

## 4.2 Creative environments

GOALS ■ Describe your impressions of something ■ Use causative *have* and *get*

### Vocabulary & Speaking describing your impressions



- 1 Work with a partner. Look at the three photos (above and on the right) and discuss the following questions.
- 1 Do either of you work in an office which looks anything like these? If not, would you like to? Why/Why not?
  - 2 Do you think that working somewhere like this would make you more creative? Why/Why not?

- 2a With your partner, add the words in the box to the lists, making groups with similar meanings.

conventional innovative inventive odd practical  
remarkable silly striking user-friendly

weird: \_\_\_\_\_  
original: \_\_\_\_\_  
impressive: \_\_\_\_\_  
functional: \_\_\_\_\_  
childish: \_\_\_\_\_  
unimaginative: \_\_\_\_\_

- b Are there any small differences in meaning between the words in each group in exercise 2a? Discuss with your partner.
- 3 With a new partner, describe your impressions of each office in the photos, using the words from exercise 2.
- 4a Read the newspaper article. Make a list of things the article mentions which might make people more creative.
- b Compare the things you found with a partner. Which idea(s) do you think are most/least likely to work? Why?

## Can companies make people more creative?

A lot of companies want their employees to be innovative and creative, but how can inventiveness be encouraged? We've all seen those pictures of striking, original or even truly weird offices, with ping-pong tables, swings, slides, even beds. But do they actually lead to greater creativity? It's hard to say. Having fun with colleagues on a slide might make you feel more relaxed and full of imaginative ideas, but then again, it might just be a silly waste of time.

Companies such as Google think that if they can get you to bump into your colleagues all the time, you'll do more sharing of ideas. They have their employees eat lunch at long tables so that they will meet and chat to more people. All this chatting might spark some ideas, but on the other hand, maybe a nice quiet office and some peace to think might actually be more user-friendly.

Another approach that some companies take is to try to make sure that you have nothing else to worry about other than coming up with new and impressive ideas. At Google, for example, breakfast, lunch and dinner are all provided free and you can get your hair cut, get your bike repaired, have your car washed or serviced, even get your washing done, without having to leave the building. Again, these could be seen as perks, but they could also just be a way of getting you to stay longer at work.

Ultimately, while companies like these could be fun places to work at, people actually often come up with the best ideas in spite of their environment, rather than because of it. J. K. Rowling famously wrote the first Harry Potter books while living on virtually no money, with a child to support. As Steve Jobs, the founder of Apple, once said about the difficult years of his company: 'We had nothing to lose and everything to gain.' Perhaps to be truly creative you need to be a bit less comfortable so you're 'hungry' to succeed?

■ **perk** something extra that you get from your employer in addition to a salary



## Grammar using causative *have* and *get*

- 5a Look at the underlined sections of the article. Do these verb forms refer to actions you do yourself, or actions someone does for or to you?
- b Check your ideas by reading the Grammar focus box, then add some of the underlined examples to the box.

### GRAMMAR FOCUS causative *have* and *get*

- When we arrange for somebody else to do something for or to us, but we don't say who does it, we use *have* + object + past participle

a \_\_\_\_\_

OR

*get* + object + past participle (slightly more informal than using *have*)

b \_\_\_\_\_

We can also use these structures when something has happened to us, and we didn't want it to happen.

*I had my handbag stolen last night.*

- When we arrange for somebody else to do something for us, or for somebody else to do something we want, and we *do* say who does it, we use

*get* + person + infinitive with *to*

c \_\_\_\_\_

OR

*have* + person + infinitive without *to*

d \_\_\_\_\_

→ Grammar Reference page 143



- 6a Rewrite each sentence in three different ways, using the structures in the Grammar focus box.

### Perks of being a Google employee

1 A chef will cook breakfast for you.

*You can get/have your breakfast cooked for you by a chef.*

*Google will have a chef cook your breakfast for you.*

*Google will get a chef to cook your breakfast for you.*

2 A doctor will give you free health checks.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3 Someone will do your dry-cleaning for you, for free.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4 Someone will fix your car for you.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

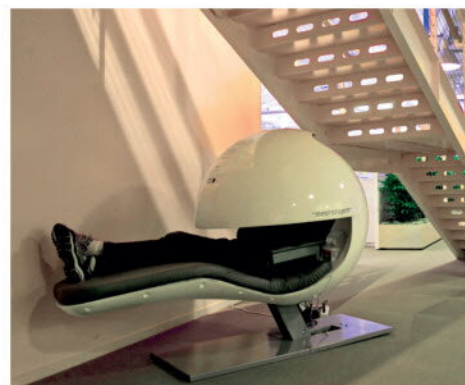
\_\_\_\_\_

- b What perks would make you most want to work for a company? Discuss with a partner.

*I'd like to have my car washed frequently.*

- 7 Work with a partner. Which of these things do you think are more likely to make someone more creative? Put the list in order, from most likely (1) to least likely (6).

- playing music quietly
- hearing colleagues' phone conversations
- having the heating turned down
- having a messy desk
- feeling tired
- having a nap



- 8 4.4 ))) Listen to a radio programme about how people work and compare it with your ideas. Does anything surprise you? Discuss with your partner.