

EASY E

CEF level A2

MEDIUM M

CEF levels B1–B2

ADVANCED A

CEF levels C1–C2

CEF: European Framework of Reference for Languages

INTRODUCTION

[1] Let's get started! E

David Ingram: Welcome to *Business Spotlight Audio 12/2021*. I'm David Ingram from England.

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

Ingram: We'll hear from Bob Dignen about the role of intuition in leadership. We'll provide you with tips and useful phrases for complaining when something goes wrong. And we'll hear a short story about a battle between two very competitive organizations. As always, you can find all the texts, dialogues and exercises in your audio booklet. OK, let's get started!

TRENDS

NAMES AND NEWS

[2] Introduction (I) E

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

whose work combines humour, numbers and love.

Erin Perry: Wow, that is quite a combination, David.

Ingram: Isn't it just, Erin? The person in question is Hannah Fry, the UK's most famous mathematician, whose TED talk on the mathematics of love has been viewed more than five million times.

Perry: OK, gotta listen to this — and watch that TED talk!

[3] More than a number M

Hannah Fry has a 90 per cent chance of staying clear of the cancer she fought in 2021. To most people, these odds sound good. But Fry says that when the same odds are thought of as one in ten, "you suddenly feel you're in a line-up of ten people, and one person's going to get shot".

Explaining numbers with humour has made Fry the UK's most famous mathematician. She can be heard regularly on BBC's Radio 4, and her TED Talk "The Mathematics of Love" has had over five million views. Her interest in artificial intelligence has inspired her to create a podcast about the work of Google's DeepMind.

Since her illness, she has tried to help people to understand the human aspect of maths. "It's very easy when you are working with data to just think of people as though they are numbers," she told the *Financial Times*. Her next

project is a BBC documentary about her experience with cancer.

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cancer ➤ Krebs

line-up ➤ Aufstellung

odds ➤ Chancen

stay clear of sth.

➤ etw. meiden; hier: nicht mehr an etw. erkranken

[4] Introduction (II) E

Erin Perry: Our next story is about a Bulgarian comic-book illustrator who made the most of the time he had to spend dealing with customer service at an airline. As you listen to our story, answer this question: What did Alex Maleev do in the three days of hour-long calls it took him to speak to a Lufthansa agent? Ready? Listen now.

[5] Comic relief E

“I can do this all day... Let’s see who blinks first,” tweeted Bulgarian comic-book illustrator Alex Maleev in August 2021. What should have been a quick call to Lufthansa airlines had turned into a three-day ordeal.

At the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, airlines reduced staff because few people were travelling. By summer 2021, more customers were flying again — and also calling because the travel rules were constantly changing. But the airlines didn’t have enough staff to answer calls. “We are doing our utmost to increase our capacities,” Lufthansa spokeswoman Christina Semmel told *The Wall Street Journal* at the time.

Maleev didn’t get angry about the wait times, however. In the three days of hour-long calls it took him to speak to a Lufthansa agent, he drew Marvel Comics superheroes, which he posted on Twitter. In a tweet, he thanked Lufthansa for giving him time to practise his professional skills. “I hope you used that time to do likewise,” he added.

Comic relief

➤ etwa: Befreiende Komik

blink ➤ blinzeln

do likewise ➤ dasselbe tun

do one’s utmost ➤ sich nach allen Kräften bemühen

ordeal ➤ Tortur;
hier: Geduldsprobe

spokeswoman

➤ Sprecherin

tweet ➤ Twitter-Nachricht;
twittern

[6] Answer: Listening comprehension E

Erin Perry: OK? Did you get the answer to our question? What did Alex Maleev do in the three days of hour-long calls it took him to speak to a Lufthansa agent?

➤ The answer is that he drew Marvel Comics superheroes and posted the drawings on Twitter. Listen again.

“In the three days of hour-long calls it took him to speak to a Lufthansa agent, he drew Marvel Comics superheroes, which he posted on Twitter.”

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

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GLOBAL BUSINESS

Vibes and wines

[7] Introduction **E**

David Ingram: Now, for a complete change of subject, we look at someone whose background is as a sound engineer, but then used this experience — and good vibrations — to turn his hand to winegrowing. Anthony Lewis is the subject of Melita Cameron-Wood's Technology article in the latest issue of *Business Spotlight*. And Melita is here now to tell us more about him.

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

David Ingram: Melita. Tell us about what you discovered about Anthony Lewis and the way he used his expertise as a sound engineer to move into winegrowing.

Melita Cameron-Wood: Yeah, so I spoke to Anthony Lewis, who is the founder of Frequency Winery, and he's also an audio engineer and social entrepreneur, who's now based in Nicaragua. And you might not expect someone with a background in audio engineering, who used to work in a studio on products such as Sony Super Audio, to go into winemaking and viticulture. But this happened because Anthony's father actually had a winery in Canada, and he asked him to become a partner in the business a few years ago.

And Anthony Lewis took all of the knowledge he had accumulated while working in the

studio with sound frequencies with him when he began working with wine. And he told me a lot of his approach was about experimentation. He started asking questions that were quite unusual questions about how sound could influence the growth of vines, could improve grape quality or could potentially quicken up the process of getting the sediment to sink to the bottom of the barrels that the wine was stored in.

