

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!**

David Ingram: Welcome to *Business Spotlight Audio 8/2020*. I'm David Ingram from England.

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

Ingram: We also have a number of new sections from this issue, including a regular interview with our author Bob Dignen and a new column full of careers advice. As always, you can find all the texts, dialogues and exercises in your audio booklet. OK, let's get started!

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

David Ingram: We'll begin with our Names and News section and a story about the Ig Nobel Prize.

Erin Perry: You mean the Nobel Prize, right?

Ingram: No, I do indeed mean the Ig Nobel Prize. It's a spoof award, given each year for achievements that "first make people laugh then make them think".

Perry: Sounds fun. Let's find out more.

[3] Crappy knives and vibrating worms M

Do knives made of faeces work well? In September, a US team of scientists won an Ig Nobel Prize for finding out the answer. (They don't.)

The award is a spoof on the prestigious Nobel Prize. Organized by science humour magazine *Annals of Improbable Science*, it celebrates "achievements that first make people laugh then make them think".

achievement

- ▶ Leistung, Errungenschaft

crappy ifml.

- ▶ beschissen

faeces

- ▶ Kot, Fäkalien

lg (ignoble)

- ▶ unedel, schändlich

prestigious

- ▶ renommiert

spoof ifml.

- ▶ Parodie

Other winning studies from this year's online ceremony identified narcissists by examining their eyebrows, showed how high-frequency vibrations affect the shape of an earthworm and demonstrated that helium changes the noise alligators make.

The winners received a fake \$10 trillion Zimbabwean bill and a six-page PDF to print and assemble into a cube-shaped trophy. And, of course, they also got bragging rights.

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[4] Introduction (II)

Erin Perry: Our next story is about an American scientist who has written a book about the end of the universe.

David Ingram: Sounds scary. But as you listen to our story, try to answer this question: how does Dr. Katherine J. Mack — otherwise known as “AstroKatie” — think the universe will actually end? Ready? Listen now.

[5] AstroKatie US E

Astrophysicist Dr. Katherine J. Mack thinks she knows how the universe will end. She has written about it with cheerful curiosity in her 2020 book *The End of Everything* (Astrophysically Speaking).

Dr. Mack, who goes by the name @AstroKatie on Twitter, is known for her ability to make science fun and understandable. This has made

the American one of the world's most popular science communicators.

Dr. Mack told the BBC she wants “to help people have that more personal connection with what's going on in the universe.” When asked by *The Guardian* why there is so much interest in her book, she said that “humans are a curious species, we want to understand stuff. I love that about us.”

In case you are curious, Dr. Mack says the universe will most likely end by “heat death.” “It's where the universe just expands and expands and cools, and everything kind of decays and fades away,” she explains, shedding some light on this dark matter.

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Ingram: OK? Did you get the answer to our question? How does Dr. Katherine J. Mack — otherwise known as “AstroKatie” — think the universe will actually end?

affect sth.
 ► sich auf etw. auswirken

assemble sth.
 ► etw. zusammensetzen

brag ► prahlen

cube ► Würfel

dark matter
 ► düstere Angelegenheit;
 dunkle Materie

decay ► zerfallen
earthworm

► Regenwurm

fade away
 ► schwinden, sterben

kind of ifml.
 ► irgendwie

trillion ► Billion(en)

trophy ► Trophäe

- ▶ The answer is by “heat death”. Listen again.
“In case you are curious, Dr. Mack says the universe will most likely end by “heat death.”

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

HEAD-TO-HEAD

Debate: A legal right to work from home?

[6] Introduction

Erin Perry: Welcome now to our debate section, in which *Business Spotlight* editor-in-chief Ian McMaster looks at the two sides of a recent controversy. In this case, the topic of our Head-to-Head debate is very topical indeed — should employees have the legal right to work from home?

David Ingram: OK, I’m looking forward to hearing what Ian has to say about this.

[7] Interview: Ian McMaster **A**

Ian McMaster: The issue is whether there should be a legal right for employees to work from home. Many people across the world have been working at home since the start of the coronavirus crisis. Some are still working from home, while others are back in their offices or other places of work. And in many organizations, there are also so-called hybrid models, by

which people spend some of the week working at their place of work and the rest working at home.

Now, of course, the issue of working from home isn’t new. A lot of organizations had policies on this well before the coronavirus crisis. But the crisis has certainly given the topic a real boost because, in a lot of cases, firms have realized that things actually work pretty well when people are at home. Of course, there are questions of trust, supervision and leadership, but lots of people tell me that things have worked out better than they expected. And this experience has made many companies think again about their policies and encouraged others to have a policy for the first time, allowing employees to spend some of the working week at home — obviously, where this is feasible. I mean, clearly, there are some jobs that simply can’t be done from home.

