

EASY E

CEF level A2

MEDIUM M

CEF levels B1–B2

ADVANCED A

CEF levels C1–C2

CEF: European Framework of Reference for Languages

trending ➤ Trend-

topic ➤ Thema

**TRENDS
NAMES AND NEWS****INTRODUCTION****[1] Let's get started! E**

Sion Dayson: Welcome to Business Spotlight Audio! It's great to have you with us. We've got loads in store for you, including listening exercises about mental-health days, innovation and contract misunderstandings. You'll also hear why farming seaweed could help us to save the planet. Then, Business Spotlight correspondent Richard Mote speaks to Shoko Plambeck, a Tokyo-based writer and podcast creator. They talk about the removal companies in Japan that help you to disappear along with your belongings. We've even organized a coffee break for you to relax and put the kettle on while listening to a conversation between co-workers at Metropolitan Mayhem, a fictional advertising agency in London, UK. They'll be discussing the idea of working while on vacation. But first of all, let's get started with some trending news topics.

loads ifml.

➤ hier: eine Menge

store: have sth. in ~

➤ etw. auf Lager haben

mental ➤ hier: psychischfarm sth. ➤ etw. anbauenseaweed

➤ Seetang, Meeressalgen

removal UK ➤ Umzugbreak ➤ Pause**[2] Making beaches more accessible M**

Every year, thousands of people enjoy their summer holidays by flocking to the beaches of southern Europe. For those with mobility issues, however, a beach presents a real challenge. It goes without saying that wheelchairs and walking canes don't work very well on sand. That usually leaves a choice between avoiding the beach or asking for help.

However, a Greek company called TOBEA has installed Seatrac chairs at nearly 200 beaches in Greece and a few other countries. The device is simple but potentially life-changing — and free of charge. A wooden walkway allows users to cross the sand easily. They transfer to the recliner, which is solar-powered and runs on a single track. Using a remote control, they then “drive” into the water. There, they are free to swim and enjoy the sea like everyone else.

“Seatrac does not provide only independent access to the sea,” Ignatios Fotiou, chief executive of TOBEA in Greece and one of the inventors of Seatrac, told The Washington Post. “It provides dignity and independence to people with mobility issues that want to enjoy swimming.” Around Greece, more and more

beaches are becoming accessible in this way, and there are plans to expand Seatrac to other popular holiday spots, such as Croatia, Spain and beyond.

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flock to sth.

➤ zu etw. strömen

mobility issue

➤ Gehbeeinträchtigung

it goes without saying

that... ➤ es versteht sich von selbst, dass...

walking cane

➤ Gehstock, -hilfe

device ➤ Gerät, Vorrichtung

recliner ➤ Liegesessel;

hier etwa: Gleitstuhl

track ➤ Spur, Bahn

remote control

➤ Fernbedienung

chief executive

➤ Geschäftsführer(in)

dignity ➤ Würde

accessible ➤ zugänglich

holiday spot UK

➤ Urlaubsort

[3] The Irish Elon Musk?

Paddy Cosgrave likes to think big. In 2009, he had an idea that Dublin should have its own tech conference, so he co-founded one: Web Summit. Since then, as chief executive, he has turned it into a global business, with events in Europe, Asia, and North and South America. By 2016, Web Summit had grown too large for Dublin and moved to Lisbon, where more than 70,000 visitors from over 160 countries come together. Now Europe's largest tech event, it hosts some 2,300 start-ups and top-level speakers.

As he's a very successful tech entrepreneur, 41-year-old Cosgrave is naturally compared with Elon Musk. This is also because, like Musk,

Cosgrave is very outspoken, particularly on Twitter. With a characteristically abrasive style, he regularly mocks Irish politicians, journalists and even members of the public when he's unhappy about something.

He's often at the centre of free-speech controversies in which it's unclear if he's motivated by ethics or ego. This led the *Irish Examiner* to ask: "Does he really care most about free speech? Does he simply enjoy winding people up? Or does he simply not care about anything at all?"

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think big ifml.

➤ sich hohe Ziele setzen

co-founded sth.

➤ etw. mitgründen

chief executive

➤ Geschäftsführer(in)

host sb.

➤ jmdn. empfangen,

zu Gast haben

entrepreneur

➤ Unternehmer(in)

outspoken

➤ direkt, unverblümt

abrasive

➤ hier: aggressiv, grob

mock sb.

➤ sich über jmdn. lustig machen

wind sb. up UK ifml.

➤ jmdn. auf die Palme bringen

[4] The case for a tax on sugar

For a long time, dietary fat was blamed for obesity and diabetes. Today, the finger has been resoundingly pointed at sugar. Eating too much sugar is very easy to do. The World Health Organization (WHO) says a typical can of sugary soft drink has 40 grams of free sugars — equal to about ten teaspoons of table sugar.

Globally, obesity has nearly tripled since 1975. As this contributes to the fast-rising cost of health care, shouldn't governments discourage sugar consumption by taxing it?

Since 2018, England has had the Soft Drinks Industry Levy, a tax on sugary drinks. Researchers from Cambridge University have found an eight per cent reduction in obesity in year-six girls (more than 5,000 cases) a year — although reductions were not seen in all the social and age groups in the study.

As low-income families tend to have more sugary diets, they stand to benefit most. Two years after Mexico's "sugar tax" was introduced, in 2014, households with the fewest resources had cut consumption of sugary drinks by 11.7 per cent, compared to 7.6 per cent among the general population.

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case ➤ hier: Argumente

dietary fat

➤ Nahrungsfett(e)

obesity

➤ Adipositas, Fettleibigkeit

resoundingly

➤ vernichtend

triple ➤ sich verdreifachen

discourage sth.

➤ hier: etw. zu verhindern suchen

levy ➤ Abgabe

year-six UK

➤ in der sechsten Schulklasse

low-income

➤ mit niedrigem Einkommen

stand to: ~ do sth.

➤ wohl etw. tun werden

resources

➤ Mittel, Finanzen

HEAD-TO-HEAD

Mental health

[5] Dialogue comprehension: Do mental-health days help?

