

**Listen to an interview with Mark Cohen, training manager with a large banking group, who has just introduced the BULATS exam as part of the corporate training programme in his organisation.**

**Optional exercise** Listen to the interview and decide whether the following statements are true or false

1. According to the presenter, there aren't many English language exams to do at the moment.
  2. According to the presenter, a language qualification can make your CV look better.
  3. Mark Cohen's company think training is important.
  4. Cohen's company only uses English as a language.
  5. Cohen thinks existing language exams meet his needs perfectly.
  6. Cohen does not need to know the language level of people in his company.
  7. Cohen has other people design courses specifically for his company.
  8. Using BULATS and designing specific courses works out cheaper for Cohen's company.
  9. Sending Cohen's trainees to the UK for a language course was a success.
  10. BULATS can be taken at any time of the year.
  11. BULATS is only for English.
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Interviewer: First Certificate, Advanced, Proficiency, Trinity and IELTS – there is no shortage of English language qualifications on the market at the moment if you need a certificate to impress an employer or enrich your CV. But now there's yet another one – BULATS. Mark Cohen, who is training manager with a large international banking group, has just introduced the BULATS exam as part of the corporate training programme in his organisation. So, Mark, two questions to kick off with, first - why another exam? And secondly, why BULATS?

Mark Cohen: Well, first of all let me say that I'm lucky in that I work for a company who invest a lot in training – and we see language training as an essential part of that. We have offices in over two dozen countries worldwide, so obviously our staff use a lot of different languages – not to mention our external clients! We do a lot of language training, and the exams you mention are all fine in their place, but they're not really what we're looking for.

Interviewer: How do you mean?

Mark Cohen: All they do is show that you have achieved a certain level.

Interviewer: And what are you looking for?

Mark Cohen: Well – this is where BULATS comes in – what we need to find out is not the language level of the people who work for us, but their *ability* to speak that language. And it is exactly this that the BULATS exam tests. It not only evaluates their skills, but also lets us look at their suitability for further language training, and helps us to decide exactly what kind of training is necessary.

Interviewer: And you then design language training based directly on their needs?

Mark Cohen: Exactly – we work with a group of language trainers who design materials and sessions specifically to meet our corporate needs, and also the needs of the people who take the courses – helping to maximise our resources.

Interviewer: So far so good – but why the necessity for the exam? Why not just do the courses straight away?

Mark Cohen: Well, we've done language courses before and they've never achieved quite what we want. We even had an extensive programme of sending trainees to the UK to do languages courses – they all had a great time, but to be honest the results didn't really meet our corporate objectives.

Interviewer: And BULATS helps you to do this?

Mark Cohen: Yes, I have to say – it's proved pretty successful so far. We've given trainees the BULATS exam at both the beginning and at the end of the language courses they've followed – it allows us to accurately measure their progress, and the efficiency of the training they underwent.

Interviewer: How do you manage to fit an exam into busy working schedules?

Mark Cohen: BULATS has proved very easy to administer – we can do it at any time, unlike the other exams which you mentioned, when they can only take them twice a year, which would mean a lot of delays – not useful in a fast-moving business like ours.

Interviewer: Is it only for English-language training?

Mark Cohen: No - we don't just use the English language version. As I said before, we work in lots of different countries, so our staff have to be able to speak more than just English – the BULATS test can also be done for French, German and Spanish – all highly useful languages in our corporate environment.

Interviewer: Mark, thanks for your time.

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**Answers:** 1F, 2T, 3T, 4F, 5F, 6T, 7T, 8T, 9F, 10T, 11F