But what are the arguments for and against a legal right to work from home? The argument in favour of a legal right is basically that employees are happier and more productive when they have more autonomy over their working

boost: give sth. a -

- ▶ etw. Auftrieb geben

feasible

- ▶ machbar

pretty

- ▶ ziemlich

supervision

- ▶ Überwachung, Kontrolle

topic

- ▶ Thema

lives and potentially a better work-life balance. But for this to work effectively, it is argued that employers need to continue to have responsibility for the welfare of their staff, even when they're working from home.

And interestingly, one of the arguments against a legal right to work from home is precisely this: that employers will have more legal obligations relating to the safety of their employees — for example having to carry out risk assessments of their homes. There is also an argument that creating a legal right to work from home may be the first step on a slippery slope towards outsourcing jobs and making them all freelance, without the benefits of holiday pay, sick pay and other benefits. So, it's a tricky debate and one we're likely to hear a lot more about in the coming months.

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argue sth.

- etw. behaupten, vorbringen

freelance

- freiberuflich

obligation

- Verpflichtung

risk assessment

- Risikobewertung

slippery slope

- hier: negative Entwicklung
(**slippery** ▶ rutschig;
slope ▶ Hang)

tricky

- schwierig

welfare

- Wohlergehen

COMMUNICATION

BUSINESS SKILLS

Small talk

[8] Introduction (I)

David Ingram: OK, now it's time for our Business Skills section, in which we look at a very important skill for building and maintaining business relationships — the ability to make small talk.

Erin Perry: Yes, many people regard small talk as unimportant compared to the real business of doing deals and selling products. But small talk is actually essential in many cultures as a way of building trust with business partners.

Ingram: Indeed. So, let's get on and do some exercises on small talk now.

[9] Essential phrases for small talk

David Ingram: Let's practise some phrases that are useful when making small talk. I'll tell you what to say and give you some of the words you'll need. In the pause, form the necessary phrase. Afterwards, you'll hear the correct version. Don't worry if your phrase is slightly different from ours. Ready? Here's the first one.

1. You want to say that you understand.

- Use “know” and “mean”.
- ▶ I know what you mean.

Next one.

2. You want to show interest.

- Use “amazing”.
- ▶ That's amazing.

OK, next one.

3. You want to tell a story about something unexpected that you experienced.

- Use “never”, “guess” and “happened to me”.
- ▶ You'll never guess what happened to me.

Next one.

4. You want to ask your business partner about their work.

- Use “how”, “going” and “your end”.
- ▶ How's it going at your end?

OK, and the last one.

5. You want to say that your situation is no different from that of the other person.

- Use “same” and “me”
- ▶ It's the same with me.

Ingram: Excellent. Well done!

[10] Small talk dialogues **M**

David Ingram: In this exercise, you'll first hear a short dialogue between Mark and Jo. Then we'll give you two words or phrases and you'll hear a sentence from the dialogue again, this time with a beep instead of one of the words or phrases. In the pause, choose the right word or phrase to complete the sentence. Then, you'll hear the correct sentence again. Repeat the sentence trying to copy Mark's or Jo's pronunciation and intonation. OK, listen very carefully now to the dialogue.

Mark: Most importantly, we all laughed about it. And that's the end of my story! I hope it was short and sweet!

Jo: That's amazing!

■ OK, here's the first pair of phrases to choose from: "short and sweet" OR "short and small"

Mark: I hope it was [beep]!

• I hope it was short and sweet!

■ And here's your next pair to choose from: "appropriate" OR "amazing"

Jo: That's [beep]!

• That's amazing!

Ingram: OK, now, listen to another dialogue and then we'll do a similar exercise.

Mark: The election results were terrible, weren't they? What do you think?

Jo: This is a little awkward, so I'd rather not talk about that.

Mark: I'm sorry. You must think I'm terribly insensitive.

Jo: Don't worry about it. No need to apologize.

■ Now, it's your turn again to choose the right word and then repeat the complete sentence. Here's your first pair to choose between: "sensible" OR "awkward"

Jo: This is a little [beep], so I'd rather not talk about that.

• This is a little awkward, so I'd rather not talk about that.

■ And here's your next pair to choose from: "insensitive" OR "sensitive"

Mark: You must think I'm terribly [beep].

• You must think I'm terribly insensitive.

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

amazing

• erstaunlich, fantastisch

awkward

• unangenehm, peinlich

insensitive

• unsensibel, instinktolos

short and sweet

• kurz und bündig

[11] Introduction (II)

David Ingram: As well as giving useful phrases for small talk, our Business Skills article by Deborah Capras in the latest issue of Business Spotlight also provides seven key tips for making your small talk more professional. Let's listen to these tips now.

[12] Tips for effective small talk Creating social capital

There's an art to social conversation — and also a little science. The idea that you have to “hold a conversation” makes it sound like you have to work hard at small talk. In business, there is some truth in this.

