

EASY E

CEF level A2

MEDIUM M

CEF levels B1-B2

ADVANCED A

CEF levels C1-C2

CEF: European Framework of Reference for Languages

INTRODUCTION**[1] Let's get started! E**

Sion Dayson: Welcome to *Business Spotlight Audio*. This time around, we question whether business trips are really necessary. Then, we explore the topics of pay transparency and strategies for winning the race for talent. There's lots more, too, but I won't give it all away. Let's begin with some trending news topics.

topic ➤ Thema

give sth. away
➤ etw. verraten**NAMES AND NEWS****[2] Good night appetite M**

Three meals a day has long been a model for good health, but keeping that routine can be difficult, leading busy employees to skip breakfast or wolf down leftover meeting biscuits and call it "lunch". Now, food manufacturers smell an opportunity to increase sales — by creating a fourth meal of the day, with sleep-friendly late-night snacks.

Sean Folkson, from the company Nightfood, told the website Fooddive.com: "Cravings for calorie-dense foods peak at night, as does overall appetite. Willpower weakens. The global food and beverage companies are well aware of

all this, and I think they expect a massive category to develop around night-time snacking."

Some medical studies suggest that eating at night can actually disturb sleep, meaning the marketers must walk a fine line. The challenge for the industry is to find ingredients that do actually improve sleep but also taste good. Chris Peruzzi, from The Functional Chocolate Company, says: "Some of the ingredients we work with, like valerian root, are simply unpalatable. It took some creative food science to ... get the taste profile just right." Like it or not, we can expect food companies to continue marketing snacks for the time between dinner and bed.

Business Spotlight 12/2023, p. 8

skip sth. ➤ etw. überspringen,
auslassenwolf sth. down (jfm.)
➤ etw. verschlingen

cravings ➤ Gelüste

calorie-dense ➤ kalorienreich

peak ➤ seinen Höhepunkt
erreichen

overall ➤ Gesamt-

willpower ➤ Willenskraft

beverage ➤ Getränk

suggest sth.
➤ etw. nahelegenwalk a fine line ➤ sich auf
einem schmalen Grat bewegen;
hier: mit Umsicht agieren

ingredient ➤ Zutat

valerian root

➤ Baldrianwurzel

unpalatable ➤ ungenießbar

[3] People who've seen too much M

Starting a new job can be stressful, but on Trevin Brownie's first day, he ended up vomiting in revulsion. Brownie was a Facebook moderator. His job was to watch the most violent and graphic videos uploaded by the platform's near-

ly three billion users, and remove them before anyone else saw them. Watching a new video every 55 seconds or so, he'd categorize them according to Facebook's content rules.

A South African, Brownie was one of many young Facebook moderators hired by Sama, a San Francisco-based outsourcing company, to work in Nairobi, Kenya. He was required to see dreadful things — including, by his own estimate, over 1,000 videos of beheadings. This traumatic experience, Brownie says, has deadened his feelings, taking away part of his humanity. He's now one of 184 former moderators who are suing Sama and Facebook's parent company, Meta.

It's the largest lawsuit of its kind in Kenya and could have global consequences for the tens of thousands of moderators who protect users from toxic content. Social media companies are under increasing pressure to moderate the content on their networks, but at what cost is this work being done?

Business Spotlight 12/2023, p. 9

vomit ➤ sich erbrechen
revulsion ➤ Ekel, Abscheu
graphic ➤ hier: grausam
billion ➤ Milliarde(n)
dreadful ➤ schrecklich
beheading ➤ Enthauptung

deadened sth. ➤ etw. abstumpfen, ersterben lassen
sue sb./sth.
 ➤ jmdn./etw. verklagen
parent company
 ➤ Muttergesellschaft
lawsuit ➤ Prozess

[4] Fighting over fossils

Sotheby's and Christie's are well-known auction houses. They usually sell famous paintings, sculptures and other artworks, but recently, they've been selling some unexpected items — dinosaur fossils. It is proving to be big business: in 2020, Christie's sold "Stan", an almost-complete T. rex skeleton for a record \$31.8 million.