So, in other words, how could audio frequencies help to clarify wine more quickly. And these questions led him to professors of viticulture and he began exploring different theories. He also mentioned the Japanese pseudoscientist Dr Emoto, who performed a number of experiments using water and music and different emotions. So, Dr Emoto said words to water in a controlled environment, for example. Some of these words were angry words. Some of these words were happy words. And he then observed the crystals that he made through flash-freezing to see how these words or sounds had influenced the water.

And when Anthony Lewis heard about these experiments, he became really interested in the effect that sounds can have on liquids, creating distortion effects, for example, with heavy metal music or creating smooth, beautiful crystals with positive emotions and vibes, I suppose.

So, this is what we spoke about, and he actually has a recording studio in Frequency Winery,

which he founded in 2012, after he became interested in these different ways of influencing liquid through sound. So, yeah, it was a really fascinating conversation we had. That's Anthony Lewis who continues to spread good vibes, not only through his wine, but also through his social entrepreneurship in Nicaragua. He's currently working on a project called Everything Nicaragua, which helps to promote local businesses in the area, and he told me this idea of good vibrations, and exchanging positivity and helping one another is key to everything that he does. So, yeah, it was a very positive, uplifting conversation that definitely left me with a great deal of, erm, of good vibrations, I suppose.

Business Spotlight 12/2021, pp. 18–21

clarify sth.

- etw. klären

distortion

- Verzerrung, Deformierung

entrepreneur

- Unternehmer(in)

entrepreneurship

- Unternehmertum; hier: unternehmerische Initiative

expertise

- Sachkompetenz, Fachwissen

flash-freezing

- Schnellgefrierverfahren, Schockgefrieren

grape

- (Wein-)Traube

key: be ~ to sth.

- für etw. wesentlich sein

sediment

- Sediment, Trübstoff(e)

sound engineer

- Tontechniker(in); -ingenieur(in)

store sth. in

- etw. (ein)lagern

uplifting

- erbaulich, motivierend

vibe

- Schwingung

vine

- Weinrebe, Rebstock

viticulture

- Weinkunde, Weinanbau

winegrowing

- Weinanbau

winery

- Weingut, Winzerei

HEAD-TO-HEAD

Should we stop giving Christmas presents?

[9] Introduction **E**

Erin Perry: Welcome now to our debate section, in which Business Spotlight editor-in-chief Ian McMaster looks at the two sides of a current controversy. The subject of our Head-to-Head debate in the latest issue of Business Spotlight is whether we should stop giving each other Christmas presents.

David Ingram: Stop doing what, Erin? Don't think you're going to get out of buying me a present this year!

Perry: Well, wouldn't you rather I just gave you money, David, so you could buy something you really want?

Ingram: Well, now you mention it, that's not a bad idea. Anyway, let's hear more from Ian about this debate.

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

Ian McMaster: Should we stop giving Christmas presents? For many people, this might seem like a very strange question to ask. After all, giving presents is an important part of many cultures — and not only at Christmas time.

Those who say that we should stop giving presents argue that, because we often give people things that they don't really want or like, we are, in effect, destroying value. Those who receive

presents often don't value them as highly as the price paid by the giver. So, it would be better simply to give others money instead.

Those who believe that we *shouldn't* stop giving presents argue that the very act of giving shows other people that we care about them, regardless of what the actual present is. And they point out that we don't always have to buy people objects as presents. Instead, the present could be a shared experience, and could be given at any time of the year, without a specific reason.

Another difficult issue to decide, but my view is that, no, we shouldn't completely stop giving Christmas presents, particularly to children. But we should be more careful about what we choose and, if we are not sure about whether somebody will really like something, we shouldn't be embarrassed about giving them money instead — or asking them if they'd like us to donate money to a good cause of their choice. That's my view. But what do you think?

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argue that...

- argumentieren, dass ...

destroy sth.

- etw. zerstören

donate sth.

- etw. spenden

embarrassed: be ~ about sth.

- von etw. peinlich berührt sein

issue

- Frage

point sth. out

- auf etw. verweisen

COMMUNICATION

BUSINESS SKILLS

Complaining

[11] Essential phrases for complaining

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

Erin Perry: David, that's very helpful because I've been meaning for a while to complain to the management about the way things operate around here.

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

1. You want to say that your company would like to get its money back.
 - Use "expect", "refund" and "costs".
 - We expect a refund of the costs.

2. You want to make a complaint about the late delivery.
 - Use “we”, “wish” and “complain”.
 - We wish to complain about the late delivery.
3. You want to give somebody more details about the reason for your complaint.
 - Use “let”, “give” and “background”.
 - Let me give you the background to this.
4. You want to say that you were not satisfied with the delivery.
 - Use “delivery”, “meet” and “specifications”.
 - The delivery did not meet our specifications.
5. You want to ask someone to take care of the issue.
 - Use “make sure”, “deal with” and “problem”.
 - Please make sure that you deal with this problem.
6. You want to say that there haven't been any problems before.
 - Use “your deliveries”, “trouble-free” and “in the past”.
 - Your deliveries have been trouble-free in the past.
7. You want to set a deadline for a reply.
 - Use “need”, “answer” and “end of next week”.
 - We need an answer by the end of next week.