Sion: More and more companies are offering mental-health days nowadays, but are they as good as they sound? Listen to this dialogue between two co-workers who have different opinions about companies offering mental-health days to their staff. We'll test your understanding of the dialogue afterwards, so listen carefully. Ready? Let's go!

Raymond: Sonia's off again. [sarcastic] She needed another mental-health day, apparently. I don't know how we're going to get this project finished with all these people taking mental health days.

Angie: Don't you think they're a good idea? To be honest, I think it's great that the company offers mental-health days. People can use the time to prioritize themselves, meditate, practise mindfulness or even book a counselling session.

Raymond: I'm not too sure about the whole concept, to be honest. I mean if someone has a serious mental-health problem, then I'm not convinced that a couple of days off, a hot bath and a cup of cocoa are going to make a massive difference. It's not a long-term solution, is it? A more sustainable workload and continued sup-

port from a mental-health professional sound like better ideas to me.

Angie: I think mental-health days can help to combat the stigma associated with psychological issues, though. It makes people feel more comfortable opening up about what they are experiencing. It's good to have that flexibility in addition to your annual leave. Our mental-health days are unpaid, but at least that way we can take time off without feeling guilty.

Raymond: But we shouldn't have to experience discomfort or negative feelings to justify taking time off. What happened to taking time off just because you wanted to? Leisure is a good enough reason to take time off, too.

Sion: Let's check your understanding of some of the words and phrases used in the dialogue. For each word or phrase, you will hear two potential definitions: **a)** and **b)**. Choose the correct option. Here's the first one.

1. If someone "practises mindfulness",...
 - a) then they focus on the present moment and calmly accept their feelings at that time.
 - b) then they think about their future commitments and how their goals can be achieved.

➤ The correct answer is **a)**. If someone practises mindfulness, then they focus on the present moment and calmly accept their feelings at that time.

2. If someone books "a counselling session",...
 - a) then they schedule an appointment with the local council.
 - b) then they schedule an appointment with a therapist to guide them through their personal or mental-health problems.

➤ The correct answer is **b)**. If someone books a counselling session, then they schedule an appointment with a therapist to guide them through their personal or mental-health problems.
 3. If someone has "a sustainable workload",...
 - a) then they are able to stay on top of their work, thereby avoiding burnout.
 - b) then they mainly work on environmental projects.

➤ The correct answer is **a)**. If someone has a sustainable workload, then they are able to keep on top of their work, thereby avoiding burnout.
 4. The phrase "to combat stigma" means...
 - a) "to fight preconceptions".
 - b) "to reinforce preconceptions."

➤ The correct answer is **a)**. The phrase "to combat stigma" means "to fight preconceptions".
- Sion:** Well done! Did you get all of the answers right? If not, go back and try the exercise again.

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mental ➤ hier: psychisch
off: be - ➤ hier: frei haben

apparently ➤ offensichtlich
mindfulness ➤ Achtsamkeit

counselling

• Beratung; Therapie

sustainable • aufrechterhaltbar; hier auch: zumutbar

workload • Arbeitspensum

combat sth.

• etw. bekämpfen

issue • Problem

annual leave • Jahresurlaub

feel guilty • hier: ein schlechtes Gewissen haben

leisure • Freizeit

commitment

• Verpflichtung

schedule sth.

• etw. anberaumen

stay on top of sth. • den

Überblick über etw. behalten

preconception

• vorgefasste Meinung

reinforce sth.

• etw. verstärken

SOCIETY

Disappearing in Japan

[6] Interview: Shoko Plambeck

Sion: Can you imagine paying someone to make you disappear in the middle of the night? I'm not talking about hitmen — I'm talking about Japanese removal companies that help you to change your identity. In this interview, you'll hear the Japanese expressions *yonige* and *yonige-ya*. *Yonige* can be translated as “running away in the middle of the night” and the expression *yonige-ya* is used to refer to the industry as a whole. Curious to find out more? Listen to the following interview, in which Shoko Plambeck, a writer and the co-host of the true-crime podcast The Evaporated: Gone with the Gods, talks to Business Spotlight correspondent Richard Mote about the business of disappearing.

Richard Mote: People who want to disappear — they can get help, right? How would you

describe the *yonige-ya* to someone who doesn't know what they are?

Shoko Plambeck: I mean, it sounds like such a surreal concept, right? But if I were to just explain it very plainly, I would say that there is a service in Japan that's completely legal, out in broad daylight, and it's a moving service, where the company will help you move in the middle of the night, discreetly, without anyone seeing you, and basically help you start an entirely new life. They'll give you a place to stay before you can get settled. They'll help you find a job. They'll advise you on how to get started on this new life and how to disappear. It's just this all-inclusive service that is basically like a very specialized moving company.

Richard: And these are legitimate businesses, so they have employees? They pay taxes?

Shoko: Yes, they pay taxes. A lot of the times, before they go in and do a *yonige* mission, they'll call the local police and say, “Hey, we're going to come, so, you know, if the neighbours complain or something, just know we're not stealing stuff. We're just doing a *yonige*.”

Richard: Right, because it would be suspicious to see people carrying furniture out of the house in the middle of the night.

Shoko: Right. And another reason that they might do that is if the *yonige* case that they're working on involves a violent spouse, because if the spouse came back during the middle of it,

they could get violent — there could be an altercation. So, they also give the police a heads-up before, you know, incidences like that in case there's any sort of violence that breaks out.

Richard: Hmm. And how do you find a *yonige-ya*? Do you just find them in the telephone book?

Shoko: Back then, maybe they were in the telephone book. That's a good question, actually. I would be curious to know if you could find them in a telephone book back then. But nowadays, you can just find them the way that we find everything now, which is online. I just typed into Google *yonige-ya* and dozens and dozens of them came up — there's quite a few *yonige-ya* in Japan, so it's very easy, and you can call them immediately. And if I wanted to, I could probably have a *yonige* operation set up in about a day. By the end of today, I could probably do it.

Richard: So, if you're in a hurry, they can respond quickly.

Shoko: Exactly.

Richard: Wow. Is it expensive?