In countries like China or South Africa, fossils belong to the state, no matter who owns the land where they're found. In America, however, property owners can do whatever they want with the fossils, and most want to make some money with them. This is highly controversial among paleontologists, many of whom worry that valuable specimens will disappear into private collections and be "lost" to science.

It's not clear whether commercial fossils really will be lost — a lot of private collectors are happy to make them available to scientists for study. It was revealed in 2022 that "Stan" had been bought by the Abu Dhabi Department of Culture and Tourism, who want to put the fossil in the Abu Dhabi Natural History Museum, due to open in 2025.

Business Spotlight 12/2023, p. 9

item ➤ Artikel
fossil ➤ Fossilie
T. rex ➤ Tyrannosaurus Rex
skeleton ➤ Skelett

property ➤ Eigentum; hier: Grund(stück)
paleontologist
 ➤ Paläontologe/Paläontologin
specimen ➤ Exemplar

reveal sth. ► etw. enthüllen**department**

► hier: Ministerium

due: be - to do sth.

► etw. (planmäßig) tun sollen

INNOVATION

[5] In shape and in the shade ☀

Sion: Bright ideas often come about when we realize something is wrong and start thinking about ways to solve the issue. Obesity and rising temperatures are two well-known and concerning problems that inspired entrepreneurs from Denmark and Spain to think outside the box. Let's hear more about these innovative business ideas. Ready? Let's go.

bright ► hier: genial**issue** ► Problem**obesity** ► Adipositas**entrepreneur**

► Unternehmer(in)

think outside the box

► unkonventionell denken

[6] Make me thin ☹

The world is getting heavier. About two-fifths of all people are overweight or obese — by 2035, it could be more than half. This is worrying, as obesity is associated with lots of health problems, including diabetes, heart disease and some forms of cancer, along with the social stigma of being overweight.

Many treatments — ranging from useless to dangerous — claim to help people lose weight. Now, there may be an effective solution. Sema-glutide, developed by the Danish company Novo Nordisk, has been shown to lead to weight

loss of about 15 per cent. It's already on sale in the US and other countries, and a rival version, said to be even more effective, is on its way. These are known as GLP-1 drugs because they mimic the role of the GLP-1 hormone, which increases the feeling of satiety. The market for them could reach \$150 billion by 2031 — almost as big as the market for cancer drugs today.

However, the long-term effects are still unknown, and that's not the only problem. Ozempic, a lower-dose version, is a diabetes drug that's being used "off-label" for weight loss. Its popularity has caused a shortage for those who need it to manage their blood sugar.

Business Spotlight 12/2023, p. 11

obese ► adipös**obesity** ► Adipositas**mimic sth.** ► etw. simulieren**satiety** ► Sättigung**billion** ► Milliarde(n)**long-term** ► Langzeit-**lower-dose**

► niedriger dosiert

off-label ► hier: außerhalb seiner Zulassung**shortage**

► Knappheit

[7] Keeping it cool ☀

In a warming world, cities are feeling the heat. Trees and other greenery are an effective way to cool down urban areas. However, as parks and public gardens are expensive, they tend to be more common in wealthier neighbourhoods.

The Spanish company Singular Green is taking a different approach, by integrating nature into existing urban architecture with vertical

gardens, green roofs and other designs. The company's projects are found all over Spain and include the country's largest vertical garden, at the Vitoria-Gasteiz conference centre. In crowded cities, gardens must make the best use of limited space. Green shades, for example, are canopies supporting a bed of plants and flowers. These are suspended across the gaps between buildings to help absorb heat radiation while providing shade at street level.

Heatwaves are most dangerous to those who can least afford to protect themselves. Green infrastructure that's adapted to urban settings makes cities cooler as well as more equal.

Business Spotlight 12/2023, p. 11

greenery ► Grün, Begrünung

neighbourhood

► hier: Wohnviertel

approach ► Vorgehensweise

shade

► hier: (Schatten-)Dach

canopy ► Vordach,

Überdachung

bed ► hier: Fläche

suspended: be ~

► (herab)hängen

gap ► Lücke

radiation

► Strahlung

setting ► Umfeld

standing of what you have heard afterwards. Ready? Let's go!

Simon: I guess I'd better start looking for a train ticket to Madrid. It's going to take me such a long time to get there. Needless to say, this will be the first time I take a train from London to Spain.

