

English Champions | Business English | Spring 2020 – 6

<https://englishchampions.fr/business-english-class-materials/>
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Welcome back to English Champions' flagship class

Time: Mar 31, 2020 20h15 Paris

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/982830834>

Meeting ID: 982 830 834

Industrial action

You probably remember the unfortunate situation that occurred at Tufty Carpets shortly after Mr Tufty announced that Tufty Carpets had been selected to be the exclusive red carpet sponsor of the *Les Arcs Film* festival.

One of Tufty Carpets' lorry drivers had been assigned to drive a large roll of red carpet down to the festival. All of Tufty's drivers belong to the *United Road Transport Union (URTU)* and the *URTU's* shop steward at Tufty, Sid Brownie, demanded a 10% pay rise for Tufty drivers, backdated to 2010. If Mr Tufty didn't agree, Mr Brownie told him he would stop the carpet being transported and he could say 'au revoir' to his fancy Les Arcs festival!

The situation was sorted out amicably with a pay deal agreed between Tufty's management, the *URTU* and the *Amalgamated Carpet Workers Union (ACWU)*, to which most of Tufty's shop floor workers belong.

Mr Tufty was about to arrive home in a taxi after cancelling his helicopter flying lesson when his mobile phone began to ring. It was Sid Brownie. Mr Tufty's heart sank. Mr Brownie told Mr Tufty that the *URTU* and *ACWU* had been in consultations and had decided that Tufty's workers were going home immediately because of the Corona virus threat.

Mr Tufty told Mr Brownie to stay at the factory so that he could return and discuss the matter before making a hasty decision. Mr Brownie agreed and went to tell the *ACWU* shop steward, Barry 'Ghost' Hawkes.

A few seconds later Mr Tufty received another call. It was Harry Helmsworth, the chief reporter from *Independent Carpet Radio News*. He had discovered that there may be trouble at Tufty Carpets.

By now Mr Tufty was in a state of shock. The government had clearly said that essential businesses should stay open and what could be more essential than carpet manufacturing? What was the world coming to?

Mr Tufty has requested some backup from the French Management team as he seeks to negotiate to keep the Tufty Carpets factory open.

Questions:

1. What is your first reaction to Sid Brownie's crazy idea of closing down the factory?
2. What could the long term effects of closing down businesses such as Tufty Carpets be?
3. If you agree with Mr Brownie, how would you persuade Mr Tufty that a factory closure is in his best interests?
4. Could Tufty Carpets help in the fight against COVID 19 in some other way?

Vocabulary

Shop steward: Someone elected by workers, for example in a factory, to represent them in dealings with management.

Lorry: (*British*) A large, heavy motor vehicle used for transporting goods

Heart sank: One's courage or hope fails; one is very disappointed or dejected.

What is the world coming to?: A rhetorical question that expresses disappointment or disillusionment

with the state of the world and its future

In a state of shock: Unpleasant or upsetting feeling because of something unexpected

In his best interests: It will benefit him.

Course dates

	janvier	février	mars	avril
Intermédiaire / avancé mardi soir (20h15)	14, 21	4	3, 10, 24* , 31#	7 #

* Cancelled. # On-line