

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**

Sion Dayson: Welcome to *Business Spotlight Audio*. The main focus of this issue is China. You'll learn about some of the country's most influential people, the language needed to plan a business trip to Shanghai and the appropriate etiquette when doing business in China. Apart from this, you'll also get a chance to improve your skills in contributing to discussions and defending your ideas at work in English. We'll also hear from an Irishman with a job that you might not have heard of before — curious to find out more? Let's begin with some trending news items.

issue ▶ Ausgabe**item** ▶ Artikel**appropriate**

▶ entsprechend, angemessen

NAMES AND NEWS**[2] Diplomacy is not black and white** **M US**

He Hua is not yet four years old but already a superstar in China. She has millions of followers on social media, and fans travel across the country to see her, even though she spends a lot of

2

her time just sitting around eating bamboo. He Hua is a giant panda at the Chengdu Research Base of Giant Panda Breeding. For those who can't make the trip to Sichuan Province, online "panda cams" are the next best thing.

Pandas are a big deal, and not just in China. They're the best example of Chinese soft power. By sending its national animal to other countries, China emphasizes close political or economic ties. As U.S.-China relations soured, the number of pandas in American zoos fell significantly. In 2023, campaigners whipped up anti-U.S. sentiment, (falsely) accusing Memphis Zoo of mistreating its pandas. But, in February 2024, China announced it would again send pandas to the U.S., as what President Xi Jinping called "envoys of friendship between the Chinese and American peoples."

Strictly speaking, China doesn't "lend" its cuddly ambassadors — panda deals are commercial transactions. The bears and any offspring remain Chinese property. He Hua, however, will probably not be going overseas. She's considered small for her age and in need of protection. The Chinese authorities will not want to get on the wrong side of the panda fans.

Business Spotlight 5/2024, p. 8

bamboo ▶ Bambus**research** ▶ Forschung**breeding** ▶ Zucht**big deal:** be a ~ (ifml.)

▶ eine große Sache sein

emphasize sth.

▶ etw. hervorheben

tie ➤ Verbindung, Beziehung**sour** ➤ sich verschlechtern**whip sth. up** ➤ etw. aufpeitschen, aufheizen**sentiment** ➤ Stimmung**envoy** ➤ Gesandte(r)**cuddly** ➤ knuddelig**ambassador**

➤ Botschafter(in)

offspring ➤ Nachkommen**trillion** ➤ Billion(en)**disadvantage: put sb. at a -**

➤ jmdn. benachteiligen

regulator

➤ Aufsichtsbehörde

issue sth. ➤ etw. ausgeben**goods** ➤ Ware(n)**outlet** ➤ Verkaufsstelle

[3] Easier to spend €

With more than \$430 trillion in electronic transactions every year, China is largely a cashless society. Chinese consumers use mobile platforms for over 80 per cent of their daily transactions, with the market dominated by the two largest providers: Alipay and WeChat Pay. The sharp fall in the use of cash had put overseas visitors to China at a disadvantage, as acceptance of foreign credit cards was limited.

In mid-2023, however, China's financial regulator loosened the rules. Now, credit cards issued by Visa, Mastercard and others can be used on China's biggest payment apps, allowing tourists to book taxis, buy tickets for public transport and pay for goods and services at outlets across the country.

This change is part of a broader effort to bring international tourists (and foreign investment) back to China — after its borders were closed during the pandemic. China has also begun offering visa-free entry for tourists from several EU countries, including Germany, France, Italy and Spain.

Business Spotlight 5/2024, p. 9

[4] What bots can't say À

China's internet is tightly controlled. Most foreign media is kept out by a technological barrier known as the Great Firewall. Inside the country, censors constantly monitor online commentary. Under Xi Jinping, censorship has become much stricter. In 2023, the Toronto-based cybersecurity group Citizen Lab found more than 66,000 rules regulating the content offered by search engines, including Microsoft's Bing, the only foreign platform still operating in mainland China.

AI, however, is a bigger challenge. The government takes great interest in the operations of tech companies to ensure that chatbots follow the rules that govern online content. Ernie Bot, China's equivalent to ChatGPT, finds no information about what happened at Tiananmen Square in 1989, for example. This oversight is likely to slow down the development of Chinese chatbots compared with those elsewhere.

However, that applies only to public-facing AI. When it comes to machine learning for business, there are few limits. China wants to lead the world in AI without dealing with subversive content. McKinsey & Company esti-

mates that AI could add more than \$600 billion of value to China's economy annually over the coming decade.

Business Spotlight 5/2024, p. 9

monitor sth.

► etw. überwachen

mainland ► Festland

AI (artificial intelligence)

► KI (künstliche Intelligenz)

oversight ► Kontrolle

apply to sth. ► für etw. gelten

annually ► jährlich

PROFILE

[5] A force for good **E**

Sion: You might not have heard of Chan Sheung Yee, but his work has been incredibly impactful. He's the founder of Companion HK, a non-profit organization that helps people with mental-health problems in China. He received the Red Cross Humanity Youth Power award 2021, featured in the 2023 Forbes Asia 30 Under 30 list and was awarded the South China Morning Post's Spirit of Hong Kong Award 2023. Listen carefully to the following article by Business Spotlight writer Rachel Preece. We'll test your understanding of it afterwards with a short exercise. Ready? Let's begin.

incredibly ► unglaublich

impactful ► wirkungsvoll

founder ► Gründer(in)

companion

► Gefährte/Gefährtin,
Begleiter(in)

non-profit

► gemeinnützig

mental ► hier: psychisch

feature sb.

► jmdn. dar-, vorstellen

[6] Chan Sheung Yee: Champion of well-being **M**

Chan Sheung Yee wants to raise awareness of mental health in China. In 2020, he founded a non-profit organization, called Companion HK, which has supported more than 500 people, helping them to reintegrate into society and find employment. His work is crucial in a country that has long neglected this issue.

