



Reporting performance

5 Read Fantastik's targets for a set of key indicators and the firm's actual performance. Which targets did the company meet?

	TARGET	ACTUAL
Unit sales	400,000	420,000
Value of sales	€10 million	€9.8 million
Repeat business	+ 5%	+ 5%
Admin costs	- 2%	- 3%
Raw materials (plastic)	- 4%	- 2%
Payroll	€2.5 million	€2.35 million
Operating profit	€220,000	€255,000

6 Complete the sentences with verbs for describing ability and your own words.

- Fantastik hoped to sell 400,000 units, and *managed to sell* 420,000.
- Fantastik planned net sales of €10 million. In fact, they only _____.
- Fantastik planned to increase repeat business by 5%, and they _____.
- Fantastik set a target to reduce admin costs by 2%. They _____.
- Fantastik hoped to reduce raw material costs by 4%, but _____.
- Fantastik planned _____.
- Fantastik hoped _____.

Explaining performance

7 Read the articles. Make notes on factors which might explain each of Fantastik's results.

HOTTEST ON RECORD

Yesterday, temperatures topped 38°C for the fourth time in July. This means that we are having the hottest July since records began. Several offices have sent staff home after complaints about staff feeling ill at work. It's not all bad, though: sellers of refrigerated products and air-conditioning ...

COST RELIEF FOR BUSINESSES

After several years of spiralling costs, there are signs that businesses in Western Europe are finding it cheaper to operate. Labour costs have dropped slightly due to the availability of migrant workers from new European states. However, the picture for manufacturers is mixed: the price of oil is high. Consequently, petroleum-derived products are expensive, with knock-on effects on ...

EXCHANGE RATE MISERY FOR EXPORTERS

Unfavourable exchange rates mean that exporters have struggled to remain competitive, say industry analysts. 'We've also seen a big increase in unpaid bills,' said one manufacturer yesterday ...

8 Write a paragraph about Fantastik's performance. Use expressions from Exercise 1 for describing cause and effect.

Hot temperatures resulted in some sickness among staff. This brought about complaints and ...

9 Complete the extract below from the CFO's speech to staff with *a/an, the* or no article.

Since I became (1) _____ accountant, I can't remember (2) _____ better year for (3) _____ air-conditioning business. We received (4) _____ information early in (5) _____ summer that (6) _____ hot weather was coming, and we increased (7) _____ production accordingly. Some people have found (8) _____ weather uncomfortable, notably (9) _____ elderly and (10) _____ very young. Many people have ended up in (11) _____ hospital. But (12) _____ demand for (13) _____ air-conditioning products has risen well in (14) _____ commercial sector, our main market. Congratulations to (15) _____ sales team, who had (16) _____ intelligence to sell effectively, and did (17) _____ great work all round. And I've got (18) _____ good news for you: all staff will receive (19) _____ bonus of €500 with (20) _____ next month's salary.

Speaking

10 Think of situations in which you ...

- managed to do something unexpected.
- succeeded in meeting an important target.
- failed to complete an important task.
- weren't able to achieve what you had intended.

11 Work with a partner. Tell your partner about your experiences in Exercise 10, explaining the events that led up to this and what effects the situation brought about.

Internet research

Search for the keywords *causes of business failure*. Find a story involving a strange chain of events and tell the class about it.