

Numbers in context

In context, there is so much more to a number than just being a 1, 2 or a 3

English has a complicated relationship with numbers, depending on their context (how and where and why they are used)

In this section, we'll explore these other contexts of numbers from 1 to 6, so that we will be better able to understand them in context, particularly in business



Numbers in context continued

1

First and firstly:

- **This is the first time** (never happened before) **we have experienced this situation**
- **I was the first** (no one had done it before) **to achieve that result**
- **Firstly** (first thing / first in line), **before we begin, let me take the opportunity to thank you all for attending today**

Once:

- **Once** (one time) **was all it took to understand the importance of this new development**
- **Please give me the numbers once more** (one more time / again)
- **Once** (when) **we have the plan finalised, we will continue**

Numbers in context continued



2

Second and secondly:

- **The second** (second time it happened) **occurrence led to a full system shutdown**
- **The second** (the instant / the moment / 60 seconds in a minute: time) **it happened, I let you know**
- **Secondly** (next after first, in line), **we acknowledge the tireless efforts of our project team in completing the project**

Twice: **Tw = Two**

- **You have twice ignore my request** (not once but twice, 2 times)

Double / two fold:

- **In order to double (2 x) profits / In order to see a two fold increase in profits, the company halved their production time**

Numbers in context continued

3

Third and thirdly: Th = Three

- **The third** (third time it happened) **incident, resulted in her being fired**
- **Thirdly** (next after second, in line), **we wish to report that the project was completed on time and on budget**

Thrice:

- **Thrice** (three times / 3x) **fail and you are out**

Triple / three fold and Triangulate:

- **They needed a three fold / triple (3x) reduction in costs to make their margins for the next year**
- **They had to triangulate** (divide into triangles / 3 sided figures) **the exact position of their competition**

Numbers in context continued



4

Fourth, fourths and fourthly:

- **The fourth** (fourth report, report number 4) **report was easier to understand than the first she had read**
- **The year was divided into fourths** (4 equal parts)
- **Fourthly** (next after three, in line), **the project has been praised by head office, as a great success**

Quarter and Quarterly:

- **This quarter** (12 months of a year are divided into 4 quarters of 3 months each: Q1=Jan to Mar, Q2=Apr to June, etc.), **Q3, we achieved good growth**
- **The quarterly** (quarters) **report pleased shareholders**

Quadrangle and Quadruple / four fold:

- **The quadrangle** (rectangular courtyard surrounded by buildings) **was full of students this time of the day**
- **They had to quadruple** (4x as much) **production / They needed a four fold increase in production, this quarter alone, to keep up with demand**

Numbers in context continued

5

Fifth, fifths and fifthly:

- **In fifth** (5th place, after fourth, in line) **position, the Concur Project Team, achieved a project go-live every three months**
- **The second fifth** ($100/5=20$, so the first fifth= 1 to 20%, and the 2nd 5th = 20 to 40%, etc.) **of the budget, which had been divided into fifths for the year, was allocated to maintenance**
- **Fifthly** (next after fourth, in line), **the next phase is to optimise on the projects success**

Pentagon and quintuple / five fold

- **The pentagon** (five sided figure) **had become famous in architecture because it was the shape and name of the building housing the US Department of Defence**
- **In order to quintuple** (5x as much) **success / To increase success five fold, all staff needed to be trained in Business English**

Numbers in context continued

6

Sixth, sixths and sixthly:

- **The sixth** (6th place, after fifth, in line) **person to be certified was also given a pay increase**
- **The fifth sixth** ($100/6=16.666$, so the first sixth= 1 to 16.666%, and the 2nd 6th = 16.7 to 33.333%, etc.) **of the project timeline needs to focus on redeploying the majority of project staff to other positions**
- **Sixthly** (next after fifth, in line), **and finally, project staff need to be redeployed, as the project nears closure**

Hexagon and six fold:

- **The hexagon** (six sided figure) **had become famous in nature as it is the inside shape of a bee hive**
- **Needing a six fold** (6x as much) **growth in revenue, they decided put more focus and funding into social media marketing**

Numbers in context:

Activity



Complete the following sentences with the correct number in context:

- ① 1. The _____ time this happened, we were all shocked
2. I'd, _____ like to start by thanking you for all your hard work
3. She was the _____ woman to be promoted to Head of Department
4. _____ it was finished, we all appreciated the effort
5. I need the figures sent to me _____ more.
6. _____ was all we needed to prove that it was the key to the success of the project

6 Points

Numbers in context:

Activity continued



Complete the following sentences with the correct number in context:

- ② 1. The _____ I knew it was relevant, I rushed the data to the CFO
2. The canteen had to _____ the number of meals they served on Fridays, when staff could have lunch with their partners
3. He was _____ in line to the position of CFO because he always did excellent work
4. _____, we will be looking at how to achieve greater success with Business English
5. She had tried it _____ and _____ it had failed
6. The _____ time it happened, she could no longer doubt the cause.

7 Points

Numbers in context: Activity continued



Complete the following sentences with the correct number in context:

- 3 1. The department needed to _____ their output to achieve the results the Board of Directors demanded
2. The team had _____ achieved success
3. The _____ test proved the most successful
4. _____, we must prove the success of the project with a quick win.
5. To locate the thief they needed to _____ his location using GPS

5 Points

Numbers in context: Activity continued



Complete the following sentences with the correct number in context:

- ④
1. The first _____ saw record profits for the IT company
 2. The final _____ report showed the company in the red
 3. The _____ quarter reflected a drop in revenue
 4. _____, we need to show increased profits in the final part of the year
 5. They needed to _____ production to cover their costs
 6. They had to see a _____ increase in output to make a profit in the last quarter

6 Points

Numbers in context: Activity continued



Complete the following sentences with the correct number in context:

- 5 1. The last _____ of the project was dedicated to compliance and closure
2. Profits saw a _____ increase thanks to their increased focus on online sales
- 6 3. _____ place was taken up by the HR department for the savings they achieved in reducing their recruitment costs
4. _____, we need to look at the benefits the project will provide in terms of savings with the new platform
5. We saw a _____ jump in assets, this quarter, after buying out our competitor
6. The _____ most likely avenue to profit from is online advertising

6 Points
30 Points Total