

INTERNET ACCESS

1

- 1 Discuss the questions in groups.
 - Do you have free access to the Internet at work?
 - Is this an important issue in your work?
 - Which of the four groups in the monster.co.uk survey below would you be in?

Do you have/use Internet access at work?

A	39%		267 votes for	Yes, a high-speed access with more than 2 Mbit/s
B	37%		254 votes for	Yes, I use an always-on connection (e.g. DSL)
C	17%		117 votes for	No, I don't use the Internet at work
D	5%		40 votes for	Yes, but with a modem only (narrow band)
Total:			678 votes	

- 2 Read the article and answer the questions.
 - a Why did Hywel Jenkins hire an IT expert?
 - b What kind of websites were the workers visiting?
 - c What was the position of the union representative? Do you think it is reasonable?
 - d What kind of things does Mr Fisher think companies should do to prevent these situations from happening?

Office workers dismissed for spending two hours a day on eBay™

Nine office workers have been dismissed by a Town Council in South Wales after it was discovered that they were spending up to two hours a day on eBay. The workers' Internet habit was discovered when an IT expert was hired by the council to investigate the amount of time its staff were spending on the Internet. The Head of Financial Services at Neath Port Talbot Council, Hywel Jenkins, said: 'The main reason for carrying out the investigations was the significant time staff were spending on the Internet. The investigation revealed that these Council employees were spending their time on shopping, entertainment and BBC/Sky-related websites.'

Union officials suggested that the Council should have set up its IT system to prevent workers accessing sites like eBay. Mark Fisher, a welfare officer with the union Unison, said: 'People get very involved in eBay, Sky Sports and their favourite football teams. It happens in many offices. Obviously we cannot justify people spending a couple of hours of working time looking at these sites, but temptation was put in their way.'

Mr Fisher emphasized the need for employers to take preventative measures. He said: 'We want the Council to make changes to its IT system to stop workers getting into this kind of trouble. We want firewalls installed to prevent staff accessing these sorts of websites at any time other than between the traditional lunch breaks between noon and 2 pm. We are looking at how the system can be tightened up so these people won't get dismissed.'



Source: http://technology.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/tech_and_web

3 Work in groups of four. You are going to take part in a meeting to decide on a policy for Internet use in your company. Each take a role: A, B, C or D.

A

The Human Resources manager

You see one of your company's biggest challenges is to recruit talented, well-qualified, young people. Potential employees of this type have been using computers and mobile phones since they were born. Digital communication is part of their lives. They will hesitate to work for an employer who prohibits Internet access. For example, a lot of companies block instant messaging because they see it as a distraction and a waste of time, but for many people now, instant messaging is a legitimate work tool that allows quick communication between colleagues and actually saves money.

B

The company boss

You are in favour of controlling access to the Internet and using filters to prevent users visiting non-authorized sites. You suspect that employees waste a lot of time looking at things like eBay™, Myspace and Facebook. You can see two problems. On one hand, if workers are using the Internet for personal use, then they are not doing anything useful during paid time. On the other hand, if they are doing this when they have finished all their tasks, it shows they have not been given enough work to do.

C

The IT manager


This sounds like more work for you and you would prefer not to have to do it. You know that although it is possible to use filters to limit Internet access, there will be some technical problems. People will constantly be asking you to modify the system so that they can surf sites which are useful for their work. Another problem is that people will think they are being spied on and blame you for it.

D

The R&D manager

You are against any use of filters because you are convinced that for your department unlimited access to the Internet is essential. You think it is sufficient to give every worker their own personal logon and then monitor their Internet use. You also think that you should give workers clear rules about what they can do and what they can't do. They should also be obliged to sign a document accepting these conditions. In other words, you believe it is important to treat people as adults and not like naughty children who cannot be trusted.



4  **CS1** Emily Pearce is business development director at Worldwide Communications, an advertising company. The firm started in 1995 and has 65 employees who need email and Internet access. Emily explains how they put an email and Internet policy in place. Listen and complete the missing information.

- a** Every employee has to _____ a copy of the policy.
- b** The policy covers personal use, _____ between colleagues, downloads and what happens if the rules are broken.
- c** Employees are allowed to access the Internet for personal use during _____.
- d** _____ emails which are not related to work are not allowed.
- e** Employees have to be careful what they _____.
- f** They once had a problem when an employee was sending emails to her _____ all day.

5 In your meeting in 3, did you create a similar policy to Emily's?