Shoko: I actually felt like it was quite reasonable for what the service is, but it is much more expensive than a regular moving company. For a one-person operation with minimal stuff that would fit in, like, one truck, if the company is in Tokyo, I would say that it would cost about three to five-hundred dollars. And then it starts to get more expensive if you have more family members, more stuff or if it's a sketchier situation.

Richard: I mean if you want to disappear because you're afraid for your life, then you're obviously just going to go and get out, but some people take stuff with them, right? So, what's, sort of, the craziest thing that you've heard about people taking a piano or something with them?

Shoko: So, I haven't heard about someone taking a piano. But I can tell you that while we were talking to Saita-san, the *yonige* CEO, she was talking about some clients she had, where you know they were like "It's very serious that I escape right now." And they were like, "OK, we'll come get you." And they're like, "How much stuff do you have?" And, like, "Oh, it's not that much." And they get there, and it's just, there's so much stuff, right? And they're like, "OK, we can do it. But like, it's just going to take more time." So, I think that they're used to people maybe overpacking. I mean, it's pretty scary to leave your life behind, so I think there's a sense of security in having these possessions. But you know, there are also many cases of people that, you know, just have a suitcase and they're ready to go.

Richard: I just wondered, because especially if you have a family and you have to leave them behind, I don't know, are they really better off after a person disappears or does the situation get worse for them?

Shoko: I think first it's interesting to note that a lot of people do escape as a family. The *yonige-ya*,

for instance, often helps, like, a whole family disappear because, for instance, if the father is in a lot of debt, then it would be really hard to leave the whole family behind. So, they all go with each other to try to escape the debt. And there's families that I've heard of that have done that, and maybe the younger children don't even know that they disappeared.

Richard: What does it take to disappear successfully? What do you have to do?

Shoko: All right, so if you want to disappear and not be found, first of all, it's very, very important to get rid of your phone, get rid of your laptop, get rid of, like, any digital footprint, because nowadays, that's the most common way that someone can catch you. It only takes one phone call or one Facebook login for people to be able to track down your location. So, that's the number-one thing. Number two would be to avoid anything that involves you having to go to the ward office, or do any paperwork, or do something where you would need to get a permanent address, because if you register, then it would be more likely that people could track you down using your koseki or what have you. Koseki is the family registry. So, in order to avoid that, people often take up jobs where there's lodging that's included. So, that could mean working in an onsen town [Japanese resorts with hot springs] at, like, a hotel, or becoming a nuclear nomad, working at one of the power plants, maybe working

in the sex industry or, you know, something else that's a little bit more underground. So, that's another big thing if you're really serious about not getting caught. And then the other one would be to, like, lay low — don't go places that people that you might know would frequent, change your appearance a little bit — stuff like that.

Richard: Cool, [I] think I've got plenty of stuff to write a good article about this.

Shoko: Great, thank you so much, Richard.

Richard: OK. Thanks a lot.

Shoko: All right, great. Bye!

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hitman *ifml.* ► Auftragskiller

removal UK ► Umzug

co-host ► Mitmoderator(in)

evaporated ► verdunstet;

hier etwa: spurlos verschwundene

plainly ► deutlich, einfach

get settled ► sich einleben

suspicious ► verdächtig

spouse ► Ehepartner(in)

altercation ► heftiger Streit

heads-up: give sb. a ~ *ifml.*

► jmdn. informieren

incidence ► Vorkommnis

sketchy US *ifml.*

► unklar, zwielichtig

CEO (chief executive officer)

► Geschäftsführer(in)

overpack

► hier: zu viel einpacken

scary *ifml.* ► beängstigend

for instance ► zum Beispiel

debt: be in ~

► Schulden haben

digital footprint

► digitale Spur

catch sb. ► jmdn. erwischen

track sb./sth. down

► jmdn./etw. aufspüren

ward office

► hier: Bezirksverwaltung

family registry

► Familienstammbuch

lodging ► Unterkunft

resort ► Urlaubsort

hot spring ► heiße Quelle

power plant

► Kraftwerk

lay low US *non-stand.*

► sich bedeckt halten

METROPOLITAN MAYHEM

Time off

[7] Coffee break: Working while on holiday

Sion: Coffee breaks form part of everyday working life, and office kitchens are the back-drop to many work-related conversations. It's fair to say if the walls had ears, they'd have a few stories to tell. Today, at the fictional London-based advertising agency Metropolitan Mayhem, co-workers Douglas and Michelle discuss their American colleague Kyle's habit of working while away on holiday. OK, have you made yourself a coffee? Let's join our friends at Metropolitan Mayhem.

Douglas: Are you all right, Michelle? You look a bit stressed and tired.

Michelle: Oh, cheers, Doug — much appreciated! Do me a favour and make me a double espresso, will you? I need some extra caffeine today.

Douglas: Sure thing — [jokingly] sounds like you need it. But seriously, though, are you OK?

Michelle: Well, to be honest, Doug, I'm really annoyed with Kyle. He's on holiday at the moment, and he's still answering work emails and participating in calls. If people start doing that, then they'll start expecting everyone to take their laptop with them when they go away. I, for one, don't plan on getting sand stuck in my keyboard!

Douglas: I wouldn't worry about it too much. Kyle is a bit of a workaholic, bless him. You know what they say about that American work ethic, after all.

Michelle: Tell me about it. Sometimes, I think he doesn't know how to take a break. He didn't even bother to set up an out-of-office message. I wonder what his boyfriend thinks about him working while they're away. I wouldn't be happy if my partner did that.

Douglas: His partner's a high-flyer in the banking industry. I think they're both very work-oriented, so maybe they enjoy doing a bit of work while they're away. Your team's working on a new commercial, right? It's probably just a bad case of FOMO.

Michelle: Do you think so? I mean we could easily update him when he gets back... [phone rings] Oh my goodness! Guess who it is? It's him! Unbelievable!

Douglas: Are you going to pick up?

Michelle: I suppose I should.

Douglas: Do you want another coffee? I'll make you one while you're on the phone.

