

**EASY E**

CEF level A2

**MEDIUM M**

CEF levels B1-B2

**ADVANCED A**

CEF levels C1-C2

CEF: European Framework of Reference for Languages

**INTRODUCTION****[1] Let's get started! E**

**David Ingram:** Welcome to *Business Spotlight Audio 1/2022*. I'm David Ingram from England.

**Erin Perry:** And I'm Erin Perry from the United States. We're glad you could join us! In this recording, you can listen to articles and interviews from the world of business English. We also have lots of exercises to help you to improve your language and communication skills.

**Ingram:** We'll hear from Bob Dignen about the positive power of pessimism. We'll provide you with tips and useful phrases for preparing a negotiation. And we'll hear a short story about a football team that seems to celebrate its lack of success. As always, you can find all the texts, dialogues and exercises in your audio booklet. OK, let's get started!

**TRENDS****NAMES AND NEWS****[2] Introduction (I) E**

**David Ingram:** We'll begin with our Names and News section and a story about a person

whose work includes creating visual effects in movies such as *Harry Potter* and *Avatar*.

**Erin Perry:** Great films, David!

**Ingram:** Indeed, Erin. And this person has also been placed on *Time* magazine's 2021 list of the 100 most influential people.

**Perry:** Oh, yes. What's his name? Er...

**Ingram:** Well, let's listen and find out.

**[3] Shaping the future M US**

Anyone who has watched a *Harry Potter* movie has seen the work of Jen-Hsun "Jensen" Huang. His company, Nvidia, made a chip called a graphics processing unit (GPU). The GPU makes possible the visual effects in movies such as *Harry Potter* and *Avatar*. The Taiwanese American's ability to guess future trends gave him a place on *Time* magazine's 2021 list of the 100 most influential people.

In 2003, Huang pushed Nvidia to design GPUs that do more than make visual effects. His decision was risky at the time. Now, the technology allows phones to answer questions in a human voice and farmers to spray weeds but not crops, for example. "Huang's gamble paid off largely because he is among the world's most technically savvy CEOs," Andrew Ng, another technology leader, wrote in *Time*.

Huang is known as a caring employer, and he gives money to support education in science and technology. In 2008, for example, he gave

Stanford University \$30 million (€26 million) to build an engineering center.

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**CEO (chief executive officer)** ▶ Firmenchef(in)

**crop** ▶ Anbau-, Nutzpflanze

**design sth.**

▶ etw. konzipieren

**engineering**

▶ Technik-

**gamble** ▶ Wagnis; hier: gewagte Unternehmung

**graphics processing unit (GPU)** ▶ Grafikprozessor

**pay off** ▶ sich lohnen

**savvy** *ifml.* ▶ erfahren, versiert

**weed** ▶ Unkraut

#### [4] Introduction (II) **E**

**Erin Perry:** Our next story comes from Japan and is about how people under 75 are no longer regarded as “elderly” but rather as “pre-old”. As you listen to our story, answer this question: according to the story, how do people in Japan describe those who are in their 40s or 50s? Ready? Listen now.

#### [5] Too young to be old **E** US

Nearly one out of three people in Japan are over 65 years of age, making it the oldest country in the world. But some cities, such as Nagano, have decided that people under 75 are no longer elderly. Instead, they are now called “pre-old.”

Japan’s 2020 White Paper on the elderly says that the traits connected to the term “elderly” do not describe most people in the 65 to 75 age range. It also says that women in Japan can expect to live into their late 80s, and men live into

their early 80s. Nagano hopes the new category will keep people active longer.

Many of the new “pre-old” people like the decision because they want to keep working. Farmer Norihiro Aizawa, 38, told *The Wall Street Journal* that his father is still farming in his 70s, and he also plans to do so. “We say here that a person in his 40s or 50s is still a child with a runny nose,” he says. “And people in their 60s and 70s are in the prime of their careers.”

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**elderly: be ~**

▶ älter sein; hier: als älter bezeichnet werden

**pre-old** *non-stand.*

▶ hier: noch nicht zu den Älteren gehören (wörtlich: voralt)

**prime: be in the ~ of sth.**

▶ in der Blüte von etw. stehen; hier: auf dem Höhepunkt von etw. sein

**runny nose** ▶ Schniefnase

**trait** ▶ Merkmal

**White Paper** UK

▶ Weißbuch

#### [6] Answer: Listening comprehension **E**

**Erin Perry:** OK? Did you get the answer to our question? According to the story, how do people in Japan describe someone who is in their 40s or 50s?

▶ The answer is as “a child with a runny nose”. Listen again.

“We say here that a person in his 40s or 50s is still a child with a runny nose.”

**Perry:** If you didn’t get the answer the first time, you might like to go back and listen to the text again.

## GLOBAL BUSINESS

### Permaculture

#### [7] Introduction **E**

**David Ingram:** Now, for a complete change of subject, we're going to take a look at permaculture, the subject of Melita Cameron-Wood's article in the latest issue of *Business Spotlight*. And Melita is here now to tell us more about the topic.

#### [8] Interview: Melita Cameron-Wood **A**

**David Ingram:** Melita. You spoke to a number of people involved in the area of permaculture. Tell us what you discovered about the subject.

**Melita Cameron-Wood:** Yeah, so first of all, I think it's quite important to talk about the term "permaculture" because it's a word that not everyone is familiar with. So, permaculture is basically the word "permanent" plus "culture" or "agriculture", and when you break that down, it basically means that permaculture allows a sustainable way of living that could be reproduced and sustained for generations to come without any major changes.

When we think about how many of us live in cities, how we go to the supermarket, get our food, go back home, cook it and don't really think about where our supplies have come from, then a great deal of information gets lost. Whereas permaculture really tries to emphasize all of the systems that are in place that allow us to exist and really reminds us, in a way,

that, as humans, we are part of nature and are not some force fighting against it. We are essentially part of the system and can be in symbiosis with it.

