

EASY E**MEDIUM M****ADVANCED A**

CEF level A2

CEF levels B1-B2

CEF levels C1-C2

CEF: European Framework of Reference for Languages

INTRODUCTION

[1] Let's get started! ↗

Sion Dayson: Welcome to Business Spotlight Audio. There's lots to look forward to this time around. We'll hear from successful video creator Liam Carpenter, whose content focuses on the differences between British and German cultures. Iceland's only full-time pathologist also took time out of his busy schedule to tell us about his work. Other than that, you'll have the chance to practise your understanding and use of English. The topics range from change in the workplace to writing effective emails at work. Are you ready to get started? Let's begin!

look forward to sth.

→ sich auf etw. freuen

schedule → Zeitplan;

hier auch: Terminkalender

topic → Thema

THE BIG PICTURE

[2] Our daily bread ↗

EGYPT · Bread is one of the most important food staples in the world. Even so, Egyptians eat about three times as much bread per person as the global average. One reason for this is that

the cost of bread is subsidized by the government. This is very expensive, of course, costing about \$3 billion a year. However, it is estimated that almost two-thirds of Egypt's 106 million people need the bread subsidies.

Part of the problem is that only about half of the grain Egypt uses to produce its bread is grown at home, making the country one of the world's largest importers of wheat. The cost of those imports has been rising recently — not only because the war in Ukraine threatens the supply, but also because Egypt's currency lost about half its value between early 2022 and October 2023, and it's expected to fall further.

There's little chance of improvement. Over the years, climate change and urban sprawl have reduced the amount of arable farmland to just four per cent of the total land area today, greatly limiting Egypt's ability to grow its own food. The government has promised to invest in measures for climate mitigation, but it's not clear where the money for that will come from.

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food staple

→ Grundnahrungsmittel

subsidize sth.

→ etw. subventionieren

billion → Milliarde(n)

subsidy → Subvention

grain → Korn, Getreide

wheat → Weizen

currency

→ Währung

urban sprawl

→ Zersiedelung

arable farmland

→ Ackerfläche(n)

measure

→ Maßnahme

climate mitigation

→ Eindämmung des Klimawandels

[3] Describing a picture

Sion: How confident do you feel describing pictures in English? You will hear a series of sentences about the picture in The Big Picture section of Business Spotlight. Each sentence has a mistake in it. Find and correct the mistake. You will hear the correct version of each sentence after the sound that follows the incorrect sentence. Ready? Let's go!

1. On this picture, I can see lots of loaves of bread.
- In this picture, I can see lots of loaves of bread. In English, we say "in this picture", not "on this picture". This is a common mistake among German speakers because the expression *auf diesem Bild* is often mistranslated using "on".
2. This photo was made in Egypt.
- This photo was taken in Egypt. In English, you "take a photo". You do not "make a photo". Remember to translate *ein Foto machen* using "take".
3. One man carries a lot of bread.
- One man is carrying a lot of bread. When you describe an action that is taking place in the picture, use the present continuous to make it clear that the action is happening at that specific moment. When you take a photo, you capture a moment in time, and it will always look like the people are in the process

of doing the action right now, so you need to use the present continuous.

4. The man on the bicycle is looking happy.
- The man on the bicycle **looks** happy. When the verb "look" (meaning to "appear") is used, it should be in the present simple tense. If you use the verb "look" meaning to "direct your eyes in a certain direction", you can use the verb in the present continuous tense. Note that when the verb has this meaning, it is used with the preposition "at". For example: "The man is looking at the woman in this picture."

Sion: Did you get all those right? If not, make a note of the correct versions of these sentences to help you remember them.

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loaf (pl. **loaves**) → Laib

capture sth.

→ etw. einfangen;
hier: festhalten

NAMES AND NEWS

[4] Bat lands

Where did SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes Covid-19, come from? Was it a spillover event from an animal or perhaps the result of a laboratory accident? Both scenarios are plausible, and we may never know the answer. That's unfortunate, since knowing more about that virus could help to prevent the next one. While pandemics are rare, the likelihood of another one

is increasing all the time. The world's search for resources is pushing further and further into regions where lots of animals, and zoonotic viruses, live.

Bats, which are known to carry tens of thousands of viruses, are widely considered prime candidates for a spillover event. Traditionally, the bats' natural habitat has been a barrier between humans and those pathogens, but today, it is estimated that around 20 per cent of the world's human population lives in "jump zones", areas in which humans and wild animals come into contact, particularly in West Africa, India and South East Asia, where transmission of a new virus could happen.

Scientists have increased testing in many of the world's "bat lands", but other human activity is also going on there. In Laos, for example, where viruses similar to SARS-CoV-2 have been found in bats, a new high-speed rail connection to China has recently opened. Making travel easier for people also makes it easier for the viruses that may go with them.

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spillover

- Überschwappen;
- hier: Übergehen, -springen

unfortunate

- bedauerlich

likelihood

- Wahrscheinlichkeit

zoonotic

- zoontisch, zwischen Tier und Mensch übertragbar

bat

- Fledermaus

habitat

- Lebensraum

pathogen

- Krankheitserreger

[5] It's hard to say goodbye

Workers cost money, and when companies need to save costs, they often lay off staff. But how do they decide who goes and who stays? Even in America's hire-and-fire world, the decision can take weeks. Top management may set a target to cut a certain percentage of the workforce, for example, but it's usually the heads of department who have to come up with a list of names. "There is no good way to do this," Gregory DeLapp, a human-resources executive, told *The Wall Street Journal*. "Ultimately, someone is unfairly treated in the end."

In the past, layoffs went by seniority — with junior employees being the first out the door. Today, they're mostly based on skills and potential. However, while HR doesn't decide who goes, they do troubleshoot the list to make sure certain groups aren't disproportionately affected and to avoid legal problems. What if, for example, a company fired an employee who'd recently made a complaint against a manager? That could lead to a costly and embarrassing lawsuit. Workers cost money, but being careless about how you get rid of them might cost more.