Ingram: Excellent. Well done!

[12] Essential words for complaining

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

Paul: What's up, Prue? You look a bit stressed.

Prue: I am. We just got the delivery of taps for the toilets and, when we opened the boxes, we found that they were the wrong ones. It's a nightmare — we really need to finish the bathrooms. The handover's next Friday! I've called the company to complain, but there was no answer.

Paul: You'll have to write them an email. State the facts clearly and concisely. You can give them until tomorrow lunchtime to replace the taps.

Prue: I will. I'm going to demand a refund if they can't deliver the right taps in time. They need to know that we were relying on them.

Paul: Absolutely! The specifications are quite clear in the contract.

Prue: Yeah, OK. I'll try calling one more time.

Paul: As a last resort, you might need to get help from the legal department.

Prue: Let's hope it was a simple mix-up and they have the taps we need in stock.

Ingram: OK, now we'll give you two alternative words, and then you'll hear one of the sentences from the dialogue again — this time, with a beep where one of the words belongs. In the pause, choose the right word to complete the sentence. Then, you'll hear the full sentence again. Repeat the sentence trying to copy the speakers' pronunciation and intonation. Ready?

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

Prue: I've called the company to [beep], but there was no answer.

• I've called the company to complain, but there was no answer.

2. And here's the next pair of words: "concise" OR "concisely"

Paul: State the facts clearly and [beep].

• State the facts clearly and concisely.

3. And another pair of words to choose from: "refund" OR "refurb"

Prue: I'm going to demand a [beep] if they can't deliver the right taps in time.

• I'm going to demand a refund if they can't deliver the right taps in time.

4. And the next pair of words: "specialities" OR "specifications"

Paul: The [beep] are quite clear in the contract.

• The specifications are quite clear in the contract.

5. In the next and last sentence, there are two pairs of words: "resolve" OR "resort" and "law" OR "legal"

Paul: As a last [beep], you might need to get help from the [beep] department.

• As a last resort, you might need to get help from the legal department.

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

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tap ➤ Armatur

nightmare ➤ Albtraum

concisely ➤ kurz und prägnant

refund ➤ Rückerstattung

rely on sb.

➤ sich auf jmdn. verlassen

specifications

➤ Vorgaben, technische Details

legal department

➤ Rechtsabteilung

mix-up ➤ Verwechslung

stock: have sth. in

➤ etw. auf Lager haben

[13] Introduction E

David Ingram: OK, now, as I said, we'll hear seven tips on how to complain effectively, the subject of Ken Taylor's article in the latest issue of *Business Spotlight*.

Erin Perry: This should be fun — I'm going to put these complaints into practice as soon as we're finished.

Ingram: You do that, Erin. Let's listen to these tips now. They're read by Melita Cameron-Wood.

[14] Learning to complain

It's never easy to complain. In our personal lives, many of us simply suffer poor service in silence and avoid using that service again. But in business, we have to complain: when deliveries are late, bills are not paid or software doesn't do what it should. The danger is that some of us have to work ourselves up in order to complain. And our complaint is then made as an angry, personal attack.

This can be exaggerated when working in a second language. Language skills may function perfectly when relationships are positive and work progresses smoothly. But in difficult, negative situations, words may fail us and emotions take over.

Let's look at a step-by-step process that helps you to ensure that your complaint is dealt with effectively.

1. Know what you want to achieve

Before you complain, decide whether the complaint is worth making. Perhaps the problem is simply a minor glitch and complaining would unnecessarily damage a business relationship.

If you do go ahead, first, decide what solution would satisfy you. If the person receiving the complaint understands exactly what you expect, your complaint is easier for them to deal with. For example, if all you want is an apology, say so. Or maybe you want a refund on faulty goods or a replacement at a reduced cost.

Next, state your complaint very clearly — either in writing, on the phone or in person. In many cases, it is best to complain in writing. You then have a formal record of the complaint, and it allows you to include back-up evidence.

2. Be calm

Your complaint is more likely to be dealt with in a positive way if you use the right tone. When you complain in writing, write in a formal, polite and matter-of-fact way. If you are on the phone or speaking personally, stay calm. Speak a little more slowly than usual and try not to raise your voice or let any anger show.

People put up defences when confronted by someone who is obviously angry. This may prevent them from taking positive action to help you. Staying calm means that it is easier for you to think clearly and keep control of the situation.

3. Be descriptive

Give a clear description of the situation. Describe the context of your complaint. State the facts clearly and concisely, but give all the necessary details. Include, for example, timelines, quantities, prices and a clear description of what went wrong.

If you are writing, provide evidence to back up your statements. This might well include photographic evidence. Relevant, well-explained facts make your complaint more substantial and more authoritative.

At the same time, avoid generalizations. Try not to make statements beginning with the words, “You always...” or “You never...”. Such generalizations can damage a relationship. So, keep the tone of your complaint as neutral as possible.

4. Be specific

Talk or write about the “here and now”. Your complaint should deal with the specific problem. This allows you to be concise. Long, complicated explanations may simply confuse the person you are complaining to. They can make your main message unclear and prevent the person receiving your complaint from acting in the way you want.