I spoke to three different permaculture experts who were all based in different places. So, Zairah Khan, who's based in The Hague, Niki Taylor, who's based in France, and Peppi Zen Gauci, who's based in Portugal. And obviously, all of these people are working with different climates, different types of land. But they all showed that when you persevere, you can really make changes in the way you interact with your immediate environment that allow cyclical patterns to occur.

So simple things, like collecting rainwater — harvesting rainwater — using that water to then water your plants. And then taking those plants and then using the compost that you get from the leftovers — so the bits that you don't use and don't consume — to then fertilize your garden.

And if you are lucky enough to have animals, for example, chickens, as Niki Taylor has, then using the droppings, for example, to also fertilize the land and also creating different types of garden that allow for more fertile growth. So, Niki Taylor mentioned a few types of garden like the lasagna garden and the keyhole garden, for example, all of which were specifically designed to optimize the growth of the plants.

So, there are some really exciting lessons to be learned within permaculture. One thing that Niki Taylor emphasized is that it is not just gardening. A lot of people tend to think, “Oh, this is all about plants and growing things”. That is one aspect of it, but it is essentially a lifestyle. And it’s a lifestyle that is based upon the systems within society and changing these systems to make them as sustainable and logical as possible, in a way.

So, my discussion with these three permaculture experts not only sparked my interest, but opened my eyes and made me realize that we all have a responsibility for the way we interact with the earth. And we can change that, and it’s something that is tangible and doable. So, yeah, it kind of filled me with hope, I suppose.

*Business Spotlight 1/2022, pp. 16–19*

#### break sth. down

► etw. zerlegen

#### droppings

► Ausscheidungen, Kot

#### emphasize sth.

► etw. hervorheben

#### fertile

► fruchtbar

#### fertilize sth.

► etw. düngen

#### harvest sth.

► etw. ernten; hier: auffangen

#### pattern

► Muster

#### persevere

► durchhalten

#### spark sth.

► etw. entfachen

#### supplies

► Lieferungen; hier: Zutaten

#### sustainable

► nachhaltig; zukunftsfähig

#### tangible

► greifbar, konkret

#### The Hague

► Den Haag

## HEAD-TO-HEAD

### Is inherited wealth good for society?

#### [9] Introduction **E**

**Erin Perry:** Welcome now to our debate section, in which *Business Spotlight* editor-in-chief Ian McMaster looks at the two sides of a current controversy. The subject of our Head-to-Head debate in the latest issue of *Business Spotlight* is whether inherited wealth is good for society.

**David Ingram:** Hmm. Interesting question! I mean, I guess most people would like to inherit a bit of money if they could.

**Perry:** Yeah, but isn’t there a danger that they might get a little lazy if they have money simply given to them without doing anything?

**Ingram:** True, good point. Anyway, let’s hear more from Ian about this debate.

#### [10] Interview: Ian McMaster **A**

**Ian McMaster:** Is inherited wealth good for society? This is a subject that creates heated debate. Those who argue that inherited wealth is good for society believe that it should either not be taxed at all or should be taxed only very lightly. On the other hand, those who believe inherited wealth isn’t good for society believe that it should be taxed more heavily.

The argument in favour of inherited wealth is that it is a way for societies to build up capital

and transfer wealth down the generations — for example, to help children start life better off than the parents did or help them start a business. Taxing inherited wealth, it is said, would stifle entrepreneurship.

Those who believe that inherited wealth is bad for society argue that it preserves and accentuates inequalities in the distribution of income and wealth. They also point out that inherited wealth often concentrates power — both economic and political — in the hands of a rich elite. Therefore, higher taxation is needed.

Another difficult issue to decide, but my view is that inherited wealth can have positive benefits, but that it should be taxed adequately to prevent extreme inequalities from arising. That's my view. But what do you think?

*Business Spotlight 1/2022, pp. 20–21*

#### argue that...

► argumentieren, dass ...

#### entrepreneurship

► Unternehmertum, -geist

inherit sth. ► etw. erben

#### point sth. out

► auf etw. hin-, verweisen

#### stifle sth.

► etw. ersticken, unterdrücken

## COMMUNICATION

### BUSINESS SKILLS

#### Negotiating

#### [11] Essential phrases for preparing a negotiation **M**

**David Ingram:** Now, it's time for our Business Skills section, in which we look at a key aspect of communication at work. This time, our topic is how to prepare for a negotiation, the subject of Ken Taylor's article in the latest issue of *Business Spotlight*.

**Erin Perry:** Oh, this will be very useful, David. I always think I'm useless at negotiating.

**Ingram:** Really, oh that's good to know! Maybe, I can take advantage of that weakness.

**Perry:** Don't even think about it!

**Ingram:** Well, later, we'll hear some tips that you might find helpful. But first, let's practise some phrases that are useful when you want to prepare for a negotiation. I'll tell you what to say and give you some of the words you'll need. In the pause, form the necessary phrase. Afterwards, you'll hear the correct version. Don't worry if your phrase is slightly different from ours. Then repeat the correct version. Ready? Here's the first one.

1. You want to ask what the main topics are that your company has to take into account.  
 ■ Use “what”, “key issues”, “need” and “consider”.

- What are the key issues we need to consider?
- 2. You want to ask whether your negotiation partners are authorized to decide things.
  - Use “they”, “have”, “authority” and “decisions”.
  - Do they have the authority to make decisions?
- 3. You want to suggest that you should analyse the companies that are in competition with yours.
  - Use “let’s”, “list”, “main” and “competitors”.
  - Let’s list our main competitors.
- 4. You want to ask whether there are other options.
  - Use “have”, “other” and “alternatives”.
  - Do we have any other alternatives?
- 5. You want to say that it’s important to know what the main topics are so that you can plan the discussions.
  - Use “need”, “identify”, “key issues” and “agenda”.
  - We need to identify the key issues for the agenda.