Michelle: Go on then, I won't be a minute. [picking up phone] Hi, Kyle. How's your holiday going?

Kyle: [background noise] We're really enjoying it here in Barcelona. The weather's amazing! But listen, I just wanted to get a quick update on the commercial we're working on for Unique

Travel. Have you guys decided on a filming location yet? I thought I could ask around in Barcelona while I'm here.

Michelle: C'mon Kyle, I'm sure there are more exciting things you could be doing while you're there. Why don't you take some time out, and we can discuss everything when you're back in the office? You are on holiday after all!

Kyle: To be honest, I don't mind doing a bit of work while I'm away. When I work from home, I break up the day by going to the gym for an hour or two, so what's the difference if I spend a couple of hours catching up with some work while I'm on holiday? It'll make things less stressful when I come back to work.

Michelle: Well, I just hope the company doesn't start expecting us all to be available 24/7 when we're away. That wouldn't be too good for our work-life balance, would it? I don't know about the others, but I'm going to wait until you're back to give you an update. Now go and do some sightseeing and leave location scouting for another day.

Kyle: Right, erm, well, I suppose it could wait. Or I could always give Paul a call... Anyway, have a great day, Michelle.

Michelle: Cheers, Kyle. You too. Bye.

Kyle: Bye! [hangs up]

Douglas: How did that go?

Michelle: He's incurrable.

Douglas: It sounds like you guys just have a dif-

ferent point of view on the matter. Maybe it's best to agree to disagree.

Michelle: Ever the diplomat, Doug! Now, where's that second coffee?

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break ▶ Pause

backdrop ▶ Kulisse

cheers UK ▶ hier: danke

much appreciated

▶ hier etwa: sehr aufmerksam

annoyed: be - with sb.

▶ sich über jmdn. ärgern

keyboard ▶ Tastatur

bless him jfm.

▶ hier etwa: der Gute

out-of-office message

▶ Abwesenheitsnotiz

high-flyer

▶ Überflieger(in)

commercial

▶ Werbespot

pick up ▶ hier: rangehen

amazing jfm.

▶ toll, fantastisch

unique ▶ einzigartig

guy jfm. ▶ Typ, Kumpel

c'mon (come on)

▶ komm schon

break sth. up

▶ etw. unterteilen

gym ▶ Fitnessstudio

catch up with sth.

▶ sich bei etw. auf den neuesten Stand bringen

24/7 jfm. ▶ rund um die Uhr

scouting ▶ (das) Erkunden;

hier: Suche

incurrable

▶ unverbesserlich

START-UP

Natural solutions

[8] Introduction Ē

Sion: Did you know that seaweed can be farmed like other crops? And what's more, it can be used to reduce the amount of methane released into the atmosphere by livestock. Let's find out more about this concept and how the Australian start-up Sea Forest is implementing the idea.

seaweed

• Seetang, Meeresalgen

farm sth. • etw. anbauen**crop** • Nutzpflanze**release sth.** • etw. freisetzen**livestock** • Vieh, Nutztiere**implement sth.**

• etw. umsetzen

[9] Can seaweed save the world? M

Cows, sheep and goats are ruminants — named after the largest of their four stomach chambers, the “rumen”. As food is broken down by fermentation, methane is a by-product. One cow produces between 250 and 500 litres a day, nearly all of which is burped out.

With over a billion sheep and 1.5 billion cows worldwide, livestock generates a significant percentage of global greenhouse gas emissions. And while methane doesn't stay in the atmosphere for as long as CO₂ does, it has up to 100 times more heat-trapping potential. It's so concerning that 149 countries and the EU have joined the Global Methane Pledge to cut emissions by 30 per cent in this decade. Sea Forest, an Australian start-up, plans to fight methane with seaweed.

In Tasmania, the most southerly part of Australia, a few corrugated-iron sheds house Sea Forest's laboratory. “This seaweed has the power to radically reduce global methane emissions,” CEO Sam Elsom told *The Sydney Morning Herald*. *Asparagopsis armata* is one of two seaweed species with an extraordinary ability to cut the amount of methane that comes out of animals. The effect is so dramatic, the scientists who made the

discovery thought their equipment must be broken. Elsom calls it “one of the most amazing climate-change discoveries of the decade”.

From clothes to climate

An unlikely eco-hero, Elsom was still a fashion designer in 2017, with his own label in Sydney. But he's also an entrepreneur, and when he learned about the seaweed-methane connection, he began investigating and was told to “call Rocky”.

Rocky De Nys is a seaweed biologist at James Cook University, in North Queensland. Soon, the two were talking regularly. Elsom says: “I couldn't even speak the same language. I was scribbling like a maniac in my book, then googling the terms later. He was just so generous. He treated me like a peer.” Elsom learned a lot — including that the two most important seaweed species for methane reduction are native to Australian waters.

Elsom's fashion industry connections led him to Stephen Turner, a venture capitalist with whom he founded Sea Forest in 2018. The company is growing, but Elsom and Turner choose their investors carefully. “It was always about climate change, not making huge profits,” Elsom says. Today, Sea Forest is worth more than A\$40 million (€25 million).

Super seaweed

With no need for land, freshwater or fertilizer, seaweed is almost a zero-input crop. It's grown

on ropes that are lowered into the sea. After eight weeks, the ropes are pulled out. With a tiny seaweed supplement (of one per cent or less) in their diets, ruminants produce virtually no methane. But how do you get cows and sheep to eat seaweed? The essential compound, bromoform, is oil-soluble, so De Nys created seaweed “smoothies” with canola that are added to the feed. The animals appear to enjoy it — or at least don’t seem to notice it.

With more proof-of-concept trials taking place, the early results are very promising. El-som, however, knows they’re still at the beginning: “We’re on the journey but won’t be there until we’re feeding hundreds of thousands, even millions, of cows.”

