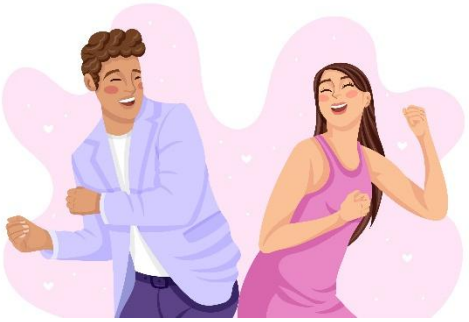
Starting Something New 5

'It all worked out in the end'

Warm up:



- What do you think it takes to be successful in running a small business?
- When you picture success in your own life, what do you see?
- Who is a person you know that you think is very successful?
- How have your ideas about success changed over time?
- Would you rather be successful and stressed, or average and relaxed?
- Do you have any friends that you think would be good at running a small business? Why do you think they'd be good at it?

1. Read the text and answer the questions on the next page.

After 12 years of hard work, Jason and Tessa have a very successful bakery truck business called 'Bake it Easy.' The business used to be just Jason and Tessa baking pastries and driving a single truck around, but today they employ roughly 40 people and have 20 different trucks, so obviously it's a big success.

When Jason and Tessa first started the business, they made a lot of mistakes and used to blame each other for those mistakes. They didn't communicate well, and they used to have arguments all the time about who should do what. But eventually they figured it out, and these days, their roles are very clear. Tessa handles the marketing and the HR, and Jason handles the food and truck management.

The first few years were not easy. They used to work roughly 14 hours a day and still didn't earn much money. They used to worry about paying their bills and keeping the business alive. There was even a period when they thought they would actually have to sell the business, because a particularly long and hard winter meant far fewer customers than usual.

Things began to improve when they started making unique, fancy pastries to advertise on social media. More people learned about the bakery truck, and customer numbers increased quickly. Eventually they bought a second truck and hired their first employee, and from there the business grew quickly.

Although the business is much larger and more financially successful now, both Jason and Tessa actually miss the days they used to drive around their city, baking and laughing together.

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a) How many people work at Bake it Easy? *40*

b) What are Jason's responsibilities in the business and what are Tessa's? *Jason manages the food and trucks, Tessa manages HR and marketing*

c) What almost ended the business? *A year with a hard winter, meaning less business*

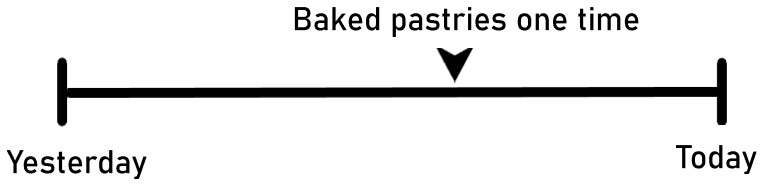
d) What strategy helped Tessa and Jason improve their business? *Making fancy pastries that look good on social media*

e) Do you think a business like this could be successful in your city? Why or why not?

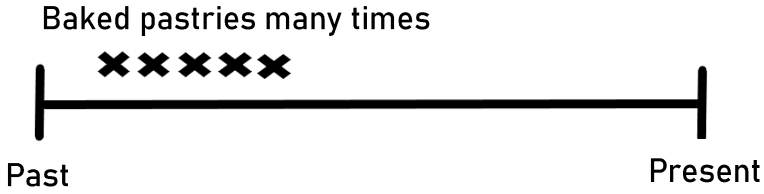
'Used to' for the past

We use the structure 'used to' + (infinitive verb) to show that something happened for a long time in the past but is finished now.

E.g. *"I baked pastries yesterday."*



E.g. *"I used to bake pastries every day."* This tells us that the person did this for a long time, but no longer does it.



This structure is also commonly used to compare the past with the present.

E.g. *"I used to spend a lot of time on Facebook, but now I find it boring."* This person is comparing their past with their present.

2. Read through exercise 1 again and find 3 examples of 'used to.'

1) .....

2) .....

3) .....

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3. Read through the statements and make one 'used to' statement for each.

a) Four years ago I worked in an office selling insurance, and I couldn't stand it. I'm not a good salesperson, and I don't like working in an office, so eventually I decided to change careers. I became a firefighter, and I absolutely love it.