Do it well, and it can help to earn you social capital — those valuable and meaningful personal connections that are essential in the workplace, and in life more generally. Social capital is what you build when you take the time to focus on relationships, and not just on the bottom line. It can help to build trust with business partners, create a sense of belonging in teams and take the loneliness out of working from home.

Don't fall into the trap of thinking that small talk is just chit-chat on banal topics. The professional kind of small talk can provide many insights. Here are seven key tips for making your small talk professional.

Finding connections

The main purpose of small talk is to discover what you have in common with your business partners or colleagues. People often feel a connection when they find out that they have experienced similar things. You can highlight what you have in common by using expressions such as “Same here”, “Me, too” or “Me, neither”. You can also invite someone to explore possible connections with a simple question: “And you?”

Timing it right

Small talk can provide a welcome break from work at any time. How do you get started? In the workplace, you might pay someone a compliment on their office or on a personal item, provided that you don't get too personal. Positive comments invite people to share information. In virtual meetings, this trick might not work, as we often can't see much more than

bottom line: the -

- hier: was unterm Strich heraukommt

break from work

- Arbeitsunterbrechung

chit-chat *ifml.*

- Geplauder

fall into a trap

- in eine Falle geraten

highlight sth.

- etw. hervorheben

insight

- Erkenntnis

invite sb.

- hier: jmd. auffordern

item

- Gegenstand

provided (that...)

- sofern ...

topic

- Thema



someone's face (or the inside of their noses). In this case, stay with the basics at the beginning and the end of a meeting: the weather, the weekend and life outside work. The same topics work in emails or on collaboration platforms, too. And open questions are always good — those that can't be answered with “yes” or “no”.

Playing by the rules

Whatever the national or company culture, the basic rule of thumb for small talk is that you avoid the top three taboos: religion, politics and

corruption. That said, touching on these topics in a sensitive way could also help you understand the local community and local business practices. Ideally, you should not make any assumptions about anything, especially family

assumption

- Mutmaßung

collaboration platform

- Kollaborationsplattform, Plattform zur (zeit- und ortsübergreifenden) Zusammenarbeit

play by the rules

- sich an die Regeln halten

rule of thumb

- Faustregel

sensitive ▶ feinfühlig

that said

- gleichwohl

life or personal beliefs. While most people are usually happy to make small talk, some may prefer to keep certain things private. If that person is you, make sure you know how to politely change the subject. If, on the other hand, you think you may have offended someone, quickly apologize and move on.

Telling a good story

Make use of the power of storytelling, but keep your stories short and sweet. Above all, don't make them all about yourself. A good story has a clear beginning and a surprising end. The best stories highlight something you have learned from your experience or facts that might be interesting to your audience.

Showing interest

If you are genuinely interested in other people, you'll find it easy to show interest in them. And it's very easy to tell if someone is interested in you: they'll ask you relevant questions and give appropriate feedback.

Remembering the details

Small talk flows best when you are open to sharing information — and when you remember what someone has shared with you in the past. Remembering personal details makes the other person feel important, which can help build social capital.

Moving on

In a work setting, too much chit-chat can look unprofessional, especially if other people in the meeting or office feel excluded from the conversation. Always be ready to change the focus back to business.

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appropriate

- entsprechend, sachgerecht

audience

- Zuhörer(innen)

genuinely

- wirklich, echt

offend sb.

- jmdn. kränken, verletzen

setting

- Rahmen, Umfeld

short and sweet

- kurz und bündig

CAREERS

RÉSUMÉS

Parenting and work

[13] Introduction

Erin Perry: OK, let's move on now to our careers section. Our first topic is one that many parents — and, in particular, many mothers — will be able to relate to very well. It's the question of how you present your résumé when you have spent long periods of time out of the paid workforce bringing up your children.

Business Spotlight editor Tenley van den Berg is here now to give us some advice on this topic.

[14] Interview: Tenley van den Berg **M**

David Ingram: Hi, Tenley. You're a parent, aren't you?

Tenley van den Berg: Yes, I have two kids aged seven and nine. Why?

Ingram: Well, a friend of mine has been a stay-at-home mother for a few years. Now, she is keen to get a job, but doesn't know how to address the gap in her résumé. Do you have any advice for her?

van den Berg: I understand how she feels. Parenting small children is extremely demanding and it is a true learning experience. Unfortu-

nately, it's still culturally unacceptable to list "parenting" on a résumé.

Ingram: That must be very frustrating for parents wanting to rejoin the workforce.

van den Berg: It is. Potential employers may be reluctant to employ someone who's been out of the workforce for a long time. But not only that: a few years spent child-rearing — arguably one of the most important jobs in the world — often translates into less pay over the course of one's career.

