**Student’s Worksheet 1**

**Summary sentences – identifying key points**

**The paragraphs below are part of a text about marketing during a recession.**

**Match each paragraph with the sentence which summarises the key points.**

**Exercise 1**

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| **1.** | It is received wisdom that in a period of general economic recession you should concentrate on your core business, and trim the fat. Non-essential fripperies can wait for the good times to return. And one of the most costly non-essentials is marketing. So it stands to reason that this is one area where savings can immediately be made. Chopping the marketing budget is a no-brainer. Isn’t it? Well, not really. | **a.** | So, the marketing focus for companies during a recession should be on keeping customers by strengthening relationships and responding to their needs, even if this means changing what they normally do.  |
| **2.** | It is tempting to disregard this point because it is easy to cut a marketing budget. There will be an immediate reduction in expenditure which looks good to shareholders or investors who might be worried about the level of outgoings. Moreover, cutting marketing budgets has little immediate effect on sales, so it can be spun as a decision with no downsides. | **b.** | During a recession, it may seem that cutting the marketing budget is a good way of saving money, but that is not really the case. |
| **3.** | Those with a more long-term view of things should be aware that copious, compelling research shows that advertising aggressively during a recession increases sales and long-term profits. As the cost of advertising goes down and others are advertising less, those who do advertise find their voice stands out and is, to all intents and purposes, amplified. You get more bang for your advertising buck in a recession. | **c.** | Companies without a clear marketing strategy may risk losing regular customers to companies which offer lower prices.  |
| **4.** | Those companies that are a bit too vague about their market position, or what their promises are, should be aware that during tough times people might be looking for something offering better value. They may feel a little less committed to the brands that they usually purchase. | **d.** | Companies which take advantage of the opportunities for cheaper advertising during a recession are likely to improve their profile and see benefits in the long run. |
| **5.** | In a recession, then, marketing budgets should give due attention to developing brand loyalty. For many firms, especially those involved in selling to other businesses, that often hinges on developing personal relationships and sharpening up messaging. During a recession it can be particularly appropriate for all types of business to focus on tailoring products to individual clients’ needs, rather than pushing what they already do. | **e.** | Economic crises are more common these days, so companies need to be better prepared to cope. |
| **6.** | Bearing all this in mind should mean that firms are battle-hardened and better prepared for a recession. In the good old days, crises only came along once every decade or so. Now ‘permacrisis’ has been added to the dictionary. That brings challenges, but should at least mean the solutions marketers used last time around should still be fresh in their minds. | **f.** | Cutting marketing budgets is seen as an instant saving with no immediate impact on sales, so it looks like this is a positive move. |

**Exercise 2**

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| **1.** | For firms at the budget end of the spectrum, this means that their pricing is likely to be a bonus in a recession. But they should not ignore the fact that habits vary with the seasons. For example, at times of major festivals, customers actually tend to trade up as a treat and go to more expensive retailers. | **a.** | However, the impact of changes to marketing may not be felt until long after they were made. |
| **2.** | Unfortunately, that is not the case. The problem is that the consequences of marketing come with a time lag. Any money put into it might have an impact one or two years later. And in two years from now, the managers who made the budget cuts might well have moved on to a new job. The damage will have been done, but it is not their problem. | **b.** | In order to survive, a company needs to keep building its brand loyalty, even in difficult times. |
| **3.** | That’s why, although there is little you can do to change the economy, a business can do its best to ensure it is well placed to deal with what is happening. When you’re cutting your marketing resources, you’re limiting your ability to develop brand loyalty. | **c.** | Companies should still be careful with their marketing budgets and take this opportunity to focus on what they are good at and meeting the needs of their customers. |
| **4.** | This assumes a view of marketing as an expense, which it makes sense to reduce. But marketing might well be better considered as an investment. Seen this way, the moment you reduce your marketing spend, you are potentially turning a short-term problem into a long-term one. | **d.** | This means companies offering cheaper goods may benefit during recessions, but there will still be occasions when customers are willing to spend more. |
| **5.** | This will help brands become resilient to negative shocks. As some big-name businesses have discovered to their cost, negativity about brands can go viral in no time. Marketing is about creating loyalty so strong that it weathers these storms. That work can’t stop just because inflation is high. | **e.** | Marketing should not be viewed as a cost that needs to be cut, but as an investment for the future. |
| **6.** | Of course, it remains wise to spend marketing money as intelligently as possible. It’s important to check the pledges made to customers ensuring they focus on what you do well and are attuned to the economic conditions. Indeed, a recession can be the perfect time to review marketing strategies to make certain they are focused on your business’s strengths. | **f.** | Businesses can’t change what’s happening in the economy, so they need to find the best way to cope with a recession. |

**Student’s Worksheet 2**

**Gapped sentences – identify text development and cohesion**

**The text below is a summary of the main text, with the sentences in the correct order. Decide which of the sentences below the text fits in each gap. There is one sentence that you do not need to use.**

During a recession, it may seem that cutting the marketing budget is a good way of saving money, but that is not really the case.