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head of department

- Abteilungsleiter(in)

human-resources executive

- Personalmanager(in)

ultimately

► letztendlich

seniority

► hier: Betriebszugehörigkeit

troubleshoot sth.

► bei etw. nach Fehlern suchen

affected

► betroffen

embarrassing

► unangenehm

lawsuit ► Prozess**get rid of sb.**

► jmdn. loswerden

interacting with fans. For her, CarynAI is a tool that “will never replace me”.

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[6] Talk to “me”

Caryn Marjorie has lots of boyfriends she's actually never met. In 2023, Marjorie worked with the software company Forever Voices to create a digital clone of herself, called CarynAI. This virtual version of Marjorie will be your online girlfriend for \$1 a minute — tens of thousands of people signed up. The 24-year-old from Arizona told the Los Angeles Times: “They feel like they're finally getting to know me, even though they're fully aware that it's an AI.”

Marjorie has also started a second channel, in which those willing to pay more can chat to her for real. Both projects aim to monetize her interactions with fans on social media. But Marjorie's hybrid model shows that, even as the technology becomes more common, it's still unclear exactly which tasks the chatbots should do for us.

Naturally, not everyone is a fan of CarynAI. Some say that customizable AI companions will create unrealistic expectations in human relationships. Marjorie, who has millions of followers, wanted a way to reduce the workload of

AI (artificial intelligence)

► KI (künstliche Intelligenz)

sign up ► sich anmelden**willing: be ~ to do sth.**

► bereit sein, etw. zu tun

monetize sth.

► etw. zu Geld machen

customizable

► personalisierbar; (individuell) konfigurierbar

workload ► Arbeitspensum, -beanspruchung**PROFILE****[7] In conversation with Liam Carpenter**

Sion: Some people might see social media as a distraction, but it can also be a business opportunity. Professional basketballer Liam Carpenter always knew that he wanted to do something alongside his sporting career. After originally thinking about becoming a fitness instructor, a post on social media changed his mind; he posted a video about speaking German on the phone that unexpectedly went viral. Now, Liam, who has been based in Germany since the age of 18, has left behind his career as a professional basketball player to dedicate himself fully to video content creation. Business Spotlight correspondent Rachel Preece spoke to Liam to find out more about his work.

Rachel Preece: You're a video creator with 2 million TikTok followers and 1.7 million Insta-

gram followers. Why do you think your content resonates so much with people?

Liam Carpenter: Well, I think a lot of people, you know, living in Germany can kind of relate to a lot of the topics that I mention. I think I use a lot of self-irony, and I have a very dry sense of humour and, yeah, I think it comes across not in kind of a mean way. Sometimes, when I'm talking about, you know, the German culture, it's kind of, yeah, it's a very relatable point of view, I would say. So, I think people like that.

Rachel: You are playing with stereotypes. Do people sometimes react negatively or is it overwhelmingly positive?

Liam: It's, yeah, overwhelmingly positive. I rarely see any negative comments. You could probably find a few if you scroll far enough, but I tend to look at the nice comments and that's it. Then I swipe away.

Rachel: And your catchphrase is "In Germany, we don't say...". How do you come up with ideas for these videos?

Liam: When I first started that series, I just kind of wanted something that was very consistent, and I could always keep reinventing. You know, so you can change the topic each time but still keep the core purpose — kind of this comedy, where it's very kind of a happy vibe in the beginning and then it turns to more of a serious tone in the end. So, yeah, I always try to find different formats where you can see the clear con-

trast between kind of the British culture and the German culture in kind of this funny way. So, yeah, that's how I came up with that idea to do this series, and that's how I kind of think of other different formats.

Rachel: I would be interested to hear what you think the most striking differences between Germany and the UK are. What is particularly German? Putting you on the spot!

Liam: No, it's fine. I get that question quite a lot. I think it's quite common, you know, to say directness. If I'm talking about, you know, the people, I would say maybe kind of the honesty can be quite brutal sometimes. But it's very, like, refreshing. I don't know about you, but I would say in England or in Britain, I would say we kind of maybe find ways to go around the truth sometimes. We kind of waffle a little bit too long — you know, the small talk. And then Germany, it's just like, bang, direct to the point! And yeah, it's nice, refreshing. Sometimes, it can be a bit tough to take. Definitely, in the beginning, I found it a little bit hard, but yeah, I'm used to it now.

Rachel: I think that's one of the things you do very well is recognizing these differences without judging them.

Liam: Yeah, yeah, for sure. I think just kind of embracing it, and not being, like, "Oh, I wish it was like how it was in England." Every culture has their own unique things. And I think

it would be boring otherwise, if every country behaved the same. Also with the language, you know — trying to make an effort with the language instead of being like, “Oh, you know, I wish everyone spoke English.” A lot of people do, but I think we tend to kind of expect people to speak English to us all the time. So, yeah, just kind of having that mindset of diving into the culture and the language really helps, yeah.

Rachel: And I would also be really interested to know what a typical working day looks like for you.

Liam: Oh, yeah, OK, so typical working day: I would probably start at, like, eight in the morning, 'cos I go [to the] gym first thing in the morning, and I'll probably start working around eight in the morning, and then I'm writing scripts, coming up with ideas, I'm brainstorming, and then, yeah, I probably film in the afternoon the ideas I've come up with in the morning. And then, yeah, editing that can go into the late afternoon, evening. And then, ideally, when I post the video around five, that's when I can kind of relax a bit. But then, it's like, “OK, now, I need to think of the next day, or you know, the next week's videos.” You know, so it kind of never really stops. You know, even when we go away on holiday, you know, I'm always thinking, like, of new ideas because I like putting the characters in different environments.

Rachel: Thank you so much, Liam. It has been wonderful speaking to you.

Liam: No problem. Thank you.

Rachel: Thank you, lovely to speak to you. Have a good day.