Ingram: How should my friend show the value of her years spent rearing children on a résumé, then?

van den Berg: There are a couple of things she can do. She can write an executive summary showcasing her experiences or qualifications. She could also include a section outlining her core proficiencies, including skills such as proj-

arguably ► wohl

child-rearing

► Aufziehen von Kindern

core proficiency

► Kernkompetenz

executive summary

► Kurzfassung

gap ► Lücke

keen: be - to do sth. UK

► (unbedingt) etw. tun wollen

rejoin the workforce

► hier: in den Beruf zurückkehren

(workforce

► Erwerbsbevölkerung)

reluctant: be - to do sth.

► zögern, etw. zu tun

résumé US

► Lebenslauf, Vita

showcase sth.

► etw. herausstellen

ect management, client relations and cost controls. Any volunteer or part-time work she has done may also give her résumé a boost.

Ingram: Thanks for the tips, Tenley. I'll pass them along to my friend.

van den Berg: I hope they help.

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LEADERSHIP

The importance of leadership

[15] Introduction

David Ingram: OK, we'll stay on the topic of careers now and focus on the issue of leadership, the subject of a new regular section in *Business Spotlight*. And we're delighted to welcome the author of this section, Bob Dignen, who's been a regular author at the magazine for many years.

[16] Interview: Bob Dignen **A**

Erin Perry: Bob, why exactly is the topic of leadership so important in business life?

Bob Dignen: It's interesting. I think when you ask the question, "Why is leadership important?", it's a little bit like asking the question, "Why is communication important?". Leadership, like communication, for me, is a key part of life. It's not really something that you can avoid. Two human beings come together, there is influence, there is impact from one person to the other and that, for me is, leadership. It's unavoidable, it's fundamental. And, therefore, if it's a fact of life, it's very, very important to engage with and to think about. And, of course, in pro-

boost: give sth. a ~

► etw. Auftrieb geben

engage with sth.

► sich mit etw. befassen

impact

► (Aus-)Wirkung

topic ► Thema

volunteer

► ehrenamtlich

fessional life, we often think about leadership as something more positional, as hierarchical. But, in fact, leadership concerns all of us, and we have very fundamental questions to ask ourselves in life. You know, do I want to be led or do I want to lead? And that's a very important question we need to ask. Of course, if we want to be led, we partly become victims of those who lead us. If we want to lead, then we face the question: OK, how do I want to lead? What is my leadership value proposition?

Perry: What aspects of leadership do you look at in your first article?

Dignen: Well, I think in the first article, I deal with what I just spoke about. You know, what is leadership? It's not just a hierarchical, alien thing. It's part of everybody's life, both professionally and personally. It's about how you choose to interact with other people. So, leadership is not really a choice. You are a born leader, like it or not. And therefore, you have to reflect on yourself. You know, what is my leadership talent? What are the behaviours that I have now? How would I like to develop? And particularly for those working in large international organizations, to deal with the complexity that leadership really means different things to different people in different places. For some, leadership is about expertise, I mean telling people the right thing to do. In other cul-

tures, it's much more about enabling, it's about humility. In some cultures, leadership is very visible, it's the inspirational hero on stage. In other places, it's about the quiet person, saying very little — that's a signal of success as a leader. So, I think a lot of the articles will address the challenges of leading internationally, where there is very little consensus about what good leadership is.

Perry: And what are some of the topics that you'll be covering in future articles?

Dignen: Yeah, I mean, the topics that I'm going to touch upon I hope are very real and relevant and come, really, from my day-to-day coaching experience, where so much of what I talk about in coaching discussions is about how an individual leads themselves or how they manage the leaders around them. It's how they manage those relationships. Probably one of the most important and common topics is: How do I get other people to do what I want them to do? How do I influence another person? Maybe, to deliver something more urgently, perhaps, than they want to. How do I get somebody to

alien ➔ fremd

expertise

➔ Sachkompetenz

face sth.

➔ etw. gegenüberstehen

humility

➔ Bescheidenheit, Demut

victim ➔ Opfer

visible

➔ sichtbar

take on an extra responsibility? That's one of the big challenges of business life. Secondly, how do I deal with my own leader? Many people in coaching relationships struggle with the leadership style of the person they report to. So, how do you handle that dilemma when your most important stakeholder isn't somebody, maybe, you respect or that you feel motivated by. And then thirdly, I think it's around self-leadership. You know, we are all overloaded, we are all overwhelmed, too many "urgents" in our inbox. And how do you, in today's overcrowded, overloaded world, decide what is most urgent? What is the urgent urgent? And what is the not-so-urgent urgent? Because if you don't do that well, it's very difficult to have the impact that you want to have in your organization. It's very difficult to lead effectively.

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

Dignen: Thank you. It was a pleasure.

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CAREER COACH

Careers and video games

[17] Introduction

David Ingram: OK, for our final careers item this time, you can listen to our new column, Career Coach. The author is Bo Graesborg, a freelance coach, consultant and author who worked for many years for a multinational electronics retailer, where he was responsible for executive education. In his first column, Bo explains why careers are like video games. The column is read by the author himself.