In July 2023, Coco Lee, a popular Chinese-American singer and actress, committed suicide after a long battle with depression. Her death focused attention on the topic of mental health in China, which has about two psychiatrists per 100,000 people, compared to a global average of nine, according to the World Health Organization (WHO). The WHO also estimates that some 54 million people in China suffer from depression, while 41 million have anxiety disorders. In 2022, *The Economist* reported that China's collective mental health had been declining since long before the pandemic. Shanghai's suicide rate has been rising since 2009 — Covid made things worse. Chan says the pandemic opened his eyes to the importance of mental health. "I was an undergrad student at the time," he told *Business Spotlight*. "Many students had been diagnosed with Covid and needed to be isolated, and many turned to the school for help, saying they were very depressed. There were many cases of people

seeking help for emotional distress during the pandemic.”

Chan has first-hand experience of mental-health challenges. As an infant, he had brain cancer, which caused deafness in his right ear and an 80 per cent loss of vision in his right eye. His language development and facial features were affected, too. “Other students would make fun of me and reject me because of my appearance,” he says. “But, after a period of time, I saw that other students and I could get along well. So, I think misunderstanding can be reduced through contact and communication.”

In 2018, he attended the Chinese University of Hong Kong to study government and public administration and communications, also joining various social clubs on campus. He describes the experience as a “turning point” in his life, and he quickly realized that he wanted to focus on mental health. “Although we [people with disabilities] may be misunderstood, this doesn’t prevent us from developing our potential and helping others,” he said in a TED Talk.

Being a companion

After noticing that many other students seemed unhappy, Chan decided to set up Companion HK. Just a few days after its launch, the pandemic lockdown began in Hong Kong. Like so many others around the world, Chan moved communications online and spoke to people in

video calls, essentially becoming a counsellor. “If you’re willing to listen and sit with people, it can be a great help,” he says. Companion HK has boomed, as there’s clearly demand for its services. Chan trains students and educators to improve their understanding of mental-health needs and help them to recognize warning signs. He says he trains people “to use active empathy in the workplace, because we believe that staff can help deal with students’ emotional distress.”

Business Spotlight 5/2024, pp. 14–15

mental	• hier: psychisch
found sth.	• etw. gründen
companion	• Gefährte/ Gefährtin, Begleiter(in)
crucial	• (äußerst) wichtig
neglect sth.	• etw. vernachlässigen; hier auch: keine Beachtung schenken
issue	• Problem
commit suicide	• Selbstmord begehen
topic	• Thema
anxiety disorder	• Angststörung
decline	• abnehmen; hier: sich verschlechtern

undergrad student (if/ml.)	• Student(in) vor dem ersten akademischen Grad
distress	• Not(lage)
infant	• Kleinkind
deafness	• Taubheit
vision	• Sehkraft
facial feature	• Gesichtszug
affected	• betroffen
reject sb.	• jmdn. zurückweisen
get along	• sich verstehen
disability	• Behinderung
launch	• Start
counsellor	• Ratgeber(in)

[7] Exercise: Check your understanding **Ä**
Sion: Now, it’s time to check your understanding of what you have just heard. Listen to the following statements based on the text. Each

statement is wrong in some way. Find and correct the mistakes. You'll hear the correct version of each statement after the sound that follows the incorrect statement. Let's begin. Here's the first one.

1. Chan Sheung Yee found Companion HK in 2020.

➤ Chan Sheung Yee **founded** Companion HK in 2020. If you say "found", this means that you see where something is that was previously lost. If you say "founded", however, this refers to the act of starting an organization or a company. Chan Sheung Yee started Companion HK, so he is its "founder" because he "founded" it.

2. His work is trivial, as mental health has long been neglected in China.

➤ His work is **crucial**, as mental health has long been neglected in China. The word you heard in the incorrect version was "trivial". This means "of little importance". The word "crucial", on the other hand, means "extremely important".

3. Chan was studying his master's programme when he realized the importance of mental health.

➤ Chan was an **undergrad student** when he realized the importance of mental health. The informal word "undergrad" is short for "undergraduate". If someone is an "undergrad student", they are in the process of do-

ing a bachelor's degree. Someone who is doing a master's degree is a "postgraduate — or postgrad — student".

4. As a teenager, Chan had brain cancer.

➤ As an **infant**, Chan had brain cancer. An "infant" is a young child, not a teenager.

5. Chan trains people to pity others in the workplace.

➤ Chan trains people to **use active empathy** in the workplace. Another way of saying this as a verb is to "empathize with someone". If you "use active empathy" or "empathize with someone", you put yourself in someone else's position and feel what they are feeling. This is different to "pitying someone", which involves feeling sorry for someone.

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

Business Spotlight 5/2024, pp. 14–15

companion ➤ Gefährte/
Gefährtin, Begleiter(in)

found sth. ➤ etw. gründen

previously ➤ zuvor

founder ➤ Gründer(in)

mental ➤ hier: psychisch

pity sb. ➤ jmdn. bemitleiden

METROPOLITAN MAYHEM

[8] Dialogue: Planning a business trip to Shanghai 

Sion: Have you ever been on a business trip to China? How did you prepare for it? Did you have any extra time outside of meetings to ex-

plore? Doug and Kyle, two colleagues at our fictional London-based advertising agency, talk about Kyle's upcoming business trip to Shanghai. Listen carefully because we'll test your understanding of some of the words and expressions used afterwards.

Doug: Not long until your business trip to Shanghai, is it? I am quite jealous. I went there a while ago and really enjoyed it.

Kyle: Yes, I'll head off on Friday. I'm hoping to get a bit of free time to have a look around. The client seems quite eager to take me out to eat at a local restaurant, too. I'm excited about that. Do you have any recommendations for me?

Doug: A few things do come to mind. I absolutely loved the People's Park, near Nanjing Road. The Shanghai History Museum, which isn't far from there, was really interesting.

Kyle: I'll make a note of those tips. My client suggested we have our first meeting at the Fairmont Peace Hotel. They have a rooftop café, which is a nice, tranquil setting for business meetings on a sunny day, apparently.

Doug: I've heard of that place. It's quite upmarket. It's down on the Bund, a promenade with lots of historic trading houses. These days, that area's home to large banks and hotels.