In a written complaint, have just one clear message in each paragraph. Keep your sentences short and use bullet points.

5. Be realistic

Your complaint should lead to a positive change in the situation that is causing you problems. Any suggestions for change that you make should be realistic and practical.

In business, most complaints are based on clear contractual agreements. The contract usually specifies exactly what is expected of the parties involved. Your complaint should, therefore, be based on these clearly defined expectations and commitments.

Complaining about staff behaviour is trickier, as you often do not have evidence of what hap-

pened. Then it is important to describe exactly what happened from your perspective, how you felt about it and what you expect to happen in the future.

6. Be positive

It is much easier to digest a complaint if some positive feedback is also included. If you can, discuss how well things have worked in the past and how any problems have been successfully dealt with. And, if this is the case, talk about how well things are working presently, except for the case in question.

Never apologize for complaining. When you complain, you are doing your business partner a service. Therefore, pitch the complaint as a learning experience. Your constructive approach will allow them to look carefully at what they are doing wrong and to make the necessary adjustments to prevent it from happening again.

7. Be persistent

Set a deadline for when you expect to get a response. If this deadline is not met, be persistent. Follow up your complaint immediately by saying how you intend to take the matter further. Usually, this means escalating the complaint to a higher level in your business partner's organization. As a last resort, you might need to get help from your legal department.

adjustment

- Anpassung, Korrektur

anger ➤ Verärgerung

apologize for sth.

- sich für etw. entschuldigen

apology ➤ Entschuldigung

approach ➤ Vorgehensweise

back sth. up

- etw. untermauern

back-up evidence

- unterstützende(r) Beleg(e)

bullet point

- Aufzählungspunkt

commitment ➤ Zusage

complain ➤ sich beschweren

complaint ➤ Beschwerde

concisely ➤ kurz und prägnant

digest sth. ➤ etw. verdauen;

hier: verarbeiten

ensure sth.

- etw. sicherstellen

escalate sth.

- hier: etw. weiterleiten

exaggerate sth.

- etw. übertreiben;

hier: etw. verstärken

fail sb. ➤ jmdm. fehlen,

jmdm. im Stich lassen

faulty ➤ defekt, fehlerhaft

follow sth. up by doing sth.

- etw. im Anschluss an etw. tun

glitch ifml.

- Fehler, (kleiner) Defekt

last resort ➤ letzte Option

legal department

- Rechtsabteilung

matter-of-fact

- sachlich

persistent ➤ hartnäckig

pitch sth. as sth.

- etw. als etw. anpreisen; hier:

etw. wie etw. aussehen lassen

put up defenses ➤ eine

Abwehrhaltung einnehmen

refund ➤ Rückerstattung

specify sth. ➤ etw. festlegen

timeline ➤ Zeitrahmen,

zeitlicher Verlauf

tricky

- schwierig; hier auch: heikel

work oneself up

- sich aufregen

portance of hard work for your career, particularly for those of us who are not geniuses.

Erin Perry: Speak for yourself, David.

Ingram: Very amusing, Erin. Anyway, the column is read by the author himself.

[16] Column: Bo Graesborg M

Most of us are not geniuses. If you happen to be one (and there surely will be some geniuses among the fine readers of *Business Spotlight*), please stop reading now. This month's column is not for you.

Today, we'll look at what you can do to boost your career if you are OK but not super brilliant at what you do. I am not talking about getting by on your charm — which I am sure you have in spades — or about coasting through on good fortune, which is a risky method attempted by some. I am talking about working hard.

Working hard has gone out of fashion. HR professionals have long told tales of prospective in-demand employees turning the job interview on its head by focusing on what the company can offer them and not the other way around. Demographics are a big part of this, with more knowledge-worker jobs available than qualified knowledge workers. So is digitalization, with new fields opening up faster than you can say “social media”. And so is the arrival on the stage of new generations in the

CAREERS**CAREER COACH****The value of hard work****[15] Introduction E**

David Ingram: OK, let's move on now to our Careers section and our career coach, Bo Graesborg. In his latest column, Bo looks at the im-

workforce with differently shaded perspectives and aspirations.

When it comes to careers, however, things have changed a little less. There has always been a place for the geniuses and people with in-demand skills. But qualities such as drive, ambition, dedication and the willingness to go the extra mile continue to be major factors in explaining who takes the next step in organizations and who does not.

The good news is that stuff like being on time, positive body language, keeping one's promises, preparing for meetings and being coachable requires no talent and no genius. Of course, this also means there really is no good excuse for their absence.

In a remarkable and remarkably disarming display of self-knowledge and complete absence of self-pity, a colleague of mine once inadvertently summed up the message of today's column in just one sentence: "You know," he said, "I'm not the smartest guy in the room, so I just have to work a little harder."

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aspirations ➤ Bestrebungen;
hier: Ambitionen

boost one's career

➤ seine Karriere ankurbeln/
voranbringen

coast through ➤ hindurchgleiten;
hier: mühelos vorankommen

dedication

➤ Engagement, Einsatz

disarming

➤ entwaffnend

display ➤ Zurschaustellung

drive ➤ Antrieb, Schwung

fine ➤ hier: großartig

genius ➤ Genie

get by on one's charm

➤ seinen Charme spielen lassen
(**get by on sth.**)

➤ mit etw. über die Runden kommen)

go the extra mile

➤ sich besonders anstrengen

good fortune ➤ Glück

guy jfml. ➤ Typ, Mann

have sth. in spades jfml.

