

B If you don't want a big piece of cheese, or a whole carrot, but you want little pieces, you can push ... you can move ... I don't know how to say it. Like this!

A Ah! OK! What you mean is ...

Unit 12

12.2 Just leave him alone!

A tramp was sleeping on a park bench, when a lady stopped and asked him what time it was. The tramp was annoyed at being woken up. He told her that he didn't have a watch, so he didn't know the time and he went back to sleep. A bit later a boy stopped. He also woke the tramp and asked if he knew the time. The tramp replied angrily that he had no idea what the time was and he added that he was trying to sleep. By now he was really fed up so he wrote a sign:

I DON'T KNOW WHAT THE TIME IS!

He put it next to him on the bench and went back to sleep. Half an hour later a policeman was passing. He read the sign, woke the tramp up and told him that it was nine o'clock.

12.3 Direct speech

- 1 'Where is he?'
- 2 'I don't know where he is. I haven't seen him for years.'
- 3 'Is he still on the payroll? Has he retired or died?'
- 4 'What have you been doing for so many years?'
- 5 'Why did you take your pay despite doing no work?'
- 6 'I didn't keep regular hours because I was bullied and I became depressed.'
- 7 'I'm making good use of my time. I've been studying philosophy.'
- 8 'You will not receive a medal.'

12.4 had or would

- 1 Did you accept the job?
Will you accept the job?
- 2 Where do you work?
Where have you worked?
- 3 We travelled by train.
We'll travel by train.

12.6 Asking more politely

- 1 **A** Can you tell me what time you normally get up?
B About seven on weekdays. Ten at weekends.
A I don't know what kind of music you like.
B Oh, I like anything that helps me to relax.
A Have you any idea what your dream job is?
B Well, I'd like to be my own boss. Failing that – an astronaut!
- 2 **A** I'd like to know who your favourite sportsperson is.
B I don't have one. I like so many.
- 3 **A** I wonder which football team you support.
B Isn't it obvious from the scarf I'm wearing! Arsenal!!!
- 4 **A** Have you ever wondered how much time you spend in front of a screen each day?
B It's a lot – too much. I don't like to think about it.
- 5 **A** Have you any idea how many times a day you check your phone?
B Oh loads! About ten times an hour. I feel lost without it.
- 6 **A** Can you tell us why you left your last job?
B I was made redundant.
- 7 **A** Could you tell me how long you have been learning English?
B What do you mean? I am English. Can't you tell?
- 8 **A** I want to know why you don't reply to my texts?
B Er ... well ... er my phone wasn't working for a while.

12.7 A wonderful way to make a living

I = Interviewer G = Giovanni

- I** Today, I am in Venice, not far from the Piazza San Marco. The sun is out, it's a beautiful, beautiful day, the place is literally crawling with tourists. It seems like a wonderful place to visit, but would it be a wonderful place to make a living?
Now here is a promising place, we are going to see if we can interview a professional gondolier.
- G** My name is Giovanni Giudice and I am a gondolier and I would never lose this for anything.
- I** There is a reason why this man sounds so cheerful, because apart from the obvious delights of working in Venice, Giovanni was initially going to become a lawyer. A career he wisely gave up at aged 26.
- G** Now it's ten years I don't touch a book of law anymore, because it is a style of life that I do prefer, you meet people with no problems and ... er you don't make money on problems of people and ... er you make money on the happiness of people on their holidays, you meet families when they are together, not when they are getting divorced and ... er all these things.
- I** Back where I come from in the United States everyone hates lawyers, but everyone wants their kid to be a lawyer because they make a lot of money. But there's very few opportunities to be a gondolier. You had parents who were professionals, how did they react when you said, 'I'm going to give up law to become a gondolier?'
- G** They didn't react well, but I was sure it was the good choice.
- I** When you say that they didn't react well, could you be a bit more specific?
- G** These are the words of my father: 'Giovanni, if you want to do the bloody gondolier, you find yourself, kicked out.'
- I** As far as I'm aware, the only other place in the world you can be a gondolier is in the desert at Las Vegas at the Venetian Hotel, where a singing gondolier will sweep you down their grand canal for a ride like no other. There are more than a thousand lawyers in Venice and only 425 gondoliers, except that becoming a gondolier is more difficult than becoming a lawyer; for a start there's the €30,000 price tag on the boat. So, how did you learn to be a gondolier?
- G** I found myself with a godfather, now don't laugh, it's not the godfather of mafia. Godfather is somebody who introduces you to life, his name is David DeScarper and for me he's most important person in my adult life, because gave me the job. So I spent two years more or less, always with him. Luckily every single boy had his own godfather; every single boy had his own 'santolo' – there is a Venetian word.
- I** Most of the gondoliers that I've seen look to be in pretty good physical shape.
- G** Because you don't see them naked. (ha ha ha)
- I** OK, OK, I've seen a few overweight gondoliers, do they reach a point where they can't be gondoliers anymore? They sink the boat?
- G** Ha, you don't see them anymore because they just sink. Actually there is a gondolier we call the Maestro, he is next to be retired actually, and he is really really really overweight.
- I** When we just went past the boat where the accordion player was playing and the men were singing, the gondolier wasn't singing, do gondoliers still sing?

G Well actually this is a myth, we don't sing, we never sang actually. Never, never, never, never. It doesn't happen.

I Do you decide in the beginning of the year how much money you want to make a year?

G No, no, no, you don't – to a fisherman ask this question, you don't know how many people will come. You can decide how many days of holiday you want to do. So my target for this year is to give up the 1st of December and come back the 1st of April, because I want to see a bit of winter in Australia, they say the surf is excellent over there you know, spend all March on the East coast of Australia.

I Are there unhappy gondoliers?

G Oh there's plenty of them, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, all those who were not lawyers once upon (ha ha), they don't realize what a mine of gold and happiness they have in their hands.

This a job in which actually you can get upset every five minutes, and you can laugh every two, and I decided to laugh. I'm healthy, finally wealthy, and so, I mean, why not to laugh. The only thing is that you don't have that much time to follow your sentimental life, so you have to find a very patient girl, who will know what does it mean to be a wife of a gondolier.

Can you hear this bell?

I Yes

G These are my favourite bell. It is the bell of San Marco square it rings at noon and midnight wherever you will be in the city – at midnight tonight in the full silence – you will hear this bell again and it is a beauty, isn't it?

12.8 Ways of speaking

Conversation 1

- A** Mmm – I'm not sure about that shirt. I don't think yellow suits you. Why do you always go for such bright colours?
- B** Hey! I can wear what I want – I like bright colours.
- A** OK, but you can't wear it with those green trousers – you look like a daffodil!
- B** I do not! I don't care what you say – I'm going to wear it!

Conversation 2

- A** This online shopping is getting out of hand!
- B** What do you mean? It's a great way to shop.
- A** But that's the fourth parcel in as many days. It's costing us a fortune!
- B** How dare you! And all the money you spend on your wretched motorbike! That's all right I suppose!
- A** Don't lose your temper with me. I don't get stuff for my bike every day.

Conversation 3

- A** Have you heard about Bob and Maggie?
- B** Is that the couple at number 43?
- A** Yeah, apparently he's been having an affair with someone at work.
- B** Really? Who told you that?
- A** Maureen from number 41.

Conversation 4

- A** We want to do something special for our anniversary.
- B** What about a weekend away in a spa hotel?
- A** Not my kind of thing. I really hate being massaged and told to relax. It makes me more stressed.
- B** Well, there's always the new Italian on the High Street. It's pricey, but ...
- A** That's fine – I don't mind the expense, it's a special occasion.