[18] Column: Bo Graseborg **A**

A colleague of mine, let's call him Tom, once told me a story that he said had taught him more about career success than all the seminars and training programmes he had ever participated in combined. He had recently been promoted to quite a senior position and suddenly found himself getting invited to events with people he otherwise would not have met.

inbox

► Posteingang, Inbox

look forward to doing sth.

► sich darauf freuen, etw. zu tun

overloaded

► überlastet

overwhelmed

► (mit Arbeit) überhäuft

promote sb.

► jmdn. befördern

report to sb.

► jmdm. unterstellt sein

senior

► leitend

stakeholder

► Interessenvertreter(in); hier: Akteur(in)



At one such event, he was standing right next to the European vice president of a very important business partner. Eager to grasp the opportunity, Tom launched into a pitch (well-rehearsed, Tom always comes prepared) of a business idea. It was going well, Tom thought, but the VP just smiled at Tom, then put his arm on his shoulder and interrupted him, saying: “Relax, Tom — we can talk about all that tomorrow. Have you tried the canapés?”

Tom had been successful in his career mainly because of his incredible drive, determination and ambition, but standing there at the buffet, he realized that what got you here, won't take you there.

Corporate worlds are like old-fashioned video games. In the beginning, it's all relatively simple. Through rounds one and two, you are fine doing the basic tricks and moving around efficiently. As the rounds go on, the game becomes increasingly difficult and you need additional weapons: a laser gun to defeat the dragon in round four, a pot of gold to buy your way past the witch in seven and an energy drink to see you through the desert in nine. In the Job Game, Tom had come through to round three but now realized he needed relationship-building skills more than sharp intelligence and dedication.

corporate world

► Unternehmens-, Geschäftswelt

dedication

► Engagement, Leistungsbereitschaft

dragon ► Drache

drive

► hier: Schwung, Tatendrang

eager; be - to do sth.

► unbedingt etw. tun wollen

grasp sth.

► etw. ergreifen

incredible ► unglaublich

launch into sth.

► mit etw. loslegen

pitch

► Präsentations-, Überzeugungsgespräch

see sb. through sth.

► jmdm. durch etw. hindurchhelfen

VP ► vice president

well-rehearsed

► gut eingeübt

witch ► Hexe

Over the next months, we'll be looking at the ingredients of Job Game success. We'll be examining some of the paradoxes that come with increased responsibility, and we'll be providing sage advice to those whose careers are stuck, to those whose careers are just taking off and to those who never had any real career ambitions but are just interested in becoming more effective at work.

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ingredient

• Bestandteil; hier: Faktor, Komponente

sage

• weise, klug

stuck: sb.'s career is ~

• jmd. kommt beruflich nicht weiter

take off

• abheben; hier: gerade beginnen, erfolgreich zu verlaufen

LANGUAGE

SKILL UP!

Boost your vocabulary

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

David Ingram: OK, let's "skill up" on our language now by practising some idioms. First, listen to a dialogue between Jill and Dan. The language they use is very simple.

Jill: I'm going with my feelings here, but I think we've reached a point where there will be an important change.

Dan: I agree. You know, we're not even doing the most important and simplest things right. We need to try something else.

Jill: I think we're going to have a difficult time.

Ingram: Now, you'll hear the same dialogue again, but this time, Jill and Dan use more idiomatic language. Listen out for the idioms.

Jill: I'm going with my gut here, but I think we've reached a tipping point.

Dan: I agree. You know, we're not even getting the basics right. We need to shift gears.

Jill: I think we're in for a bumpy ride.

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

1. If you follow your feelings when doing something, you go with your...

a) gut.

b) heart.

➤ **a)** is right. If you "go with your gut", you follow your feelings. Next one.

2. If you create the right conditions for doing something, you get the basics...

a) right.

b) fixed.

➤ **a)** is right. If you "get the basics right", you create the right conditions for doing something. Next one.

3. If you totally change the way you're doing something, you shift...

a) ways.

b) gears.

➤ **b)** is right. If you "shift gears", you do something completely differently. OK, last one.

4. If you're going to face difficulties, you're in for a bumpy...

a) trip.

b) ride.

➤ **b)** is right. If you are "in for a bumpy ride", you're going to have a difficult time.

Ingram: Did you get those four idioms right? If not, go back and try the exercise again.

[20] Exercise: Idioms (II)

Erin Perry: In this exercise, you can practise the idioms in the previous exercise again. You'll hear the sentences that Jill or Dan said using an idiom. In the pause, rephrase what they said in simpler words. Then you'll hear the simpler version again for you to repeat. Don't worry if your simpler sentence is slightly different to ours. OK, here's the first one.

Jill: I'm going with my gut here.

➤ I'm going with my feelings here.