Sion: OK, now it's time to test your understanding of the interview. You will hear a series of statements. Decide whether they are true or false. You will hear the answer after the sound that follows each statement. Ready? Let's go.

1. Rachel asks Liam why so many people can identify with the content he produces.
 - ▶ This statement is true. Rachel asks Liam, “Why do you think your content resonates so much with people?” If “something resonates with someone”, that person is able to identify with the topic.
2. Liam tends to avoid using humour in his content to avoid offending viewers.
 - ▶ This statement is false. Liam says that he uses “self-irony” and mentions that he has a “dry sense of humour”.
3. Liam usually looks at positive comments and ignores negative comments.
 - ▶ This statement is true. Liam says that he tends to look at the nice comments and then swipes away. “Swiping” is the action of quickly moving your thumb across a touch-screen to change what is displayed on the screen.

4. Liam misses British small talk and the tendency not to get straight to the point.
- This statement is false. Liam says, "The British waffle a little bit too long — you know, the small talk." He also calls German directness "refreshing", even though the honesty can sometimes be a bit "brutal". If someone "waffles", this means that they use lots of words and unnecessary language to say something.
5. Travelling often gives Liam ideas for new content.
- This statement is true. Liam says that he likes "putting the characters in different environments".

Sion: Did you get all those right? If not, listen to the dialogue once more and try the exercise again.

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distraction	► Ablenkung
alongside	► neben
fitness instructor	► Fitnesstrainer(in)
go viral	► sich rasant im Netz verbreiten
dedicate oneself to sth.	► sich etw. widmen
resonate with sb.	► bei jmdm. Anklang finden
relate to sth.	► etw. nachvollziehen (können)

topic	► Thema
come across	► rüberkommen
mean	► fies, gemein
relatable	► zuordenbar
overwhelmingly	► durchweg
swipe (sth.) away	► (etw.) wegwischen
catchphrase	► Slogan
consistent	► gleichbleibend

core

► Kern; hier: wichtigste(r,s)

vibe (fml.)

► Atmosphäre, Stimmung

come up with sth.

► sich etw. einfallen lassen

striking

► auffällig, markant

spot: put sb. on the ~

► jmdn. in Verlegenheit/Zugzwang bringen

honesty

► Ehrlichkeit, Aufrichtigkeit

go around sth.

► etw. umgehen

waffle (UK)

► schwafeln

tough

► hier: schwierig

take sth.

► hier: etw. wegstecken

recognize sth.

► etw. erkennen

embrace sth.

► etw. akzeptieren

unique

► einzigartig

mindset

► Einstellung, Denkweise

dive into sth.

► in etw. eintauchen

'cos

► because

gym

► Fitnessstudio

edit sth.

► etw. redaktionell bearbeiten

environment

► hier: Umgebung, Umfeld

offend sb.

► jmdn. verletzen

HEAD-TO-HEAD

[8] Dialogue: The impact of multinationals

Sion: This dialogue is based on the Head-to-Head article "Can multinationals be good for the world?" Listen to two colleagues, Tina and David, discussing their thoughts on the impact of multinationals on society. Afterwards, we'll test your understanding of the dialogue. Ready? Let's go.

David: I think I'll stop for lunch in a minute. Did you bring a packed lunch or are you going to pop out and get something?

Tina: To be honest, I've had a hell of a morning. And nothing beats stress like comfort food. I

think I'm going to get myself some chicken nuggets and fries from McDonald's. It's dangerously close to the office, so I do sometimes treat myself to a cheeky burger or a milkshake. Can I tempt you?

David: Absolutely not! I boycotted McDonald's and a number of other multinationals last year. So many of these massive corporations just churn out poor-quality food and other products on a large scale. I'll stick to my pumpkin salad, thank you very much.

Tina: Oh, come on, David. Multinationals are part of everyday life. Most of the furniture in this office is probably from IKEA and the snacks in the vending machine are mainly produced by Nestlé. It's unavoidable these days. At least you know what to expect with these well-known brands.

David: Just because buying products from multinational companies is an easy option doesn't make it a good one. I'd rather support local entrepreneurs and small businesses than a multinational that only cares about increasing their bottom line, whatever the expense. So often, multinationals' production processes will be really dubious, and they'll just throw money at problems.

Tina: Well, I think most multinational companies are becoming more conscious of sustainable and fair practices. And consumers aren't stupid — they will call companies out on things

like greenwashing or poor working conditions. Anyway, I'm off to get those chicken nuggets. Enjoy that salad!

Sion: OK, now it's time to test your understanding of some of the words and phrases used in the dialogue. Complete the definitions of these terms and expressions by choosing the correct option: **a)** or **b)**. You will hear the answers after the beep.

1. If you "boycott" a company,...
a) you choose not to buy their products or services.
b) you find their products childlike.
► The correct answer is **a)**. If you "boycott" a company, you choose not to buy their products or services.
2. Companies that "churn out" products...
a) create them slowly, ensuring that they meet high standards.
b) create them rapidly and in big amounts, usually prioritizing quantity over quality.
► The correct answer is **b)**. Companies that "churn out" products create them rapidly and in big amounts, usually prioritizing quantity over quality.
3. A "vending machine" is...
a) a machine from which you can purchase snacks and drinks.
b) a machine from which you can withdraw money.