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Cutting marketing budgets is seen as an instant saving with no immediate impact on sales, so it looks like this is a positive move.

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Companies which take advantage of the opportunities for cheaper advertising during a recession are likely improve their profile and see benefits in the long run.

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Companies without a clear marketing strategy may risk losing regular customers to companies which offer lower prices.

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So, the marketing focus for companies during a recession should be on keeping customers by strengthening relationships and responding to their needs, even if this means changing what they normally do.

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Economic crises are more common these days, so companies need to be better prepared to cope.

1. However, the impact of changes to marketing may not be felt until long after they were made.
2. In order to survive, a company needs to keep building its brand loyalty, even in difficult times.
3. Companies should still be careful with their marketing budgets and take this opportunity to focus on what they are good at and meeting the needs of their customers.
4. This means companies offering cheaper goods may benefit during recessions, but there will still be occasions when customers are willing to spend more.
5. Marketing should not be viewed as a cost that needs to be cut, but as an investment for the future.
6. Businesses can’t change what’s happening in the economy, so they need to find the best way to cope with a recession.

**Student’s Worksheet 3**

**Linguaskill Business Reading Sample task**

**Read the text.**

**Choose the correct paragraph (A–F) for each gap.**

**You do not need to use one of the paragraphs.**

***Marketing during a recession***

It is received wisdom that in a period of general economic recession you should concentrate on your core business, and trim the fat. Non-essential fripperies can wait for the good times to return. And one of the most costly non-essentials is marketing. So it stands to reason that this is one area where savings can immediately be made. Chopping the marketing budget is a no-brainer. Isn’t it? Well, not really.

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It is tempting to disregard this point because it is easy to cut a marketing budget. There will be an immediate reduction in expenditure which looks good to shareholders or investors who might be worried about the level of outgoings. Moreover, cutting marketing budgets has little immediate effect on sales, so it can be spun as a decision with no downsides.

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Those with a more long-term view of things should be aware that copious, compelling research shows that advertising aggressively during a recession increases sales and long-term profits. As the cost of advertising goes down and others are advertising less, those who do advertise find their voice stands out and is, to all intents and purposes, amplified. You get more bang for your advertising buck in a recession.

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Those companies that are a bit too vague about their market position, or what their promises are, should be aware that during tough times people might be looking for something offering better value. They may feel a little less committed to the brands that they usually purchase.

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In a recession, then, marketing budgets should give due attention to developing brand loyalty. For many firms, especially those involved in selling to other businesses, that often hinges on developing personal relationships and sharpening up messaging. During a recession it can be particularly appropriate for all types of business to focus on tailoring products to individual clients’ needs, rather than pushing what they already do.

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Bearing all this in mind should mean that firms are battle-hardened and better prepared for a recession. In the good old days, crises only came along once every decade or so. Now ‘permacrisis’ has been added to the dictionary. That brings challenges, but should at least mean the solutions marketers used last time around should still be fresh in their minds.

1. For firms at the budget end of the spectrum, this means that their pricing is likely to be a bonus in a recession. But they should not ignore the fact that habits vary with the seasons. For example, at times of major festivals, customers actually tend to trade up as a treat and go to more expensive retailers.
2. Unfortunately, that is not the case. The problem is that the consequences of marketing come with a time lag. Any money put into it might have an impact one or two years later. And in two years from now, the managers who made the budget cuts might well have moved on to a new job. The damage will have been done, but it is not their problem.
3. That’s why, although there is little you can do to change the economy, a business can do its best to ensure it is well placed to deal with what is happening. When you’re cutting your marketing resources, you’re limiting your ability to develop brand loyalty.
4. This assumes a view of marketing as an expense, which it makes sense to reduce. But marketing might well be better considered as an investment. Seen this way, the moment you reduce your marketing spend, you are potentially turning a short-term problem into a long-term one.
5. This will help brands become resilient to negative shocks. As some big-name businesses have discovered to their cost, negativity about brands can go viral in no time. Marketing is about creating loyalty so strong that it weathers these storms. That work can’t stop just because inflation is high.
6. Of course, it remains wise to spend marketing money as intelligently as possible. It’s important to check the pledges made to customers ensuring they focus on what you do well and are attuned to the economic conditions. Indeed, a recession can be the perfect time to review marketing strategies to make certain they are focused on your business’s strengths.