Kyle: Oh, wow. I'm looking forward to seeing all the impressive buildings in Shanghai. I've heard there are some really iconic skyscrapers in Shanghai's financial district just across the

Huangpu River in Pudong. I'd love to check them out.

Doug: Well, if you want to admire the skyscrapers, the best place to do that is from another skyscraper. I'd recommend Cloud 9, the bar on the 87th floor of Jin Mao Tower. The 360-degree views you get from there are spectacular.

Kyle: Amazing! I'm glad I ran into you before leaving. I'll send you a photo from the cocktail bar when I go there!

Doug: Please do! You'll love it up there.

Business Spotlight 5/2024, pp. 26–29

upcoming ▶ bevorstehend

jealous ▶ neidisch

head off ▶ sich aufmachen

eager ▶ begierig

come to mind

▶ in den Sinn kommen

tranquil ▶ ruhig, beschaulich

setting ▶ Umgebung, Kulisse

apparently ▶ offensichtlich

upmarket (UK) ▶ gehoben

trading house ▶ Handels-
haus, hier auch: Handelsfirma

look forward to sth.

▶ sich auf etw. freuen

iconic ▶ kultig

check sth. out (ifml.) ▶ etw.
überprüfen, ausprobieren

amazing ▶ fantastisch, toll

[9] Exercise: Check your understanding **A**

Sion: OK, now it's time to test your understanding of some of the words and phrases used in the dialogue you have just heard. Complete the sentences based on the dialogue by choosing option **a)** or **b)**. Ready? Let's begin.

- Kyle will [beep] to Shanghai on Friday.
 - head on
 - head off

- The correct answer is **b**). Kyle will head off to Shanghai on Friday. If you “head off” somewhere, you go there.
2. Kyle’s client seems quite [beep] to take him out to a local restaurant.
- a) eager
b) reluctant
- The correct answer is **a**). Kyle’s client seems quite eager to take him out to a local restaurant. If someone is “eager” to do something, they really want to do something. Another expression with the same meaning is to be “keen” to do something.
3. According to Doug, the hotel suggested by Kyle’s client is quite [beep].
- a) uplifting
b) upmarket
- The correct answer is **b**). According to Doug, the hotel suggested by Kyle’s client is quite “upmarket”. This means it is expensive and aimed at high-end clients. If something is “uplifting”, it makes you feel good.
4. Kyle is particularly interested in seeing the [beep].
- a) skyscrapers
b) cloud-scratchers
- The correct answer is **a**). Kyle is particularly interested in seeing the skyscrapers. The word “cloud-scratchers” does not exist in English.

5. Kyle is glad he ran [beep] Doug before his trip.
- a) into
b) by
- The correct answer is **a**). Kyle is glad he ran into Doug before his trip. If you “run into” someone, you unexpectedly or coincidental-ly meet them. In other words, the meeting is unplanned.

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

Business Spotlight 5/2024, pp. 26–29

high-end

► luxuriös; hier: Top-

coincidentally

► zufällig

ETIQUETTE

[10] Exercise: Expats’ advice on doing business in China **A**

Sion: When working in another country, it is always worth doing your research to make sure things go smoothly. Just because something is considered to be polite or efficient in your country does not mean the same will be true in your new location. Listen to the following pieces of information and advice based on expats’ experiences of living and working in China. After each statement, you will hear two options, **a**) and **b**). Decide which one has the same meaning as the statement that you have just heard. This exercise is about recognizing and understanding

vocabulary, so if there are any words that are new to you, then make a note of them for future reference. Ready? Let's begin.

1. Businesses are microcosms of the country they are in, so in an authoritarian system, you can also expect company leadership to be firm.

a) Businesses reflect the nations they are based in, so in a country that is not democratic, expect company management to be strict.

b) Businesses do not function in the same way as the country they are based in, so expect to find democratic company leadership in countries with a totalitarian regime.

➤ a) is correct. A "microcosm" is a small-scale reflection of a bigger system. An "authoritarian" system is one that is not democratic.

2. The exchanging of gifts between business partners is common, particularly when one partner invites the other to lunch or dinner.

a) It is typical for business partners to give each other presents, especially if one partner asks the other one to join them for a meal.

b) It is usual to split the bill when you go out for a meal with a business partner.

➤ a) is correct. "Gifts" is another word for "presents". If you "invite" someone to lunch or dinner, you ask them to join you for one of those meals.

3. Make sure you download WeChat, as much essential business communication will happen on this application.

a) The application WeChat won't be necessary, as important business communication will happen on other channels.

b) It's important to have WeChat on your devices because it is used for business purposes in China.

➤ b) is right. If you "download" an application, you have it on your devices, such as your mobile phone. WeChat is used for business communication in China.

4. You'll need a VPN to move about freely online and use WhatsApp.

a) In order to have unrestricted access to the internet and be able to use WhatsApp, you will need a virtual private network.

b) In order to have unrestricted access to the internet and be able to use WhatsApp, you will need to use a vivid picture network.

➤ a) is right. A "VPN" is a "virtual private network", which allows you to use your computer as if it were in another country.

5. Relationships and perception are more highly valued than logic and reason.

a) Interpersonal connections and reputation are seen as more important than good sense and rationality.

b) Good sense and rationality are seen as more important than interpersonal connections and reputation.

➤ a) is right. "Relationships" are interpersonal connections. "Perception" is the way you are

seen by others, which results in your “reputation” or, in other words, what others think of you.

6. Avoid having disagreements in public, as people could find the situation embarrassing and bear a grudge against you for a long time to come.

a) Try not to have arguments in front of an audience, as people could find the situation awkward and leave the room.

b) Try not to have arguments when others are present because people could find the situation humiliating and hold it against you well into the future.

➤ b) is correct. If you do something “in public”, this means “when others are present”. It is the opposite of doing something “in private”. If something is “embarrassing”, it is “humiliating”.

7. Having a rudimentary level of Chinese is important, even though it isn’t an easy language to learn.

a) It’s important to have an advanced level of Chinese, even though the language is hard to learn.

b) It’s important to have a basic level of Chinese, even though the language is hard to learn.

