

# 1 Personal development

- ▶ structuring a biography
- ▶ participle clauses
- ▶ writing a professional bio



## 1.5 Writing A professional biography

### Discussion

**1** Which of the items a)–h) below would you include in a professional bio for the following publications?

- 1 a bid document    2 a conference programme    3 your company website
- a) a photo                                      d) hobbies                                      g) academic qualifications  
b) marital status and family            e) professional achievements            h) positions held and dates  
c) address and phone number            f) professional objectives

### Model

**2** Read Erica Winter's bio and number the paragraph headings in the order they appear.

- background     other     current position     recent achievements

## ERICA WINTER

A recognized expert with more than 15 years of successful experience in HR, Erica has a proven ability to identify and develop management talent. She heads up Black, Bone & Winter's executive search team, filling strategic positions for industrial clients and government departments.

Having earned her Master's in Management from the London School of Economics, Erica first went to work in the car industry, quickly earning a reputation for boosting productivity while maintaining quality. She then moved into HR, steadily making the transition from shop floor management to global responsibility for managing 4,500 people.

Erica is most fulfilled when helping people to maximize their potential, and having championed numerous personal development initiatives in the car industry, in 2010 she co-founded BBW, an executive search firm that specializes in placement of executives. To date, she has successfully completed hundreds of successful searches.

Leveraging her professional network (she is an active member of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development), Erica also chairs 'Work on wheels', an association that lobbies the car industry to employ more disabled people. She has made numerous TV appearances and is the author of a best-selling book, *How to be headhunted*. Erica lives in London with her husband, two children and three cats.

### Analysis

**3** Which of the following recommendations did Erica *not* follow in the model bio above?

- 1 Ideally your bio should be between 150 and 300 words long, and never more than one page.
- 2 Use the third person (*he*, *she*) to sound more professional.
- 3 Include a head and shoulders photo of yourself in business clothes.
- 4 Give a brief description of your business and your customers.
- 5 Describe your key professional achievements.
- 6 Include any professional qualifications and awards you have received.
- 7 Mention organizations, associations or clubs you belong to.
- 8 Add to your credibility by mentioning media appearances and publications.
- 9 Include your contact details in your final paragraph.
- 10 Add a human touch that people will remember you for, such as mentioning your family life, hobbies, etc.

### Internet research

Search for the keywords *sample professional bio* for more models and tips. Be critical; not all the advice you will find is helpful!