Perry: OK, next one.

Dan: You know, we're not even getting the basics right.

➤ You know, we're not even doing the most important and simplest things right.

Perry: Next one.

face sth.

➤ etw. gegenüberstehen

Dan: We need to shift gears.

► We need to try something else.

Perry: OK, and the last one

Jill: I think we're in for a bumpy ride.

► I think we're going to have a difficult time.

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

[21] Exercise: False friends **M**

David Ingram: Let's continue "skilling up" on our vocabulary. In this exercise, we'll look at some false friends — pairs of words that sound similar in German and English, but with very different meanings. We'd like you to translate from German into English, being careful to avoid the false friends. Let's begin.

Ingram: You use this phrase when you want to think about something again before taking a decision. Please translate the phrase.

German: *es überschlafen*

English: sleep on it

Ingram: Don't say "oversleep", as this means that you wake up too late in the morning and, therefore, don't arrive at work on time or don't make it to an appointment in time. In Ger-

man, that is *verschlafen*. Translate this sentence, please.

German: *Ich denke, es ist besser, es noch einmal zu überschlafen.*

English: I think it's better to sleep on it again.

Ingram: Well done. If you found this difficult, try the exercise again.

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

David Ingram: As we just heard, the English verb "oversleep" is *verschlafen* in German. But if *verschlafen* is used with an object — that is, *etw. verschlafen* — then it's translated as "miss sth." in English. In this exercise, we'll practise these two meanings. You'll hear a sentence with a beep. In the pause, decide if you need "oversleep" or "miss" for the beep and say the sentence with the right verb in the correct form. Then you'll hear the full sentence again for you to repeat. Ready?

1. I forgot to set the alarm clock and [beep].

► I forgot to set the alarm clock and overslept. OK. Next sentence.

2. She was so busy that she [beep] our appointment.

► She was so busy that she missed our appointment.

in time ► rechtzeitig

on time ► pünktlich

OK, now listen carefully because there are two beeps in our third and last sentence.

3. He [beep] almost every morning and often [beep] lunch.
- He overslept almost every morning and often missed lunch.

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

[23] Dialogue and exercise: Collocations

Erin Perry: For our final Skill Up! exercise, we'll look at some collocations. These are words that frequently go together to form word partnerships. Listen carefully to this dialogue now, focusing on the collocations with the term "research". We'll then do an exercise on them.

Paul: The last time the company funded such research, nobody was happy with the results. The research was flawed.

Janice: Not this time. We'll be carrying out painstaking research over the next two years. Already, our preliminary research suggests that this drug will save lives.

Perry: OK, in this exercise, you'll hear the beginning of a sentence describing a situation. In the pause, complete the sentence using a collocation from the dialogue with the term "research".

1. If you give money for research, you...
- **fund research.** If you give money to research, you fund research.

OK, next one.

2. If you do research, you...
- **carry out research.** If you do research, you carry out research.

Next one.

3. Research that is not final is...
- **preliminary research.** Research that is not final is preliminary research.

OK, last one.

4. Research with errors in it is...
- **flawed research.** Research with errors in it is flawed research.

carry sth. out

- etw. durchführen

flawed

- fehlerhaft

fund sth.

- etw. finanzieren

painstaking

- gründlich

preliminary

- vorläufig

research

- Forschung(sarbeit(en))

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

Business Spotlight 8/2020, pp. 42–43

TALKING FINANCE

Exponential growth

[24] Introduction

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

Erin Perry: Yes, and this time, Ian's topic is that of “exponential growth”, something we've heard a lot about during the coronavirus crisis.

[25] Interview: Ian McMaster ^A

Ian McMaster: We've heard the terms “exponential growth” and “growing exponentially” a lot recently, particularly in relation to the coronavirus crisis. For example, we might hear that the number of cases of infection has been “growing exponentially” or “showing exponential growth”.

Now, when we hear these terms, we automatically think about something that is growing very rapidly. And indeed, if we look at dictionary definitions, this is one of the meanings that we find, sometimes marked as informal usage.

So, for example, if we hear someone say that a politician's popularity has grown exponentially, they do probably simply mean that it has grown rapidly.

The mathematical meanings of the terms “exponential” and “exponentially” are more precise, however. They simply mean a constant rate of growth over a number of time periods, for example, over a number of weeks or months or years. Now, this rate could be very small, for example involving a one per cent increase in each time period. Or it could be very large, involving, say, a 100 per cent increase or a doubling within that same time period. In both cases, the growth is exponential because the rate is constant in each time period. And in both cases, the absolute increase rises over time. But clearly, in one case, the growth rate is small so the growth over time is slow. And in the other case, the growth rate is very large and so the growth is very fast.

So, although non-mathematicians typically mean rapid growth when they talk about exponential growth, it's maybe worth remembering that this isn't necessarily the case.