➤ b) is right. A “rudimentary level” is a basic level.

Sion: How did you find that exercise? If you’re planning a business trip to China soon, you might want to repeat the exercise, as this advice could be useful.

Business Spotlight 5/2024, pp. 32–33

research ➤ Recherche(n)

expat(riate) ➤ dauerhaft im Ausland lebende Person

strict ➤ streng

small-scale ➤ kleinmaßstäblich

split sth. ➤ etw. aufteilen

device ➤ Gerät

unrestricted ➤ uneingeschränkt

embarrassing ➤ peinlich

grudge: bear a ~ against sb.

➤ einen Groll gegen jmdn. hegen

argument

➤ Streit, Auseinandersetzung

awkward

➤ unangenehm, peinlich

humiliating

➤ demütigend

hold sth. against sb.

➤ jmdm. etw. übel nehmen

BUSINESS SKILLS

[11] Making your voice heard ㉑

Sion: Have you ever been in a meeting and been unsure how to share your opinion with others? Maybe you felt unsure about what they would think of your ideas. Or perhaps the people in the group were very confident, while you were shy or more reserved? Listen to the following article by Business Spotlight correspondent Ken Taylor for some advice on effectively contributing to discussions at work.

confident

➤ selbstsicher, -bewusst

reserved ➤ zurückhaltend

[12] How to contribute to discussions (without sounding stupid)

Many people find it difficult to join in meetings or discussions. Some may feel insecure about speaking a second language — or speaking in public at all. And there are some who tend to assume that everyone else is simply cleverer than they are. However, just because someone is confident doesn't mean they know everything. There's no reason why you can't learn to contribute to discussions without feeling stupid or anxious.

Most formal meetings have an agenda you can see beforehand, which gives you a chance to prepare. Take time to identify topics you can contribute to. Write down a few notes for yourself. If you're working in a second language, look up some key vocabulary. If an item is unclear, talk to the facilitator or to other colleagues — perhaps even test your ideas on them.

For informal and impromptu discussions, of course, you'll need to use some of the following tips, which work for both formal and informal meetings.

Believe in yourself

We are often our own worst critics. We censure our input by telling ourselves our ideas aren't original or relevant. We avoid responding spontaneously to the ideas of others for fear of sounding stupid or naive. Remind yourself that you are in the meeting because

you have relevant knowledge and experience. And in informal discussions, you are part of the group. Everyone is equal. If you are the self-censuring type, the following tips can help you to change that.

1. Agree with others

When someone expresses an idea you agree with, support them openly and compliment them on what they said. Then, if possible, add something of your own. This helps ease you (and your own ideas) into the conversation. It can also help you build a rapport with the people you compliment. Agreeing with someone is usually quite easy and it's the simplest way of contributing to a discussion.

2. Ask questions

Another form of contribution is asking questions. These might be questions you've prepared (based on the agenda of a formal meeting). Then, you just need to ask them at the right time in the discussion. In general, open questions (those that begin with "what", "why", "how", etc.) work better than closed questions (those that can be answered simply with "yes" or "no") because they naturally encourage discussion, and that produces a collaborative feeling.

In informal discussions, look for opportunities to ask questions. This involves you in the discussion and motivates you to be fully engaged in what is being discussed. This, in turn, makes it easier for you to become an active participant.

3. Listen actively

The key to speaking in any conversation is listening. A major problem in meetings is that many people don't really listen but simply wait for a gap in the conversation in order to take over and say what they have wanted to say from the beginning. And some second-language speakers may think more about avoiding grammatical mistakes than about the content of what they're saying.

Listening actively requires concentration on what the speaker is saying. If you find that difficult, try mentally repeating their words as they speak. This forces you to follow what they are saying. Body language and other signals that show you're listening can also help you to pay attention.

4. Give yourself some time

If you need a moment to organize your ideas, give yourself a few more seconds by using a filler phrase. This is a way of signalling that you're about to say something, so that the opportunity to speak does not pass.

5. Explain simply and clearly

Use common, uncomplicated words and sentences, and get to the point quickly. This way, everything you say will be understood, and it's easier for you to put the sentences together. Using straightforward language will let you sound more confident.

Contributing to discussions is about more than just expressing your views. It is also a way to build and maintain good relationships with your co-workers, and to develop your communication skills. It boosts your confidence and helps teams to function better. After all, any contribution you make, no matter how small, is valid and important.

Business Spotlight 5/2024, pp. 34–36

assume sth.

► etw. annehmen

anxious ► beunruhigt, nervös

agenda ► Tagesordnung

topic ► Thema

item ► Gegenstand;

hier: Tagesordnungspunkt

facilitator ► Moderator(in);

hier: Sitzungsleiter(in)

impromptu ► spontan

censure sth. ► etw. monieren;

hier: kritisch betrachten

input ► Beitrag/Beiträge

ease sb./sth. into sth.

► jmdm./etw. zu einem guten

Start in etw. verhelfen

rapport ► gutes Verhältnis

collaborative feeling

► Gemeinschaftsgefühl

engaged: be - in sth.

► hier: etw. mit Aufmerksamkeit verfolgen

gap ► Lücke; hier: Pause

mentally ► hier: gedanklich

filler phrase

► Ausdruck/Redewendung ohne eigentlichen Inhalt

get to the point

► zur Sache kommen

straightforward ► einfach

maintain sth.

► etw. aufrechterhalten

boost sth. ► etw. steigern

valid: be -

► seine Berechtigung haben

[13] Essential phrases for contributing to discussions **M**

Sion: In this exercise, you can practise some phrases that are useful for contributing to discussions. I'll tell you what to say and give you

some of the words that you'll need. Remember that you will need to conjugate the verbs and add articles before nouns where necessary. In the pause, form a sentence, using the words you've been given. 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 agree with others.
 - Use “that”, “seem”, “like”, “sensible” and “approach”.
 - That seems like a sensible approach.
2. You ask questions.
 - Use “what”, “your”, “thoughts” and “this approach”.
 - What are your thoughts about this approach?
3. You give yourself some time.
 - Use “what”, “main”, “question” and “here”.
 - What is the main question here?
4. You explain simply and clearly.
 - Use “my”, “proposal”, “would be”, “analyse”, “results” and “survey”.
 - My proposal would be to analyse the results of the survey.

