

Character Builder 您好嗎？

The basic unit of the Chinese language is the *zi* (字), i.e. a Chinese word. Each *zi* has a written form (called a character, made up of strokes), a sound (made up of consonant and vowel) and a meaning (or multiple meanings). When we speak or write Chinese, we string *zi* together to form terms, phrases and sentences.

This week: Words about management

務

Pronunciation: *wu* (Putonghua, 4th tone), *mo* (Cantonese, 6th tone)
Basic meaning: activity, errand, affair

Verb 務 means do/work. Peasants 務農 (*wu nong* = work-as~farmers). Pragmatists 務實 (*wu shi* = act~practically).

Noun 務 = 事務 (*shi wu* = affair~activity): 家務 (*jia wu* = home/house~work = household duties/chores), 商務 (*shang wu* = commerce~affairs = business activities), 軍務 (*jun wu* = army~duties). 公務員 (*gong wu yuan* = public~duties~members) = public servants. 政務官 (*zheng wu guan* = political~duties~officials) = administrative officers. 公務纏身 (*gong wu chan shen* = official~duties~tie~body) means always busy with duties/assignments related to one's employment.

Some “財務公司” (*cai wu gong si* = money~affairs~public-bureau = so-called “financial companies”) are loan-sharks. Tramps/crooks 不務正業 (*bu wu zheng ye* = no~work~lawful~job = loaf around, engage in unlawful activities).