

Listen to this speech given at a party being held for the retirement of an employee, James Dawson.

**Optional activity:**

Listen and put the following events into chronological order.

Sentence	Chronological order
a) James became vice president of the company.	
b) James negotiated the successful takeover of a rival company.	
c) Plans for a merger fell through.	
d) The company had a lot of difficulties and some workers were made redundant.	

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...Thank you all for coming today. As you are all aware we are here to celebrate 35 years of continuous service by our friend and colleague James Dawson. He started as an administration officer in 1972, in our accounts department and worked his way up the career ladder over the years, finally becoming vice president in 1989, of the company, and managing over three hundred employees. As most of you who have been working here long enough will know, it has been a long struggle to become one of the European market leaders in our field, and you may remember in 1982, when we had a huge setback, with the plans for a merger with our top rival company falling through. Because of that, we had to make some workers redundant, however James was lucky enough to keep his job. Yes, those really were the worst few years. However we managed to get through these difficult times by working hard and James was a key player in the struggle to get us back on the path to becoming one of the largest computer manufacturing companies in Europe. One of James's biggest strengths has been his immaculate timekeeping and organisational skills, in fact I have never known him to be without his diary! His negotiation skills and determination led to a tactful action plan to become one of the leading companies in Europe. I will never forget that day in 1987 when we had the final negotiations for the takeover of our rival company. James and his superb presenting and negotiating skills was one of the key factors to our success. The turning point in our company came with the successful takeover, and despite all the obstacles we have faced, the hard work and dedication of all our workers has made our company the success it is today. And I have to say that James, as one of our managers, has always acknowledged the work and contribution made by others. James, you rewarded your best employees with some of the best perks any company has given! Today we want to acknowledge the hard work and significant contributions which you have made. So thank you James for your loyalty to the company and your hard work.

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**Answer key: c,d,b,a.**