Sion: Excellent. Well done!

Business Spotlight 5/2024, pp. 34-36

ODD JOBS

[14] Interview: Gemologist Colin Weldon

Sion: Did you know that people who learn to identify precious stones and separate the fakes from the real ones are called “gemologists”? Well, you do now! Colin Weldon, a Dublin-based gemologist and jeweller, spoke to *Business Spotlight* about his career. Listen carefully to two extracts from our interview with him. After each section, we'll test your understanding with a true-or-false exercise, in which you'll decide whether statements based on the interview are true or false. Ready? Let's begin. Here's the first extract.

Colin Weldon: So, what you cover in gemology is essentially how to identify and how to spot every single stone there is, right? So, to give you an example, the last exam in gemology is... I think it was 500 stones or 600 stones, and you have to get all of them identified correctly or you don't pass it. I actually failed it the first time I did it because there's a garnet family within coloured stones, and within the garnet family, they are so close, and you have to identify them using the spectrum of light. I missed one of them, and I retook it the week later and passed — thank God. It's basically a lot of staring into microscopes. A lot of tiny, tiny little details. But essentially, it's “How do you tell the difference between a natural versus a synthetic?” That's

the big one, without going to a specific giant laboratory. Because as a jeweller, you see fakes constantly, constantly. And some of them are really, really good — like really good. The biggest thing about the gemology course is a) “Can you identify a stone?” but b) “Can you identify a fake?” because if you don’t, you can get seriously badly burned, and I’ve known a lot of people who’ve gotten seriously badly burned for big, big amounts of money.

Sion: Decide whether the following statements based on this extract of the interview are true or false. You will hear the answer after the sound that follows each statement.

1. Gemology involves learning how to recognize different stones and identify ones that are not genuine.

➤ This statement is true. Gemology involves learning how to recognize different stones and identify ones that are not genuine. If something is “genuine”, it is real.

2. Colin Weldon hasn’t met many people who have lost out because they were unable to identify a fake stone.

➤ This statement is false. Colin says that people can “get seriously badly burned for big amounts of money”. The expression to “get badly burned” in this context means to “experience negative consequences”.

3. Gemologists use microscopes to examine stones.

➤ This statement is true. Colin says, “It’s basically a lot of staring into microscopes.” If you “stare into something”, you look at it intently.

Sion: OK, now it’s time for the second extract, in which Colin talks about Gen Z’s attitude towards diamonds.

Colin: What’s interesting is that Gen Z are sort of turning against diamonds. I think Gen Z are more interested in spending money where it’s supposed to go. They’re not buying the old De Beers adage of “a diamond is forever”. They’re just not buying it. They’re much more critical of the old guard for everything — I think politically, in business, in lots of things. They’re into sustainability. They’re into the environment. They want different things than the old guard, in a big way. And lab-grown stuff kind of feeds into that because it doesn’t cost a lot of money. You know, they can still have something nice and sparkly and whatever. They don’t want to spend thousands on a stone. They still want the ring. There’s no doubt about that. That hasn’t changed. They want something on the hand. That thing hasn’t gone away, but what they want on their hand has changed dramatically.

Sion: Here are three more statements based on what you have just heard. Decide whether they are true or false.

1. Gen Z is still convinced by the idea that “a diamond is forever”, according to Colin.

- This statement is false. Colin says that Gen Z is not “buying into” the old De Beers adage of “a diamond is forever”. If you “buy into something”, then you believe it and are convinced by it. The word “adage” means “saying”. De Beers is a South African-British diamond company.
2. Gen Z is more concerned about the environment, according to Colin.
- This statement is true. Colin says that this generation is more “into the environment”, meaning they are more interested in it.
3. Colin says that part of the appeal of lab-grown “stuff”, in reference to diamonds, is that it is less costly.
- This statement is true. He says that it “doesn’t cost a lot of money”.

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

Business Spotlight 5/2024, p. 37

gemologist

• Gemmologe/Gemmologin

jeweller • Juwelier(in)

gemology • Gemmologie, Edelsteinkunde

spot sth. • etw. entdecken

pass sth. • hier: etw. bestehen

garnet family

• Granatgruppe

miss sth.

• hier: etw. falsch bestimmen

attitude

• Haltung, Einstellung

adage • Spruch, Redensart

old guard • alte Garde

into: be ~ sth. (ifml.)

• auf etw. stehen, etw. mögen

sustainability

• Nachhaltigkeit

lab-grown (ifml.)

• aus dem Labor

feed into sth.

• in etw. einfließen

sparkly • glitzernd

appeal

• Reiz, Attraktivität

CAREER COACH

[15] Showing the value of your ideas **E**

Sion: Having ideas is great, but it’s important also to be able to defend them when people question them. This article by *Business Spotlight* career coach Frank Peters is all about strategies for dealing with people who disagree with the ideas you have and share with others at work.

[16] Defending your ideas **M**

A few years ago, I was working in a small team on a proposal for our next team-building activity, looking for locations, activities and transportation. It took time to come up with a plan. After we’d finished our presentation, our boss asked the team for some feedback. One person didn’t understand why we’d suggested an expensive option when the company should be saving money. Another thought the location was too far away and that the travel time would be better spent team-building or working.

To be honest, we weren’t prepared for questions like these. We thought everyone would

be grateful for our ideas and the research we'd done. Clearly, we were wrong about that and didn't know how to respond. After some awkward silence, our boss sent us back to come up with a new proposal. However, when we presented our new idea, the team (and especially the two members who had criticized the first proposal) weren't happy at all.

The person who had said that the first location was too far away now thought the new location was too close. If people didn't stay overnight, how would that encourage team-building? And the one who'd complained about the cost thought the new idea sounded boring, saying he preferred the first proposal. Arggh!

