

6 Risk management

Perspective adverbials

We can comment on something from many perspectives. For example, we can add a perspective adverbial containing our required perspective to a sentence. These allow us to offer a clear context and framework for what we are saying.

From a financial/ethical/practical/social/personal/medical perspective, the mission has been quite a success.

Because these adverbials are used to contextualize, they are most likely to come at the beginning where they sound more natural:

From a financial perspective the mission has been quite a success.

The mission has, from a financial perspective, been quite a success.

The mission has been quite a success from a financial perspective.

As with other adverbials, we can put them at the beginning of the sentence, in the middle or at the end. There are many other perspectives, including politics, the environment, science, ethics, etc.

1 Complete the sentences with an appropriate perspective adverbial based on the phrases in brackets.

cultural ethics finance historical personal
technologically

- 1 The whole project has been a disaster – we've lost about \$60,000 so far.
(in terms) _____
- 2 We will need to make sure there is no conflict of interest.
(are concerned) _____
- 3 From the company's point of view the plan looks great, but I would question it – it means I've got more responsibility but no extra money.
(from a) _____
- 4 The harbour bridge is an amazing feat of engineering, but they certainly broke the bank in building it.
(speaking) _____
- 5 We would be the first company ever to have such a far-reaching policy in place.
(to put) _____
- 6 It's a risky proposition – just look at all the differences in behaviour, appearance, values, you name it.
(if we) _____

Stance expressions

The main way to add an opinion, attitude or evaluation to a text is through a stance adverbial. Stance adverbials can be prepositional phrases, adverbs or clauses beginning with subordinators such as *if* and *because*. The information added is essentially subjective, and can add information on areas such as knowledge, reality, truth, certainty or style: *without doubt, arguably, as Smith argues ...* Any of these adverbials can be added to a sentence.

Instead of adverbials such as *undoubtedly*, there are other ways of expressing stance: *There is little doubt that ...; Few doubts remain concerning ...; It is doubtful that ...; I would doubt that ...* These structures are part of the sentence structure and, unlike adverbials, cannot simply be added or removed.

2 Match the stance expressions in 1–6 with the correct ending a)–f).

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| 1 I don't believe | a) over the possible loopholes in the latest contract. |
| 2 Worries persist | b) there is much chance of a reconciliation between the two parties. |
| 3 It is regrettable that | c) the best candidate for the job. |
| 4 There is no real doubt in my mind | d) that we made the right decision. |
| 5 As my boss says, | e) this would never have happened if the risks had been properly assessed beforehand. |
| 6 She is, without question, | f) details of the deal were prematurely leaked to the press. |

Position of adverbials

There are three main positions for adverbials in English: at the beginning, middle and end of a sentence.

Adverbials which link and frame the text (*consequently, later, perhaps, therefore, finally*) typically appear at the beginning.

Stance adverbials and adverbs of frequency, manner and certainty (*probably, undoubtedly, slowly, generally, definitely, usually*) most frequently come in the middle of a sentence, usually before the main verb. Stance adverbials can also come at the beginning of a sentence, or, as an 'afterthought', at the end.

Circumstance adverbials are those which tell us where, when, how (long/much) or why something happened. Adverbial clauses beginning with subordinators (*because, although* – see 4.3) tend to come at the end of a sentence, except for those with *if*, which usually come at the beginning.