Business Spotlight 8/2020, p. 44

SHORT STORY

[26] Introduction

David Ingram: Now, it's time for our latest short story by James Schofield. It's called "Catchphrase" and involves a situation in which somebody's own words come back to show him what he needs to do.

Perry: Sounds intriguing. Let's listen in.

[27] Catchphrase **M**

"...and remember what my old sheepdog Billy taught me: who dares, wins!"

There was an explosion of lights, rock music blasted from the speakers and Jack Pagett marched to the front of the stage. He stood smiling, waving to the left and right, pointing at somebody in the audience and...

"Cut!"

The music stopped. Jack looked across the empty auditorium to the projection box, where Tony King was watching the rehearsal.

"What's wrong, Tony?" he asked, shading his eyes from the spotlights.

audience

- Publikum

blast • dröhnen

Cut!

- Schnitt; hier: Stopp!

rehearsal

- Probe

spotlight

- Scheinwerfer(licht)



“How many times have we told you, Jack? Point and give a thumbs up. A thumbs up! What’s the problem?”

Jack frowned. “But who am I giving it to?”

Tony exploded.

“For Chrissake!” he screamed. “Bibi? Where are you? Do your bloody job!”

I hurried on stage with a bottle of water, my heart thumping as it always did when I was near Jack. As he drank, I explained that the finger-point and thumbs-up gesture were not meant for anyone specific. “Each member of the audience wants the illusion they’re your friend, Jack. It makes them feel loved.”

“Ah,” he said sadly, “so, I’m faking love now?” He shook his head, and I found myself feeling guilty.

At that time, I worked for Tony King. He ran an agency called King’s Speech, which provided top speakers for company conferences. Design thinking, environmentalism, digitalization — as long as the show was entertaining, companies were happy to pay.

But Jack was different from Tony’s other speakers, who were mostly ex-salespeople. Jack was originally a sheep farmer, who Tony had met by chance on a farm in New Zealand. He was likeable but, more important, charismatic. Not because he was brilliant, but because he could take funny farming anecdotes and connect them with the topics that

companies wanted to hear about. Audiences loved him.

When he joined King’s Speech, Tony had asked me to look after him, even though I was about to leave the agency. I’d had enough of the phoney catchphrases our speakers all used, and I wanted to write a novel.

“It’s all bullshit, Tony,” I’d said. “‘Who dares, wins!’ and ‘When life gives you lemons, make lemonade!’ — I’m sick of it.”

“Yes, but Bibi, this guy’s special. Coach him for six months, and I’ll give you enough money to write your novel without living off packet soup.”

Two years later, I was still there. You see, I had fallen in love with Jack, but, although he was always nice to me, he never seemed interested

bloody UK ifml.

► verdammt

by chance

► zufällig

catchphrase

► Slogan

Chrissake:

for ~ US ifml.

► verflucht noch mal

design thinking

► etwa: kreative Problemlösung und Ideenfindung

environmentalism

► (Engagement für den) Umweltschutz

fake sth.

► etw. vertäuschen

live off sth.

► von etw. leben

packet soup

► Tütensuppe

phoney ifml.

► falsch; hier auch: verlogen

sick: be ~ of sth.

► etw. satthaben

thumbs up:

give a ~ ifml.

► den Daumen hochhalten

thump

► (heftig) klopfen

in anything more. So, I stayed and gradually turned him from a sheep farmer into a corporate motivational guru. He earned good money, but I could see (because I watched him closely) that every clichéd catchphrase or cheap presenter's trick that I taught him added a grey hair to his head. This made me feel guilty. The only alternative, however, was to get him to go back to his sheep. I couldn't do that.

Anyway, on this particular evening, he was to talk about corporate environmentalism to an audience of car salespeople. He didn't like the speech I'd written for him, and as we went through it after lunch, he was sulky.

"It's all greenwashing," he said.

"It has a great title," I said, trying to be patient. "Global warming isn't cool!"

"Oh, very clever," he sneered. "Wonderful use of your writing skills. What happened to your novel?"

I was speechless.

"It's like that stupid story you invented for me with Billy the sheepdog and 'Who dares, wins'. It's a waste of your talent," he said. "I think..."

"That's enough!" I snapped. "I've wasted two years of my life because of you! But after tonight, I'm resigning!"

"...because of you?" he asked. "How is it my fault?"

I paused. I couldn't admit I was crappy about him.

"True, it's not your fault," I said, heading for the door. "Forget it!" Then I ran away, turned off my mobile phone and hid in my hotel room.

Before the show started, I went down to the projection box to supervise the technical side for the last time.

"Music and lights," I said to the technician as Jack walked on to huge applause.

"Thank you, thank you! Now, what do you know about... sheep?" he began. Everybody laughed.

"Not much? Well, they fart and they burp. A lot."

A big laugh, but this was not the speech I'd written.

