

# *Setting the Standard for Business English Assessment*

*A 5-Step Guide to the TOEIC<sup>®</sup> Test*

# **ACHIEVING SUCCESS IN YOUR COMPANY**

As the HR Director of your company or organization, one of your many responsibilities is measuring the English-language skills of employees, both existing and prospective. That's why we offer the Test of English for International Communication,<sup>™</sup> or TOEIC,<sup>®</sup> the global standard in English-language assessment for business. The TOEIC test has been used for more than 25 years, and is currently implemented in over 8,000 organizations worldwide. These companies recognize that, in today's global marketplace, the ability for nonnative speakers of English to properly use English in everyday work activities can mean the difference between success and failure.

The TOEIC test was created by ETS (Educational Testing Service), the world's largest private educational measurement organization, to advance English-language learning around the world. ETS is committed to listening to the needs of our clients, learning the best methods of consistently and accurately measuring English proficiency, and leading the way in the field of English-language assessment worldwide.

## ***Typical uses of the TOEIC test within companies include:***

- **Recruiting and promoting employees**

The TOEIC test establishes score standards, or benchmarks, based on the levels of English necessary to carry out particular responsibilities, under which personnel decisions can be made.

- **Technical training**

If technical training at your company is conducted in English, the TOEIC test will help determine whether an individual is proficient enough to participate in, and benefit from, that training.

- **Assignments abroad**

The TOEIC test can indicate whether an employee will be able to work and interact effectively in a location where English is the language of business.

- **Language training**

The TOEIC test can be used to identify those employees who need further English-language training, to set learning goals and to monitor their progress.

Please read through this informative, 5-step guide to learn more about the TOEIC test and how it can be seamlessly implemented within the workplace.

# STEP ONE

## DEFINE YOUR STRATEGY

1 2 3 4 5

Begin by establishing benchmarks for each level within your organization based on the English skills required to carry out particular job responsibilities. These benchmarks, which your TOEIC representative can help you establish, will help you and your colleagues make important personnel decisions such as promoting people from within, deploying employees to a country where business is done in English, and identifying employees who need additional English training to maximize their ability for achieving success in their position.

The two-hour paper-and-pencil TOEIC test consists of 200 questions divided into two separately timed sections: Listening Comprehension and Reading Comprehension. Individuals taking the test receive a Listening Comprehension score, a Reading Comprehension score and a Total score, which is the sum of the Listening and Reading scores. The Total score ranges from a high of 990 to a low of 10.

For the majority of test takers, the Listening Comprehension and Reading Comprehension scores will be similar. However, in some cases, a candidate may be more at ease with spoken language than with written language, or vice versa. You can use this type of information in conjunction with the Total score, in making recruitment, placement, training or other personnel decisions.

Some companies prefer to create interpretive scales specifically for personnel within their own organization. They may link TOEIC scores to particular positions and/or job functions, or establish a correspondence between TOEIC scores and other pre-existing scales. The following chart is an example of score ranges from a defense company in France, and should be used as a guideline only and not considered definitive.

<b>ENGLISH COMPETENCY LEVEL</b>	
<i>TOEIC Score</i>	<i>Description</i>
<b>900–990</b>	Managers who are able to represent the company by themselves and with final authority in negotiating agreements and contracts with native English-speaking partner organizations.
<b>800–850</b>	Managers who are able to represent the company by themselves in contributing to the negotiation of agreements and contracts with partner organizations using English.
<b>700–750</b>	Individuals who actively participate in meetings with partner organizations using English.
<b>600</b>	Individuals who accompany and support staff members with primary responsibility for business meetings. May be called upon to give a short, prepared speech and/or to take minutes of the meeting.
<b>400–500</b>	Individuals who, with assistance of vocabulary/grammar aids, have occasional and short-term contact in English. This may include welcoming visitors (in person or by telephone) and working with the mail.

# STEP TWO

## ASSESS YOUR JOB APPLICANTS

1 2 3 4 5

Once your benchmarks are defined, you'll have a clear understanding of the TOEIC score you require of job applicants to fulfill their responsibilities within your organization. You may prefer that job applicants take the TOEIC test in an open testing session managed by TOEIC representatives and submit their scores along with their resumes. Or you may require them to take the TOEIC test that is administered at a location of your choice. Either way, using the TOEIC test to measure applicants' skills prior to the interviewing process will save your company time and money. And you'll feel confident that you are only hiring the most qualified employees.

