CONDITIONAL SENTENCES

Conditional sentences are sentences which express hypothetical situations and their consequences. They have two parts: the main clause and the dependant or if-clause. They are called *conditional* because the validity of what is said in the main clause is conditional on (depends on) certain circumstances expressed in the if-clause. For example, *If there is a shortage of the product* (a hypothetical circumstance or condition)*, the prices will go up* (probable result)*.* The order of the main and if-clause can also be reversed. If the main clause comes before the if-clause, the two clauses are not separated by a comma: *The prices will go up if there is a shortage of the product.*

There are three kinds of conditional sentences: zero, first, second and third. Each kind contains a different pair of tenses. Certain variations are possible with each type, however if your command of English is not very good, it is better to use the basic forms that you will find below.

Zero conditional expresses a situation that is always true, and is also used to talk about scientific facts and general truths.
The pattern is: if + present… present
Example: If you *spend* over £20 at that supermarket, you *get* a 5% discount.

First conditional expresses real or possible situations and their future result. An action in the future will happen if a certain condition is fulfilled by that time, and we think it is likely to happen.
The pattern is: if + present ... future
Example: If it *rains*, the reception *will take* place indoors.

Second conditional expresses hypothetical situations in the present or future. An action could happen if the present situation were different.
The pattern is: if + past ... would & infinitive
Example: If I *were* the Prime Minister, I *would work* to bring down the food prices.

Third conditional expresses hypothetical situations in the past, i.e. hypothetical results of past situations. It is very unlikely that the condition will be met since we are talking about a finished action.
The pattern is: if + Past Perfect ... would have & past participle
Example: If we *had taken* a taxi, we *would have got* there in time.

A. Match the two parts of sentences.

1. The company will lose money
2. We'll have a presentation today
3. Mr Tomlison wouldn't have missed the train
4. If you saw his financial report,
5. If we had targeted the right type of customer,
6. I'll call you
7. If you send your order by fax,
8. We would not be the leading company in our business
9. If you had read the paper,
10. His wife would apply for that job abroad

a. if he had left the office earlier.
b. if the conference room is free at 3 p.m.
c. you would fire him for all the wrong numbers he had put in it.
d. if we delivered poor quality.
e. if I finish earlier.
f. you would have seen the advertisement.
g. we will deliver the goods by the end of the week.
h. if her French was better.
i. if they cut prices.
j. the product would have sold much better.

Key: 1i, 2b, 3a, 4c, 5j, 6e, 7g, 8d, 9f, 10h

B Put the verbs in brackets in the correct tense.

1. If we increase our advertising, sales _____ (go up).
2. If I _____ (play) the lottery, I would have a chance to hit the jackpot.
3. The team would have moved up in the league if they _____ (win) the match.
4. The product _____ (sell) much better if it weren't so expensive.
5. I _____ (help) the poor if I were a star.
6. If Peter _____ (not accept) our offer, we'll have to fire him.
7. What would you say if your boss _____ (ask) you to work all weekend?
8. If I'd taken that job, I don't think I _____ (be) very happy.
9. We would have produced more I we _____ (have) a bigger budget.
10. You will get a promotion if you _____ (continue) to work hard.

Key: 1. will go up, 2. played, 3. had won, 4. would sell, 5. would help, 6. doesn't accept, 7. asked, 8. would have been, 9. had had, 10. continue