# Improving English Language Skills
# for Migration Officers

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# CONTENTS

# FOREWARD

This volume was inspired by the dedicated work of the Bucharest Office of the International Organization for Migration. It was finally brought to light thanks to the support provided by the British Council in Bucharest for upgrading English teaching in higher education throughout Romania in the years when this volume was beginning to take shape.

With life-long learning as a stated objective and an implicit necessity, the volume aims to support migration officials' professional growth by developing their English skills. As such this self-study book has been designed for the migration professionals who have studied English previously and have developed linguistic abilities that recommend them as intermediate learners.

The volume opens with a short section on effective learning strategies promoting successful self-study. The major section in the volume is dedicated to a range of migration issues, including but not limited to the management of migration, migration and integration, illegal migration and trafficking in human beings, international terrorism and migration and, finally, migration and globalization.

Just like its predecessor - "English for Migration Officials", with me as sole author and published by Editura Universitară in 2015 - the present volume builds on the life and work experience of the professionals who are its intended audience. Not surprisingly, it has experiential learning at its core and aims to accompany the learner at work and at home, for daily

interactions: compact and easy to carry throughout the day's professional commitments and domestic chores, the volume is intended as the migration officer's reliable companion, to inspire, serve, and delight her/him, during everyday interactions, no matter how briefly.

Open the book at any page, spend just a few minutes reading a section in a unit, and you will feel enriched: comprehensive approaches, specialist vocabulary, solid grammar, and a touch of humour, too. Therefore give this volume a chance to help you grow professionally, not only through its fine blend of challenge, support, and access, but also thanks to its balanced mix of migration terminology, humor, and ultimate celebration of our humanity.

The author

# SECTION I
# SELF STUDY FOR MIGRATION OFFICERS

# UNIT 1
# EFFECTIVE LEARNING STRATEGIES

## 1. Causes and Consequences

How do you feel about this opinion?
>"Many adults think that they can't learn English because they aren't good at foreign languages."

Think of minimum 3 causes of the statement above. Can you suggest at least 3 consequences such opinions can generate?

## 2. Positive Thinking

1. Below you have some strategies to help you feel good about yourself. Read them and decide which of them may work in your case.

a. Think about events which give you pleasure or a sense of achievement. Plan such events.
b. Wake up happy every morning and begin each day with an activity you enjoy. For example, listen to your favorite song.
c. Never compare yourself with others.
d. Try to improve on your own past performance.
e. Write down 10 things you are good at. It will help you remember how talented you are.
f. Think of your mistakes as lessons learnt which will help prevent future mistakes.

g. Keep a diary to record your positive thoughts and feelings.

h. When you reach an objective, give yourself time to celebrate your success before moving on to the next objective.

i. Be your best friend and encourage yourself just as you would encourage your best friend.

j. Even if you are not feeling confident, act as if you are.

2. Can you think of other strategies that may help you?

## 3. Stress Breakers

1. Read the following text and decide which of the ideas below are mentioned in it.

 a. Learning a language by self-instruction is stressful to some adults. ☐

 b. Stress has negative effects on people. ☐

 c. A small amount of stress helps you to perform well. ☐

 d. People use a variety of stress breakers. ☐

 e. Creativity fights stress most effectively. ☐

Self instruction

Self instruction may be an additional stress in your life. But for all its negative effects, some stress can be good to you. A small amount can give you the stimulus you need to do well. Too little stress can result in boredom and a sense of frustration. The key is balance and learning how to deal with the harmful effects of anxiety.

People have different ways of fighting stress. Some relax when listening to music. Some use creativity to break stress, some physical activities. Some share their problems with friends or with family and this reduces their level of anxiety.

(Key: a-d are mentioned; e isn't).

2. Find words or phrases in the text that mean the same as the following:
- quantity (1)
- something that encourages you to act in a certain way (2)
- if something ….. in a particular situation, it causes that situation to happen (3)
- equilibrium (4)
- something that has a bad effect on something else, especially on a person's health (5)

(Key:1 amount; 2 stimulus; 3 result in; 4 balance; 5 harmful)

3. Word Associations

Some words are frequently grouped together, like in *to break the rule, to fight poverty, to break the news*. Decide which of the words in the box go with the verb *to fight* and which with the verb *to break*.

|  | |  |
|---|---|---|
| to fight | • the record | • the news |
|  | • injustice | • the silence |
| to break | • an window | • trafficking in persons |
|  | • the speed limit | • the law |
|  | • cancer | • the secret code |
|  | •silence | • corruption |
|  | •a leg | |

(Key: to fight injustice, cancer, trafficking in persons, corruption. All the others go with the verb to break).

