

**Listen to a radio interview with a manager whose company helps other organisations become more creative through the arts.**

**Radio interviewer** Art & Business is an organisation that develops creative partnerships between business and the arts. Peter Jones is going to talk about the company's ideas and tell us about some of their success stories. Peter ... maybe you could begin by telling our listeners why Art & Business was created?

**Peter Jones** Well, in the twenty first century productivity is no longer a matter of machines. The success of a company depends on its people and on the creativity of its people .... It makes sense that the way to increase productivity is to stimulate creativity.

**Radio interviewer** And what better way to stimulate creativity than through reading books.

**Peter Jones** Exactly. Every reader knows that a good book can stimulate the imagination and the intellect ... get you thinking along lines you might not have thought of before ... open up new worlds.

**Radio interviewer** So, have you had any help in setting up the project?

**Peter Jones** Yes. The London Libraries Agency and an organisation called The Reading Partnership work with us on this project. We're trying to use the power of the written word to motivate staff in the workplace. In a recent survey seven hundred business leaders were asked which book had inspired them and had a positive influence on their career. They were able to choose any kind of book ... any kind at all. Only about 40% chose a business book. Most people chose a work of fiction; a novel, a play or even poetry.

**Radio interviewer** How can reading help somebody to become a more creative worker?

**Peter Jones** Successful managers need to be well-rounded people. They need active imaginations. When they interpret fictional scenarios they are using their creativity. Readers combine imaginative skills with critical and analytical skills.

**Radio interviewer** Are we talking about the right and left sides of the brain?

**Peter Jones** Yes. ... Our logical left side of the brain interprets the language of a book. The creative right side looks at the forms of expression. The left side analyses the plot while the right side is more interested in the relationships between characters – the emotional aspects.

**Radio interviewer** How does this transfer to the world of Business

**Peter Jones** Creative ideas make businesses more competitive. Shared reading experiences improve communication and morale at work.

**Radio interviewer** Can you give listeners some examples of how this scheme has been brought – successfully into the workplace?

**Peter Jones** Employees at WH Smith have stuck poems and quotations above their desks ... for inspiration

**Radio interviewer** Well ... WH Smith deals in books. What about other examples?

**Peter Jones** The telecommunications company Orange set up a project called "Talk Books at Work". They discovered that encouraging employees to read helped them to develop their linguistic and interpersonal skills. Marks and Spencer has set up reading groups at work. The groups cut across the usual hierarchies and working relationships have improved greatly.