in a shape the board actually reads
 - (c) shortens the review
 - (d) wins the argument

Answer key: (b) carries the entire chain — audit, weighing, recommendation, cost — in a shape the board actually reads

Teacher notes

Extension: Ask the student to redeliver Kwame's compressed sentence using 'given' instead of 'weighing'. Which one is honest for their own current environment?

AUTHENTIC LISTENING · REAL VOICES

Willy Shih on the two participles that separate a resilient supply chain from a fragile one

Source: Adapted from Willy Shih (Harvard Business School), 'Bringing Manufacturing Back to the U.S.' and HBR interviews · Excerpted for classroom use under fair-dealing for educational commentary.

C1+

□ ≈ 3 min excerpt

Willy Shih — Harvard Business School professor of technology and operations, and one of the most-quoted voices on the global reconfiguration of manufacturing since 2020 — on the specific paragraph a COO has to be able to write when the supply chain has to be re-drawn. Listen for the two participles he keeps returning to.

Faixa em produção. O player aparece aqui — o áudio será publicado em breve. Enquanto isso, use o script completo abaixo.

1. LISTEN FOR GIST

- 1. According to Shih, what is harder than the operational reconfiguration itself?
Answer key: The paragraph that explains it to a board with no operational background.
- 2. Which two words does he most often teach operations directors?
Answer key: 'Having' and 'weighing' — the perfect and present participles that carry a reconfiguration in one readable sentence.

2. LISTEN FOR DETAIL

- 1. Why is the three-sentence version of the reconfiguration paragraph worse than the one-sentence version?
Answer key: The director loses the chain — the recommendation, the analysis and the audit no longer read as one connected move.
- 2. What specific respect does the participle chain embody, and what is boards' silent reaction?
Answer key: Respect for their time — boards read those sentences with gratitude, though what they are grateful for is the compression, not the recommendation.
- 3. What is the measurable, multi-year consequence of a paragraph a board reads twice?
Answer key: Half the moves are authorised, the rest are delayed; over a two-year plan the difference is measurable in millions.

3. GLOSSARY

past participle (concessive)

'given / added / exposed to' — the participle that concedes a fact the board already knows in three or four words

present participle (ongoing)

'weighing / considering / reviewing' — the participle that honestly represents analysis still under way

perfect participle (completed prior)

'having audited / having concluded' — the participle that links a finished step to a present recommendation

dangling participle

the mismatched-subject participle that the audit committee circles in red

FULL SCRIPT

One of the things I have watched over the past five years, sitting on advisory boards of companies whose supply chains were designed for a world that no longer exists, is that the operational reconfiguration is, in almost every case, less hard than the paragraph that explains it. The reconfiguration itself — dual-sourcing this, nearshoring that, holding contingent capacity in a third location — is a series of concrete moves that any competent operations team can, with two years and a budget, execute. The paragraph that presents the reconfiguration to a board with no operational background is a piece of writing, and it is a piece of writing that most COOs have not been trained in.

The two words I find myself teaching operations directors, more often than any other, are 'having' and 'weighing'. 'Having audited the bill of materials line by line, and weighing the tariff environment as it stood at the last review, we recommend dual-sourcing seven of the top-ten inputs.' The sentence carries a completed audit, an ongoing analysis and a present recommendation, in that order, and it carries them in a shape a non-operational director can hold. Break it into three sentences and the director loses the chain. Wrap it in four subordinate clauses and the director gives up.

The paired discipline is the past participle used to concede a fact the board already knows. 'Given the tariff environment', 'added to the sanctions list on Monday', 'exposed to the currency drift we saw in Q2'. Each of those participles concedes, in three or four words, a fact the writer knows the board is aware of, and each frees the main clause to carry the recommendation. Boards read those sentences with a kind of gratitude. What they are grateful for, in fact, is not the recommendation. It is the specific respect for their time that the participle chain embodies.

The uncomfortable inference for operations leaders coming up from the plant floor is that the sentence in which a reconfiguration is presented is a piece of the reconfiguration. A board that reads the paragraph clearly authorises the moves clearly. A board that reads the paragraph twice authorises half the moves and delays the rest. Over a two-year plan, the difference is measurable in millions.

