



16 TELECONFERENCING

Teleconferencing is so rational, it will never succeed.

JOHN NAISBITT, MEGATRENDS

1 Is business travel a perk or a pain? With today's sophisticated telecommunications, how much of it is really necessary?

2 George Mackintosh is the serial entrepreneur who set up Geonconference, at one time Europe's fastest-growing teleconferencing company. Do you agree with what he says?

Videoconferencing is never going to eliminate the need for at least one face-to-face meeting. If you are doing business with someone for the first time, I don't dispute the fact that you need to meet them, look them in the eye and shake their hand. After that it is likely you are going to be speaking to them on the phone or by e-mail. Videoconferencing allows you to have a more personalised relationship.

3 Read the web page below, which presents Cisco's TelePresence videoconferencing system, and answer the questions.

- What is the 'paradox' the web page describes?
- How does TelePresence solve this problem?



TELEPRESENCE

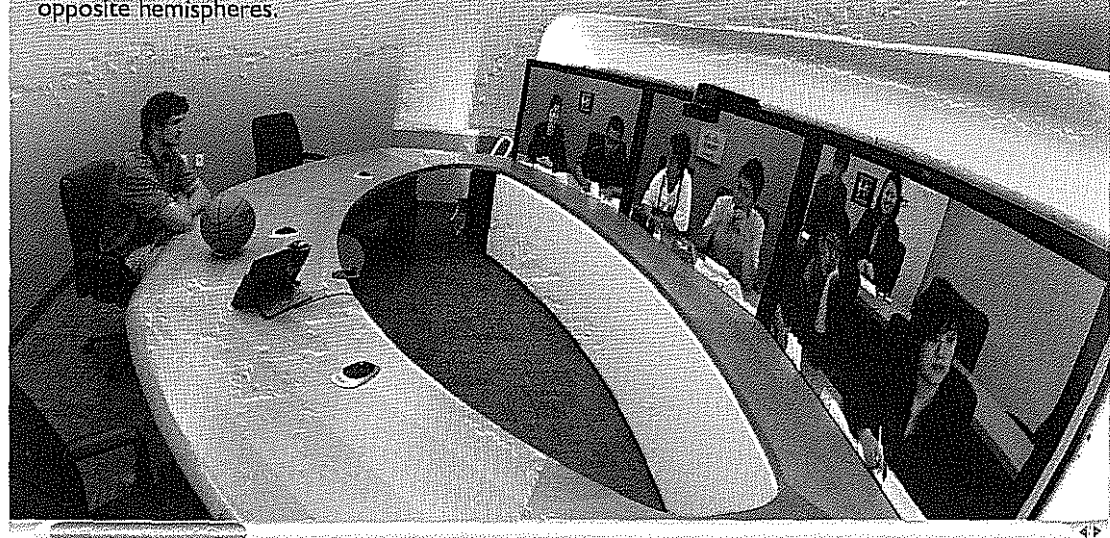
www.cisco.com

Business Benefits

We live in a world of paradox. Technology has allowed us to establish economically advantageous business operations worldwide. However, to excel in today's fast-moving business environment, you have to interact and collaborate with co-workers, partners, and customers all over the world at a moment's notice. You need to continuously innovate and transform your business model to maintain competitive edge. And you need to plan ahead to respond rapidly to unexpected issues that affect business continuity.


At the same time, much of business is still done based on the quality of your relationships with the people with whom you interact most often. To build and maintain these critical relationships, you often need to travel, which translates to lost time and reduced productivity, not to mention valuable time spent away from home and family.

All of this points to the need for a technological solution that allows the same type of face-to-face business interactions, without the constant need for global travel. That's where the concept of Cisco TelePresence comes in. It allows for real-time, face-to-face communication and collaboration over the network with colleagues, prospects, and partners, even if they're in opposite hemispheres.




4 Find two-word phrases in the text you just read which mean:

- a how your business works
- b an advantage you have over your competitors
- c making sure your business can still operate even in a crisis.

5  4.12 Now listen to a short commercial for TelePresence. Cisco recommends the system for the following kinds of meeting. Which do you think it would be best suited to? Would *you* use it?

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| design team meetings | consultations with vendors, suppliers and clients |
| in-company executive meetings | job interviews |
| product demonstrations | project meetings |
| sales presentations | |

TROUBLE AT THE PLANT

1  4.13 Peter Devlin is CEO of the European division of Oriflamme, a manufacturer of candles and home fragrance products. Currently on a business trip to Vancouver with his marketing director Monica Brookes, Peter was woken at 2am by an unexpected phone call from his plant manager in Hamburg. Listen and answer the questions.

- a What has happened at the Hamburg plant?
- b Why didn't Max have any alternative?
- c What happened last time there was a similar disaster?
- d What does Peter suggest doing now?

2 Complete the phrasal verbs in the following sentences from 1 with the correct preposition. Use the synonyms in brackets to help you.

- a We're going to have to shut the Hamburg plant immediately. (close)
- b Otherwise, the whole thing could go! (explode)
- c We'll have container lorries backed from Hamburg to Lübeck. (queueing)

3 You also heard the following idiomatic expressions in 1. Can you remember the missing words? The first two letters are given. Use the definitions in brackets to help you.


- a Who on ea..... can that be? (I have no idea who this is.)
- b All he.....'s broken loose here. (Everything's in chaos here.)
- c Everything grinds to a ha..... (Everything comes to a complete stop.)
- d There's not a mo..... to lose. (We must act immediately.)
- e I'm sorry to get you up at this unearthly ho..... (I don't like to disturb you so late/early.)

4 Work with a partner. List the implications of a crisis like the one above.

5 Now match the following. Did you include them in your list in 4?

- | | |
|----------------|--------------|
| a a backlog of | bottleneck |
| b a production | hazard |
| c a safety | productivity |
| d a fall in | orders |
| e a damaged | manhours |
| f adverse | reputation |
| g lost | deliveries |
| h delayed | publicity |

6 Work with a partner to discuss what immediate action Oriflamme should take to avoid the implications in 5.

7  4.14–4.16 Listen to the emergency teleconference and answer the questions.

Extract 1

- Who hasn't been able to join the teleconference?
- Where are Peter and Monica?
- How long will it take to fix the problem at the plant?

Extract 2

- What state is the plant in?
- Why can't the orders be met completely?
- Describe Monica's response to Peter's suggestion that they buy product from their competitors to sell on to their customers 'to cover the shortfall'.
enthusiastic positive lukewarm cool negative hostile

Extract 3

- Why may Handelsmann be prepared to help?
- Is there still a safety hazard at the plant?
- What arrangement does Peter make with Otto?

8 The minutes on page 119 were taken by Françoise Fleurie directly after the teleconference. Complete them using the verbs in the boxes.

Points 1 and 2

assure authorised confirmed ensure estimated informed keep

Points 3 and 4

agreed follow mentioned OK'd opposed pointed proposed reach report smooth