"Thirty litres of methane a day. That's a pretty stinky animal and not good for the planet. Not as bad as your cars, but that's another story..." They laughed again.

For two years, he had told people they should do only the things they believe in, he went on. But what about himself?

burp ▶ rülpfen

corporate

▶ Unternehmens-;
hier: für Unternehmen

crazy: be ~ about sb. ifml.

▶ in jmdn. verknallt sein

fart ▶ furzen

greenwashing

▶ pseudo-umweltbewusstes
Marketing

snap

▶ blaffen

sneer

▶ spotten

stinky ifml.

▶ stinkend, übelriechend

sulky

▶ mürrisch, schlecht gelaunt

“I’m a sheep farmer. How can I talk about cars and the environment when the only thing I really understand is an animal that farts and grows 15 kilos of wool every year? Stick to your knitting!” my grandma always said. Well, she was right about part of that, I suppose...”

The audience was eating it up.

“Anyway, it’s time now for me to get back to my sheep. But I can’t go alone. You see, there’s this person I used to work with...”

He’d wasted two years being too afraid to tell her how he felt about her, he said. But now he’d upset her, and she wouldn’t answer his calls. I could feel the technician looking at me.

“You see, I’ve finally got up enough courage to invite her to visit New Zealand for a holiday. Maybe she could begin the novel she wants to write while I look after my sheep. So, this is my question to all of you and whoever is listening in the projection box at the back: do you think I should ask her?”

The silence of 2,000 people holding their breath filled my ears. Then the technician pushed a microphone into my hands.

“Say something,” he said. “I’m begging you!”

I thought for a moment, then made a decision.

“Well,” I asked Jack and the audience, “what did your old sheepdog Billy teach you?”

Business Spotlight 8/2020, pp. 46–47

AND FINALLY

ONE QUESTION

[28] Introduction

David Ingram: And finally, we have a new section on *Business Spotlight Audio*, in which we ask you to identify our mystery person. Listen now to our clues.

[29] Who am I?

- I was born on 8 May 1926 in London.
- I grew up on the University of Leicester campus, where my father was the principal.
- My parents took in two Jewish girls from Germany during the Second World War.
- When I was a boy, finding fossils was “magic”.
- I studied geology and zoology at Cambridge.
- I held senior positions at the BBC in the 1960s and 1970s.
- When I got my first job in television, I didn’t even own a TV!

eat it up

- hier: mit Vergnügen zuhören

Jewish

- jüdisch

principal

- Rektor(in)

senior

- leitend

stick to your knitting *ifml*.

- Schuster, bleib bei deinem

Leisten

upset sb.

- jmdn. verärgern

- My brother played the industrialist park owner in the film *Jurassic Park*.
- I received a knighthood in 1985, which is why I am called “Sir”.
- I store my honorary degrees (I have at least 32) in a drawer.
- At least 11 plants and animals have been named after me.
- But don't call me an “animal lover” — the term annoys me!
- The British public voted to name a research ship *Boaty McBoatface*. In the end, the ship was named after me, as the public's choice was thought to be too ridiculous.
- I may well be the most widely travelled person in the world: to make *The Life of Birds* documentary, I covered 411,992 kilometres — that's like travelling ten times around the globe!
- The one animal I do not like? Rats!
- BBC *Wildlife* magazine asked me what superpower I would choose to have. I answered: “To fly. It would be wonderful, wouldn't it?”
- I have one of the most recognizable voices in television.
- At 83, I reached the North Pole.
- In September, I gave a prehistoric megalodon tooth from Malta to Prince George. Malta was miffed.

- I also joined Instagram in September. Within 4 hours and 44 minutes, I already had a million followers, breaking Jennifer Aniston's record by 32 minutes.
- In October, Prince William and I launched the Earthshot Prize — the world's biggest environmental prize.
- So, who am I?

Ingram: So, do you know who our mystery person is? If you want to find out, go to our website at www.business-spotlight.de/who0820, where you'll find the answer.

Business Spotlight 8/2020, pp. 50

annoy sb.

- jmdn. (ver)ärgern, nerven

drawer

- Schublade

honorary degree

- Ehrendoktorwürde

knighthood: receive a ~

- in den Adelsstand erhoben werden

launch sth.

- etw. ins Leben rufen

megalodon

- Megalodon (ausgestorbene Haiart)

miffed *ifjml.*

- verstimmt, verärgert

research ship

- Forschungsschiff

CONCLUSION

[30] For more information

David Ingram: Well, we've come to the end of *Business Spotlight Audio* 8/2020. We hope you've enjoyed it and have found our exercises helpful.

Erin Perry: We offer *Business Spotlight Audio* both as a CD and a subscription download. For more information, and to find out about our range of products, visit our website at www.business-spotlight.de.

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

Perry: And Erin Perry...

Ingram: Wishing you success with your business English.

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