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ruminant

- Wiederkäuer

stomach chamber

- Magenkammer

rumen

- Pansen

break sth. down

- etw. in seine Bestandteile zerlegen

by-product

- Nebenprodukt

burp sth. out

- hier: etw. in die Atmosphäre rülpfen, ausstoßen

billion

- Milliarde(n)

livestock

- Vieh, Nutztiere

greenhouse gas

- Treibhausgas

heat-trapping

- hier: den Treibhauseffekt verstärkend

pledge

- Pakt

seaweed

- Seetang, Meeresalgen

corrugated-iron shed

- Wellblechhütte

CEO (chief executive officer)

- Geschäftsführer(in)

amazing

- erstaunlich

eco-hero jfm!

- Ökoheld

entrepreneur

- Unternehmer(in)

scribble

- kritzeln; hier: rasch notieren

maniac

- Verrückte(r)

peer

- Fachkollege, -kollegin

venture capitalist

- Risikokapitalgeber(in)

found sth.

- etw. gründen

fertilizer

- Düngemittel

zero-input crop

- Anbaupflanze, die keinen Einsatz erfordert

rope

- Seil, Strick

supplement

- Ergänzung; hier: Nahrungs-ergänzung

virtually

- nahezu, praktisch

compound

- Verbindung

soluble

- löslich

canola

- Rapsöl

feed

- Futter (mittel)

proof-of-concept trial

- Machbarkeitsstudie

COMMUNICATION BUSINESS SKILLS

Change

[10] Introduction

Sion: Change is an inevitable part of life. But change isn’t always welcome, particularly when employees don’t see the value in the changes being made by their employer. Ken Taylor’s article offers tips on how to communicate change. Let’s listen.

inevitable • unvermeidlich

[11] Communicating change

It’s often said that humans naturally resist change, preferring the status quo. This is not completely true. Homo sapiens is a successful species because of our ability to adapt. We change all the time. We move house, change

jobs, get married and, sometimes, divorced. In fact, we change our lives frequently and in many different ways. The choices we make aren't always logical and rational, but quite often based on emotion.

John P. Kotter, in his books *Leading Change* and *The Heart of Change*, says that the case for change must appeal to people's feelings as well as to their minds. He says change communication should focus 40 per cent on the mind and 60 per cent on the heart in order to achieve both rational and emotional buy-in. People resist change if they think it's meaningless, when they don't see its relevance or when it comes as a surprise.

So, change management communication must help people understand what's changing and why, and how that will affect them specifically. Good change management communication follows four general rules.

1. Communicate the why

Show the reasons for the changes openly and honestly. Emphasize that the changes are inevitable and explain why. Share a vision of how the organization will benefit from the proposed changes. Make it clear and simple. People will see through any attempt to gloss over difficulties or exaggerate the benefits. They'll then lose trust in any future communications.

The most common reasons why organizations change:

- A crisis — such as managing the pandemic
- New technology — introducing more efficient working methods
- Performance gaps — not fully meeting goals and objectives
- New opportunities — increasing competitiveness in the market
- Planned abandonment — moving resources away from unprofitable areas
- Mergers or acquisitions — managing dual organizations and staff functions
- A new leader — proving to the board they're doing something

2. Communicate the what

Provide a clear plan of what will happen, showing how the proposed changes affect the workflow of the whole organization. It needs to identify tangible expected outcomes, and make clear exactly what should be done, by whom and by when.

A good plan must meet certain criteria:

- The changes are seen as absolutely necessary.
- The proposed plan is clearly better than any of the alternatives.
- The changes are needed urgently.
- The positive effects outweigh the negative consequences.
- The processes involved are effective.

3. Communicate the who

Of course, people will be concerned and curious about the impact on their working lives. They

will wonder whether their roles will change or disappear. They will ask if their work will be evaluated differently and if they will join a new team or work with new colleagues or a new boss.

According to data from Gartner in 2019, 73 per cent of change-affected employees reported experiencing moderate to high stress levels. It also showed that employees suffering from change-related stress perform worse than normal. Your communication must address these concerns. Be open with the good and the bad news, and recognize the fact that many will be apprehensive about the future.

Make your messages employee-focused:

- Stress your appreciation of people's cooperation, patience and loyalty to the organization.
- Even when there are no benefits, share that aspect openly. Your staff will respect your honesty and be more likely to work through the transition.
- Explain what resources are available to help. These may include retraining, coaching and (in the worst case) redundancy support and counselling.

4. Communicate regularly, often and two-way

Change communication must be two-way. You can be firm about the expected outcomes

of the proposed changes, but must also listen to those who will implement them. Provide regular updates and be prepared to repeat the key messages frequently.

Choose appropriate communication channels:

- Small, face-to-face meetings are best for feedback sessions. You could use online platforms to encourage collective decisions about common issues.
- Have a dedicated virtual space to enable easy access to important documents and information.

You might also hold anonymous surveys during the transition period to get feedback on how people are reacting.

Change is inevitable. Communicating the need for that change takes time and effort, but it's worth it. Skilfully managed communication will enable you to build awareness and support for your proposed change management programme.

move house UK

► umziehen

divorced; get ~

► sich scheiden lassen

case ► hier: Argumente

buy-in ► Akzeptanz, Übernahme

affect sb. ► Auswirkungen auf jmdn. haben

emphasize sth.

► etw. hervorheben

inevitable ► unvermeidlich

gloss over sth. ► etw. beschönigen, überspielen

exaggerate sth.

► etw. übertreiben, überzogen darstellen

goal ► Ziel

objective ► Ziel(setzung)

abandonment

► Aufgabe, Auflösung

merger ► Fusion

function

► hier: Aufgabe

board ► Vorstand,
Unternehmensführung

tangible ► greifbar

outcome ► Ergebnis

outweigh sth.

► gegenüber etw. überwiegen

impact

► Auswirkung(en)

apprehensive

► ängstlich, besorgt

stress sth. ► etw. betonen

appreciation

► Wertschätzung,
Anerkennung

redundancy UK

► Entlassung, betriebsbedingte
Kündigung

counselling ► Beratung

firm ► entschieden,
standhaft

appropriate ► geeignet

face-to-face ► persönlich

issue ► Frage, Sachverhalt,
Thema

dedicated ► speziell für etw.
vorgesehen

access ► Zugang

survey ► Befragung, Umfrage

enable sb.

