



NB: This is not a word-for-word transcript

Feifei: Welcome to 6 Minute English! I'm Feifei,

Neil: And I'm Neil.

Feifei: And in today's programme we're talking about – err, actually, what are we talking about today Neil?

Neil: Well, I've made a big decision today Feifei. Everybody has a mobile phone and I'm not like everybody, I am an individual, so I've decided to get rid of my phone.

Feifei: But everyone in this country has got a phone.

Neil: That's just the point. I've got this report from Ofcom, the UK telecoms regulator that says that 92% of UK adults now own a mobile phone.

Feifei: Apart from you.

Neil: Apart from me.

Feifei: Oh, but that's just you being special. Anyway, more and more people are now actually buying mobile phones, not just in the UK but across the world.

Neil: That's true, and manufacturers are always designing better handsets so that they can sell more and more, and increase their profits.

Feifei: Yes, like new smartphones that allow you to search the internet and make phone calls, but companies have to keep up with the latest technology to survive.

Neil: True, otherwise you might hear this kind of report in the news.

BBC Reporter:

It's been a bad year for the company, although it started well with an unexpected rise in sales of their new phone. In fact sales rose in the first quarter and peaked in March, with over 10,000 being sold. But following the launch of a

rival's new smartphone, sales declined steadily. It decided to cut its prices in June which caused a boost in sales, but they then fluctuated and finally levelled off in September. Since then, it's selling only around 1,000 handsets a month.

Neil: So an interesting year for this phone company. Did you get all that?

Feifei: Well, I was trying to follow what happened. There was a lot of going up and down.

Neil: Oh, hang on. What's that? Hang on a minute, it's the phone.

Feifei: What?!

Neil: Hello, yes, yes. Of course, Betty.

Feifei: Is that Business Betty?

Neil: Yes. She's stuck outside and she wants me to let her in. Come on in!

Feifei: But before we carry on, I thought you just said you don't have a phone?

Neil: I don't have one, it's just for emergencies.

Feifei: But that's still a phone.

Neil: But you need one for emergencies.

Neil / FF: Hello Business Betty!! You're just in time!

BB: Just in time, good good! Now, what can I help you with today?

Neil: Can you go over some useful language for describing sales in business?

BB: I'd be delighted. So, to start with, when you're talking about sales, you need to give a general overview. You could say 'The situation is good'.

Neil: The situation is good.

BB: And then to explain the situation, you can say 'We can see from the sales figures that...'

Neil: We can see from the sales figures that...

BB: Or, 'As the graph shows...'

Neil: As the graph shows...

BB: Next you need some key vocabulary to describe sales figures. There are lots of words you can use to say that sales have gone up. We can say 'increased'.

Feifei: Increased: Sales increased in January.

BB: Rise.

Feifei: Rise: There was a large rise in sales in February.

BB: Or the past of rise: rose.

Feifei: Rose: Sales rose last year.

BB: If things changed a lot and went up and down, you can say 'They fluctuated'.

Feifei: Fluctuated: Sales fluctuated for two months.

BB: And when sales reach their highest point, you can say 'They have peaked'.

Feifei: Peaked: Sales peaked in December.

BB: That's right. And when sales remain steady and don't change 'They are level' or 'have levelled'.

Feifei: Level or levelled: Sales finally levelled in September.

Neil: Thanks Betty, all very useful. But what happens when a company's sales are very bad?

BB: Then you might say that 'Sales have declined' or 'dropped'.

Neil: Sales have declined or sales have dropped. Now that's not good news, but you've been brilliant. Thanks Betty.

BB: You're welcome. Bye bye for now.

Feifei: Bye.

Neil: I think things are a lot clearer now.

Feifei: Yes, crystal clear! So do you know what that means?

Neil: Time for me to be the boss in the role-play!

Feifei: I'll be the boss.

Neil: Again!

Feifei: Yes again, and you need to come to me and tell me about our sales figures – they better be good.

Role-play

Feifei: *Come in.*

Neil: *Hello Feifei, I've got those sales figures you asked for.*

Feifei: *Great. Please give me the details.*

Neil: *This graph shows the monthly sales of mobile phones for last year. We can see that sales of mobile phones declined steadily in January, but then increased in February.*

Feifei: *So they're on the rise?*

Neil: *Yes, but they fluctuated considerably in July and August, reaching a peak of 6,200 per month in September.*

Feifei: *So that was our biggest month for sales?*

Neil: *Actually no. Sales levelled off in October through to November. But by December there was a large rise, as you can see on this graph.*

Feifei: *A large rise, excellent. Bonuses all round!*

Neil: Were you happy with the sales figures Feifei?

Feifei: Of course, a large rise in sales at the end of the year is brilliant!

Neil: So about the bonus you mentioned? When would I get that?

Feifei: Neil, it was just a role-play.

Neil: No, but you said I'd get a bonus, so...

Feifei: That's all we have time for today. Say goodbye...

Neil: Bye!

Describing sales: Key phrases

Giving a general overview	The situation is good.
Explaining the situation	We can see from the sales figures that...
	As the graph shows...
Saying that sales have gone up	Sales increased in January.
	There was a large rise in sales in February.
	Sales rose last year.
	Sales peaked in December.
Saying that sales have gone up and down a lot	Sales fluctuated for two months.
Saying that sales remain steady and don't change	Sales levelled in September.
Saying that sales have gone down	Sales have declined.
	Sales have dropped.