So, again, we went back to the drawing board and came up with a third proposal. In the end, our boss decided to go for the first option we'd presented. Arggh again!

The experience of trying to organize the event was exhausting and demotivating, but perhaps this situation could have been avoided if we had responded differently to the first round of feedback. Don't get me wrong — it's often very helpful to get feedback and incorporate it into your work. However, in this case, we were facing two colleagues who almost always found something to complain about. If you have to deal with people like that, a few techniques might come in handy.

Present, past, future (PPF)

You take the objection you've just heard (present) and relate it to your decision-making (past). Explain what you learned and what made you think differently and invite the person into the process (future).

Explain, for example, that you, the organizers, have discussed the costs extensively. Considering the goals of the event, you feel the higher cost is justified. One goal is to create something memorable that will get people through hard times in the future. Then, ask for five minutes to explain in more detail why you think it's worth investing the money.

With the PPF technique, you let the other person know that you understand their point of view. If they're really concerned about the costs, this is your chance to argue that the return on investment will be higher than it would be for the cheaper option.

Boomerang

You take the other person's argument and throw it back to them to make your point. Take the objection that the travel time is too long. Explain that it's because of this that you chose this option. Here's why:

1. Being further away from the office makes it easier to switch off from the daily office routine, to interact with all colleagues and get involved in new situations.

- The company will charter a bus to get there. The travel time can be used to get to know each other better by doing a few activities together. If the location were closer, more people might travel independently.
- A shorter distance may limit the choice of impressive locations. Three hours' travel time gives the team the opportunity to go somewhere special, such as the mountains or a beautiful lake. This supports the goal of creating unforgettable memories for the team members.

Of course, you don't have to lay all three arguments on the table at the same time. Start with the first one and see how the other person reacts.

Combine PPF and boomerang

It's also possible to combine these two techniques. Let's see what that would look like for the long-travel argument:

Agree: "Yes! We had exactly the same thought — we can't suggest something that requires travelling for a total of six hours, even with an overnight stay. But then, we looked at how we can take advantage of a longer travel time and we realized that a longer trip actually gives us more time for team-building by starting much earlier, on the bus, and giving us better options for activities on site. If you give us five minutes, we'll talk you through the advantages."

This technique often comes as a surprise and is very effective, as you're using the objection for your own purposes.

Why these techniques work

I know from experience that these techniques are powerful. They offer you the opportunity to strengthen your position and communicate in a competent but also appreciative manner with the other person.

Think about what the typical reaction to an objection is. Most of the time, the response is defensive and starts with "But...". Whereas, here, you are not being defensive. You're starting with "Yes, I see your point".

When you apply the PPF and boomerang techniques, it can make a huge difference. We, as human beings, crave to be seen and heard, which is what you're giving the other person. If you start by showing your understanding, you invest in the relationship and show appreciation. It suggests that you and the other person are going through the same thought process — you're just further ahead because you started earlier and that, with time, the other person will reach the same conclusion you have reached.

These three techniques work best if you're well prepared and if you've thought through the typical objections you might get. You may even want to practise these techniques to be able to use them when necessary.

Feel free to experiment with these techniques. It's also fun to practise them with your team and learn together. This will not only make you stronger as a team and leave you better prepared for objections and critique from others. It will also help your team bond with you and with each other. So, go out there and throw the boomerang!

Business Spotlight 5/2024, pp. 38–41

come up with sth.

► sich etw. einfallen lassen, etw. vorlegen

research

► Recherche(n)

awkward

► unangenehm, peinlich

encourage sth.

► hier: für etw. förderlich sein

Arg!

► Verflixt!

drawing board: go back to the ~

► von vorne anfangen

go for sth.

► sich für etw. entscheiden

exhausting

► anstrengend

get sb. wrong

► jmdn. falsch verstehen

incorporate sth. into sth.

► etw. in etw. integrieren

come in handy

► nützlich sein

relate sth. to sth.

► etw. zu etw. in Beziehung setzen

goal

► Ziel(setzung)

memorable

► einprägsam

argue

► den Standpunkt vertreten

return on investment

► Kapitalrendite; hier: Gewinn, positive(r) Effekt(e)

make one's point

► sein Argument vortragen

on the table: lay sth. ~

► hier: etw. vorbringen

on site

► vor Ort

talk sb. through sth.

► mit jmdm. etw. durchgehen/ besprechen

appreciative

► wertschätzend

crave sth.

► etw. ersehnen, nach etw. Verlangen haben

appreciation

► Wertschätzung

conclusion

► Schlussfolgerung

critique

► Kritik

bond with sb.

► zu jmdm. eine Beziehung aufbauen

[17] Exercise: Phrases to defend your ideas

Sion: This is an exercise on phrases that can help you to defend your ideas. First, you'll hear two words and then a sentence with a beep. In the pause, decide which word you need instead of the beep. Then, you'll hear the correct sentence again.

- “conversations” OR “reservations”

With all due respect, I have some [beep] about implementing this strategy.

► **reservations.** With all due respect, I have some reservations about implementing this strategy.
- “concerns” OR “troubles”

I understand the proposal, but I have [beep] about its feasibility in the current market conditions.

► **concerns.** I understand the proposal, but I have concerns about its feasibility in the current market conditions.
- “objection” OR “opposition”

I'd like to raise an [beep] regarding the timeline for the project.

► **objection.** I'd like to raise an objection regarding the timeline for the project.
- “clear” OR “clarify”

Let me [beep] how our idea addresses the issue you've raised.

► **clarify.** Let me clarify how our idea addresses the issue you've raised.

5. “point” OR “pointing”

That’s a fair [beep], and I think it’s essential that we continue this discussion in detail.

- **point.** That’s a fair point, and I think it’s essential that we continue this discussion in detail.

Sion: Well done. Try to memorize one or two of the phrases and use them the next time you take part in a discussion.

Business Spotlight 5/2024, pp. 38–41

ENGLISH FOR...

[18] A repair café: Tricky translations

Sion: This exercise will focus on a false friend related to the topic of repairing things. 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.