► jmdn. in die Lage versetzen

2. You let your team know what will be changed.

■ Use “Here”, “overview”, “planned” and “transition process”.

► Here is an overview of the planned transition process.

3. You inform your team about the impact of the change on them.

■ Use “So”, “how”, “this”, “affect” and “your work”.

► So, how will this affect your work?

Sion: Excellent. Well done!

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[12] Essential phrases for communicating change

Sion: In this exercise, you can practise some phrases that are useful for communicating change to your team. I'll tell you what to say and give you some of the words that you'll need. In the pause, form the necessary phrase. Afterwards, you'll hear the correct version. Don't worry if your phrase is slightly different from ours. Then repeat the correct version. Ready? Here's the first one.

1. You tell your team why your company needs to change.

■ Use “We”, “adapt to”, “changing” and “market situation”.

► We have to adapt to a changing market situation.

impact ► Auswirkung(en)

CAREERS CAREER COACH Trust

[13] Introduction

Sion: What do you think makes a successful team? While there are various aspects that can lead to a team's success, trust among team members is an essential part of building and retaining a strong team. In his article, career coach Frank Peters writes about the importance of this five-letter word. Listen carefully.

retain sth. ► etw. behalten

[14] It's all about trust

Today, there are various models out there to explain how a team can become a high-performance team. Almost all of them have one ingredient in common: trust. My favourite is called “The five dysfunctions of a team”, by Patrick Lencioni. In his model, the first barrier to a great team is the absence of trust. In simple terms, if there's no trust, there's no team. Without trust, every conflict becomes personal.

When I think about the teams I've been in, as well as those that I work with today, I fully agree. I would have loved to say: “Without trust, there is no success.” But that's not really true. You can be successful, in the short term, without trust.

Some highly successful teams are driven by fear, for example. They work extremely hard because they are afraid of being yelled at or getting a bad performance review or even being fired. Fear can produce a brief peak in performance, but in the long run, people will try to escape this situation — and the most talented people will be the first ones out.

In the short term, management by fear may get results faster than trust, because building trust takes time. A certain amount of experience is necessary to reach a level of trust at which I have complete confidence that my colleagues will treat me and the things I share with them in a good and supportive way.

Different types of trust

When you start working with a new team and want to kick-start the bonding process within the team, you might consider doing classic team-building exercises. I'm sure you've all heard of these, and perhaps even participated in a few of them. They usually involve group activities in which some team members are blindfolded and others guide them by giving them verbal instructions. Obviously, the blindfolded team members have to trust that their colleagues won't lead them into danger, such as making them walk into a wall or bump into each other.

Of course, there's also the famous “trust fall”, in which one person stands on a chair or table and lets themselves fall backwards, trusting that the others will catch them. These exercises may be clichés, but they do have an effect. They're often fun — and, yes, it certainly requires some trust to do them and feel safe.

However, if you are looking for longer-lasting trust, I wouldn't be so sure. After all, in a trust fall, trust is really needed only in that moment when the person falls. And who would let another person (let alone a colleague) fall and hurt themselves — especially with the entire team looking on? That doesn't mean there's sufficient trust in everyday work situations. The analogy is a bit stretched. My colleague didn't let me fall to the ground, but will he treat sensitive information about me confidentially?

Value the vulnerable

The kind of trust I'm talking about doesn't involve physical danger or adventure. It's more about making yourself vulnerable and being comfortable with that. In her TED talk, American professor and author Brené Brown discusses the power of vulnerability and how important it is for leaders not to put up a wall when they feel vulnerable, but to share what they think and feel. Of course, it is important to find the right balance between being open and transparent with your team and the risk of "oversharing".

To get started, I recommend doing a simple but fun exercise with your team that is usually called "Two Truths and a Lie". Depending on how much time you have and how talkative and creative your team is, you could also extend it to three truths and a lie.

How does it work?

Make sure you are in a place where you won't be disturbed and where everybody can listen to each other. I point that out because I've seen this exercise done in a noisy restaurant where people sat at a long table and only half of them could hear what anyone was saying.

A meeting room is a good idea. This exercise is often done as part of a longer team-building event. In those cases, I love to do it outdoors with the team sitting in a circle around a real or imaginary campfire. Again, make sure everybody can follow what's going on.

Now, the task for each team member is to think of two stories from their life that are interesting and inspiring, which they're happy to share with the team. And, as the name suggests, everyone has to invent a story about something that didn't happen to them — a lie.

If possible, let the team know in advance, so they have enough time to think of their real and fake stories. Even for someone like me, who loves to tell and make up stories, it's stressful to be told: "You have five minutes to come up with three good stories."

To help people understand what's expected of them, it's helpful to provide some examples or ideas for inspiration: tell us about a sporting achievement, a funny incident that happened to you, an amazing coincidence, the time you met someone famous, a birthday surprise, an unusual fact about yourself...

Now, you tell your stories

As team leader, you might want to go first. That will probably put others at ease, and you can set the tone of the activity in terms of how the stories are told, how detailed they are, etc. It shouldn't take longer than two minutes per story.

On the subject of time: obviously larger teams have more stories, which takes more time. In my experience, it's a good idea to split the activity up into several sessions: listen to stories from one or two people at a time, for example, before

moving on to something else. That way, people won't get tired but they will look forward to hearing more stories.

After one person has told their stories, the others have to guess which one is fake. If you want, you can turn it into a competition, giving points to those who guess correctly and to the storyteller for how many people believe the lie.

What can you learn from this?

When I do this activity in communication trainings, I follow it up with certain questions: How did you spot the lie? How did the non-verbal communication differ? How did the tone of voice change? Did the true stories have more detail?

However, if you are doing this to strengthen trust and deepen relationships, you should focus more on how people listen to and engage with each other. This exercise offers three main benefits:

- People talk to each other more. They now have three more points of reference with which to start a conversation.
- People feel more connected to each other. It's almost inevitable that team members will re-late to some of the stories and discover they have something in common with someone else.
- People open up. They learn that it's OK to share information about themselves, including personal information. And maybe

it's better than OK — it might even be fun to share.