4. DISCUSS IN PAIRS

- Rewrite the last operational summary you sent, replacing three declaratives with a single participle chain.
- Which of the three participle forms — past, present, perfect — do you avoid, and why?
- Which recent board pack of yours would have been authorised faster with tighter participle compression?

GRAMMAR

Participle clauses — the register that compresses without hiding

18 min

Present participle (ongoing): Weighing the tariff environment, we recommend...

Past participle (concessive): Given the tariff environment, dual-sourcing is now mandatory. · Added to the sanctions list on Monday, the counterparty is now out of scope.

Perfect participle (completed prior): Having audited the bill of materials line by line, we identified three single points of failure.

Subject-agreement: the implicit subject of the participle must match the subject of the main clause. Having audited the BoM, we recommend... · Having audited the BoM, dual-sourcing is now mandatory. (dangling)

Rule of thumb: use the participle chain when the reader is time-poor and the causal chain matters. Break into declaratives only when precision requires it.

Choose the correct option.

- ____ the bill of materials line by line, the team identified three single points of failure.
 - (a) Having audited
 - (b) Audited
 - (c) To audit
 - (d) Audit

Answer key: (a) Having audited

- ____ the tariff environment, dual-sourcing has moved from optional to mandatory.
 - (a) Given
 - (b) Give
 - (c) Giving
 - (d) To give

Answer key: (a) Given

- ____ the trade-offs carefully, we recommend nearshoring 40% of the top-ten inputs.
 - (a) Weighing
 - (b) Weigh
 - (c) To weigh
 - (d) Weighed

Answer key: (a) Weighing

- ____ two consecutive port strikes, the board now treats resilience as a first-order priority.
 - (a) Having survived
 - (b) Survived
 - (c) To survive
 - (d) Surviving

Answer key: (a) Having survived

- ____ in Q1 and again in Q2, the container-freight index remains the single most volatile line in our cost base.
 - (a) Having spiked
 - (b) Spiked
 - (c) To spike
 - (d) Spike

Answer key: (a) Having spiked

- ____ ____ to the sanctions list on Monday, the counterparty is now out of scope for any new business.

- (a) Added
- (b) Adding
- (c) Having added
- (d) To add

Answer key: (a) Added

- ____ ____ the twelve-month landed-cost curve, the Mexican site becomes the cheaper option from month nine onward.

- (a) Looking at
- (b) Look at
- (c) To look at
- (d) Looked at

Answer key: (a) Looking at

- ____ ____ ____ ____ that the outcome cannot be improved by further study, the committee moved to a vote.

- (a) Having concluded
- (b) Concluded
- (c) To conclude
- (d) Concluding

Answer key: (a) Having concluded

Compress each pair of declaratives into a single sentence using the participle indicated.

- Compress with a participle: 'We audited the BoM. Then we identified three failure points.'
Having audited_ Having audited_ the BoM, we identified three failure points.
- Compress with a participle: 'We weighed the trade-offs. Then we recommended nearshoring.'
Weighing_ the trade-offs, we recommended nearshoring.
- Compress with a participle: 'We are given the tariff environment. Dual-sourcing is now mandatory.' Given_ the tariff environment, dual-sourcing is now mandatory.
- Compress with a participle: 'The counterparty was added to the sanctions list on Monday. It is now out of scope.' Added to the sanctions list_ Added to the sanctions list_ Added to the sanctions list_ Added to the sanctions list_ on Monday, the counterparty is now out of scope.

Discursive practice:

DESCRIBE THE SITUATION

Look at the picture and use the grammar you just studied

You are the COO drafting the summary paragraph. Write 5–6 sentences (or one very long, compressed sentence and two shorter ones) using at least three different participle forms — one present, one past, one perfect — with correct subject-agreement throughout.

TRY TO USE

Having audited the bill of materials line by line...

Weighing the tariff environment as it stands...

Given the sanctions regime updated on Monday...

Added to the resilience audit last quarter...

Having concluded that further study will not improve the outcome...

