

# SPECULATING

B2-C1 | Functional language for discussing possibilities carefully

## 1 Useful phrase patterns

Use these phrases to explore possible explanations without making firm claims.

It is possible that ...

It is possible that demand has changed.

There is a chance that ...

There is a chance that the plan will succeed.

I wouldn't rule out ...

I wouldn't rule out a technical problem.

It may well be that ...

It may well be that they need more time.

One possibility is that ...

One possibility is that costs will rise.

It is unlikely that ...

It is unlikely that the data is complete.

We cannot assume that ...

We cannot assume that everyone agrees.

It remains to be seen whether ...

It remains to be seen whether sales recover.

## 2 Respond to the situations

Write one careful sentence about each situation. Try to use a range of phrases.

1. Website traffic fell sharply after a design change.

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2. A supplier has not replied to several messages.

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3. A pilot project worked in one small town.

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4. A client has asked for more detailed cost information.

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5. Sales have grown for three months in a row.

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6. A new policy has not been explained to all staff.

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7. Two teams reported very different results.

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8. A competitor has lowered its prices suddenly.

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# SPECULATING

B2-C1 | Suggested answers

## 3 Possible answers

These are examples only. Other accurate and suitable responses are also correct.

Encourage students to use a range of phrase patterns from page 1.

1. It is possible that the new design has made the site harder to use.

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2. I wouldn't rule out a problem with the supplier's email system.

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3. It remains to be seen whether the pilot will work in larger towns.

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4. There is a chance that the client is preparing to make a decision.

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5. It may well be that demand is increasing.

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6. We cannot assume that all staff understand the new policy.

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7. One possibility is that the teams used different methods.

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8. It is unlikely that the competitor lowered its prices without a reason.

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