All of these benefits will help to build trust among your team members. Once you and your team have done this activity — even if some were hesitant at first — they will trust each other more than before. Of course, it won't immediately transform you into a high-performing team with no conflicts, but you will have taken an important step in the right direction — and had a lot of fun doing it.

out there ➤ da draußen;

hier: auf dem Markt

ingredient ➤ Bestandteil

in simple terms

➤ einfach gesagt

in the short term

➤ auf kurze Sicht, kurzfristig

yell at sb.

➤ jmdn. anschreien

performance review

➤ Mitarbeiterbeurteilung

brief ➤ kurz

peak ➤ hier: Spitzenwert

in the long run

➤ auf lange Sicht, langfristig

kick-start sth.

➤ etw. in Gang setzen

bonding ➤ Verbundenheit;

hier: Teambildung

blindfold sb.

➤ jmdm. die Augen verbinden

bump into sb. ➤ mit jmdm.

zusammenrennen

let alone

➤ geschweige denn

sufficient ➤ genügend

stretched

➤ hier: überzogen

sensitive

➤ sensibel; hier: vertraulich

confidentially

➤ vertraulich, im Vertrauen

vulnerable ➤ verwundbar;

hier: angreifbar

talk ➤ hier: Vortrag

talkative ➤ redefreudig

point sth. out

➤ auf etw. hinweisen

suggest sth. ➤ etw. vermuten

lassen, nahelegen

in advance ➤ im Voraus

incident ➤ Ereignis

amazing

➤ erstaunlich, verblüffend

coincidence

➤ Zufall

put sb. at ease ➤ jmdm. die Befangenheit nehmen

in terms of ➤ im Hinblick auf

look forward to sth.

➤ sich auf etw. freuen

competition

➤ Wettbewerb

follow sth. up

➤ etw. weiterverfolgen

spot sth. ➤ etw. erkennen

differ ➤ unterschiedlich sein

engage with sb.

➤ hier: mit jmdm. interagieren

inevitable

➤ unvermeidbar

relate to sth.

➤ sich mit etw. identifizieren

hesitant: be ~ to do sth.

➤ etw. nicht gern tun

[15] Useful phrases for creating trust through storytelling

Sion: This is an exercise on phrases that you can use for telling stories to create trust among team members. We'll give you the stage of the story, the beginning of a sentence and then two options — **a)** and **b)** — to finish the sentence. In the pause, choose the right option. Then you'll hear the correct answer. Are you ready? Let's start!

1. You start to tell a story.

■ When I was 22,...

a) I used to work in Boston.

b) I usually worked in Boston.

➤ The correct answer is **a)**. "When I was 22, I used to work in Boston." When talking about past states that are no longer true, you can use the construction "used to" + infinitive. "Usually" is an adverb that has the same meaning as "normally".

2. You move on to what happened next.

■ At first, everything seemed fine,...

a) but ultimately, the company collapsed.

b) but then the company I was working for ran into financial difficulties.

➤ The correct answer is **b)**. "At first, everything seemed fine, but then the company I was working for ran into financial difficulties." You use "ultimately" to end a story. You cannot say that "a company collapsed", either. Instead, you'd say that the company "went bankrupt".

3. You add excitement.

■ When my salary was not paid on time, that was the moment...

a) when I would realize that something had gone wrong.

b) when I realized that something had gone wrong.

➤ The correct answer is **b)**. "That was the moment when I realized that something had gone wrong." The simple past is used for a specific moment in the past that is now completed.

4. To continue your story, you can use time phrases.

■ I was wondering how I could find out what had gone wrong, and...

a) the next moment, the phone rang.

b) next time, the phone rang.

➤ The correct answer is **a)**. "I was wondering how I could find out what had gone wrong, and the next moment, the phone rang."

5. Here's another time phrase you could use.
- My colleague told me that the company was hoping to receive funding to turn the situation around, ...
 - a) but in the meanwhile, I had already started looking for another job.
 - b) but in the meantime, I had already started looking for another job.
 - The correct answer is **b)**. "My colleague told me that the company was hoping to receive funding to turn the situation around, but in the meantime, I had already started looking for another job." Instead of "in the meantime", you could say "meanwhile", but not "in the meanwhile".
6. And then, you end your story.
- I thanked her for sharing the information with me —
 - a) I finally understood why my salary still hadn't been paid.
 - b) ultimately, I understood why my salary hadn't been paid.
 - Here, **a)** is correct. "I thanked her for sharing the information with me — I finally understood why my salary still hadn't been paid." Note that when "ultimately" is used at the start of a clause, its meaning is similar to "fundamentally", for example: "Ultimately, this decision is not mine to make."

Sion: Well done!

collapse

- zusammenbrechen, kollabieren

go bankrupt

- in Konkurs gehen

funding

- Finanzierung

LANGUAGE ENGLISH FOR...

Contracts

[16] Dialogue: A contract misunderstanding **M**

Sion: Before signing a new contract, it's important to read everything carefully to make sure you don't get any nasty surprises later on. Listen carefully to the following dialogue between the HR manager and a new employee at Sunshine Solutions, a company specializing in solar panels. There has been a misunderstanding, and Cindy and Philippe have scheduled a meeting to discuss the problem. While you are listening, make notes on what caused the misunderstanding and how the issue will be resolved. Ready? OK, let's go.

Cindy: Hi, Philippe. Thanks for finding the time to talk to me today.

Philippe: No worries. Is everything OK? I hope I'm not in trouble!

Cindy: I just wanted to talk to you about an issue that your manager flagged up. He mentioned that you've booked a two-week holiday to France next month.

Philippe: Yes, I'm so excited about it. I can't wait to see all my family, and I've got something really special planned...

Cindy: Well, usually, I wouldn't have a problem with our employees going on holiday, but you are still on probation for the next two months. I'm afraid we don't allow staff to go on holiday during their probation period.

Philippe: Oh, really? I wasn't aware of that.

Cindy: It is on page six of your contract. Did you read the fine print?

Philippe: Oh, I see. Erm, well, I flicked through the contract and signed it on the final page. I remember seeing something about my probation period, but I thought it was only three months, and this is my fourth month working here.