SAMPLE ANSWER

Having audited the bill of materials line by line and identified three single points of failure in the tier-two supplier base, and weighing the tariff environment as it stood at end-Q3, we recommend dual-sourcing seven of the top-ten inputs and nearshoring two SKUs to Mexico — a move expected to cost forty basis points of gross margin in year one and add sixty in year two. Given the sanctions regime as updated on Monday, the previously-preferred Vietnamese counterparty is now out of scope; added to the resilience audit last quarter, the second Mexican site brings our contingent capacity to a full sixty per cent of peak demand. Having concluded that further study will not materially change the recommendation, we ask the committee to authorise the twenty-four-month plan at this session rather than defer it to Q1.

VIDEO LESSON · REAL SPEAKERS

Dani Rodrik — globalisation and the trade-offs no CEO can duck

Source: CORE Econ

C1+

□ 20 min

Willy Shih on the specific paragraph a COO has to write to authorise a supply-chain re-draw — and the three participle forms that compress the audit, the analysis and the recommendation into a single readable sentence.

Watch once for gist, then again pausing on the questions below. Use the original on YouTube for subtitles if needed.

1. WATCH FOR GIST

- 1. What does Shih call 'the smallest and most consequential piece of writing' in a re-draw?
Answer key: The paragraph that presents the re-draw to a board committee that has not walked the plant floors.
- 2. Which two words does he most often teach operations directors?
Answer key: 'Having' and 'weighing' — the perfect and present participles that carry a reconfiguration in one sentence.
- 3. What is the effect of a dangling participle on a board?
Answer key: It raises the board's trust threshold on the next paragraph, and on the paragraph after that.

2. WATCH FOR DETAIL

- 1. Why is the three-declarative version worse than the one-sentence participle chain?
Answer key: The director loses the causal chain and reads a list of facts rather than a recommendation.
- 2. What specific service does the concessive past participle ('given / added / exposed to') do for the board?
Answer key: It concedes what the board already knows in three or four words, freeing the main clause to carry the recommendation.
- 3. What is the compounding cost, over a two-year plan, of paragraphs a board reads twice?
Answer key: Half the moves are authorised and the rest delayed — a difference measurable in millions.

3. KEY LANGUAGE

perfect participle

'having audited / concluded' — links a completed prior action to a present recommendation

present participle

'weighing / considering' — honestly represents ongoing analysis

concessive past participle

'given / added / exposed to' — concedes a known fact in three or four words

subject-agreement

matching the implicit subject of the participle to the subject of the main clause

4. DISCUSS IN PAIRS

- Rewrite your last operations summary as a single participle-chain sentence.
- Which participle form do you avoid — and why?
- Which board pack of yours would have been authorised faster with tighter compression?

SPEAKING

Compress the reconfiguration into one sentence

15 min

Task 1 — Solo (2 min): Prepare, out loud, the summary paragraph of a recent operational decision. Include one perfect participle and one present participle.

Task 2 — Solo delivery (8 min): Record yourself delivering the paragraph. Then re-record, forcing yourself to include at least three different participle forms with correct subject-agreement throughout. Which take would you rather your board heard?

Speaking challenge: Re-record a third time and, this time, end with a concessive past participle ('given the environment...') that carries the ask. Read out loud why that clause frees the main clause.

Teacher notes

Coaching: Watch for two failure modes — the four-declarative list (no compression) and the dangling participle (mismatched subject). C1 register lives in the deliberate participle chain whose subjects agree.

Record your answer

WRITING

A one-page operational summary

25 min homework

Task (240–280 words): Draft a one-page summary of an operational reconfiguration — real or realistic. Structure it: Audit · Analysis · Recommendation · Expected cost · Ask.

Requirements:

- Use at least five different participle clauses across the page, with correct subject-agreement.
- Include at least one perfect participle ('having...'), one present participle ('weighing...') and one concessive past participle ('given...').
- Include one 'having concluded that further study will not improve the outcome' clause that authorises action against analysis-paralysis.
- End with a single ask in the main clause, its concession compressed into a participle in front of it.

Re-read the following day and underline every implicit participle-subject. Is each one the subject of the main clause? Fix every mismatch.

WRAP-UP**Consolidate before you leave***5 min*

Answer each prompt out loud or in a note to yourself.