### Kenwood and TOEIC: In perfect harmony

At Kenwood Electronics Technologies, located in Malaysia, there is a direct relationship between English proficiency and job advancement within the organization. This is a very big motivator to those individuals applying for employment since Kenwood relocated their R&D division from Japan to Malaysia. The common language there is English, therefore it became imperative that all employees have and maintain certain levels of English. By implementing the TOEIC test with these job candidates, Kenwood was able to streamline their business practices and save money in the hiring process. They can now be sure that all new employees possess a sufficient level of English proficiency to excel in their position. In turn, potential costly mistakes, miscommunication, and poor job performance can be avoided.

ETS makes every effort to ensure the TOEIC test is fair, unbiased and culturally relevant to candidates worldwide. Our development team is careful to:

- Avoid language (e.g., vocabulary, idioms, grammar) that is specific to American or British English
- Choose contexts that are not specific to one culture
- Ensure the balanced use of names from different nationalities
- Refer to locations, people or events that would be recognized in many different countries
- Avoid situations that are too specific to one type of occupation

# **STEP THREE**

## **ASSESS YOUR EXISTING EMPLOYEES**

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Your employees are your company's greatest assets. To ensure they are reaching their full potential, it is important to understand how their English skills may be affecting your business. By administering the TOEIC test to your employees, you can confidently gauge whether they have the English skills required to achieve success in the global business environment or if they are in need of additional language training.

### **Johnson & Johnson K.K. and TOEIC: A healthy partnership**

Johnson & Johnson (J&J), an American manufacturer of a wide range of health care goods, has affiliates in 51 countries and sells its products in more than 175 countries. In 1978, they established a Japanese subsidiary, Johnson & Johnson K.K. (J&J K.K.). Because J&J K.K. has strong ties with overseas enterprises, including its parent company in the United States, the ability to effectively communicate in English is critical, especially for executives. In April 2002, J&J K.K. decided to use the TOEIC test to assess the English-language skills of its employees. Once they established its score standards for each job category, they announced that achieving the recommended score would be made a condition for promotion and pay increases. Today, the employees of J&J K.K. have a better grasp of the English language than ever before and the company, with the help of the TOEIC test, is thriving in the global marketplace.

## **STEP FOUR** **IMPLEMENT THE TEST**

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Implementing the TOEIC test within your organization is easy. There are no costly set-up materials, and it can be administered using two different methods: on-site testing and open session testing. TOEIC representatives will work with your company to establish the best testing method for your needs. And, in addition to managing the scoring of the test, your local TOEIC representative will distribute a customized report to you based on the results of the test. You will normally receive the scores within a maximum of ten working days, allowing you to quickly and easily make important decisions.

By choosing on-site administration, testing will take place on your own premises as often as you would like. Staff from your local TOEIC office and/or your staff will supervise the testing sessions. In cases where your own staff administers the test, they will receive training on TOEIC procedures and guidelines from an authorized TOEIC representative.\* For both testing methods, one supervisor is required for each group of 25 candidates or less and is responsible for all testing materials, organizing and administering the test, and returning all testing materials to the TOEIC representative immediately after the session.

If you decide to use the open session testing method, sessions are held on scheduled, fixed dates in various locations throughout the world. Open public sessions are not held in all countries, so test candidates should check with their local TOEIC representative regarding the availability of the sessions.

\*Training is only applicable in regions where on-site administration of the TOEIC test is available.

# STEP FIVE

## CONTACT YOUR LOCAL REPRESENTATIVE

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For more information, contact your local area TOEIC representative who can provide you with a free copy of the *TOEIC Examinee Handbook* (available in several languages) and help you implement the TOEIC test in your company today. To find your local representative, go to [www.ets.org/ell/representative.html](http://www.ets.org/ell/representative.html).

### ***Representatives are available in the following countries:***

Algeria	Germany	Kuwait	Qatar	Ukraine
Argentina	Greece	Latvia	Russia	United Arab Emirates
Australia	Hong Kong	Lebanon	Saudi Arabia	United Kingdom
Bahrain	Hungary	Malaysia	Singapore	United States
Brazil	India	Mexico	Spain	Uzbekistan
Canada	Indonesia	Morocco	Switzerland	Venezuela
Chile	Ireland	New Zealand	Syria	Vietnam
China	Italy	Oman	Taiwan	West Bank/Gaza
Colombia	Japan	Pakistan	Thailand	Yemen
Egypt	Jordan	Philippines	Tunisia	
France	Korea	Portugal	Turkey	

If your country is not listed here and you would like more information, please contact ETS headquarters at [internationaldevelopment@ets.org](mailto:internationaldevelopment@ets.org).

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