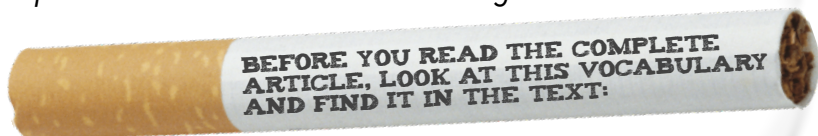


Extra holidays for non-smokers

A Japanese company has decided to **grant** its non-smoking staff an additional six days of holiday a year to make up for the time off smokers take for cigarette breaks.



grant: to give, to permit

allowance: an amount of money paid regularly to someone

spokesman: an official (male) representative

staff: the people working at a company

following: after

matter: a question, an issue, a problem, a topic

scheme: a programme, a plan

quit smoking: to stop smoking, to give up smoking

tougher: stricter, more serious

across Japan: everywhere in Japan, in different places in Japan

ban: a prohibition

ahead of: before, prior to

Marketing firm Piala Inc. introduced the new paid leave **allowance** in September after non-smokers complained they were working more than their colleagues who smoked.

Hirota Matsushima, a **spokesman** for the company, told The Telegraph newspaper: "One of our non-smoking **staff** members put a message in the company suggestion box earlier in the year saying that smoking breaks were causing problems."

Following the suggestion, the company's CEO Takao Asuka decided to give non-smoking employees extra time off to compensate, Mr Matsushima added.

The **matter** has been taken seriously by the Tokyo-based company which is located on the 29th floor of an office block – making any cigarette break last at least 15 minutes because smokers take a few minutes to get downstairs and another few to come back up again, according to staff.

Mr Asuka hopes the **scheme** will create an incentive for the company's staff to **quit** smoking.

Efforts to reduce the number of smokers and impose **tougher** anti-smoking regulations have been seen **across Japan** in recent months.

In July, Tokyo governor Yuriko Koike made plans to impose a smoking **ban** in public places across the Japanese capital **ahead of** the 2020 Summer Olympics.

But the proposal is likely to encounter strong opposition from pro-smoking politicians, restaurant owners and particularly from cigarette-manufacturing giant *Japan Tobacco*, which is one third government-owned, and paid the state \$700m in dividends in 2015.

The World Health Organisation ranks Japan at the bottom of the list in anti-smoking regulations in terms of the type of public places entirely smoke-free, and around 18 per cent of the Japanese population are believed to smoke.

adapted from: www.independent.co.uk/news/

"Let's chat about that!"

Write your answers in an email and send them to your ECP coach!

- *Do you smoke or have you ever been a smoker?*
- *Are you happy that smoking is no longer legal in public spaces here? Why (not)?*
- *To what extent do you think smoking can interfere with a company's productivity?*
- *Do you think the company's decision to give non-smokers six days off is fair?*
- *What else could companies do to encourage their employees to quit smoking?*



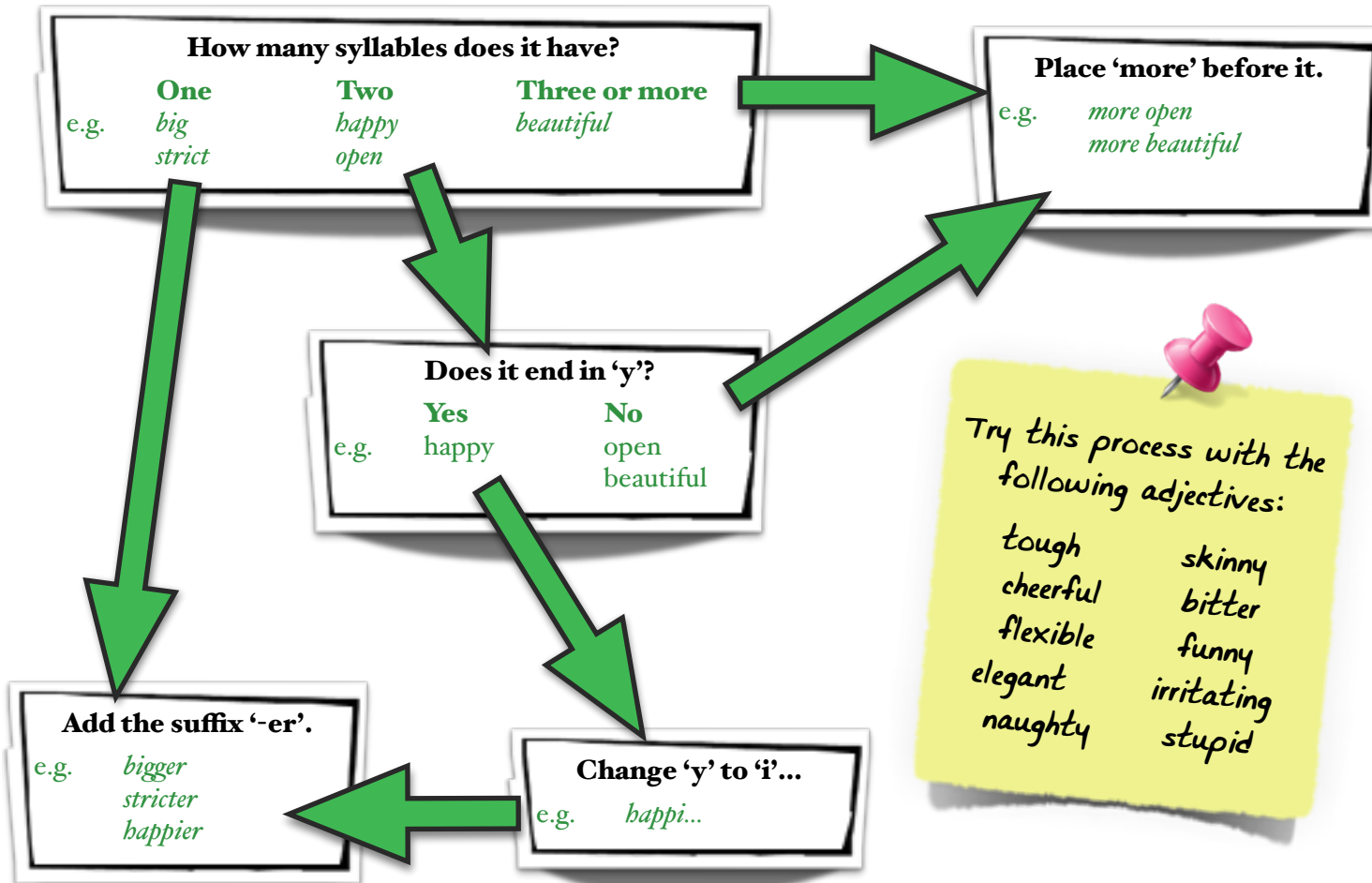
"iLook, iThink, iSpeak"

Express Yourself Better



'Stricter' or 'more strict'?

One of these forms is more correct. Use the flow-chart below to find out which, and how to form other regular comparative adjectives.



Try this process with the following adjectives:

tough	skinny
cheerful	bitter
flexible	funny
elegant	irritating
naughty	stupid



A **HUGE** thank you to **Roselis Silva**, **Margaret Roundtree** and **Cristina Juesas** for being our wonderful speakers at last week's **FRED Talks** event. And of course, thanks to everyone who came to see them and who **shared drinks and pintxos together while socialising in English!**

***** Watch the videos [here](#) *****

- * Support **Araski Basketball Club** by going to watch them play top level basketball in **Mendizorrotza**
- * Experience **TEDx VitoriaGasteiz** on **14th April 2018**