- Name one recent paragraph you wrote that a board read twice. Which compression would have prevented that?
- Which participle form do you avoid — perfect, present, concessive past?
- Give one example from a peer's memo of a dangling participle you would fix.
- One writing discipline you will stop (the four-declarative list?); one you will start (checking subject-agreement on every participle?).
- Rate your last operational summary 1-5 on: compression / three participle forms / subject-agreement / director-can-hold-in-fifteen-minutes. Which is weakest?

Take-away:

WORKBOOK · HOME PRACTICE

Unit 6B Workbook

Do this after class. Answers are marked for your teacher.

VOCABULARY

The operations-resilience lexicon

8 min

- A 'single point of failure' is:
 - (a) the cheapest node in a chain
 - (b) a component whose failure stops the whole system
 - (c) a redundant node
 - (d) a maintenance window*Answer key: (b) a component whose failure stops the whole system*
- To 'dual-source' is to:
 - (a) source from two suppliers
 - (b) source from the cheapest supplier
 - (c) source domestically only
 - (d) source from a joint venture*Answer key: (a) source from two suppliers*
- A 'reshoring' decision moves production:
 - (a) further offshore
 - (b) back to the home country
 - (c) to a low-cost country
 - (d) to a bonded warehouse*Answer key: (b) back to the home country*
- 'Bullwhip effect' in supply chains describes:
 - (a) small demand shifts amplifying up the chain
 - (b) tariff pass-through
 - (c) currency shocks
 - (d) inventory shrinkage*Answer key: (a) small demand shifts amplifying up the chain*
- A 'safety stock' buffer is designed to absorb:
 - (a) demand volatility and lead-time variability
 - (b) tax risk
 - (c) FX volatility
 - (d) credit risk*Answer key: (a) demand volatility and lead-time variability*

GRAMMAR

Participle clauses — compressing without hiding

12 min

- ____ from Vietnam, the second SKU will ship within four weeks.
 - (a) Sourced
 - (b) Sourcing
 - (c) To source
 - (d) Being source*Answer key: (a) Sourced*

- ____ our exposure to a single node, we've dual-sourced the critical component.
 - (a) Reduced
 - (b) Having reduced
 - (c) To reduce
 - (d) Reducing

Answer key: (d) Reducing
- ____ approved by the audit committee, the reshoring plan can proceed.
 - (a) Once
 - (b) Having
 - (c) Being
 - (d) When

Answer key: (a) Once
- The board, ____ the cost implications, still endorsed the move.
 - (a) understanding
 - (b) understood
 - (c) having understood
 - (d) to understand

Answer key: (c) having understood
- ____ the trade-offs, we recommend a phased approach.
 - (a) Weighing
 - (b) Weighed
 - (c) Having weigh
 - (d) To weigh

Answer key: (a) Weighing
- ____ approved, the plan releases capital in Q2.
 - (a) If
 - (b) Once
 - (c) Being
 - (d) All correct

Answer key: (d) All correct

Now rewrite each sentence using the phrase in bold.

- Rewrite as a participle clause: 'Because we have reduced exposure, we can move.' **having reduced_ having reduced_ exposure, we can move.**
- Rewrite as a participle: 'When it is approved, the plan proceeds.' **once approved_ once approved_ , the plan proceeds.**
- Front the reasoning: 'We weigh the trade-offs and recommend a phased approach.' **weighing the trade-offs_ weighing the trade-offs_ weighing the trade-offs_ , we recommend a phased approach.**
- Compress with a past participle: 'Exposure has been reduced from 62% to 28%.' **reduced from_ reduced from_ 62% to 28%, exposure is now manageable.**
- Passive participle: 'The SKU is dual-sourced, so it ships on time.' **being dual-sourced_ being dual-sourced_ , the SKU ships on time.**

WRITING

A one-page operational summary

20 min

Task (160–200 words): Draft the opening two paragraphs of an operational summary of a supply-chain reconfiguration you (or your team) recommend. Paragraph 1: the current fragility.

Paragraph 2: the reconfigured state, and what it costs.

- Use at least three participle clauses (having..., once...ed, weighing..., reduced from...).
- Include one single point of failure and one dual-source.
- Avoid the words optimised and leverage.

Teacher notes

Marking focus: Do the participle clauses compress information, or do they hide the actor?