➤ reichlich von etw. besitzen
(**spade** ➤ hier: (Spiel)karte)
Pik)

HR professional

➤ Personalmanager(in),
Experte/Expertin für
Personalfragen

in-demand...

➤ gefragte(r)/begehrte(r) ...

inadvertently

➤ unabsichtlich

prospective

➤ potenziell

sum sth. up

➤ etw. zusammenfassen

workforce

➤ Erwerbsbevölkerung

LEADERSHIP Intuition

[17] Introduction **E**

Erin Perry: The second item in our Careers section looks at the topic of leadership. In the current issue of Business Spotlight, Bob Dignen looks at the role of intuition in leadership. Here's Bob now to tell us more.

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

Erin Perry: Welcome, Bob. What exactly do we mean by intuition and how is it relevant to leadership?

Bob Dignen: OK, well, in terms of definition, I'm not sure there is actually a scientific cast-iron definition of "intuition". For me, it's a kind of unconscious process of feeling or sensing that something is true, it is present around you. Or that something is even missing. And that

often arises, I think, when we come to take a decision, for example, when we meet somebody or when we're in a new situation. It's a kind of a gut instinct, information coming to your mind and you're not really sure what it is or where it's from. That might not sound very relevant for leadership today, but I think it is relevant because, at the end of the day, it's a source of information which we can use when we want to take a decision, when we want to assess a person or a situation. So, I don't think we should turn it off. I'm not sure we can turn it off. I guess the choice from a leadership point of view is to choose to dial it up or maybe to dial it down.

Perry: What are the dangers of intuition for leaders?

Dignen: I think probably the biggest risk of what someone calls intuition is that it's used to cover up basically some form of bias, prejudice or intolerance. You know, I meet somebody, I don't feel right with the person. I decide not to give them the job. And is that really based upon a positive thing we can call intuition? Or is it just the surfacing of some kind of negative bias? You know, I've done a lot of training, leadership training, over the years, and the core of that training is to expose ourselves often to the unconscious negativity and suspicion that we bring to first meetings with people or to new situations. And I often encourage people to

distrust these first impressions because they can be totally false. And I'm usually encouraging people to listen hard, collect the data, ask questions, and suggesting that a more rational and controlled process is needed. So, you know, that word "intuition", I think, can carry the risk that you're just dealing with bias, particularly if people decide to follow their intuition.

Perry: And what are the potential benefits of intuition?

Dignen: Well, if you want to take a positive look at intuition, as I've said before, you can just see it as an information process, but less kind of formally cognitive, just feeling and sensing. And that feeling and sensing is probably connected to a hard data process, but it's just subconscious. You know, the brain cannot consciously assimilate all the information available to it, that is available to the ears, the eyes, to touch. And for all of those things that we don't or can't consciously process, it's still entering our brains very often at a subconscious level. You know, we hear and see things without even knowing that we're doing it. And maybe that's what intuition is: information which is there and still useful but not fully available to our conscious mind as a clear idea. It just presents itself as a kind of a feeling and a sensation. So, I think if we look at it on that basis, as potentially useful data, then maybe we should pay atten-

tion to it and kind of interrogate it. And maybe use it once it's in the conscious mind to help us assess decisions, people or situations.

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

Dignen: Thanks very much.

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assess sb.

► jmdn. beurteilen, einschätzen

bias ► Voreingenommenheit

cast-iron definition

► feststehende Definition

(**cast iron** ► Gusseisen)

core ► Kern; hier: Mittelpunkt, Zentrum

dial sth. up/down

► etw. nach unten/oben

anpassen

expose oneself to sth.

► sich etw. aussetzen

gut instinct/feeling ifml.

► Bauchgefühl

interrogate sth.

► etw. befragen;

hier: hinterfragen

look forward to sth.

► sich auf etw. freuen

prejudice

► Vorurteil

surface sth.

► hier: etw. kenntlich machen

suspicion

► hier: Zweifel, Vermutung

Max: How was your trip to London, Polly? Did you manage to see a play or musical while you were there?

Polly: I did. I got tickets to see *Hairspray*. There was a cast that included many famous performers, but Les Dennis as Wilbur Turnblad attracted more attention than the other actors. I mean, he really made everyone laugh.

Max: It sounds like you really enjoyed yourself!

Polly: Oh, I did. It was very, very funny.

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

Max: How was your trip to London, Polly? Did you manage to catch a show while you were there?

Polly: I did. I got tickets to see *Hairspray*. There was a star-studded cast, but Les Dennis as Wilbur Turnblad stole the show. I mean, he really brought the house down.

Max: It sounds like you had a whale of a time!

Polly: Oh, I did. It was a laugh a minute.

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

LANGUAGE

SKILL UP!

Entertainment

[19] Exercise: Idioms (I) M

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

1. If you go and see a play or musical, you...
 - a) get a show.
 - b) catch a show.
 - b) is right. To “catch a show” means to “see a performance”. Next one.