The German word *fix* is “quick”, “quickly” or “fast” in English. The word “fix” in English, however, translates as *reparieren* or *in Ordnung bringen*. This is a key term when talking about repairing broken objects. First, you’ll hear a sentence with a beep. In the pause, decide whether you need “quick”, “quickly” or “fix”. Ready? Let’s begin.

1. Do you know anyone who could [beep] my umbrella?
- Do you know anyone who could fix my umbrella?

2. I need to make a [beep] phone call, then I’ll help you.

- I need to make a quick phone call, then I’ll help you.

3. There are two beeps in the next sentence.

I know that you repair everything [beep], but please try to [beep] things more carefully.

- I know that you repair everything quickly, but please try to fix things more carefully.

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

Business Spotlight 5/2024, pp. 42–43

topic ▶ Thema

[19] Vocabulary exercise:

Repairing things

Sion: Rather than throwing things away that are broken or no longer working properly, it’s a good idea to repair them to avoid unnecessary waste. In this exercise, you will hear a dialogue between two people at a neighbourhood repair café. The dialogue is missing some words and expressions. You need to choose the right words and expressions from a list of options to fill in the gaps. It might help to make a note of these options on a piece of paper before starting the exercise.

Here are the words and expressions that you can choose from to fill the gaps in the dialogue:

kettle, plug and cable, volunteer, pensioner, button.

And once again: kettle, plug and cable, volunteer, pensioner, button.

Sion: OK, let's begin. You'll hear a beep where the missing words and expressions belong.

Kate: Hello, you're new, aren't you?

Raquel: Yes, now that I've retired, I have time to help out at the repair café as a [beep].

Kate: That's great. I started when I retired, too. I am really enjoying life as a [beep]. I have much more time to help out in the local community than I did before.

Raquel: I agree. So, where do we begin? There are so many things here.

Kate: Let's start with something simple. You've seen one of these before, I take it?

Raquel: Yes, of course. It's a device used to boil water. I use it every day. It's a [beep]. But I haven't got a clue how to repair it. I think I would be more confident mending clothes. Perhaps I could start by sewing the [beep] back on to those trousers instead?

Kate: No, this is a chance for you to learn something new. The device itself is fine. It's a minor electrical issue. We just need to replace the [beep]. I'll show you how to do it. You'll get the hang of it in no time.

Sion: OK, let's check your answers. Here are the correct versions of the sentences with missing

words and expressions in the order that you heard them in:

1. Yes, now that I've retired, I have time to help out at the repair café as a volunteer.

Sion: A "volunteer" is a person who gives their time for free.

2. I am really enjoying life as a pensioner.

Sion: A "pensioner" is someone who receives a "pension" and has retired. A "pension" is the money you receive after you have stopped working because you have reached the retirement age.

3. It's a kettle.

Sion: A "kettle" is a device used to heat water to 100 degrees Celsius or, in other words, to "boil" water.

4. Perhaps I could start by sewing the button back on to those trousers instead?

Sion: A "button" is used to keep two pieces of fabric together. Note that the word "button" can also refer to parts that you can press on a machine. It is the word used for both *Knopf* and *Taste* in German. In this example, it means *Knopf*.

5. We just need to replace the plug and cable.

Sion: The "plug and cable" are used to connect a device to the electricity supply.

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

gap	► Lücke
device	► Gerät
clue	► Ahnung
confident	► sicher
mend sth.	
►	etw. flicken, stopfen
sew sth.	► etw. nähen

issue	► Problem
hang: get the ~ of sth. (fml.)	► den Dreh raus haben
fabric	► Stoff
electricity supply	
►	Energieversorgung

SKILL UP!

[20] Dialogue and exercise: Changing

careers

Sion: Have you ever thought about changing careers? Change can present challenges, but it can also lead to better opportunities and more flexibility. Listen to the following dialogue between podcaster, Dylan, and Josie, a woman who has changed careers. We'll test your understanding of some of the words and phrases used afterwards, so pay close attention. Ready? Let's go!

Dylan: Today, in our series on career changers, I'm talking to Josie. Welcome, Josie. Tell us a bit about yourself.

Josie: Thanks, Dylan. So, I used to work in the finance department of a large company, but the constant threat of downsizing finally gave me the push I needed to leave the rat race behind.

Dylan: So, what did you do?

Josie: Well, I'd always loved being outdoors and working with my hands as well as my head. I'd already taken a few evening classes when I heard about a new horticultural diploma

course. I was able to take voluntary redundancy, which gave me a financial buffer, so I could attend the course full-time.

Dylan: Tell us what the other people on the course were like.

Josie: There was a man who used to work in a factory and had a passion for mountain climbing. He realized that was a transferable skill, and now he's in demand as a tree cutter. And then there's my new business partner, Sally.

Dylan: What did she use to do?

Josie: She used to work in IT, but it was a bit of a dead-end job, so she was looking for a new challenge, and she realized that gardening ticked all the boxes.

Dylan: Do you think you made the right decision?

Josie: Oh, yes. Of course, setting up a business hasn't been easy. We've experienced a few bumps in the road, but I certainly have a better work-life balance now.

Sion: OK, now, it's time to test your understanding of some of the words and phrases used in this dialogue. Complete the definitions by choosing option **a**) or **b**). You will hear the correct answers after the sound that follows each question. Ready? Let's get started.

1. If something "gives you the push" you need-
ed to make a change, ...
a) it acts as the impetus for the change.

- b)** it forces you to make the change against your will.
- **a)** is right. If something “gives you the push” you needed to make a change, it acts as the impetus for the change. An “impetus” is a “trigger” or, in other words, something that makes you decide to act.
2. If you “take voluntary redundancy”, ...
- a)** you tell your employer that you will be leaving your job.
- b)** you are given money by your employer to encourage you to leave your job.
- **b)** is right. If you “take voluntary redundancy”, you are given money by your employer to encourage you to leave your job. If, however, you tell your employer you will be leaving your job, you “resign from” your job.
3. If you have a “financial buffer”, ...
- a)** you have some money or savings that can be accessed immediately, making it financially easier if your circumstances suddenly change.
- b)** you lose your source of income and experience financial hardship.
- **a)** is right. If you have a “financial buffer”, you have some money or savings that can be accessed immediately, making it financially easier if your circumstances suddenly change.
4. If someone’s services are “in demand”, ...
- a)** there are lots of people who need and want their services.