**Ingram:** Excellent. Well done!

**competition: be in ~ with sb.**

➤ mit jmdm. im Wettbewerb stehen, mit jmdm. konkurrieren

**negotiation** ➤ Verhandlung

**take sth. into account**

➤ etw. berücksichtigen

**topic** ➤ Thema

## [12] Essential words for preparing a negotiation M

**David Ingram:** In this exercise, you’ll first hear a dialogue between Helen and Geoff. Then, we’ll do an exercise in which we’ll test you on some of the words used. OK, first listen very carefully.

**Geoff:** The flight’s delayed. We might as well use the time to make a plan for the negotiation.

**Helen:** Good idea, Geoff. These are the targets we need to reach. We want to make a gross margin of 40 per cent on the wholesale price of £40. So, we want to source them from the supplier for £24. But what are the key issues we need to consider?

**Geoff:** We should try putting ourselves in the supplier’s shoes. What are their key expectations? And what do you think their bottom line could be?

**Helen:** My educated guess would be that it’s somewhere in the region of £26.

**Geoff:** Well, we’ll be talking to Shashidhar and Ranitha. And we know that they have the authority to make decisions.

**Helen:** Let’s consider our minimum outcome and what our trade-offs are.

**Geoff:** OK. Oh, they just called our flight. Time to go.

**Ingram:** OK, now we’ll give you two alternative words, and then you’ll hear one of the sentences

from the dialogue again — this time with a beep where one of the words belongs. In the pause, choose the right word to complete the sentence. Then, you'll hear the full sentence again. Repeat the sentence trying to copy the speaker's pronunciation and intonation. Ready?

1. Here's the first pair of words to choose from: "application" OR "negotiation"

**Geoff:** We might as well use the time to make a plan for the [beep].

- We might as well use the time to make a plan for the negotiation.

2. And here's the next pair of words: "targeting" OR "targets"

**Helen:** These are the [beep] we need to reach.

- These are the targets we need to reach.

3. And another pair of words to choose from: "affairs" OR "issues"

**Helen:** But what are the key [beep] we need to consider?

- But what are the key issues we need to consider?

4. And one more pair of words: "bottom line" OR "dotted line"

**Geoff:** And what do you think their [beep] could be?

- And what do you think their bottom line could be?

5. And the last pair of words to choose from: "trade-ins" OR "trade-offs"

**Helen:** Let's consider our minimum outcome and what our [beep] are.

- Let's consider our minimum outcome and what our trade-offs are.

**Ingram:** Well done. Did you all get the words right? If not, go back and listen to the dialogue again.

**bottom line** ► Untergrenze

**educated guess**

- fundierte Annahme

**gross** ► brutto

**issue** ► Frage, Problem

**marginal** ► Gewinnspanne

**negotiation** ► Verhandlung

**outcome** ► Ergebnis

**shoes: put oneself in sb.'s -**

- sich in jmdn. hineinversetzen

**source sth.** ► etw. beschaffen

**target** ► Ziel(setzung)

**trade-off** ► Kompromiss

**wholesale** ► Großhandel

## [13] Introduction **E**

**David Ingram:** OK, now, as I said, we'll hear seven tips on how to prepare for a negotiation, the subject of Ken Taylor's article in the latest issue of Business Spotlight. The tips are read by Melita Cameron-Wood.

## [14] Negotiating: Preparing to succeed **M**

**Negotiating** is a demanding skill. You need to state your position clearly, listen carefully to your business partner, and think and respond quickly. And negotiating in a second language is even more demanding.

A good **negotiator** has to be well prepared. You cannot always **predict** or control what is

going to happen in a negotiation. But good preparation ensures that you are more likely to achieve your goals. Here are seven key factors to consider in your preparation.

### 1. Specify your goals

You need to know what you want before a negotiation, rather than settling for what you end up with. The clearer your goals, the better your chance of reaching them. You can use the SMART model here:

**S for “specific”.** Your goals should be straightforward, precise and clearly defined.

**M for “measurable”.** You need points of reference that you can use to assess whether you reach your goals or not.

**A for “attainable”.** Your goals should be realistic and possible to achieve within the negotiation.

**R for “relevant”.** Your goals should align with the goals of your organization.

**T for “timely”.** You need clearly specified time frames and deadlines.

### 2. Check the background

What is the context of your negotiation and the reason for it? If you are negotiating with a new business partner, what can you find out about them before the meeting? Do you have colleagues or business partners who have had dealings with your negotiation partner? If so, what can they add to the information that is publicly available?

If your two organizations have done business together before, how have past negotiations worked? Have there been any problems? Has the business run smoothly?

### 3. Do a SWOT analysis

The SWOT analysis was first developed at Stanford University in the 1970s. It is a useful tool for marketing and process planning, but can easily be adapted to negotiations. SWOT stands for “strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats”. In any negotiation, you have these factors on both sides of the table. The party that best analyses and applies them will control the negotiation:

- Your strengths might include things such as your market position, experience or product advantage over the competition.
- Your weaknesses could be low margins, staffing problems or your product range.
- Your opportunities might be a market that is likely to grow significantly, strategic alliances or the weakness of the competition.
- Your threats could be your cash flow, new technologies or new regulations.

These are just examples. In your planning, you need to emphasize your strengths, shore up your weaknesses, clearly define your opportunities and assess your risk of threats.

### 4. Consider your BATNA

The BATNA concept — the “**best alternative to a negotiated agreement**” — was developed by

Harvard academics Roger Fisher and William Ury in their 1981 book, *Getting to Yes*, as a strategy for determining the importance of a negotiation and thinking about your best alternative if the negotiation fails.

The value of knowing your BATNA means that you have an alternative if negotiations fall through. This gives you strength in your negotiation. It also helps you determine the worst agreement you are willing to accept and, therefore, your walk-away point.

To develop your BATNA, list all the alternatives to a negotiated agreement and estimate the value of each one to you. You can then see which alternative is your BATNA and calculate the worst acceptable deal for the negotiation.