- The correct answer is **a)**. A “vending machine” is a machine from which you can purchase snacks and drinks.
- 4.** If something is “unavoidable”...
- it is inevitable.
 - it is easy to avoid.
- The correct answer is **a)**. If something is “unavoidable”, it is inevitable. Both “unavoidable” and “inevitable” mean “impossible to avoid”.
- 5.** An “entrepreneur”...
- is a mediator in business negotiations.
 - is a person with their own business.
- The correct answer is **b)**. An “entrepreneur” is a person with their own business.
- 6.** In business, “the bottom line” refers to...
- the final page of a contract.
 - the profit and loss generated by a business activity.
- The correct answer is **b)**. In business, “the bottom line” refers to the profit and loss generated by a business activity.
- 7.** The word “expense” is another word for...
- “cost”.
 - “exhaustion”.
- The correct answer is **a)**. The word “expense” is another word for “cost”.
- 8.** If someone says something is “dubious”...
- they are unsure about it and suspect that something about it is not quite right.
 - they have a good feeling about the situation.
- The correct answer is **a)**. If someone says something is “dubious”, they are unsure about it and suspect that something about it is not quite right.
- 9.** When companies “throw money at problems”...
- they invest money in sustainable solutions to have a long-lasting positive impact.
 - they try to deal with issues by spending large sums of money on them, even though other solutions might be more suitable.
- The correct answer is **b)**. When companies “throw money at problems”, they try to deal with issues by spending large sums of money on them, even though other solutions might be more suitable.
- 10.** When someone is “conscious” of something...
- they are aware of it.
 - they prefer to ignore it.
- The correct answer is **a)**. When someone is “conscious” of something, they are aware of it.
- Sion:** Did you get all those right? If not, listen to the dialogue once more and try the exercise again.

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impact ➔ Auswirkung(en)**packed lunch**

➔ Lunchpaket, Pausenbrot

pop out (ifml.)

➔ kurz rausgehen

comfort food

► etwa: Essen für die Seele

fries (US)

► Pommes

treat oneself to sth.

► sich etw. gönnen

cheeky (UK ifml.)

► frech, dreist; hier etwas geil

tempt sb.

► jmdn. verführen

corporation

► Unternehmen

churn sth. out

► austreiben,

am laufenden Band produzieren

on a large scale

► in großem Rahmen

pumpkin

► Kürbis

vending machine

► (Waren-)Automat

brand

► Marke

entrepreneur

► Unternehmer(in)

bottom line

► Geschäfts-ergebnis; auch: Profit

dubious

► fragwürdig

sustainable

► nachhaltig

call sb./sth. out on sth. (ifml.)

► jmdn./etw. wegen etw. anprangern

greenwashing

► Vorspiegelung umwelt-freundlichen Verhaltens

off: be - to do sth. (ifml.)

► mal eben (weg)gehen, um etw. zu tun

ensure sth.

► etw. sicherstellen

purchase sth.

► etw. kaufen

withdraw (money)

► (Geld) abheben

inevitable

► unvermeidlich

negotiation

► Verhandlung

exhaustion

► Erschöpfung

suspect

► den Verdacht haben

issue

► Problem

suitable

► geeignet

Michelle: Have you seen the new artwork in the boardroom?

Doug: Yes, it's beautiful, isn't it? Apparently, the artist is based in Fiji. It's mind-blowing to me that they managed to discover him. He's literally on the other side of the world.

Michelle: I heard they used an online marketplace for contemporary art. It's a Toronto-based company called Peggy.

Doug: Wow. I never would have thought of buying art online. I thought it was more common to go to art fairs or buy from local art dealers and galleries.

Michelle: I started reading up on it recently, and it turns out that more and more investors are showing interest in art. It's a good way of diversifying investment portfolios and supporting artists. I love art, but I've never bought any before. I really like the idea of an online marketplace for art. It makes it feel more accessible. I think art can really change the atmosphere of a home or an office. I hope they invest in more art for the office.

Doug: Yes, it'd be nice to see art in communal spaces like the kitchen or the corridor. It shouldn't just be in the boardroom. Maybe we could suggest buying a few other artworks at the next staff meeting.

Michelle: Good idea, Doug. It's about time we brightened up these white walls with some vibrant paintings.

METROPOLITAN MAYHEM

[9] Buying art for the office M

Sion: Do you have art at your workplace or at home? Does it influence your mood? Would you like to have more art on the walls of the rooms you spend a lot of time in? This dialogue is based on the article "Where art meets smart". The colleagues at Metropolitan Mayhem, a fictional advertising agency in London, UK, talk about online art marketplaces and having more art at work.

Sion: OK, now it's time to test your understanding of the dialogue you have just heard. You will hear a series of statements based on the dialogue. Decide whether they are true or false. You will hear the answers after the sound that follows each statement. Ready?

1. The new artwork is in the room dedicated to coaching and training sessions, which is complete with an interactive whiteboard.
- ▶ This statement is false. The new artwork is in the "boardroom", which is the meeting room used by members of the board of a company. People "on the board" of a company are the ones who run it.
2. Doug finds it surprising that the artist who made the piece in the boardroom is based in Fiji.
- ▶ This statement is true. Doug finds it "mind-blowing" that the company managed to discover an artist who lives so far away from London.
3. Online art marketplaces are a new concept to Doug, who had only ever heard of art fairs and art dealers before.
- ▶ This statement is true. Doug says that he never would have thought of buying art online before. He thought more common ways of buying art involved going to an art fair or contacting an art dealer.

4. Michelle mentions that art could be an interesting asset for investors.
- ▶ This statement is true. An "asset" is an object of value. Michelle says that art could be of interest to those looking to diversify their investment portfolios, which means "to invest in different assets rather than in the same type of asset".
5. Doug thinks art should be reserved for those in important positions in the company.
- ▶ This statement is false. Doug thinks there should be art in the "communal spaces" at work. "Communal spaces" are shared spaces.
6. Michelle thinks the office would benefit from some subtle artwork in muted tones.
- ▶ This statement is false. Michelle thinks "vibrant paintings" would be a good option. If something is "vibrant", it is bright. "Muted tones" are not bright colours.

Sion: Did you get all those right? If not, listen to the dialogue again and try the exercise once more.

Business Spotlight 1/2024, pp. 22-23

mood ➔ Stimmung

boardroom

➔ Vorstandszimmer

mind-blowing (ifml.)

