

# Unit 3: Simply flying

## A Reading

### 1 Read the article below.

#### Passage A: My life at TopFlight

It's 8:00 a.m. Monday morning, and Manchester Airport is closed due to fog. As a result, three TopFlight flights are unable to land at the airport. In the terminal, over 300 TopFlight passengers are becoming increasingly anxious – many have appointments to keep. We are then advised that Air Traffic Control has diverted the incoming aircraft to Leeds airport. So ... three aircraft in Leeds and their corresponding passengers in Manchester. And my job? To sort it out!

Obviously this kind of **scenario** is unusual – but it can happen. As airport manager for northern England, I am responsible for overseeing all the TopFlight ground operations at both Manchester and Leeds airports. Essentially, this means that I look after all TopFlight activities at the airport, up until the point the aircraft takes off. This includes all aspects of passenger services (check-in, sales desks, departures and arrivals), as well as the behind-the-scenes operations such as baggage handling.

My time is divided between both airports, but as there are far more TopFlight flights to and from Manchester than Leeds (23 per day compared to five), the larger proportion of my time is spent at Manchester.

At both airports, we work in close partnership with our handling agents, and a crucial part of my role is overseeing their practice to ensure that TopFlight passengers receive the very best service as they proceed through the airport and on to their flight. I organise regular training sessions and group activities with all our service staff.

Much of my job is about building strong relationships and partnerships, and I liaise closely with other airport managers to ensure that the interests of TopFlight are properly represented. TopFlight already has an established presence at Manchester (we are the third-largest airline there), but it lies with me to see that our profile remains high with the authorities, so that TopFlight continues to receive a good service.

Obviously, safety is top of the agenda, and I am responsible for ensuring that we comply with all the standards and regulations set down by the relevant government bodies.

As a scheduled airline operating high-frequency, short-haul flights, another critical measure of our performance is the punctuality of our flights. As so many factors within the airport environment can affect punctuality, I continually **monitor** every aspect of our operation at both airports so that I can quickly identify areas of weakness and put measures in place to **rectify** these. Airports are complex environments and so, for everything to run smoothly, it's very important that everyone works as a team. Excellent communication skills are therefore essential. At times it can also be a stressful place, and so the ability to remain calm and maintain a sense of humour is also crucial! One of the things I really enjoy about my job is interacting with a wide variety of people – from passengers to airport senior management.

I keep fully up to date with what's going on at the airline by travelling down to the TopFlight offices at London Stansted airport regularly to meet with colleagues – including my **counterparts** from other TopFlight airports. We all share ideas and experiences so that we can continually improve the way in which we work. It's also my opportunity to give **feedback** about what's happening at my airports.

To succeed in this role, you need to be adaptable and flexible, as no two days are ever the same and you have to deal with everything. It's not a job for people who like to **meticulously** plan out every minute of their day! But I really enjoy the pace and variety – and I can honestly say it's never boring.



## B Language and style

- 2 The underlined words in Passage A have more than one meaning. Choose the one which is being used in this context.

|                          |                |               |             |
|--------------------------|----------------|---------------|-------------|
| a <u>corresponding</u> : | letter-writing | matching      | respective  |
| b <u>essentially</u> :   | necessarily    | mainly        | basically   |
| c <u>proportion</u> :    | size           | ratio         | part        |
| d <u>critical</u> :      | vital          | finding fault | in a crisis |
| e <u>deal</u> :          | trade          | sort out      | distribute  |

- 3 The following words from Passage A are useful but tricky to spell. Look at the bold 'hot-spot' (difficult part) in each word for a few seconds, then cover the word and try to write it correctly from memory.

Think of a rule or mnemonic (way of remembering) to help you remember the spelling of those words you find difficult.

- |                     |                     |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| a crucial _____     | f environment _____ |
| b receive _____     | g excellent _____   |
| c liaise _____      | h colleagues _____  |
| d scheduled _____   | i succeed _____     |
| e punctuality _____ | j opportunity _____ |

- 4 Give synonyms for these words, which are in bold in Passage A:

- |                                   |                      |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------|
| a scenario <u>situation</u> _____ | d counterparts _____ |
| b monitor _____                   | e feedback _____     |
| c rectify _____                   | f meticulously _____ |

- 5 Put as many prefixes as possible on to the following stems.


For example: -prove improve, approve, reprove, disprove

- |               |
|---------------|
| a -vert _____ |
| b -port _____ |
| c -sult _____ |
| d -sent _____ |
| e -ply _____  |

- 6 Write a sentence containing each word below to show the difference in meaning between the words in each pair. The first one has been done for you as an example.

- |   |         |   |
|---|---------|---|
| a | proceed | <u>When the alarm goes off, please proceed to the nearest exit.</u> |
|   | precede | <u>A brief presentation will precede the debate.</u>                |
| b | lie     | _____   |
|   | lay     | _____   |

- c** affect \_\_\_\_\_  
 effect \_\_\_\_\_
- d** continuous \_\_\_\_\_  
 continual \_\_\_\_\_
- e** principal \_\_\_\_\_  
 principle \_\_\_\_\_
- f** whose \_\_\_\_\_  
 who's \_\_\_\_\_
- g** uninterested \_\_\_\_\_  
 disinterested \_\_\_\_\_

 **7** Circle the single dashes and hyphens used in the text. First work out the rules for their usage and then give other examples of your own.

**a** Dashes have a space either side and are used singly to: \_\_\_\_\_

For example: \_\_\_\_\_

**b** Hyphens, which do not have spaces before or after, are used to: \_\_\_\_\_

For example: \_\_\_\_\_

**8 a** Who do you think is the audience for Passage A?

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**b** List the features of the passage that are typical of spoken informal language.

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## C Comprehension and summary

- 9 In a paragraph, give the facts about the airline in Passage A.

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- 10 In a paragraph, describe the qualities needed for the job of airport manager.

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- 11 In a paragraph, summarise the responsibilities and tasks of an airport manager.

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