CONDITIONALS

A   **Compare these sentences:**

　　　1 If sales **increase** (generally), we **make** more profit.

　　　2 If sales **increase** (next quarter), we **will make** more profit.

　　　3 If sales **increased** (next quarter), we **would make** more profit.

　　　4 If sales **had increased** (last quarter), he **would have been** happier.

Key: 1-> section B, 2-> C, 3-> D, 4 -> E

B   **If we sell ... (always true)** zero conditional

> When we want to talk about things that are always or generally true, we use:

IF/ WHEN + PRESENT,   PRESENT SIMPLE OR IMPERATIVE
　　　　condition　　　　　　　　　　　result

> In this type of conditional we are not referring to one specific event.
> Any type of present tense can be used, even the present perfect.

*If people **understand** that change is necessary, **they have** an appetite for it. ... **If** you **don't get** the best people into the company, your product **suffers**.*

> Notice that we can use IF or WHEN where the meaning is EVERY TIME.

C   **If we sell ... (likely future)**   first conditional

> When we want to talk about future events that will happen, or are likely to happen, we use:

IF + PRESENT,   FUTURE OR IMPERATIVE
condition　　　　　　　　result

> Again any type of present tense can be used, even the present perfect.

*If the compromise deal **fails**, who knows what **will happen**?*

*If I**'ve made** any mistakes, I **will correct** them later.*

➢ The examples above are about two actions in the future. If the result clause refers to the present we can use a present tense.

*If anyone **calls**, I **am** in a meeting all morning.*

D   If we sold ... (imaginary future)   second conditional

➢ When we want to talk about future events that are imaginary, unlikely or impossible, we use:

IF + PAST SIMPLE OR CONTINUOUS,

                                        WOULD/ COULD/ MIGHT + INFINITIVE

       condition   result

➢ **DON´T FORGET**: We only use the past tense to express the unreality of the condition. It DOES NOT REFER TO THE PAST!

*If you **wanted** a quantity discount you **would have to order** at least 1,000 units.*

*If I **were** the Queen of England, I **wouldn't have to pass** the English exam.*

➢ For the verb TO BE we prefer the form **were** instead of *was*.

E   If we had sold ... (imaginary past)   third conditional

➢ When we want to talk about past events that are different to what really happened, we use:

IF + PAST PERFECT,   **WOULD + HAVE + PAST PARTICIPLE**

       condition   result

➢ There is often a suggestion of criticism or regret.

*If the economic situation **had been better**, we **wouldn't have lost** so many customers.*

➢ Might is also common in this type of conditional.

*If you **had tried** harder, you **might have succeeded**.*

➢ **WATCH OUT!** A contracted *`d* can be *had* in the condition or *would* in the result...

F   Mixed conditions:

> For past events that have a result continuing in the present, it is possible to mix conditionals 2 and 3.

*If you **had saved** some money, you **wouldn't be so** hard up.*

> Also for possible past consequences of imaginary present situations, the conditionals are mixed.

*If I **lived** in Germany (but I don't, now) I **would have got** a better interest rate last year. (but I didn't, then)*

G   Unless

> Unless means the same as *if ... not*

*Polish attitudes are dominated by the belief that **unless** Poland joins the European Union, things **can** only get worse.*

Compare*:*

If he doesn't arrive soon, he will miss the start of the presentation.
***Unless he arrives** soon, he will miss the start of the presentation.*

H   If I were you, ...

> When we give advice we use *If I were you...,* or when we ask for it we use *What would you do if you were me...?*

***If I were you**, I would be more careful.*