### 5. Decide on your fallback position

You have now defined the parameters within which you can negotiate. Next, you need to think about your fallback position.

Look at the different elements of the negotiation — such as price, delivery, service — and decide how and where you can compromise. For each of the elements, you need to specify acceptable alternatives or compromises. And you need to decide which elements are non-negotiable.

### 6. Put yourself in your partner's shoes

Look at the negotiation from your business partner's perspective by putting yourself in their shoes. What might their SMART goals be? Can you do a SWOT analysis for their negotiat-

ing position? What do you think their BATNA is? To answer these questions, you will have to make some assumptions. And you will need to check these during the negotiation.

The more you can put yourself in your negotiation partner's shoes, the easier it will be for you to identify potential areas of agreement and disagreement. And this will help you in devising your negotiating strategy.

### 7. Use a formal agenda

One highly effective negotiating tactic is to use a formal and carefully planned agenda. This strengthens your team's ability to control the negotiation. It also allows you to sequence the topics in such a way as to maximize your influence. And by agreeing to your agenda, your business partner indirectly agrees that your topics and concerns are worth discussing.

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academic ► Wissenschaftler(in)

achieve sth. ► etw. erreichen

agenda ► Tagesordnung

align with sth.

► mit etw. auf einer Linie sein

assess sth. ► etw. einschätzen

assumption: make an ~

► eine Vermutung anstellen

competition ► Konkurrenz

devise sth.

► etw. ausarbeiten

emphasize sth.

► etw. hervorheben

fallback position

► Ausweichlösung

fall through ► scheitern

goal ► Ziel

margin ► Gewinnspanne

negotiate (sth.)

► (etw.) ver-, aushandeln

negotiation ► Verhandlung

negotiator

► Verhandlungsführer(in)

non-negotiable

► nicht verhandelbar

predict sth. ► etw. vorhersagen

**product range**

- ▶ Produktpalette

**sequence sth.** ▶ die Reihenfolge von etw. festlegen

**settle for sth.**

- ▶ sich mit etw. zufriedengeben

**shoes: put oneself in sb.'s ~**

- ▶ sich in jmdn. hineinversetzen

**shore sth. up** ▶ etw.

(ab)stützen; hier: abbauen

**staffing**

- ▶ Personalausstattung

**straightforward**

- ▶ eindeutig

**SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats)**

- ▶ Stärken, Schwächen, Chancen und Risiken

**time frame** ▶ Zeitrahmen

**timely** ▶ fristgerecht

**topic** ▶ Thema

**walk-away point**

- ▶ Ausstiegspunkt

## CAREERS

### CAREER COACH Stakeholders

**[15] Introduction E**

**David Ingram:** OK, let's move on now to our Careers section and our career coach, Bo Graesborg. In his latest column, Bo looks at the importance of making sure that a wide range of relevant people — your “stakeholders” — know about you and your work.

**Erin Perry:** Yes, do spread the word about me, David.

**Ingram:** Well, it's not quite that simple, Erin. Anyway, here's Bo's column, read by the author himself.

**[16] Column: Bo Graesborg M**

In times like these, when change is the master currency and everybody is constantly scram-

bling to find or adapt to the Next Big Thing, it may be good to remember the following point: just because a thing has been around for a long time doesn't mean it's not useful any more.

Today, we will look at how good old-fashioned “stakeholder mapping” can be a helpful tool for you to manage your career.

Many large organizations — in fact, according to a 2018 Kienbaum study, about half of them — actively work to set up systems to identify internal talents and provide career-development opportunities.

But while talent-management systems are great at promoting visibility, transparency and fairness, they do not take out the human factor. Systems don't promote people. People do.

You probably know who would be in charge of promoting you. But when you sit down and write up your stakeholder map, don't stop at your boss and their boss. They are important, but so are your current peers. How would they feel about you moving up? And what about your future peers? Would they easily see you as “one of them”? And don't forget the views of internal and external customers: what would be their feedback on your performance?

As if that were not enough, you also shouldn't forget the classic gatekeepers: people in organizations with limited but very specific powers to give or deny access to the people or information you need. The best-known gatekeeper is,

of course, the executive assistant. With their approval, you might find yourself getting face time with the CEO, which would not otherwise be warranted by the importance of your project. But also the HR professionals, or those fun types down in controlling, may know stuff you need to know, too.

This may all sound horribly complex. Dealing with human beings often is. So, let me end with two pieces of good news. First, you are probably already mindful of the importance of managing relationships for your day-to-day performance, as well as for your career. Second, the golden rule of managing relationships is very simple: kindness. Always start with kindness.

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#### **CEO (chief executive officer)**

► Geschäftsführer(in),  
Firmenchef(in)

#### **deny access**

► den Zugang verwehren

#### **executive assistant**

► Assistent(in) der Geschäftsleitung

#### **face time** US jfml.

► persönliches Gespräch

#### **gatekeeper**

► Torwächter(in); hier: Person, die den Zugang zu Entscheidungsträgern kontrolliert

#### **HR (human resources) professional**

► Personalreferent(in)

#### **master currency: ...is the ~**

► hier etwa: alles dreht sich um ...

#### **(master) currency**

► Stammwährung)

#### **mindful: be ~ of sth.**

► etw. beachten

#### **peer** ► gleichrangige(r)

Kollege/Kollegin

#### **scramble to do sth.**

► sich danach drängeln, etw. zu tun; hier: wetteifern, etw. zu tun

#### **stakeholder mapping**

► Visualisierung der Beziehungen zwischen Interessengruppen

**visibility** ► Sichtbarkeit;

hier auch: Wahrnehmung

**warranted** ► garantiert

## LEADERSHIP

### Pessimism

#### [17] Introduction **E**

**Erin Perry:** The second item in our Careers section looks at the topic of leadership. In the current issue of Business Spotlight, Bob Dignen looks at how pessimism can actually be a positive force for leadership. Here's Bob now to tell us more.