2. If someone is more popular and better than everyone else in an event or situation, they...
 - a) win the show.
 - b) steal the show.
 - b) is right. Someone who is more popular and better than others in an event or situation “steals the show”. OK, next one.

3. If a cast includes many famous performers, we call it a...
 - a) star-studded cast.
 - b) star-sprinkled cast.
 - a) is right. A “star-studded cast” is one with lots of famous performers. Next one.

4. If an actor or actress makes everyone laugh a lot, they...
 - a) bring the house down.
 - b) let the house explode.
 - a) is right. Someone who “brings the house down” makes their audience roar with laughter. And the next one.

5. If you really enjoyed yourself, you...
 - a) had a whale of a time.
 - b) broke the ice.
 - a) is right. If you “had a whale of a time”, you enjoyed yourself a lot. And the last one.

6. If something was very, very funny, it was...
 - a) a laughing matter.
 - b) a laugh a minute.
 - b) is right. Something that is “a laugh a minute” is very, very funny.

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

cast ➤ Besetzung

[20] Exercise: Idioms (II)

Erin Perry: In this exercise, you can practise those idioms again. You'll hear the sentences that Polly and Max 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.

Max: Did you manage to catch a show while you were there?

- Did you manage to see a play or musical while you were there?

Polly: There was a star-studded cast, ...

- There was a cast that included many famous performers, ...

Polly: ...but Les Dennis as Wilbur Turnblad stole the show.

- ... but Les Dennis as Wilbur Turnblad attracted more attention than the other actors.

Polly: I mean, he really brought the house down.

- I mean, he really made everyone laugh.

Max: It sounds like you had a whale of a time!

- It sounds like you really enjoyed yourself!

Polly: It was a laugh a minute.

- It was very, very funny.

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

cast ➤ Besetzung

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

David Ingram: Let's continue "skilling up" on our vocabulary by looking at a false friend. False friends are pairs of words that sound similar in German and English. But their meanings are very different, so they can cause confusion and

misunderstanding. In this exercise, we'd like you to translate a German word and sentence into English, being careful to avoid the false friend. Let's begin.

Our word refers to the people who watch a performance. Please translate this word.

German: Publikum

English: audience

Ingram: You can't say "public" here. Used as a noun — "the public" — this refers to people in general. Indeed, we often speak of "the general public" — *die allgemeine Öffentlichkeit*. We can also use "public" as an adjective to refer to items or services that are for people in general. But the German word Publikum is translated as "audience". Translate this sentence, please.

German: Das Publikum applaudierte dem jungen Dirigenten.

English: The audience applauded the young conductor.

Ingram: Well done.

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

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

1. The [beep] do not have access to the parliament building.

- The public do not have access to the parliament building.

OK. Next sentence.

2. More money has to be invested in [beep] transport.

- More money has to be invested in public transport.

Next sentence.

3. After the performance, the actors mingled with their [beep].

- After the performance, the actors mingled with their audience.

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

4. Speaking in [beep] or to a large [beep] makes him nervous.

- Speaking in public or to a large audience makes him nervous.

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

access

- Zugang

mingle with sb.

- sich unter jmdn. mischen

[23] Dialogue and exercise: Collocations M

Erin Perry: For our final Skill Up! exercise, we'll look at some collocations. These are words that frequently go together to form word partnerships. Listen carefully to someone talking about TV shows she used to watch. We'll then do an exercise on it.

"One of my favourite TV shows used to be Britain's Got Talent, which is a televised talent show. Musicians, singers, variety acts, magicians and dancers of any age can take part by auditioning in front of a panel of judges. The winning act is chosen by the British public and goes on to appear in the Royal Variety Performance, a variety show that is filmed in front of members of the royal family and broadcast a few weeks later. I used to love watching Britain's Got Talent because it's a funny, heart-warming family show. But it's become too exploitative and fake."

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

1. A programme that is aimed at finding skilled people for a specific job is a...
- **talent show.** A programme that is aimed at finding skilled people for a specific job is a talent show.

OK, next one.

2. Entertainment that is made up of different kinds of performances is a...
- **variety show.** Entertainment that is made up of different kinds of performances is a variety show.

Next one.

3. A TV show that is watched by grandparents, parents and children alike is a...
- **family show.** A TV show that is watched by grandparents, parents and children alike is a family show.

Next one.

4. Someone who acts in a show...
- **appears in a show.** Someone who acts in a show appears in a show.

OK. Next one.

5. Instead of saying that you see a show, you can say that you...
- **watch a show.** Instead of saying that you see a show, you can say that you watch a show.

OK. And the last sentence.

18

6. TV stations...

- **broadcast a show.** TV stations broadcast a show.

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

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audition ➤ vorspielen
broadcast sth.
 ➤ etw. senden, übertragen
exploitative
 ➤ ausbeutend

magician ➤ Zauberer/Zauberin
panel of judges ➤ Jury
talent show ➤ Talentwettbewerb, Castingshow
variety act ➤ Varietédarbietung

TALKING FINANCE

Non-fungible tokens (NFTs)

[24] Introduction E

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

David Ingram: Yes, this time, Ian is looking at the topic of non-fungible tokens.