➔ umwerfend

literally ➔ buchstäblich

contemporary

➔ zeitgenössisch

art fair ➔ Kunstmessen

read up on sth. ➔ sich Kenntnisse über etw. anlesen

turn out ➔ sich herausstellen

accessible ➔ zugänglich

communal	► Gemeinschafts-
brighten sth. up	► etw. aufheatern, beleben
vibrant	► lebendig
dedicated: be ~ to sth.	► für etw. bestimmt sein

run sth.	► hier: etw. leiten
asset	► Vermögenswert
subtle	► dezent
muted	► gedämpft

language, and how we put them together, and how we can make clever sentences and so on. And that's exactly what we try to do with our reports. That's the product of our work. We don't heal disease. We usually don't solve crimes, but we are very strict in being objective, and we don't take sides. The material I have — it's dead and static. It's just a picture. But what I am trying to figure out is a process, a happening.

Rachel: Are you very busy?

Pétur: Oh, yeah. Yeah, I mean we have 260 cases a year. We have some living cases also because we investigate the injuries in living people in regards to like assaults and abuse. And then there is also a lot of work building up the system we want to have here regarding the investigations and making protocols and so on. So, that's like a side job for me, also. So, yeah, there is a lot to do, and I try to be available also for the police if something happens.

Rachel: Iceland is a popular tourist destination, but it can also be a dangerous place to visit. Do you deal with a lot of tourist deaths?

Pétur: Yeah, of course. Iceland's nature is very popular and appealing, and it's also dangerous — the sea and cliffs and ice and bodies of water. Of course, the roads: the roads aren't great, so there are lots of road traffic accidents, but not so many deaths this year. I think only three, perhaps. It is not many compared to other years, but other accidents are pretty frequent, so we

INTERCULTURAL

[10] Interview: Forensic pathologist Pétur Gudmann Gudmannsson M

Sion: Are you a fan of crime dramas and true crime series? These films and programmes usually feature forensic pathologists who do autopsies and tests on bodies to determine the cause of people's death. Business Spotlight correspondent Rachel Preece spoke to Iceland's only full-time pathologist about the ins and outs of his job. Here's an extract from the interview.

Rachel Preece: What aspects of your job do you find most interesting?

Pétur Gudmann Gudmannsson: I am very interested in anatomy and how things are put together and how they look — morphology. This is the centre of our work. It's the morphology, the appearance of things. And that is always the ground for our interpretation. So, I like delving into this, working with my hands. I think this is pretty underestimated nowadays with so much computer-oriented work and so on. And I also like language. I'm very interested in words and

are quite used to dealing with tourists' accidental death, and of course, also natural death because some tourists are pretty old and not very well, and they die here just as they would have done if they hadn't come here. But the hundreds of thousands of tourists — it has an **impact** on our everyday also.

Rachel: Thank you so much for time and for speaking to me.

Pétur: Thanks so much.

Rachel: Thank you. Bye-bye.

Pétur: OK. Bye-bye.

Business Spotlight 1/2024, pp. 30-33

feature sb. ▶ jmdn. zeigen

body ▶ hier: Leiche

ins and outs: the ~

► die Besonderheiten

ground ▶ Grundlage

delve into sth. ▶ sich eingehend mit etw. befassen

take sides ▶ Partei ergreifen

figure sth. out (ifml.)

► etw. herausfinden

investigate sth.

► etw. untersuchen

injury ▶ Verletzung

assault

► tätlicher Angriff

abuse ▶ Missbrauch

side job

► Nebentätigkeit, -job

appealing

► attraktiv, reizvoll

body of water

► Gewässer

impact

► Auswirkung

BUSINESS SKILLS

[11] Getting emails just right

Sion: Emails are part of everyday work communication, but they aren't always easy to write. Have you ever written an email that caused a misunderstanding or a problem? If

so, then Ken Taylor's advice on writing effective emails might be just what you need.

[12] The Four Box Technique: How to write effective emails

Email is still one of the most popular ways to communicate online, especially when it comes to business communication. But open and reply rates for emails have been **steadily falling**. It's estimated that most people now open only one email for every six they receive.

If you want your email to be opened and read, you need to structure it properly. Use business-like organization to achieve business-like communication. First, have your main **purpose** in the email's **heading** to make sure your mail is opened. Then, organize it into four different sections – four boxes.

Box 1. Purpose

If the reader can't determine within 15 seconds what the mail is about and why it's important, you risk losing their attention. People are too busy to read **lengthy** introductions before getting to the main point. The opening one or two short paragraphs in your mail should answer two questions: What is the mail about? Why has the reader received it?

Always write with a clear **sense of purpose** and make sure your reader knows what that purpose is. Do you want your reader to react

quickly? Then, tell them that you want them to react quickly. Do you want your reader to analyse a problem? Then, say so. Do you want to motivate your reader? Then, use motivating language.

Remember the 15-second rule. Open with your main idea, avoiding clichéd greetings. Be absolutely clear, using simple sentences, for example:

A. Re sales figures 2nd quarter 2024

Dear Chris

Just a quick mail to remind you that we need your quarterly sales figures by Friday lunchtime at the latest.

Or

B. Re: Late delivery of order 254/WE

Dear Ms Howard

I am writing to tell you that the delivery of the above order was 24 hours late.

According to the penalty clause in our agreement, the sales invoice should therefore be reduced by 20 per cent.

Box 2. Background information

Here, you support or explain the main point and answer the questions Why? How? Who? When? Where? List reasons, arguments or evidence, and arrange the list in descending order of importance, for example:

A. This is a week earlier than was originally planned. We have had to move it forward so as not to clash with the International Sales Conference.

If you need any help with this, just let me know.

Or

B. As you know, we work with a just-in-time delivery agreement and any delay in supplies is costly for us. The late delivery meant that we had to shut down one of our production lines for several hours.

Box 3. Details

Does the reader need more detail? Sometimes, details reinforce what you've written in box 2. These might include a schedule, steps in a process, sales or production data. Keep this section as short as possible. There's usually no end to the amount of background detail that could be supplied, but there's always an end to how much detail the reader can absorb. Include only details that will help your reader. If possible, put detailed information in an attachment.

