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Dear friends

There was considerable enthusiasm among the small group who recently visited the offices where the new **Language Support Centre** will be. The present tenants kindly gave me the opportunity to show people interested in renting a desk in the Centre what it's like. The sheer quality of the craftsmanship is striking, but the facilities are also excellent (see more pictures in this issue), and the location in the centre of Roskilde is quite amazing. Everyone present wanted a desk! ☺

The new Language Support Centre gets its first freelancers

“Wow!”, “It's beautiful”, “Fantastic!” were just some of the comments that flew around as the first group of freelancers to express an interest in renting a desk in the new Centre looked around the office space we will soon be taking over. →

I reacted the same way the first time I saw it too. It's not that it is in any way pretentious. On the contrary, the style is clean and modern, but there is something very special about the detail and care that is incorporated in every feature.

Seventeen of the work spaces will be in the six offices whose windows face north on to the market place (*Stændertorvet*) and, beyond it, the cathedral.

Having windows facing north is ideal for people who work a lot with computers, because it minimises the risk of direct sunshine that can make it difficult to see what's on your screen.

To compensate, facing south is an open roof-terrace for relaxing breaks in the sun. And if it's too cold or rainy to go outside, there is a glass-enclosed veranda. Both terrace and veranda look out over a cobbled yard with a water fountain. Other small businesses are all around, including shops.



The eleven windows of the forthcoming LSC on the first floor look out over the historic centre of Roskilde: *Stændertorvet*



Both the veranda and the roof-terrace look out over an enclosed yard surrounded by other small businesses



The cobbled backyard seen at ground level with the small water fountain to the right of the central path

What it means for you

If you did not receive this newsletter by e-mail, you will need to subscribe if you want it again. It's FREE. Get on the mailing list via the website!

The new Language Support Centre – opening in September

This is the physical beginning of the realisation of an ambitious project to create a multilingual centre for teaching and translation into a wide range of languages by native-speaker experts. Our customers will range from companies and organisations of all sizes to schools and universities.

Freelance translators and teachers

This place is designed for you! Perhaps you're thinking of going freelance, or perhaps you've had your own one-(wo)man business for a while, but are fed up with having no colleagues to talk to.

Either way, we're trying to create an ideal environment for your language business. The rent for a work space has been set as low as possible to make it as attractive as possible. We will not be making any money on renting space out. But we do expect to gain from the **synergy** (see page 3) from having a variety of different self-employed people working in the same place.

For just 2500 kr. a month (+ VAT) you get an ergonomic desk and chair, a lamp, bookcase and cupboard, and a quiet, friendly office with one or two others. We assume you will have your own laptop and mobile phone for your business. You share the rest of the facilities, kitchen, veranda, roof-terrace, classroom/meeting rooms, etc. with about 20 people in all.

If you want a desk just one or two days in the week, we will accommodate you. This means you can be a *part-time* freelancer – which is not a bad way to start. Here is the table of charges:

These charges include water, heating and lighting, normal electricity use, a fast internet connection, and a common reception. And your company gets a very fine address in the centre of Roskilde!

1 day a week	700 kr. per month
2 days a week	1300 kr. per month
3 days a week	1800 kr. per month
4 days a week	2200 kr. per month
Full time	2500 kr. per month

Who are we looking for?

From our point of view, the ideal freelance partner will have several skills to contribute. If you can teach as well as translate or edit text in your mother tongue, that is a real plus. We want to offer native-speaker teaching.

But other skills (marketing, accounts, IT, etc.) are also useful in such a community. ***This is not yet another translation bureau!*** We are independent freelance partners working together, helping each other, and enjoying shared facilities.



Parking spaces are available, but not included.

English support and Language support

English support already has a large number of customers who need translation, proofreading and teaching. Much of our translation work now is to other languages, including Danish, and we have carried out quite a few orders for multi-language translation. With the launch of *Language support*, that trend will continue and expand.

Our network of over 200 freelance partners covering 33 languages means that we only ever say 'no' to work we really wouldn't want anyway. And we get a lot of work. Some of that work will come your way, because you are right there in the same building!

The new *Language Support Centre* will officially open on 3rd September, but you can apply now to be among the first to share its facilities (from 1st August).

If all this sounds interesting to you, get in touch here: LW@englishsupport.dk.

The new Machinery Directive

An example of synergy

A great many engineering companies in Denmark will have a particular interest in one of the half-day seminars we will be running at the *Language Support Centre* this autumn. It will focus on the requirements of the new Machinery Directive which comes into force on 29th December this year.

Two of our freelance technical writers have made a point of studying the requirements of this new EU directive. As a result we will be able to offer the following assistance:

1. Seminar on: ***What the new Machinery Directive means for your company.***
2. Individual consultancy help tailored to the needs of your particular business.
3. Technical-writing assistance with preparing original documentation in Danish or English.
4. Translation assistance with the task of providing documentation in the languages needed.

Is it really new?