#### [18] Interview: Bob Dignen **A**

**Erin Perry:** Welcome, Bob. Pessimism and pessimists have a bad reputation. Why is this?

**Bob Dignen:** Well, I guess we associate pessimism and pessimists sometimes with negative thinking. And you don't find many people who are really a fan of negative thinking or communication styles, which disrupt relationships and provoke conflict. As a trainer, and I'm sure many of the people listening who are trainers, you know, we've all been part of this, outlawing "yes, but" in favour of "yes, and". And, you know, spending time trying to support people to accept and appreciate others rather than trying to contradict or look for the negative. I think that's a kind of a current practice. It has a history, you know, this all comes, I think, from the 1960s, positive psychology with this optimistic perspective of human nature and the belief that people's intrinsic motivations are generally good, so we should try to communicate along

the positive rather than the negative. So, there's a quite a tradition over 50 years of putting pessimists to the side and saying that optimism is good. The other thing about pessimism and pessimists, it's quite a good label, to label those who challenge our ideas. And so, sometimes, when we talk about pessimists and pessimism, we're not actually describing pessimism. We're often just describing somebody who disagrees with us.

**Perry:** So, what are the positive aspects of pessimism?

**Dignen:** When you ask me about words, I'm always going to start with a clarification of the meaning. We have to ask ourselves, "What do we mean by pessimism in order to understand its positives?" If we see pessimism as an awareness of risk, for example, as a hypersensitivity to things potentially going wrong, mistakes or failures, which we know can and will happen — you know, human beings make mistakes, machines fail — then kind of a pessimism can be a way to avoid catastrophe, even death. And in certain industries, actually, it's pretty much standard practice to think pessimistically in order to avoid accidents. That's one way pessimism is useful. I mean more broadly, pessimism is also useful to avoid groupthink, you know, overly optimistic group thinking. We know that individuals, we know that groups

have blind spots, so challenging these blind spots with some degree of scepticism — a kind of Socratean tradition, 3,000 years old — is also good. It's also there in lean management — ask why, ask why, ask why, don't assume that you really know. All of that will bring us to insight, to creativity. So, I wonder sometimes whether pessimism is the wrong word. I think at the end of the day, it's about critical thinking and please show me anybody who disagrees with that.

**Perry:** Thanks very much, Bob. We look forward to talking to you again next time.

**Dignen:** Thank you very much.

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appreciate sb.

► jmdn. (wert)schätzen

assume sth.

► etw. annehmen

clarification ► Klärung

hypersensitivity

► Überempfindlichkeit,  
hypersensitive Reaktion

insight ► Einsicht

intrinsic ► eigentlich,  
wesentlich

label (sth.) ► Bezeichnung;  
etw. bezeichnen

lean ► schlank

look forward to sth.

► sich auf etw. freuen

outlawing ► ächtend

overly ► übermäßig

## LANGUAGE

### SKILL UP!

#### Energy

#### [19] Exercise: Idioms (I) M

**Erin Perry:** OK, let's "skill up" on our language now with some idioms relating to energy. First, listen to a dialogue between Amber and Hugo. The language they use is simple.

**Hugo:** I'm a bit worried about Arthur. It's as though he has no energy. He seemed to stop listening when I was talking to him.

**Amber:** I think he might have been distracted. He got very angry this morning when he found out he wasn't getting a bonus this year. I think I may have made the situation worse when I mentioned that there could be a promotion planned for Sandy. I feel bad now.

**Hugo:** Poor Arthur! You really aren't very clever sometimes, Amber!

**Perry:** Now, you'll hear the same dialogue again, but this time, Amber and Hugo use more idiomatic language. Listen out for the idioms.

**Hugo:** I'm a bit worried about Arthur. It's as though he's running on empty. He seemed to switch off when I was talking to him.

**Amber:** I think he might have been distracted. He blew a fuse this morning when he found

out he wasn't getting a bonus this year. I think I may have added fuel to the fire when I mentioned that there could be a promotion in the pipeline for Sandy. I feel bad now.

**Hugo:** Poor Arthur! You really aren't the brightest spark sometimes, Amber!

**Perry:** Now, it's your turn to form the idioms you've just heard. You'll hear a description of a situation and two suggestions, **a)** and **b)**, for the appropriate idiom. In the pause, choose the correct option. OK? Here's the first one.

1. If you continue to work even though you feel very exhausted, you are...
  - a) running on empty.
  - b) out of power.

➤ **a)** is right. If you go on working even though you have no energy left, you are "running on empty". Next one.
2. When you do not pay attention to someone or something, you...
  - a) turn down.
  - b) switch off.

➤ **b)** is right. If you "switch off", you do not pay attention to something or someone. OK, next one.
3. Someone who gets furious, blows...
  - a) their trumpet.
  - b) a fuse.

➤ **b)** is right. Someone who gets very angry "blows a fuse". Next one.

4. If you make things worse by what you do or say, you...

a) add fuel to the fire.

b) add petrol to the flames.

➤ a) is right. If you do or say something that makes a situation worse, you “add fuel to the fire”. And the next one.

5. Something that will happen soon, is...

a) on the mind.

b) in the pipeline.

➤ b) is right. Something that will happen soon is “in the pipeline”. And the last one.

6. Someone who is very clever is...

a) a bright spark.

b) a sparkling head.

➤ a) is right. To “be a bright spark” means to “be very clever”.

**Perry:** Well done. Did you get all those idioms right? If not, go back and try the exercise again.

**distracted:** be -

➤ abgelenkt/zerstreut sein;

hier: nicht ganz bei der Sache sein

**exhausted** ➤ erschöpft

**fuel** ➤ Kraftstoff

**furious** ➤ wütend

**fuse** ➤ Sicherung

**promotion** ➤ Beförderung

**spark** ➤ Funke

**sparkling** ➤ funkelnd

## [20] Exercise: Idioms (II)

**Erin Perry:** In this exercise, you can practise those idioms again. You’ll hear the sentences that Amber and Hugo said using an idiom. In the pause, rephrase what they said in simpler words. Then you’ll hear the simpler version

again for you to repeat. Don’t worry if your simpler sentence is slightly different to ours. OK, here’s the first one.