# 4. "I Feel Good about Me." Meaning and Context

The meaning of a simple statement is usually clear to the people engaged in conversation. They don't have to clarify it. However, the meaning depends on who says what, to whom and where. For example:

| Statement | Meaning | Context |
|---|---|---|
| "It's hot in here!" | The air conditioning isn't working! You need to call somebody to fix it. | The wife to her husband who can't fix anything and, in addition, is always slow in his reactions. |
| | No wonder I can't concentrate. | A student taking a written exam to his teacher |
| | I want some ice cream. | Two friends having a chat at the fitness center. |
| | Open the window, please. | The boss having a meeting with her staff. |
| | I'd like some cold water. | A customer in a bank. |

In the exercises below you are given a statement and the meaning and you are then invited to provide the context. Or you are given a statement and the context and you then think of a number of meanings.

| Statement | Meaning | Context |
|---|---|---|
| "I feel good about me!" | I'm happy with my progress in English. | |
| | I'm so proud about my success in learning English! | |
| | I expect to be appreciated and promoted. | |
| | See that I can do it? | |

| Statement | Meaning | Context |
|---|---|---|
| "English is fun!" | | Adult learner talking to colleagues at work. |
| | | Migration officer talking to himself. |
| | | Migration officer's wife discussing her husband's self-instruction English course with his friends who are concerned about his busy schedule. |

## 5. Spot the Lie

Read the text and find the lies. There is NO such language learner and language learning works differently in real life.

The miraculous migration officer

Adrian is a young migration officer who has a great talent for foreign languages. He picks new languages without any effort. He is always quiet and shy. He has quite an interesting personality. He hates to talk to people he doesn't know very well. In addition, his greatest concern in life is avoiding making mistakes when speaking a foreign language.

Because of his busy schedule at work, he can only study once a month and his friends know that he always dedicates the last day in the month to language study. On that day he studies and studies for hours. He spends his time learning tons of new words and new grammar rules, which he never cares to repeat and practise. He can memorize everything and never forgets one single word even if he doesn't use it for years.

## 6. Learning Strategies

Do you have effective strategies for learning grammar, vocabulary, speaking, listening, reading, and writing? You can assess their effectiveness by working through the following questionnaires[1].

Use the scale below to answer the questions. Circle the number that best reflects your situation.

5 always     4 usually     3 occasionally     2 rarely     1 never

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[1] The questionnaires are based on "How to be a more successful language learner" by J. Rubin and I. Thompson, second edition, published by Heinle& Heinle, Boston, USA, 1994.

## GRAMMAR

| | 5 4 3 2 1 |
|---|---|
| a) When you study grammar, do you look for a pattern or a rule, and do you refer to what you already know about the particular structure you are studying? | **5  4  3  2  1** |
| b) In studying grammar, do you rely on your knowledge of your own language and of other languages you know in order to try to make sense of the new language? | **5  4  3  2  1** |
| c) Do you try to use the grammar patterns you are studying? | **5  4  3  2  1** |
| d) When you don't know or can't remember a grammar structure you need, do you use one you know or a combination of simpler structures instead? | **5  4  3  2  1** |

**A high score on this section (16-20) indicates that you have effective grammar learning strategies. A low score (below 8) indicates that you need to change your approach to learning grammar. You clearly should develop more effective grammar learning strategies.**

## VOCABULARY

| | 5 4 3 2 1 |
|---|---|
| a) Do you try to learn words by using them in context (in sentences of your own, orally or in writing)? | **5  4  3  2  1** |
| b) Do you try to organize the words that you have to learn into  meaningful groups? | **5  4  3  2  1** |
| c) Do you associate new words with words you already know? | **5  4  3  2  1** |
| d) Do you check after you finish studying a group of new words? | **5  4  3  2  1** |
| e) Do you periodically review vocabulary you studied earlier? | **5  4  3  2  1** |

**A high score on this section (20-25) indicates that you have effective vocabulary learning strategies. A low score (below 10) indicates that you need to change your approach to learning vocabulary. You clearly should develop more effective vocabulary learning strategies.**

## SPEAKING

| | |
|---|---|
| a) Do you ever speak English to yourself in your mind? | **5 4 3 2 1** |
| b) If you have to make a short presentation in English, do you repeat it in your mind to make sure you can do it well? | **5 4 3 2 1** |
| c) When you are in a store or a restaurant in your country, do you try to imagine what you would say in English in a similar context? | **5 4 3 2 1** |
| d) When you don't know how to say something in English, do you try to say it in another way? | **5 4 3 2 1** |
| e) When you don't know how to say something in English, do you say something else instead? | **5 4 3 2 1** |
| f) When you don't know how to say something in English, do you ask for help? | **5 4 3 2 1** |
| g) Do you take every opportunity to practise speaking English? | **5 4 3 2 1** |