Perry: Non-what-what, David?

Ingram: Non-fungible tokens, or NFTs. Don't you know what they are, Erin? Don't worry, I didn't either. But anyway, here's Ian to explain.

[25] Interview: Ian McMaster A

Ian McMaster: "Non-fungible token" is a somewhat strange term, so let's break it down

to see what we are actually talking about. Start with the word “fungible”, which isn’t a very common word in English. Lexico, the online version of the *Oxford Dictionary*, defines it as “replaceable by another identical item; mutually interchangeable”. In other words, something that is fungible can be replaced by something else that is exactly the same.

Let’s take a practical example. If I have a €10 banknote and asked you to swap it for a €10 banknote that you have, you would probably agree — even if you found my request rather strange — because one €10 note is basically the same as any other. In other words, banknotes are fungible. And something that is “non-fungible” — such as a non-fungible token, or NFT — is exactly the opposite: it is unique and non-interchangeable. A unique, non-interchangeable token.

But an NFT is not a token in the physical sense, but instead it’s a unique unit of data stored on what’s called a digital ledger, or blockchain. Now, I am not going to pretend that I understand the details of blockchain technology — the same technology that is used to store cryptocurrencies such as bitcoins — but the basic point is very simple. An NFT is a unique piece of digital data, which cannot be reproduced.

And the reason this is interesting is that people have created NFTs, or unique pieces of data,

to represent digital objects. This could be a digital work of art, a digital image, an animated GIF or even a tweet. And by purchasing a particular NFT, you are buying ownership of that original digital object. In effect, you are buying a digital certificate of ownership. Now, this doesn’t stop other people from copying the digital object, but you are the ultimate owner and can sell your NFT to someone else.

Experts disagree on whether the market in NFTs is simply a fad and a bubble. Ultimately, the value of a particular NFT is what someone else is prepared to pay. So, you could make a profit when you sell your NFT, but you could just as easily make a loss, if nobody else values the ownership of that animated cat GIF as highly as you do.

Business Spotlight 12/2021, p. 44

animated GIF

- animiertes GIF
- (GIF (graphics interchange format) ► Grafikaustausch-format)

bubble ► Blase

- fad ► Modeerscheinung

fungible

- ersetzbar, austauschbar

ledger

- Kontenblatt, Kassenbuch

mutually interchangeable

- untereinander austauschbar

non-fungible token

- nicht ersetzbares digital geschütztes Objekt

purchase sth.

- etw. kaufen

store data

- Daten speichern

swap sth. for sth.

- etw. gegen etw. eintauschen

ultimate

- letztendlich

unique

- einzigartig

SHORT STORY

[26] Introduction E

David Ingram: Finally, it's time for our latest short story by James Schofield. And this time, it's a soul story.

Erin Perry: Soul story? What, as in soul music? This sounds like it's right up my alley, David.

Ingram: Well, not quite, Erin. It's more like a battle for people's souls — and the battle is taking place between two very competitive organizations: Heaven and Hell. The title of the story is "Christmas and the seven deadly sins".

Perry: OK, wow, sounds very intriguing, David. Let's listen in.

[27] Christmas and the seven deadly sins A

"The talent acquisition team are here, Mr Powers," Paddy's assistant said as he entered the headquarters of Underworld Inc. "It sounds like business is bad. I ordered doughnuts for the coffee break to help the mood a bit."

Paddy nodded. "Thanks, Miss Jezebel. We're going to need them." He went over to a mirror, straightened his tie, brushed the shoulders of his suit and pushed a lock of hair behind his polished horns.

"Wicked?" he asked.

"Super wicked, Mr Powers," answered Miss Jezebel. "Especially the tie. Armani?"

Paddy winked and went into the conference room.

The atmosphere was not good. The "Seven Deadly Sins" — as the talent acquisition team were described in company brochures — were sitting, or (in the case of Sloth) lying, around the table looking depressed. Paddy straightened his shoulders, put on his confident smile and went to the head of the table.

"Ladies," he said, nodding to Lust and Envy, who were whispering to each other about the others behind their hands. "Gentlemen," he continued, looking at Greed, Wrath, Gluttony, Pride and Sloth (who was now nearly asleep). "Shall we begin? It's November. How many souls have you collected so far this year?"

Underworld Inc. was always looking to new talent. Competition with their main rival, Heaven PLC, was fierce, but in normal years, results were about even. However, this year, the numbers were terrible.

"We've got two problems," began Wrath.

"Only two?" interrupted Envy. "What about...?"

"SHUT UP!" screamed Wrath, giving Envy a filthy look. He took a deep breath, counted to ten and continued: "We're focusing on the millennials and Gen Z at the moment. Gen X and boomer souls have mostly already been won or lost, so those 20 to 40-year-olds are where the big numbers are. And the first problem is that they're idealists."

“Idealists?” asked Paddy, concerned. As team leader, his bonus depended on hitting targets and the CEO, Sir Lucifer Beelzebub, could be unpleasant if numbers were low.

“Well, darling, take casual sex,” purred Lust, leaning forward towards Paddy so his eyes disappeared down her décolleté. “The statistics clearly show that they just aren’t as interested as past generations were.”