**Hugo:** It’s as though he’s running on empty.

➤ It’s as though he has no energy.

**Hugo:** He seemed to switch off when I was talking to him.

➤ He seemed to stop listening when I was talking to him.

**Amber:** He blew a fuse this morning when he found out he wasn’t getting a bonus this year.

➤ He got very angry this morning when he found out he wasn’t getting a bonus this year.

**Amber:** I think I may have added fuel to the fire when I mentioned...

➤ I think I may have made the situation worse when I mentioned...

**Amber:** ...that there could be a promotion in the pipeline for Sandy.

➤ ...that there could be a promotion planned for Sandy.

**Hugo:** You really aren’t the brightest spark sometimes, Amber!

➤ You really aren’t very clever sometimes, Amber!

**Perry:** Well done. If you found it difficult to convert those idioms into simpler language, listen to the dialogues once more and do the exercise again.

**fuel** ➤ Kraftstoff**fuse** ➤ Sicherung**promotion** ➤ Beförderung**spark** ➤ Funke**[21] Exercise: False friends** **M**

**David Ingram:** Let's continue "skilling up" on our vocabulary by looking at a false friend. False friends are pairs of words that sound similar in German and English. But their meanings are very different, so they can cause confusion and misunderstanding. In this exercise, we'd like you to translate a German word and sentence into English, being careful to avoid the false friend. Let's begin.

**Ingram:** Our word is vital for everybody whose car has run out of petrol. Please translate this word.

**German:** tanken

**English:** get petrol, fill up (the tank)

**Ingram:** Don't say "tank", as something that "tanks" goes spectacularly wrong. If tanken refers to filling a car's tank with petrol, you say "get petrol" in UK English and "get gas" or "get gasoline" in US English. You can also say "fill up (the tank)". OK, translate this sentence, please.

**German:** Wo kann ich tanken?

**English:** Where can I get petrol? Where can I get gas? Where can I fill up?

**Ingram:** Well done.

**run out of sth.**

➤ etw. nicht mehr haben

**vital**

➤ wichtig, unerlässlich

**[22] Exercise: Don't confuse** **M**

**David Ingram:** In this exercise, we'll practise the use of the false friend in the previous track. First, you'll hear a sentence with a beep. In the pause, decide whether you need "get petrol" or "tank" instead of the beep. Then you'll hear the right sentence again. Ready?

1. Though she is a famous designer, her latest fashion line [beep].

➤ Though she is a famous designer, her latest fashion line tanked.

OK. Next sentence.

2. If you live in the country, you may have to drive a long way to [beep].

➤ If you live in the country, you may have to drive a long way to get petrol.

OK, there are two beeps in our final sentence. So, listen carefully.

3. The new petrol station [beep] as you could only [beep] by paying cash.

➤ The new petrol station tanked as you could only get petrol by paying cash.

**Ingram:** Did you choose the right words to complete the sentences? If not, go back and try this exercise again.

**[23] Dialogue and exercise: Collocations** **M**

**Erin Perry:** For our final Skill Up! exercise, we'll look at some collocations. These are words that frequently go together to form word part-

nerships. Listen carefully to someone talking about what has to be done to control global warming. We'll then do an exercise on what they say.

To succeed in curbing global warming, the world urgently needs to **consume energy** efficiently and embrace clean **energy sources**. You can do your bit for the environment by opting for green energy — **energy generated** from eco-friendly sources. You can buy your gas and electricity from a specialist green **energy company** that **produces** 100 per cent of its energy from renewable sources. Some mainstream suppliers also offer green **energy tariffs**, which guarantee that most or even all of your energy comes from an eco-friendly source.

#### curb sth.

➤ etw. eindämmen, begrenzen

#### embrace sth.

➤ etw. akzeptieren; hier: nutzen

#### supplier

➤ Lieferant(in), Anbieter(in)

**Perry:** OK, in this exercise, you'll hear the beginning of a sentence describing a situation. In the pause, complete the sentence using a collocation with the term "energy" from the text you just heard. Then you'll hear the correct answer. OK, here's the first sentence.

1. An organization that provides electricity, gas etc. is an...

➤ **energy company.** An organization that provides electricity, gas, etc. is an energy company. OK, next one.

2. Solar, wind and water power are renewable...

➤ **energy sources.** Solar, wind and water power are renewable energy sources.

Next one.

3. Energy suppliers usually offer large customers special...

➤ **energy tariffs.** Energy suppliers usually offer large customers special energy tariffs.

Next one.

4. Instead of saying "use energy", you can also say...

➤ **consume energy.** Instead of saying "use energy", you can also say "consume energy".

The last sentence can be completed with two collocations from the text you heard.

5. Before energy companies are able to supply energy, they have to...

➤ **generate energy or produce energy.** Before energy companies are able to supply energy, they have to generate energy. / Before energy companies are able to supply energy, they have to produce energy.

**Perry:** Well done. If you didn't get all those collocations right, listen to the text again and then try the exercise once more.

Business Spotlight 1/2022, pp. 42–43

supplier ➤ Lieferant(in), Anbieter(in)

## TALKING FINANCE

### Percentages and quality

#### [24] Introduction E

**Erin Perry:** Welcome now to our Talking Finance section, in which *Business Spotlight* editor-in-chief Ian McMaster talks about a topical financial subject.

**David Ingram:** Yes, this time, Ian is looking how we understand percentages and the relation of percentages to quality.

**Perry:** How we understand percentages, David? We don't understand percentages, right?

**Ingram:** I know what you mean. But anyway, here's Ian to explain.

#### [25] Interview: Ian McMaster A

**Ian McMaster:** Many of us have problems when it comes to thinking about percentages, proportions and probabilities. And this can be very important in relation to issues of risk.