A. I attach the revised sales reporting forms. You will notice that we have simplified the forms with easier-to-view, colour-coded bar charts that you just fill in.

Or

B. I attach the breakdown of the stoppage provided by our production team so that you can see the effect of the delay. I also attach a copy of the warehouse log, showing the time when the goods were received.

Box 4. What's next?

Restate or summarize the main idea. Say what you expect the reader to do next. Be polite, but always avoid clichéd endings.

A. Looking forward to getting your report by Friday lunchtime and seeing you at the ISC.

Or

B. Could you please send me a revised sales invoice for this delivery with the 20 per cent reduction? If you need to contact me, my direct phone number is...

In a well-written email, the sentences and paragraphs follow each other logically, like the links in a chain. Make sure each sentence is simple and clear. A good length is between 10 and 19 words per sentence.

Each paragraph should contain only one major idea, with the key message at the start — this makes your ideas easier to understand and remember.

Make sure there's plenty of white space and that the mail has a clear layout with short paragraphs and bullet points.

Business Spotlight 1/2024, pp. 34–36

steadily ➔ kontinuierlich

purpose ➔ hier: Zielsetzung

heading

➔ Überschrift; hier: Betreffzeile

lengthy ➔ umständlich

sense of purpose

➔ Zielgerichtetheit

clichéd ➔ klischehaft

quarter ➔ Quartal

penalty clause

➔ Strafklausel

invoice ➔ Rechnung

evidence ➔ Belege

descending

➔ absteigend

clash with sth.

➔ hier: bei etw. in Schwierigkeiten geraten

costly ➔ kostspielig

production line

➔ Fertigungsanlage

reinforce sth.

➔ etw. verstärken;

hier: untermauern

schedule ➔ Terminplan

attachment ➔ Anhang

revised

➔ überarbeitet, korrigiert

bar chart

➔ Balkendiagramm

breakdown

➔ hier: Aufgliederung,
Aufschlüsselung

warehouse log

➔ Aufzeichnung des Warenein- und -ausgangs

summarize sth.

➔ etw. zusammenfassen

link ➔ hier: Glied

bullet point

➔ Aufzählungspunkt

[13] Exercise: Essential phrases for writing effective emails

Sion: In this exercise, you'll practise some phrases that are useful for writing effective emails. I'll tell you what to say and give you some of the words that 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 mention the purpose of your email.
 ■ Use "The reason", "this email", "is", "update", "you" and "the schedule".
 ▶ The reason for this email is to update you on the schedule.
2. You give some background information.
 ■ Use "This means", "that", "any delay", "supplies", "costly" and "for us".
 ▶ This means that any delay in supplies is costly for us.

3. You give some details.
 - Use "Here's", "breakdown" and "costs".
 - ▶ Here's a breakdown of the costs.
4. You say what you need next.
 - Use "Could you", "let", "know", "Monday", "if", "this" and "possible".
 - ▶ Could you let me know by Monday if this is possible?

Sion: Excellent. Well done!

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CAREER COACH

[14] Introduction: Change

Sion: Things change all the time. Some changes are planned, others are spontaneous and some are forced upon us. But more often than not, change comes with fear of the unknown. How can businesses and employees change their perception of change? Let's find out!

force sth. upon sb.
→ jmdm. etw. aufzwingen

perception → Wahrnehmung

[15] Making change better

I once went to a conference where a speaker talked about "change" and what could be done to make the word more positive. At the end of his speech, he did something that was cheesy but effective. He had everyone in the audience

look at the person sitting next to them and say to each other: "You are the change." He ended his speech by saying: "And now, embrace the change." People hesitated, but when they saw others hugging each other, they also stood up and hugged the person next to them.

The speech ended with laughter and applause — as everybody was standing anyway, you might say that the speaker got a standing ovation. As I said, cheesy but effective. He got people to do something they'd probably never done before: hug a complete stranger at a business conference. That's quite an achievement. I'm sure everyone in the audience that day remembers the speech as a very positive experience, and that may well have improved the image of change in their minds. Maybe they've become at least a little more willing to try new things.

Ready for anything?

Leaders want their teams to see change as an opportunity and would be thrilled to see them develop this kind of mindset — an attitude of "whatever happens, we can handle it". So, what do you do, as a leader, to make this happen? Free hug sessions? Not necessarily. There is, however, an exercise that can help. It requires no preparation and is fun for the team and gets them to practise dealing with unexpected change.

How does it work?

Divide the team into groups of three — or into pairs if three doesn't work. Each group has the same task, such as telling a story about the best company Christmas party ever.

Let's say Ray, Cecile and Mo are in one group. Ray starts telling his story. The other two listen carefully for a few sentences. Then, they jump in — in a peculiar way: they think of a random word that doesn't fit in the story they've heard so far. After this word has been spoken aloud, Ray has to spontaneously integrate it into his story somehow. Mo and Cecile give Ray a little time to do this, before producing the next random word, which Ray also has to incorporate into his story and so on. Mo and Cecile can take turns providing the words. The point is that there should be a regular flow of random words that Ray has to deal with.

An example

Ray: Let me tell you about the best company Christmas party ever. It was a few years ago. The company rented an elegant venue at a hotel in the Alps. When we arrived, it began to snow...

Cecile: Costa Rica!

Ray: Even our colleagues from Costa Rica came. For many of them, it was the first time they'd seen snow, and they were so excited and ran out into the cold evening...

Mo: Dishwasher!

Ray: When we all went back inside, we heard the news that the hotel's dishwasher had broken down, so there were no glasses, plates or cutlery. There we sat, in our dinner jackets and evening gowns, eating with our fingers and drinking from bottles. And all that in this elegant ski resort...

An important aspect here is that Ray must be prepared to change his story spontaneously in response to the words. Ray could have said something like: "This was a real contrast to the previous Christmas, which I spent in Costa Rica." And then, simply continued with his original story. But that's not opening up and allowing the others to make a real contribution. Encourage your team to be brave and creative, and just follow the story wherever it goes.