Cindy: Your contract took effect four months ago, but the probation period is six months — not three! Going on holiday during that time is a breach of your contract.

Philippe: I'm really sorry. If I had known this, then I would have complied with this rule, but I seem to have missed this important detail. I suppose I'll have to cancel or postpone my holiday. My wife's going to kill me. We were planning on going to France to renew our vows, you see. We wanted to return to the church where we got married ten years ago.

Cindy: I see. Well, perhaps if you talk to your manager, an exception could be made, but it

might be worth re-reading your contract to avoid issues like this in the future.

Philippe: Right. Yes, I will have another look at it.

Sion: OK, now let's check your understanding of the problem that caused the misunderstanding. Decide whether the following statements are true or false, based on the dialogue that you've just heard. Here's the first statement.

1. Philippe only skimmed over his contract.
 - This statement is true. Philippe says that he "flicked through his contract". If you "flick through", "skim over" or "skim through" a document, then you do not read everything thoroughly. Instead, you just read the main points. The danger of flicking through or skimming over a document is that you could miss some important details.
2. Philippe's trial period isn't over yet.
 - This statement is true. Philippe is still on probation. A "probation period" is the same as a "trial period". This happens at the start of a contractual agreement between an employee and an employer.
3. The HR manager says that employees can go on holiday after the third month of their probation period has been completed.
 - This statement is false. The HR manager tells Philippe that employees can only go on holiday after the sixth month of their probation period has been completed.

4. If Philippe goes on the holiday he has booked, this will be a violation of the contractual agreement made between himself and his employer.

► This statement is true. The HR manager tells Philippe that going on holiday while he is on probation would be a breach of his contract. A “breach of your contract” or a “violation of your contract” means that you go against what was agreed upon in your contract.

5. Philippe wanted to go to a friend’s wedding in France.

► This statement is false. Philippe and his wife wanted to go to France to renew their vows in the church where they got married ten years ago. If you “renew your vows”, then you celebrate your married life together and restate the commitment that you have made to one another.

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

nasty surprise

► böse Überraschung

HR (human resources)

► Personalwesen

schedule sth.

► etw. anberaumen

issue ► Frage, Problem

resolve sth.

► etw. lösen

flag sth. up ► auf etw. aufmerksam machen

probation: be on ~

► Probezeit haben

probation period

► Probezeit

fine print: the ~

► das Kleingedruckte

flick through sth.

► etw. überfliegen

take effect

► in Kraft treten

breach ► (Vertrags-)Bruch

comply with sth.

► etw. erfüllen, einhalten

postpone sth.

► etw. verschieben

vows: renew one’s ~

► sein Eheversprechen erneuern

skim over/through

sth. ► etw. überfliegen

trial period

► Probezeit

contractual

► vertraglich

violation

► Verletzung

restate sth.

► etw. noch einmal sagen, wiederholen

commitment

► Verpflichtung;

hier: Versprechen

[17] Exercise: Tricky translations

Sion: Let’s do a vocabulary exercise on false friends. False friends are pairs of words that sound similar in German and English. But their meanings are very different, so they can cause confusion and misunderstanding. In this exercise, we’d like you to translate a German word and sentence into English, being careful to avoid the false friend. Let’s begin.

Sion: This word is used for a separate element in a contract or other legal document. Translate this word.

German: *Paragraf*

English: article, clause

Sion: Don’t say “paragraph”, as this refers to a section in a text — Absatz in German. The German word *Paragraf* is “article” or “clause” in English. Translate the following sentence.

German: Die Formulierung der meisten Paragraphen ist viel zu kompliziert.

English: The wording of most articles is much too complicated.
The wording of most clauses is much too complicated.

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

Sion: In this exercise, we'll practise the use of false friends. The German word *Paragraf* is "article" or "clause" in English. It is not "paragraph", which is *Absatz* in German. First, you'll hear a sentence with a beep. In the pause, decide whether you need "article" or "paragraph" instead of the beep. Then, you'll hear the correct sentence again. Ready?

1. Can you shorten the third [beep] of the story by one line?
➤ Can you shorten the third paragraph of the story by one line?
2. Penalties for a breach of this contract are stated in section II, [beep] seven.
➤ Penalties for a breach of this contract are stated in section II, article seven. "Clause" is also possible instead of "article".
3. In the first [beep] of the last [beep] of the agreement, it should say "and" not "or" — there's a typo.
➤ In the first paragraph of the last article of the agreement, it should say "and" not "or" — there's a typo. "Clause" is also possible instead of "article".

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

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penalty ➤ (Vertrags-)Strafe

typo ➤ Druck-, Tippfehler

SKILL UP!

Innovation

[19] Exercise: Essential words and phrases for innovation **M**

Sion: With this language exercise, you can practise some words and phrases that can be used to talk about innovation. First, you'll hear a definition of a word or phrase. Then, you'll hear two suggestions for the word or phrase that is being defined: **a)** and **b)**. In the pause, choose the correct option. OK? Here's the first one.

1. A moment of sudden inspiration, understanding or recognition is a...
a) moment of enlightenment.
b) light-bulb moment.
➤ **b)** is right. A "light-bulb moment" is an occasion when someone suddenly understands or recognizes something that they did not understand or recognize before. "Enlightenment" is the state of understanding something.
2. If you think about something in a way that is new and unusual, you think...
a) outside the box.
b) beyond limits.

➤ a) is right. If you think differently or from a new perspective, then you “think outside the box”.

3. The abbreviation “R&D” stands for...

a) research and development.

b) recycling and disposal.

➤ a) is right. “R&D” is short for “research and development”.

4. If you change something to make it suitable for a new situation, you...

a) adapt it.

b) adopt it.

➤ a) is right. You “adapt something” if you make it suitable for a new situation or purpose. If you “adopt something”, that means you accept and start to use something, such as a new method.

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

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enlightenment

➤ Erleuchtung

light-bulb ➤ Glühbirne

research ➤ Forschung

CONCLUSION

[20] Until next time... 📺

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

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