- b)** there are not enough people offering these services.
- **a)** is right. If someone’s services are “in demand”, there are lots of people who need and want their services.
5. If a job “ticks all the boxes” for you, ...
- a)** it sounds like what you were looking for but is not in reality.
- b)** it involves everything you are looking for.
- **b)** is right. If a job “ticks all the boxes” for you, it involves everything you are looking for.
6. If you “experience a few bumps in the road”, ...
- a)** your company’s vehicles are not working properly.
- b)** you have a few challenges along the way.
- **b)** is right. If you “experience a few bumps in the road”, you have a few challenges along the way. This is a way of saying that things didn’t go completely smoothly.

Sion: Great work. Well done.

Business Spotlight 5/2024, pp. 44–47

department ▶ Abteilung

downsize

• hier: Personal abbauen

give sb. a push (jfmL.)

• jmdm. einen Schubs geben

rat race ▶ Hamsterrad, erbar-

mungsloser Konkurrenzkampf

horticultural ▶ Gartenbau-

take voluntary redundancy

(UK) ▶ sich freiwillig freistellen lassen

financial buffer

• finanzielles Polster

transferable

• übertragbar

demand: be in ~

• gefragt/begehrt sein

dead-end job

• Beruf ohne Zukunft, Tätigkeit ohne Aufstiegschancen

tick all the boxes (UK jfmL.)

• alle Kriterien erfüllen

bumps in the road:
experience ~ (jfmL.)

• Turbulenzen durchmachen

access sth.

• auf etw. zugreifen

hardship • Not(lage), Härte

[21] Exercise: Essential words and phrases for changing careers **M**

Sion: In this language exercise, we'll practise some words and phrases that can be used to talk about changing careers. 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.

- If you have knowledge about a particular field, you have...
 - a background in it.
 - a basement in it.

➤ **a)** is right. Having a "background" in something means that you have knowledge about it. "Basement" refers to the part of a building below ground level.
- If you feel like you are not progressing and have been doing the same thing for too long, you...
 - stop in your tracks.
 - are stuck in a rut.

➤ **b)** is right. If you feel like you are not progressing and you have been doing the same thing for too long, you are "stuck in a rut". If you "stop in your tracks", you suddenly stop moving or doing something.

- A job without any prospects of promotion is a...
 - loose-end job.
 - dead-end job.

➤ **b)** is right. A "dead-end job" is a job with no possibilities to advance. While a "loose-end job" does not exist, the expression "loose ends" does exist. It refers to things that need to be done or explained. It is usually used with the phrasal verb to "tie up", for example: "I still need to tie up some loose ends before dinner tonight."
- If people fiercely compete with each other for success, they are caught up in the...
 - rat race.
 - mouse trap.

➤ **a)** is right. The "rat race" refers to someone's competitive struggle for wealth and power. A "mouse trap" is a device used to catch mice.
- Skills that are needed for one job but are also useful in another job are...
 - transferable skills.
 - moving skills.

➤ **a)** is right. "Transferable skills" are skills that you learned for a particular job but which are also valuable in another job.
- If you start working in a different sector, you...
 - transform to that field.
 - transition to that field.

➤ **b)** is right. If you "transition" to a different professional field, you change sector. If you

“transform” something, you completely change its appearance or structure.

7. If you learn a new skill set with the aim of changing jobs, you...

a) retrain.

b) rework.

➤ a) is right. “Retrain” means that you learn a new kind of work that is different from your present job. If you “rework” something, you make changes to something to improve it.

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

Business Spotlight 5/2024, pp. 44–47

promotion ► Beförderung

tie sth. up ► etw. unter Dach und Fach bringen

fiercely ► stark, heftig

compete with sb.

► mit jmdm. konkurrieren

competitive ► wettbewerbsorientiert, Konkurrenz-

device ► Gerät, Vorrichtung

CONCLUSION

[22] 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, interviews, dialogues and exercises. Keep up the good work!

IMPRESSUM

Chefredakteurin:

Judith Gilbert (Vi.S.d.P.)

Geschäftsführende Redakteurin

(CvD): Maja Sirola

Audioredaktion:

Melita Cameron-Wood (Autorin,

Produktion, Redaktion; frei),

Hildegard Rudolph (frei)

Gestaltung: Georg Lechner,

Christiane Schöffner (frei)

Fachredaktion:

Anja Giese (frei),

Hildegard Rudolph (frei),

Michele Tilgner (frei)

Druck und Vervielfältigung:

optimal media GmbH,

D-17207 Röbel/Müritz

SPRECHER

Melita Cameron-Wood (UK):

Names and News, Profile,

Metropolitan Mayhem, Etiquette,

Business Skills, Odd Jobs, English for..., Skill Up!

Owen Connors (IRE): Names and

News, Metropolitan Mayhem

Sion Dayson (US): Anmoderation

Richard Mote (AU): Skill Up!

Rachel Preece (UK): Profile,

Business Skills, Career Coach,

English for..., Skill Up!

Damion Sanchez (US): Names

and News, Metropolitan Mayhem,

Career Coach, Skill Up!

Colin Weldon (IRE): Odd Jobs

Audioproduzent:

Mathieu Rouil

Aufnahme und Abmischung:

Domenic Meinhold

GEMA

Verlag und Redaktion

ZEIT SPRACHEN GmbH

Kistlerhofstr. 172

81379 München

Tel. (089) 8 56 81-0

www.business-spotlight.de

Kundenservice:

abo@zeit-sprachen.de

Redaktion:

business-spotlight@zeit-sprachen.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

@ZEIT SPRACHEN 2024

Bestellen Sie Business Spotlight

Audio unter:

www.business-spotlight.de/audio