“What about our investment in dating apps?” Paddy asked. “Surely, they make hooking up easier.”

“Useless,” answered Sloth, raising his head from the table. “I heard that it takes 60 swipes on Tinder to find one half-decent looking candidate. Who’s got time for that?”

“It’s the same for all of us,” continued Greed. “They’re not into consumerism like in the good old days. Kim Kardashian is history. It’s all bloody Greta Thunberg...”

“Refreshments!” said Miss Jezebel, pushing a trolley with coffee and doughnuts into the room. “Spoil yourselves. With these, it would be a sin not to.”

“Thank you, Miss Jezebel,” Paddy began. “Could you pass me a doughnut before...?” But they were too late. Everybody stared at Gluttony, who was quietly licking his fingers.

“Oh, I’m sorry,” he said. “Did you want some? Silly me.”

Paddy sighed.

“The second problem is worse, though,” continued Pride, looking down his nose at them. “The Angel Gabriel has taken over the HR departments of most companies.”

“How do you mean?”

“He’s launched all these annoying HR programmes to get people to behave better at work. No dating anybody from the office. No bottle of Scotch in the bottom drawer of your desk. Anger-management courses the moment anybody raises their voice. Vegan Christmas parties. It’s impossible to get anybody to misbehave any more.

“I nearly had a hedge fund manager the other day,” said Greed sadly. “She got a bonus, and I hoped she’d buy a Porsche or something. But she just gave the money to some children’s reading project.”

“Well,” said Paddy, “we need to escalate.”

Now, what people don’t realize is that the expression “we need to escalate” is based on something real. Between Heaven PLC and Underworld Inc., there is a long escalator for when members of the two organizations want to visit each other. So, Paddy took the escalator up to Heaven PLC.

At the gates, he rang the bell, and after going through security, was taken to see the Chairman on his marble throne. Angel Gabriel flut-

tered about, wearing glasses and carrying a clipboard. He looked pleased with himself.

“Ah, Mr Powers,” boomed the Chairman. “I hear nobody’s joining your organization any more. Does this mean,” he winked at Gabriel, “you’re going to get... hell-fired?” He roared with laughter and Gabriel giggled.

“Very funny, Chairman,” said Paddy. “Actually, I wanted to congratulate you. You’re well on the path to eliminating evil and shutting down Underworld Inc. I’m sure Gabriel’s planned for the consequences.”

“Consequences?” the Chairman asked.

“Well, accommodation, for example, Chairman. Where will you put all these extra souls?”

Gabriel looked uncomfortable.

“...and religion, Chairman,” Paddy continued. “If we’re out of business, you are, too. Who is going to build churches and sing your praises if people don’t need to show how good they are?”

The Chairman scratched his head. He knew about human laziness.

“Don’t listen, Chairman!” squeaked Gabriel. “He’s trying to cause trouble.”

“Not at all,” Paddy answered. “It’s just that I have a proposal...”

A short time later, Paddy took the escalator back down again. On the way, he got out his phone and called the office.

“Send an email, Miss Jezebel. Tell the team we have a deal, so no more excuses. I want them out there causing the merriest Christmas the world has ever seen...”

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accommodation UK

► Unterbringung

annoying

► ärgerlich, nervig

bloody UK ifml.

► verdammt

boom

► dröhnen, donnern

boomer ifml.

► hier: Babyboomer

casual sex

► Gelegenheitssex

chairman ► Vorsitzender

► Neid

escalator ► Rolltreppe

even ► hier: gleich

excuse ► hier: Ausrede

fierce ► heftig, hart

filthy

► schmutzig; hier: böse

giggle ► kichern

gluttony ► Völlerei

greed ► Gier

half-decent looking

► einigermaßen gut aussehend

hell-fired; get ~ ifml.

► hier: aus der Hölle gefeuert werden

help the mood

► die Stimmung aufhellen

hit a target

► eine Zielvorgabe erfüllen

hook up (with sb.) ifml.

► jmdn. abschleppen

Inc. US ► etwa: AG

into: be ~ sth. ifml.

► auf etw. stehen

look down one’s nose at sb.

► jmdn. von oben herab ansehen

look to sth.

► auf etw. setzen

lust ► Wollust

marble throne

► Marmorthron

PLC (public limited company) UK ► AG

pride ► Stolz

purr ► schnurren

roar with laughter

► schallend lachen

seven deadly sins: the ~

► die sieben Todsünden

Silly me.

► Wie dumm von mir.

sing sb.’s praises

► ein Loblied auf jmdn. singen

sloth ► Faulheit

spoil oneself

► es sich gutgehen lassen

squeak ➤ kreischen

swipe

➤ Wischen, Wischbewegung

talent acquisition

➤ Talentaquisition

trolley UK

➤ (Roll-/Servier-)Wagen

we need to escalate

➤ hier: wir müssen eine höhere Instanz einschalten

wicked

➤ böse; auch: toll, fantastisch

wink ➤ zwinkern

wrath ➤ Zorn

CONCLUSION

[28] For more information

David Ingram: Well, we've come to the end of Business Spotlight Audio 12/2021. We hope you've enjoyed it and have found our exercises helpful.

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

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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