Much of the content is not new, but Directive 2006/42/EC is termed a “recast” of the Machinery Directive, and the modifications are presented in the form of a new directive.

DIRECTIVE 2006/42/EC OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 17 May 2006 on machinery, and amending Directive 95/16/EC (recast)

(Text with EEA relevance)

The main thrust of the changes is aimed at improvements in health and safety, including risk assessment at design stage and manufacturing stage, and risk prevention in use (including risks to the health of operators). And the new directive introduces the concept of what is ‘reasonably foreseeable’ with reference to risk, hazard, misuse, etc.

Quality assurance

One major problem for many manufacturers and importers of machinery will lie in fulfilling the new requirements with regard to documentation: *‘The contents of the instructions must cover not only the intended use of the machinery but also take into account any reasonably foreseeable misuse thereof’*. The instructions and declarations of conformity and incorporation must be given in the original language (authorised and verified by the manufacturer) and (if different) the official language(s) of the EU countries where the machinery is to be put on the market and/or used.

And all this documentation will be part of the quality assurance requirement for the machinery as from 29th December this year.

This means that between now and the end of the year, a lot of technical writing has to be carried out and approved – all of which will then need translation into the language(s) where the machinery is going to be put on the market and/or used.

A complete package

Our strength in this area is that we will be able to offer *one-stop shopping*. A seminar to help you understand the new requirements, and then advice tailored to your company on the documentation needed, followed by assistance with the technical writing and the translation work as required.

We do not pretend we will know all the answers, but we will be able to help you find them.

What the new Machinery Directive means for your company

The new *Language Support Centre* will be offering a **half-day seminar** to explain the significance of the new Machinery Directive on the following dates throughout September: 7th, 8th, 15th, 16th, 23rd, 24th, 28th and 29th. The seminar will start at 1 pm each day and finish around 4 pm. The dates and times have been chosen to enable as many as possible to attend, because we think this issue is of vital importance for a great many companies who manufacture, import, or sell machinery in the European Economic Area.

That little word *to*...

The little word *to* causes a lot of trouble. It is used in two distinct ways: to form the infinitive of the verb (e.g. *to be*, *to do*, *to form*, *to speak*, etc.), and as a preposition (e.g. *the train to London*). But it is not always so easy for non-native speakers to keep these two quite different ways of using that little word distinct! Here are examples of the contrast:

	After a verb:	After an adjective/adverb:
Infinitive:	<i>I hope to see you soon.</i>	<i>I will be happy to see you.</i>
Preposition:	<i>I look forward to seeing you soon.</i>	<i>I came close to seeing you yesterday.</i>

Note that when *to* is a preposition, it must be followed by a noun or by something that plays that role in the sentence – here a phrase starting with the gerund (*ING*-form).

1. *To* as part of the infinitive

I suppose the first thing we have to say about *to* as part of the infinitive is that it *isn't* – at least, not always. ☺

There is something called the *bare infinitive*, or the *infinitive without to*, which is used after modal verbs (*can*, *must*, *will*, etc.) and in quite a few other cases too. This is a complex question in its own right, so I will take it up separately (see page 5).

But what we are concerned with here is the *full infinitive* – often called the *to-infinitive*, because it includes *to*.

A great many verbs can be followed by the *to-infinitive*: e.g. *aim*, *begin*, *continue*, *decide*, etc. Sometimes, the *to-infinitive* is called a *to-infinitive clause*, especially when it takes an object: e.g. '*She seemed to like me*'. It can also be passive or perfect: e.g. '*He wanted to be liked*' or '*I'd prefer to have been in Paris*'.

Similarly, quite a lot of adjectives can be followed by the *to-infinitive*: e.g. *good* (*to eat*), *difficult* (*to do*), *beautiful* (*to look at*), etc.

And again, the *to-infinitive* can sometimes take an object, be passive or perfect: e.g. '*Mary was glad to find her key*', '*John was anxious not to be arrested*' or '*Madoff is probably sorry to have been found out*'.

2. *To* as a preposition

But there are some adjectives that are followed by the preposition *to*: *amenable to*, *averse to*, *close to*, *conducive to*, *similar to*, etc. *Tip*: We can tell the *to* here is prepositional, because it is possible to put a noun after it: *amenable to reason*, *close to madness*, *similar to marzipan*, etc.

Once it is clear we are dealing with a preposition, *to* is like any other preposition. It cannot be followed by an infinitive. If it is to be followed by a noun form of the verb, it must be the gerund: e.g. '*He was averse to being stared at*' or '*Her manner was not conducive to people liking her*'.

And, of course, there are a number of phrasal verbs which end with *to* (e.g. *to admit to*, *be up to*, *object to*, etc.). The same tip applies. If you can put a noun after the *to*, it is a preposition, and the noun is what is known as a prepositional object. Someone can *admit to murder*, *be up to a marathon*, *object to a punishment*, etc.

So if a phrasal verb that ends with *to* is to be followed by a noun form of the verb, it must be the gerund: someone can *admit to killing a man*, *be up to running a marathon*, *object to being punished*, etc.