Let's take a simple example. If we hear that there is a 90 per cent chance of us avoiding a bad outcome — whether it's an illness, a bad accident or whatever — then that sounds pretty good. I mean, 90 per cent is a high number. But if we look at this the other way and say that we have a one in ten chance of this bad thing happening to us, suddenly, the risk sounds much greater, even though it's exactly the same as saying there is a 90 per cent chance of the bad thing not happening.

Likewise, when it comes to quality control, we often hear people saying things such as “80 per cent quality is good enough”. Well, in some situations, it might be, I suppose. But not when it comes to building bridges, cars or planes. I don't want a one in five chance of failure in any of those situations, and I'm sure you don't either.

As a friend once said to me: “If I take my car to the mechanic to get the tyres changed and they do four of them correctly and one incorrectly — including, that is, the spare tyre — then that isn't 80 per cent, that's just crap.”

In terms of our work at *Business Spotlight*, even if we had a 99 per cent level of correctness in our texts, that would still mean that one in every 100 letters would be wrong — in other words, there would be around 20 mistakes per page in the magazine. And I'm sure our readers wouldn't find that satisfactory. Indeed, even with 99.9 per cent quality, we'd still have two mistakes per page.

Finally, let's take a fun example with probabilities to see how difficult they are to work out intuitively. If I asked you how many people you would need to have in a room for the probability of two of them having the same birthday to be 50 per cent or more, you'd probably say you need a lot — maybe 365 (for the number of days in a year) divided by two. The answer is just 23. I don't have time to prove that here, but if you

search online for “birthday paradox”, you’ll find the proof.

Business Spotlight 1/2022, p. 44

crap ifml. ➔ Mist

spare tyre ➔ Ersatzreifen

## SHORT STORY

### [26] Introduction **E**

**David Ingram:** Now, it’s time for our latest short story by James Schofield. And this time, it’s about a football team in London.

**Erin Perry:** I guess you mean a soccer team, David?

**Ingram:** Football, soccer, whatever you want to call it, Erin. You know, the real game — the one we play in England.

**Perry:** Charming!

**Ingram:** Anyway, the interesting thing about this particular team is that its song is about being, well, not very successful. The title of the story is “Bubble-bursting”.

**Perry:** OK, sounds intriguing, David. But that kind of loser song wouldn’t work very well in the States, I’m telling you. Anyway, let’s listen in.

### [27] Bubble-bursting **A**

It was a freezing January evening in the stadium, but the rush of emotion that always filled my chest as I sang the West Ham song with 50,000 other football fans warmed me:

I’m forever blowing bubbles,  
 Pretty bubbles in the air.  
 They fly so high,  
 Nearly reach the sky,  
 Then like my dreams,  
 They fade and die.  
Fortune’s always hiding,  
 I’ve looked everywhere.  
 I’m forever blowing bubbles,  
 Pretty bubbles in the air.

“Neil ... are you crying?” Sheona asked. She was wearing two jumpers, a thick coat, a hat and several scarves but was clearly still cold. The chilly stadium in East London must have felt a long way away from her Californian home in San Diego.

“No,” I lied. “Just dust in my eye. So...” I waved my arms around, “great, isn’t it?”

I’d met Dr Sheona Hakovski, a motivational coach, on a plane from Los Angeles to London. She was travelling to do a consultancy job and I was returning from a holiday. At some point, I made the mistake of telling her about the novel I was trying to write and how I had writer’s block.

For the next five hours, she tried to unblock me, and — although I found her and her interest in me very attractive — I was relieved to land at Heathrow. As we parted, I foolishly gave her my number, which she called a few days later. Isn’t

that always the way? The people who should call don't, and the ones who shouldn't call do? Of course, Sheona would say that's part of my always-say-die attitude.

"I'm staying in London for longer than expected," she said. "Want to show me around a bit? And maybe I can help you finish your novel."

I'm not sure why this was so important to her. I think she saw me as a challenge — and Sheona did like a challenge. If I'd realized that, I could have faked an unblocking while still on the plane. But I hadn't, and now I was too embarrassed to pretend I had other things to do, especially after our first meeting ended in bed. So, most days, after work, we'd do touristy things, she'd try to fix me and, when that didn't work, we'd sleep together.

My main problem, she told me, was that I was too negative — a real negatron Neil. She, on the other hand, was positive about everything. This became quite stressful. Like the time we were in the London Eye. It was a beautiful day, and I remarked that my mother would have loved to see the view from the top of the wheel, but sadly, she'd died the year before it opened.

She fell to her knees and lifted her arms to the sun. "Tell your mom what you're seeing and how awesome it is, Neil!" she ordered in a voice that carried to all 20 people in the pod and instantly silenced all other conversations. "She's

still with us, you know?" If you understand the English, you'll understand how awful the next 20 minutes in our pod were.

Then there was the occasion when I told her the first lines of my novel. We were sitting in a restaurant at the time. "The past doesn't inspire. It warns us that failure is inescapable. And I'm okay with that."

I was quite proud of this. It felt to me like the opening lines that an F. Scott Fitzgerald or a Salman Rushdie might have written. Sheona looked at me as if I'd turned into a cockroach and she was trying to decide whether to hit me with a book or with her hand. Eventually, the manager had to tell us to finish our argument somewhere else.

At some point, she found out about my love for West Ham United and asked me to take her to a game.

"You like football, you know, soccer?" I asked.

"Sure, all those endorphins you get when your team wins something. What's not to like?"

I thought about this for a moment. West Ham don't tend to win things, but that's not really the point of them for me in my life. West Ham are part of my identity, of who I am. Perhaps if she saw them play, she'd stop seeing me as something to fix. As you can see, the optimism stuff she preached was rubbing off on me.