When I do this exercise, I go from group to group and always hear a lot of laughter. People seem to enjoy what they are doing. Let them share their stories for a little while before they switch roles. Now, Cecile tells her own story while Mo and Ray add words. And then Mo should also have a turn. After that, we all come together in a big circle and share our experiences.

Here are a few good questions for the group to reflect on:

- How easy or difficult was the exercise?
- How did it make you feel?
- To what extent were you able to follow your

original idea? How much did you have to improvise?

- Were the random words a nuisance or a source of inspiration?

Usually, there's a wide range of responses. While nearly everyone has fun, some people do find the exercise stressful because they feel they have to perform. Some struggle to react to the random words spontaneously; others say they feel that, as if by magic, each word unlocks a new twist in the story. Those last two things are key questions with regard to change.

What the team members experience in this exercise reflects the real world with a heightened need for flexibility. Every other minute, every other day, something unexpected pops up, requiring us to react on the spot. Trying to stick to a plan no matter what may lead to failure.

This is why the final question is so important: were the random words an obstacle or a welcome inspiration? With most groups, a small transformation takes place during the exercise. At the beginning, the random words are a bit of a nuisance. We're not accustomed to being interrupted like that. Lots of people are reluctant, at first, to change their story. At some point, however, they realize that stubbornly clinging to the original idea is actually harder than allowing the words that are thrown at them to be a source of inspiration for a new story. That's

usually when the laughter peaks, and that's a good sign.

The more we practise spontaneity, the more relaxed we can be in the face of unforeseen changes in our everyday (work) life. If you have to give an important presentation and discover that, for whatever reason, your presentation time has been cut in half unexpectedly, you'll find it easier to adapt and come up with an alternative way to proceed.

I encourage teams to practise this "change mindset" regularly with this exercise — even if it's just for half an hour every month. And I think the leaders should join in and do this with their teams. It's not just fun but also helps the participants to develop a more flexible mindset. If you do it with your team, let me know what your experience is.

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cheesy (ifml.)

- kitschig; hier: lustig, aber peinlich

audience

- Publikum, Zuhörerschaft

embrace sb./sth.

- jmdn. umarmen; etw. annehmen

hesitate → zögern

hug sb. → jmdn. umarmen

- willing; be - to do sth.
- bereit sein, etw. zu tun

thrilled

- begeistert

mindset

- Einstellung, Denkweise

attitude

- Haltung, Einstellung

jump in → hier: dazwischenreden, sich einmischen

- zufällig, beliebig

incorporate sth. into sth.

- etw. in etw. einbauen

take turns → sich abwechseln

venue → Veranstaltungsort

cutlery → Besteck

dinner jacket (UK)

- Smoking(jacke)

evening gown

► Abendkleid

previous ► vorangegangen

► Ärgernis

unlock sth.

► etw. freisetzen; hier: eröffnen

twist ► Wendung**on the spot** ► sofort**obstacle** ► Hindernis**accustomed: be - to sth.**

► an etw. gewöhnt sein

reluctant ► zögerlich**stubbornly** ► stur**cling to sth.**► sich an etw. klammern;
hier: an etw. festhalten**throw sth. at sb.** (ifml.)

► hier: jmdm. etw. vorgeben

peak

► den Höhepunkt erreichen

proceed ► fortfahren**[16] Exercise: Verbs for making changes** M

Sion: This is an exercise on verbs to talk about making changes. First, you'll hear two verbs and then a sentence with a beep. In the pause, choose the right verb to complete the sentence. Then, you'll hear the correct English sentence. Are you ready?

1. "rethink" or "think up"

After getting some feedback, I've had to [beep] my approach.

- After getting some feedback, I've had to rethink my approach.

2. "overwork" or "rework"

He decided to [beep] the presentation, adding some brighter colours.

- He decided to rework the presentation, adding some brighter colours.

3. "reassess" or "reaccess"

We need to [beep] the market to understand what the problem is.

- We need to reassess the market to understand what the problem is.

4. "reposition" or "repost"

To attract younger customers, they've tried to [beep] their brand.

- To attract younger customers, they've tried to reposition their brand.

5. "alter" or "alternate"

She wants to [beep] the ad campaign to target a different demographic.

- She wants to alter the ad campaign to target a different demographic.

6. "modulate" or "modify"

The designers had to [beep] the product to meet the new regulations.

- The designers had to modify the product to meet the new regulations.

7. "transfer" or "transform"

Their innovative approach could actually [beep] the whole industry.

- Their innovative approach could actually transform the whole industry.

8. "overhaul" or "overtake"

The IT department says we really have to [beep] our outdated systems.

- The IT department says we really have to overhaul our outdated systems.

Sion: Well done. Did you get all the answers right? If not, go back and try this exercise again.

approach

► Herangehensweise

brand ► Marke

target sth. ► etw. anvisieren

regulation

► hier: Vorschrift, Verordnung

outdated

► veraltet

English: Everyone on the building site has to wear a hard hat and a safety vest. Instead of “building site”, you can also say “construction site” here.

Business Spotlight 1/2024, pp. 42–43

ENGLISH FOR...**[17] Civil engineering: Tricky translations** ⓘ

Sion: Let's do a vocabulary exercise on false friends. 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.

Sion: This word is used for something that you wear to protect your head. Translate this word.

German: Helm

English: helmet or hard hat

Sion: Don't say “helm”, as this word refers to a wheel or handle used to steer a boat. The English translation of the German word Helm is often “helmet”, but in the context of the construction industry, it's translated as “hard hat”.

German: Das Nichttragen eines Helms beim Radfahren kann gefährlich sein.

English: Not wearing a helmet when cycling could be dangerous.

German: Jeder auf der Baustelle muss einen Helm und eine Warnweste tragen.