E.g. *"He used to work in an office, but now he's a firefighter."*

b) When I was a teenager, I blamed everyone else for my problems. If I failed a test, it was my teacher's fault. If my parents were upset because I didn't clean my room, it was their fault for not reminding me to clean it. These days I always try to take responsibility if I do something wrong.

I used to blame everyone else for my problems. (Other answers possible)

c) Today Nintendo is widely recognised for making video games like Mario Brothers and The Legend of Zelda. However, Nintendo was founded in 1889, obviously well before video games were invented, and originally sold handmade playing cards.

Nintendo used to make playing cards (Other answers possible)

d) I moved to Germany 5 years ago, and to be honest I should have started studying German right away. I found everything confusing and difficult, even something as simple as ordering food at a restaurant. Eventually I started studying German, and now life is much easier.

I used to have trouble ordering at a restaurant

e) Today Wawel castle is one of the most popular tourist destinations in Poland, with hundreds of thousands of visitors every year. Apparently, hundreds of years ago the locals believed that a dragon lived under the castle.

The locals used to believe that a dragon lived under the castle.

f) Sometimes I think people forget how much smartphones have changed everything, even with something as simple as navigation. It was an everyday thing for someone to ask for directions, and it was kind of nice stopping and talking to a stranger. Now everyone just uses their phone.

People used to ask strangers for directions (Other answers possible)

g) When my grandfather was young, he rode to work on his bike every day. Today he has to drive everywhere because he has arthritis, and to be honest I don't think riding a bike would be safe for him anymore. Apparently, he was a really good cyclist!

He used to ride a bike to work every day (Other answers possible)

h) When I was a teenager, my older brother played loud music in his room every evening. It drove me mad because I was trying to study. Whenever I complained, I blamed him for my poor grades. We really hated each other, but now we get along very well.

My older brother used to play loud music every evening. (Other answers possible)

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4. Ask your partner the questions (or any questions about their past you can think of). Listen to their answers and make 'used to' sentences about them below.

a) Where did you grow up? e.g. *"I grew up in Paris, but now I live in Berlin."*

b) What TV shows did you watch when you were younger?

c) What kind of phone did you have in the past?

d) What was your favourite food when you were a kid?

e) What is something you think was better in the past than it is now?

f) Did you have a pet when you were younger? Tell me a bit about it.

g) What was your favourite place to visit when you were a child?

h) Who is someone you used to see very often but don't see much anymore?

i) Did you have a different haircut in the past? What was it like?

1) e.g. *"He used to live in Paris"* .....

2) .....

3) .....

4) .....

5) .....

6) .....

7) .....

8) .....

9) .....

10) .....

5. Now read the sentences you have written about your partner to the class.

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6. Read the origin stories of well-known businesses and explain them to your partner in your own words. Try to use the 'used to' structure.

Student A

Under Armour was founded in 1996 by Kevin Plank, a former American football player. While he was playing football at university, he always got irritated with his cotton sports clothes, as they got heavy and uncomfortable when he sweated. He decided to create a special sports shirt that stayed dry during exercise.

For the first few years, Kevin made the clothes in his grandmother's basement and sold the shirts himself. He travelled to different teams and tried to convince players to buy his product. He. As more athletes started wearing them, the company grew quickly. Today, Under Armour is one of the best-known sports clothing companies in the world.

Ferruccio Lamborghini founded his company (guess which company) in 1963. Before he started making sports cars, he owned a successful company that made tractors. He became very rich and enjoyed buying expensive cars, including Ferraris.

However, Ferruccio was frustrated with some mechanical issues with his Ferrari. Apparently, Ferrucio spoke to Ferrari's founder about the problems, but he was basically laughed at. This made Ferrucio mad enough to start his own car company.

Soon, Lamborghini produced its first sports cars. They became famous for their powerful engines, beautiful designs, and high speed. Today, Lamborghini is one of the most famous luxury car brands in the world.

Student B

1938 Lee Byung-chul founded a small company called Samsung, a company which sold products such as dried fish, vegetables, and noodles.

At first this is all they did, but eventually they expanded into transporting foods goods around South Korea. Over time, the company expanded into many different industries, including textiles, insurance, and construction.

In the 1960s, Samsung entered the electronics industry. The company began producing televisions and other electronic devices, and today are one of the most recognizable tech brands in the world.

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NASCAR is a large American car racing organization, founded in 1948 by a man named Bill France. Today, NASCAR is one of the most popular sports organizations in the United States, but its origins are actually quite unusual.