Once the game began, I'm afraid I forgot about Sheona. It was a classic West Ham game:

losing 0-1 at half-time, fighting back to lead 2-1, then conceding two goals in the last five minutes and losing 2-3. I was transported by the drama, and it wasn't until we'd reached the Underground station that I stopped talking to Pete, Gary, Naseem and whoever else had been in our section of the stadium and remembered Sheona. She was looking pleased but wouldn't tell me why until we were sitting in a pub and I'd bought her a drink.

"I have the answer," she said. "It's very simple. It's all in that loser song you sing before the game. I'm forever blowing bubbles, pretty bubbles in the air..."

I was speechless.

"...they fly so high, nearly reach the sky, then like my dreams, they fade and die. Fortune's always hiding, I've looked everywhere," she sang.

To be honest, I'd never thought about the words. It's just what we sang.

"Negative reinforcement," she continued. "West Ham and its fans will always be losers with that anthem. So, if you want to write your novel, you have to dump them. Sorry to burst your 'bubble!' Then she laughed, which was unforgivable."

Of course, the resulting argument led to a mutual agreement never to see each other again. Ever, ever. But Sheona wasn't wrong in her analysis. I didn't finish the novel. But I did write a book about what it's like being a West

Ham United fan, and about how Netflix wants me to turn it into a documentary, so that's not bad, is it?

This is how the book opens: "The past doesn't inspire. It warns us that failure is inescapable. And I'm okay with that."

Business Spotlight 1/2022, pp. 46-47

#### always-say-die attitude

*non-stand.*

► negative Grundhaltung

anthem ► Hymne

argument ► Zwist

awesome *ifml.*

► fantastisch, toll

carry to sb.

► hier: von jmdm. zu hören sein

chilly ► kühl, frisch

cockroach ► Kakerlake

concede a goal

► ein Tor kassieren

dump sb. ifml. ► jmdm.

abservieren, fallen lassen

embarrassed ► verlegen

fade ► schwinden

fix sb.

► hier: jmds. Probleme lösen

fortune ► Fortuna, Glück

inescapable

► unentrinnbar

jumper UK ► Pullover

London Eye

► Londoner Riesenrad

mutual ► gegenseitig

#### negatron *ifml.*

► negativ geladenes Elementarteilchen; hier: negativ gestimmt

pod ► Kapsel; hier: Kabine

point ► hier: Sinn

preach sth.

► etw. predigen

reinforcement

► Verstärkung

rub off on sb.

► auf jmdm. abfärben

rush of emotion

► Gefühlswallung

show sb. around

► jmdm. herumführen

soccer US ► Fußball

transported: be ~ by sth.

► hier: von etw. völlig gefesselt sein

unforgivable

► unverzeihlich

What's not to like? *ifml.*

► etwa: Was gibt's da nicht zu mögen?

writer's block: have ~

► hier: eine Schreibblockade haben

## AND FINALLY

### ONE QUESTION

#### [28] Introduction **E**

**David Ingram:** And finally, we come to our One Question section, in which we ask you to identify our mystery person. Listen now to our clues.

#### [29] Who am I? **M**

- I was born in Athens, Greece, on 15 July 1950.
- My father published an underground newspaper during the German occupation of Greece.
- I moved to the UK when I was 16, after my parents' divorce.
- I studied economics at the University of Cambridge. I was teased for my accent, so I took up debating to improve my English. I went on to become president of the university debating society, the Cambridge Union.
- I wrote my first book, *The Female Woman*, at the age of 23. It was a bestseller.
- My second book, which was about the crisis of political leadership, was rejected by more than 37 publishers.
- I just have coffee for breakfast.
- I moved to the United States in 1980.
- In 1986, I married a US Republican politician who is also an oil tycoon and film producer. We have two children.

- I assisted my husband with his unsuccessful Senate campaign.
- In 1997, my husband and I got divorced.
- I was accused of plagiarizing others' work in my biographies of Maria Callas and Pablo Picasso. A court settlement resulted in Callas's biographer, Gerald Fitzgerald, receiving a five-figure sum.
- In 2003, I ran for governor of California in the recall election.
- In 2005, I co-founded a news aggregator that carries my name. It publishes syndicated content online.
- I became editor-in-chief of this news aggregator in 2011, when it was acquired by AOL.
- After collapsing from exhaustion in 2007, I realized that I needed to prioritize getting a good night's sleep.
- This experience prompted me to write *The Sleep Revolution: Transforming Your Life, One Night at a Time*.
- I installed sleep pods in my company, and I encourage my employees to take a nap if they need one.
- In 2020, BuzzFeed acquired the news aggregator that I co-founded.

So, who am I?

*Business Spotlight 1/2022, p. 50*

**David Ingram:** Do you know who our mystery person is? If you want to find out, go to our web-

site at [www.business-spotlight.de/who0122](http://www.business-spotlight.de/who0122), where you'll find the answer.

### aggregator

► hier: Dienst, der digitale Inhalte sammelt

at a time ► jeweils

### co-found sth.

► etw. mitgründen

divorce ► Scheidung

### editor-in-chief

► Chefredakteur(in)

exhaustion ► Erschöpfung

### prompt sb.

► jmdn. veranlassen

### publisher

► Verlag; Verleger(in)

### recall election US

► Abwahl eines/einer Amtsinhabers/-inhaberin

reject sth. ► etw. ablehnen

### run for sth.

► für etw. kandidieren

settlement ► Vergleich

### sleep pod

► Schlafkabine, -kapsel

### syndicated

► mehrfach veröffentlicht

take a nap ► ein Nickerchen machen

tease sb. ► jmdn. hänseln

## CONCLUSION

### [30] For more information

**David Ingram:** Well, we've come to the end of Business Spotlight Audio 1/2022. We hope you've enjoyed it and have found our exercises helpful.

**Erin Perry:** And remember: we offer Business Spotlight Audio both as a CD and a subscription download. For more information, and to find out about our range of products, visit our website at [www.business-spotlight.de](http://www.business-spotlight.de).

**Ingram:** So, until next time, this is David Ingram...

**Perry:** And Erin Perry...

**Ingram:** Wishing you success with your business English.

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