[18] Exercise: Don't confuse ⓘ

Sion: In this exercise, we focus on avoiding false friends. The German word Helm is “helmet” or, in the context of construction, “hard hat” in English. It is not “helm”, which is Ruder or Steuer in German. First, you'll hear a sentence with a beep. In the pause, decide whether you need “helm”, “helmet” or “hard hat” instead of the beep. Then you'll hear the correct sentence again. Ready?

1. I wasn't able to keep the boat on course as the [beep] suddenly broke.
► I wasn't able to keep the boat on course as the helm suddenly broke.
2. If he hadn't worn a motorcycle [beep], he would have been seriously injured.
► If he hadn't worn a motorcycle helmet, he would have been seriously injured.
3. There are two beeps in the next sentence. The construction supervisor over there wearing a [beep] has recently taken the [beep] of the company.
► The construction supervisor over there wearing a hard hat has recently taken the helm of the company.

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

Business Spotlight 1/2024, pp. 42–43

construction supervisor

► Bauleiter(in)

SKILL UP!

[19] Exercise: Essential words and phrases for social media marketing

Sion: This language exercise is based on the “Word bank” at the start of Skill Up! We’ll practise some words and phrases that can be used to talk about social media marketing. First, you’ll hear a definition of a word or phrase. Then, you’ll hear two suggestions for the word or phrase that is being defined: a) and b). In the pause, choose the correct option. OK? Here’s the first one.

1. If a product is always presented in the same way, it has...

- a) continuity.
- b) a consistent presence.

► b) is right. If a product is always presented in the same way, it has a “consistent presence”. “Continuity” refers to not stopping or not changing something.

2. The introduction of a product on to the market is called a...

- a) product launch.
- b) product exhibition.

► a) is right. In a “product launch”, a product is introduced on to the market. At a “product exhibition”, a product is just shown.

3. A personalized code offered to customers to reduce the price of an item is a...

- a) bar code.
- b) discount code.

► b) is right. A “discount code” is offered to customers as an incentive to buy something at a reduced price. A “bar code” is a series of parallel lines with numbers underneath them. “Bar codes” are scanned to give information about an item.

4. A study in which people are asked for their opinion is a...

- a) poll.
- b) pollster.

► a) is right. In a “poll”, people are asked for their opinion. A “pollster” is a person who conducts a poll.

5. If you mention a person in a post to greet or thank them, this is called a...

- a) speak out.
- b) shout-out.

► b) is right. If you mention a person in a post to greet or thank them, this is called a “shout-out”. “Speak out” means “speak one’s mind”.

6. A label that is used to identify something is a...

- a) tag.
- b) trigger.

- ▶ a) is right. A label that is used to identify something is a “tag”. A “trigger” is something that causes a particular development or reaction.

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

Business Spotlight 1/2024, pp. 44–47

item ➔ Artikel

incentive ➔ Anreiz

[20] Text and exercise: Collocations

Sion: This collocations exercise is based on the collocations in Skill Up! Collocations are words that frequently go together to form word partnerships. Listen carefully to this message from a company to someone who regularly engages with their posts on social media. Afterwards, we'll do an exercise on it.

We have noticed that you regularly like our posts and that your profile fits well with our brand image. Our brand management and marketing team are searching for brand ambassadors who will get our brand message out to their followers and friends. Give us shout-outs and use our hashtag in your posts and stories to help us increase brand awareness, and we will reward you with free products.

Sion: In this exercise, you'll hear the beginning of a sentence describing a situation. In the pause, complete the sentence using the matching collocation with “brand” from the text that you have just heard. Then, you'll hear the correct answer. OK, here's the first sentence.

1. A person, often a celebrity or an influencer, who is paid to endorse a particular product is a...
- ▶ **brand ambassador.** A person, often a celebrity or an influencer, who is paid to endorse a particular product is a “brand ambassador”.
2. The extent to which consumers are familiar with the qualities of a product made by a particular company is called...
- ▶ **brand awareness.** The extent to which consumers are familiar with the qualities of a product made by a particular company is called “brand awareness”.
3. The impression that consumers have of a product made by a particular company is the...
- ▶ **brand image.** The impression that consumers have of a product made by a particular company is the “brand image”.
4. Company communication with consumers is called the...

► **brand message.** Company communication with consumers is called the “brand message”.

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

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engage with sth.

► sich mit etw. befassen

fit with sth.

► zu etw. passen

reward sb.

► jmdn. belohnen

celebrity

► Promi(nente(r))

endorse sth.

► etw. unterstützen

CONCLUSION

[21] Until next time... ☺

Sion: Thanks so much for joining us and taking the time to practise your business English. We hope you enjoyed our selection of articles, dialogues and exercises. Keep up the good work!

IMPRESSUM

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Anja Giese (frei),

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Audioproduzent:

Matthieu Rouil

Aufnahme und Abmischung:

Domenic Meinhold

Druck und Vervielfältigung:

optimal media GmbH,

D-17207 Röbel/Müritz

SPRECHER

Melita Cameron-Wood (UK):

The Big Picture, Head-to-Head, Metropolitan Mayhem, Business Skills, Career Coach, English for..., Skill Up!

Liam Carpenter (UK): Profile

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Rachel Preece (UK): Names and News, Profile, Head-to-Head, Intercultural, Business Skills, Career Coach, Skill Up!

Maria Rouil (GER): The Big Picture, English for...

GEMA

Verlag und Redaktion

ZEIT SPRACHEN GmbH

Kistlerhofstr. 172,

81379 München

Tel. (089) 8 56 81-0

www.business-spotlight.de

Einzelverkaufspreis:

Deutschland € 14,50

Abonnementpreis:

Deutschland € 12,90

Geschäftsführer:

Ulrich Sommer

Amtsgericht München

HRB 179611

UST-IdNr. DE 265 973 410

ZEIT SPRACHEN ist ein Tochterunternehmen der Zeitverlag Gerd Bucerius GmbH & Co. KG