For more on the gerund (or *ING*-form), see especially *News & Tips* nos. 25 and 26.

Did you know?

English support has special expertise in medical, juridical, financial and many other areas of technical writing, including less common ones such as hunting and martial arts?

The infinitive without *to*

The bare infinitive (without *to*) is actually quite common. One simple case is where we do not repeat the *to* in a list of *to*-infinitives: *I asked the waiter **to go and get** a cup of coffee.* The same applies to the infinitive forms of verbs listed in dictionaries. Here are some other cases:

1. After *do*

The bare infinitive is used with *do* to make the simple forms (in both present and past tenses) of most verbs when they are negative or questions: e.g. *'Mary has a car, but she **does not have** a boat. Do you **have** a boat?'*

2. Modal verbs

The modal verbs *can, could, may, might, must, shall, should, will* and *would* are also followed by the bare infinitive: e.g. *'Mary might **come***, and *'John will **come***. The same applies to the modal form *had better*: e.g. *'Jane had better **come***. Note that the negative of these forms is formed by putting *not* immediately after the modal: e.g. *'Jane had better **not come***. Note too that, in the case of the modal *can*, it always combines with the modal into one word: *'Brian cannot **come***.

But there are other modal verbs that take a *to*-infinitive, such as *be able, have, ought*: e.g. *'Fred is able **to come***, *'Ann has **to come***, and *'David ought **to come***. Note how the negative forms here are different: *'Fred is **not able to come***, *'Ann **does not have to come***, and *'David ought **not to come***.

And just to complicate matters, there is even a special modal form, *need not*, which is a shorter alternative to *does not have to*, but which takes the bare infinitive: e.g. *'Ann need **not come***.

This modal use of *need* is only ever seen in negative statements like this, or in questions: *'Need I come?'* It is also often replaced with the normal verb *need*, which is followed by a *to*-infinitive: e.g. *'Ann needs **to come***, *'Ann does not need **to come***, and *'Do I need **to come**?'*

The *to*-infinitive without the infinitive ☺

Yes, it may sound strange, but in some circumstances we can even have a *to*-infinitive without the infinitive! This happens when words are left out to avoid unnecessary repetition: e.g. *'Don't tell me if you don't want **to***. It is crystal-clear that the *to* here is part of the *to*-infinitive, *to tell me*, but we don't repeat the *tell me* part, which has already been said.

The same thing often happens in dialogue: *'Did you think she liked you?'* – *'Well, she seemed **to***.

A date for your diary...

On **Thursday 3rd September**, the Mayor of Roskilde will open the new *Language Support Centre*. The celebrations start at **2 pm**, and all our readers are most welcome! See www.englishsupport.dk.

Questions & Answers

(Edited)

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A letter from Singapore

Dear Lawrence,

In the course of my work, I have to do a monthly Correspondence Audit on the team of correspondence officers. One officer wrote: "We would like to inform that we were unable to..."

I spotted the error – it should have been: "We would like to inform you that we were unable to...". However, my boss told me that there was nothing wrong with the officer's statement, with which I disagreed. So, I was told to justify my position.

Please advise how I should explain it to my boss. To put it simply, can I just say that the object (i.e. "you") was missing from the statement?

Thank you very much for your question. Yes, the simplest way is to say that in English (unlike some other languages) the verbs *inform*, *tell* and *advise* all normally take an (indirect) object, as in three common expressions in business English:

I am delighted to inform you that ...

I am pleased to tell you that ...

I am happy to advise you that ...

Contrast three other similar verbs:

I am delighted to announce that ...

I am pleased to say that ...

I am happy to give advice on ...

When the verb *inform* is used without an indirect object, it has the different and specific meaning of to inform the authorities, police, occupying power, etc. E.g. *She is going to inform on you.*

This is also the meaning contained in the noun *informer*, e.g. *a police informer*, who is someone who informs the police – not for instance a police spokesman, who might be called an *informant*.

I hope that helps! But you are very welcome to refer your boss to me for further clarification.

The Language Support Centre

Dear Lawrence,

Many congratulations on the new Language Support Centre. It looks terrific. What a location! My only concern is that it begins to look as if you will only be giving work to people who have office space. I do hope this is not so, as I could not afford the time or money needed to drive into Roskilde every day, let alone rent desk space (much as I would love to).

Let me assure you that I will **not** be only giving work to people who rent office space! We have more than 200 freelance partners now, and that figure is rising. And you will remain one of them.

Obviously there will be a tendency for people who are working in the same building to get offered work that is in their area of expertise first, if only because they are just down the corridor. But that works both ways. So there will almost certainly be more work for us all.

But you are right – it does look terrific! Here are some more pictures to whet your appetite:



The glass-enclosed veranda



Even the entrance is beautiful!



And the city centre is just outside...

More exciting news and tips next month!

Best wishes

Lawrence White

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www. **English support** .dk

Your natural language partner

(6)

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