

## Sony appoints British CEO (Tue 8 Mar, 2005)

### WARM-UPS

**CHAT:** Talk in pairs or groups about Sony / CEO / electronics / Walkman / PlayStation / HandyCam / ...Change topic / partner frequently to energize the class.

**SONY BRAINSTORM:** Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with SONY. Share your words with your partner / group and talk about them.

**SONY LIFESTYLE:** With a partner, write down 5 ways in which life would be different without SONY – (no Walkman on the train, no PlayStation... etc.). Change partners and compare what you wrote. Change partners again and compare again. Return to your original partner and decide on the five biggest ways in which life would be different of those you wrote down / heard.

**2-MINUTE SONY DEBATES:** Rotate pairs to ensure a lively pace and noise level is kept:

- a. Japanese companies need Japanese CEOs. vs. Nissan has a Brazilian CEO.
- b. Sony is the best electronics company in the world. vs. Isn't.
- c. Sony's products are not so reliable. vs. Sony's products are extremely high quality.
- d. Sony's Walkman is the best portable music player. vs. Ten years ago – yes – but now it's Apple's iPod.
- e. PlayStation is best. vs. Xbox / Nintendo DS / GameCube is better.
- f. Walkman's changed the world. vs. They just meant we could listen to music on the train. That's not changing the world.
- g. A foreign CEO will bring important change to Sony. vs. Sony is a traditionally run Japanese company in no need of change.

## PRE-READING IDEAS

**WORD SEARCH:** Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... of the words 'electronics' and 'giant'.

**TRUE FALSE:** Guess whether the following statements about the article are true or false:

- a. Sony Corporation has appointed its first foreign CEO. T / F
- b. Sony's profits have been falling. T / F
- c. Sony's share price has fallen over 50% in the past five years. T / F
- d. The new British CEO is a newcomer to the world of entertainment. T / F
- e. This is the new British CEO's first job with Sony. T / F
- f. Sony may make a loss for the second successive year. T / F
- g. Sony needs a new line of 'hit' products to return it to the top. T / F
- h. Sony products have become household names. T / F

**SYNONYM MATCH:** Match the following synonyms from the article:

- |                 |               |
|-----------------|---------------|
| (a) giant       | resuscitate   |
| (b) revive      | workforce     |
| (c) flagging    | dominating    |
| (d) earnings    | cutting edge  |
| (e) illustrious | gadgets       |
| (f) appointment | powerhouse    |
| (g) commanding  | revenue       |
| (h) devices     | job           |
| (i) ranks       | falling       |
| (j) innovation  | distinguished |

**PHRASE MATCH:** Match the following phrases based on the article:

- |                                 |                    |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|
| (a) revive flagging             | slump              |
| (b) electronics                 | and technology     |
| (c) extraordinary general       | profits            |
| (d) taken                       | the red            |
| (e) 60% share price             | names              |
| (f) illustrious                 | responsibility for |
| (g) twin pillars of engineering | giant              |
| (h) going into                  | year               |
| (i) a second straight           | meeting            |
| (j) have become household       | career             |

## GAP FILL

### Sony appoints British CEO

**BNE:** Japan's Sony Corporation has \_\_\_\_\_ its first foreign CEO in an attempt to revive flagging profits. The electronics giant named British Sir Howard Stringer as its new boss in an extraordinary \_\_\_\_\_ meeting. He replaces current CEO Nobuyuki Idei, who has taken responsibility for \_\_\_\_\_ earnings and a 60% share price slump over the past five years. The 63-year old Stringer was born in Wales and has had an illustrious career. He is a Vietnam war hero, he \_\_\_\_\_ as president of America's CBS Inc between 1988-95, and joined Sony Corp. of America in 1997 as president. He was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II in 1999. Sir Howard said of his appointment, "We look forward to joining our twin pillars of engineering and technology with our commanding \_\_\_\_\_ in entertainment and content creation to deliver the most advanced devices and forms of entertainment to the consumer." His task is to prevent Sony from going into the red for a second straight year, and to \_\_\_\_\_ the creativity within Sony's ranks. It needs a new line of 'hit' products to return it to the top. Sony was started by Akio Morita after World War II selling wireless radios, and soon developed into an electronics \_\_\_\_\_ known for innovation and quality. Products such as Walkman and PlayStation have become \_\_\_\_\_ names.

*poor   appointed   presence   general   household   powerhouse   served   revive*

## DISCUSSION:

- a. What was interesting in this article?
- b. Are you Sony fan?
- c. Have you ever bought any Sony products?
- d. What electronics goods do you have? Was the maker a factor in your decision to buy them?
- e. Which of these countries make the best electronics goods: Japan, USA, Korea, Germany, Finland, Taiwan, and China?
- f. Do you have any brand loyalty towards any electronics company?
- g. Are Sony's Walkman and PlayStation the best products of their kinds?
- h. What do you think of the appointment of a British CEO to head Sony?
- i. Is an iPod better than a Walkman?
- j. Would you buy a Sony computer?
- k. What kind of new products do you want Sony to bring out?
- l. What would you do if you were CEO of Sony?
- m. What new markets should Sony try and enter?
- n. Which is the best electronics company in the world?
- o. Teacher / Student additional questions.

## **HOMEWORK**

- 1. VOCAB EXTENSION:** Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.
- 2. INTERNET:** Search the Internet and find information on Sony. Share your findings with your class next lesson.
- 3. NEW PRODUCT:** You are a worker for Sony R & D. Make a new product design that will be a best seller.
- 4. LETTER TO SIR HOWARD:** Write a letter to Sir Howard Stringer giving him advice on his new position as CEO of Sony.

## **TEXT**

### Sony appoints British CEO

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