During the 1920s and 1930s, alcohol was actually illegal in the United States, but some people still made and sold it. To avoid being caught by the police, these criminals modified their cars to make them faster. These drivers often competed against each other to see who had the fastest car and the best driving skills.

As these races became more popular, larger events were organized. However, there were almost no rules, and some race organizers treated drivers unfairly. Bill France stepped in and turned it into an official (and very profitable) organization, with strict rules.

7. Listen to Jason and Tessa and answer the questions.

a) Whose idea was it to start a business? *Tessa's*

b) When did Tessa realise that starting 'Bake it Easy' was not a mistake? *When they bought a second truck*

c) When did Jason realise that starting 'Bake it Easy' was not a mistake? *In the months after they bought the second truck, because they were better at running it than the first one.*

d) What does Jason think they should have done differently? *Started marketing earlier*

e) What does Tessa regret? *She regrets worrying so much.*

f) Why does Jason find it easier to stay motivated now than when the business first started? *Because he knows it is successful now, so he knows his work is accomplishing something.*

g) Why doesn't Tessa want to expand the business anymore? *She wants to have enough time to relax and spend time with her family.*

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Audio Transcript

Jason: I mean obviously it was a good idea to start Bake it Easy, it's a very successful business, but I don't even remember why we started it, or whose idea it was.

Tessa: Seriously? You don't remember? We started it because we both couldn't stand our jobs. Remember you had that boss who used to drive you crazy? And I used to hate dealing with customers all day.

Jason: Ahhh of course, I remember him now, I used to get so mad at him. And I think it was my idea to start a business, right?

Tessa: Actually, it was mine. Do you remember I had that list of business ideas? And we read through them and eventually decided to start a bakery truck?

Jason: Oh, right I'd forgotten. I remember you wanted to start a pet grooming business!

Tessa: That's right. To be honest for the couple of years I thought we made a huge mistake, do you remember we used to argue about everything? Like that time you made 3000 bread rolls??

Jason: Oh my god I remember that. I mean it turned out pretty well in the end. Was there an exact moment you realised it wasn't a mistake to start a bakery truck?

Tessa: I think the day we bought our second truck. That's when I realised it wasn't just some small side business anymore.

Jason: Interesting, I think for me it was in the months after we bought a second truck.

Tessa: What do you mean?

Jason: Well when we bought the first truck we really had no idea what we were doing. There are so many things we should have done differently with the first truck, but I think we eventually learned from our mistakes, and the second one was so much easier and smoother than the first one. And every truck after that just got easier and easier.

Tessa: You're right. I think it took us roughly half as long to get the second truck up and running as the first truck. If you could go back and do it again, what would you do differently?

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Jason: Mmm good question. I think we should have started marketing a lot earlier. It took so much more time than I thought it would to become a recognizable brand.

Tessa: Good answer. But both you and I can't stand doing online marketing, so I think we avoided it for a long time.
Jason: True. I still hate it. What about you, what would you do differently?

Tessa: Honestly, I would just worry less. I used to stress so much about it that I didn't sleep at night. I should have just relaxed and trusted our vision.
Jason: Really? Why did you stress so much?

Tessa: Well, I mean we both put all the money we had into the first truck… I couldn't stop thinking about what would happen if the business didn't work? What if it failed and we both had to go back to our old jobs?
Jason: Good point, sometimes I forget how stressful those first few years were. I think I actually do more hours of work for the business now, but it's much easier to stay motivated now than it used to be.

Tessa: What do you mean?
Jason: Well basically when I work on the business now, I know it's a successful business, which means I know my work is worth it! It's really hard to work 60 hours a week on a business that might fail next week.

Tessa: Ahhh ok I understand, I see what you mean. Yeah that's a good point actually, it's easier to stay motivated when you know it's going to work out. It was quite hard for the first few years, but eventually our hard work paid off.
Jason: Do you want to expand the business anymore? Like would you be interested in buying any more trucks or moving into any more cities?

Tessa: Honestly… not really. I know it can be really exciting to make a business grow, but at some point you have to think about how much time you are willing to put into it. I love our business, but I also want to have enough time to relax and spend time with my family.
Jason: Yeah, that's a good point. I think I agree. We achieved our goals, and I think now we basically just sit back and enjoy life.

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