**A high score on this section (28-35) indicates that you have effective strategies for practising speaking. A low score (below 14) indicates that you need to expand your range of speaking strategies so as to get more speaking practice.**

**LISTENING**

| | |
|---|---|
| a) Do you use your knowledge of the world in order to understand a conversation, a TV or radio program, or a movie? | **5  4  3  2  1** |
| b) Do you try to guess the meaning, if you don't fully understand what is said? | **5  4  3  2  1** |
| c) If you don't understand a word, do you keep listening because the context may help? | **5  4  3  2  1** |
| d) When you are in a conversation and you don't understand, do you indicate to your conversation partner what exactly you did not understand? | **5  4  3  2  1** |
| e) When you don't understand the whole message, do you summarize what you have understood and ask your conversation partner for verification? | **5  4  3  2  1** |

**If you have a high score on this section (20-25), you use effective strategies for improving your listening comprehension. A low score (below 10) indicates that you need to improve your listening skills.**

**READING**

| | |
|---|---|
| a) Do you use the context - such as title, illustrations, layout, etc.- in order to figure out what the text is about before actually reading it? | **5  4  3  2  1** |
| b) Do you rely on words that look similar to words in your own language or in any other language you know in order to figure out the meaning of unfamiliar words in the text? | **5  4  3  2  1** |
| c) Do you rely on context to figure out the meaning of unfamiliar words in the text? | **5  4  3  2  1** |
| d) Do you consider the context when you look up new words in the dictionary? | **5  4  3  2  1** |

| | |
|---|---|
| e) Do you use your knowledge of the subject matter to figure out unclear sections of the reading text? | **5  4  3  2  1** |
| f) Do you use your knowledge of the logical sequence of events in the reading text to figure out unclear sections of it? | **5  4  3  2  1** |
| g) Do you use your knowledge of grammar to figure out unclear sentences or parts of sentences? | **5  4  3  2  1** |
| h) Do you ask yourself questions in order to monitor your understanding of the text? | **5  4  3  2  1** |
| i) Do you read the whole text first to get the big picture? | **5  4  3  2  1** |

**A high score on this section (36-45) indicates that you have effective reading strategies. A low score (below 18) indicates that you need to expand your reading practice.**

**WRITING**

| | |
|---|---|
| a) Do you try to pick up a writing topic that will allow you to use what you know rather than one that may require what you don't know yet in terms of grammar and vocabulary? | **5  4  3  2  1** |
| b) Do you develop an outline before you start writing? | **5  4  3  2  1** |
| c) Do you write a draft first and review it before starting work on the final version? | **5  4  3  2  1** |
| d) Do you try to use the vocabulary and grammar you already know rather than look up most of the words in a dictionary? | **5  4  3  2  1** |
| e) Do you make sure that you have a correct model for the type of writing you are going to do, for example the appropriate way to compose a business letter or the correct way to address people? | **5  4  3  2  1** |

**A high score on this section (20–25) shows effective writing strategies. A low score, below 10, shows need for improving your writing skills.**

## 7. Keeping Track of Your Learning

Below there is an evaluation form for the current unit. Fill it in order to keep record of what you have learnt in this unit, of what you need to do next, and how you intend to achieve this.

**Unit evaluation**

| Language areas | What have I learnt in this unit? | What do I need to practise more? | How am I going to do it? |
|---|---|---|---|
| Vocabulary | | | |
| Grammar | | | |
| Reading | | | |
| Speaking | | | |
| Listening | | | |
| Writing | | | |

Fill in the evaluation sheet at the end of the units in this volume.

# SECTION II
# MIGRATION ISSUES

# UNIT 2
# MANAGEMENT OF MIGRATION

## 1. Effective Management

Why is it necessary to have an effective management of migration?  What does effective management achieve? What are the benefits of properly managed migration?

You are going to read a short text on managing migration. Before you read it decide which of the words and phrases in the following box you expect to find in the text.

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・to maximize the positive effects of migration (a)
・opportunities (b)
・management strategies (c)
・orderly and safe migration (d)
・exploitation of individual migrants  (e)
・challenges (f)
・costs of managing migration (g)
・rights and obligations (h)
・human trafficking (i)
・comprehensive approach (j)
・migrant smuggling (k)
・ economic, political and social trends (l)

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