Rita: I think you might be pleasantly surprised. I always take trains when I go on holiday. It's so much more relaxing than flying. You can choose a train connection that works for you rather than having to fly ridiculously early or late.

Simon: I'm not convinced. Travel is such a crucial part of my work. If people can't take short-haul flights, then I will have to significantly reduce the number of business trips I go on. I'm worried about the impact that could have on business. My clients are used to meeting me in person.

Rita: But don't you think a lot of your trips could be replaced with conference calls? We are in the middle of a climate emergency, so I'm sure your clients will understand the company's new policy. It might even impress them.

Simon: I hadn't thought of that. I thought they would immediately see it as a negative thing, but I suppose some clients might actually like the idea.

Rita: And to be honest, I think our work-life balance is likely to improve as a result. So many of my business trips are a bit pointless. I'm look-

HEAD-TO-HEAD

[8] Are business trips still necessary? M

Sion: This dialogue is based on the Head-to-Head article "Are business trips still necessary?" You will hear colleagues Rita and Simon having a conversation about their company's decision to ban short-haul flights for business travel. Listen carefully because we'll test your under-

ing forward to saving time and increasing my productivity by travelling less.

Simon: That's a good point, but I maintain that there are certain hands-on tasks that simply can't be done remotely. And people definitely feel more invested in projects when they have met the stakeholders in real life. I think some exceptions will have to be made to this ban on short-haul flights, but I suppose time will tell.

Sion: OK, now it's time to check your understanding of the dialogue you have just heard. Listen to the following statements based on the dialogue and decide whether they are true or false. You will hear the answers after the beep that follows each statement. Here's the first one.

1. When you travel by train, it's easier to depart at a time that suits you than it is when flying, according to Rita.

▶ This statement is true. Rita says you can choose a train connection that works for you rather than flying ridiculously early or late. The word "ridiculously" is an adverb that shows that you find something surprising or absurd.

2. Travel isn't a vital part of Simon's job.

▶ This statement is false. Simon says that travel is "a crucial part" of his work. The words "crucial" and "vital" both mean "very important".

3. Rita thinks occasional conferences would be a good alternative to business trips.

▶ This statement is false. Rita thinks "conference calls" could replace many business trips. "Conference calls" are video calls with three or more participants.

4. Rita believes some clients will see the company's decision to ban short-haul flights as a positive thing.

▶ This statement is true. Rita thinks this decision might "impress" some clients. If you "impress someone", you make them respect or admire you.

5. Simon thinks people will be more likely to invest money in the company if they have met the stakeholders in person.

▶ This statement is false. Simon says that people will feel more "invested" in projects if they have met the stakeholders in real life. This doesn't mean that they will supply money to fund the project. It means that the project will become more important to them because they will have a more personal connection to it.

6. By the end of the conversation, Simon is confident that the policy will be effective.

▶ This statement is false. Simon thinks that "exceptions will have to be made". This means that he believes the policy will not work in every case and, on some occasions, the policy will not be followed.

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

Business Spotlight 12/2023, pp. 16-17

ban sth. ➤ etw. verbieten

short-haul flight

➤ Kurzstreckenflug

crucial ➤ wichtig, wesentlich

short-haul flight

➤ Kurzstreckenflug

impact ➤ Auswirkung(en)

emergency

➤ Notfall; hier: Krise

pointless ➤ sinnlos

look forward to sth.

➤ sich auf etw. freuen

point ➤ hier: Argument

maintain sth.

➤ hier: etw. behaupten

hands-on ➤ praktisch

remotely: do sth. ~

➤ etw. nicht vom Büro aus tun

invested: feel ~

➤ sich eingebunden fühlen

stakeholder

➤ Projektbeteiligte(r)

ban ➤ Verbot

time will tell ➤ die Zeit wird es zeigen, es bleibt abzuwarten

depart ➤ abfahren

vital ➤ wichtig, unerlässlich

fund sth. ➤ etw. finanzieren

male and female employees at the company on LinkedIn. And he also shared average salaries within the company according to age group. I was lost for words when I saw the post. When I worked over in the US, lots of employers asked me not to disclose my salary if I was asked. And at home, I was always taught not to ask people what they earn or to tell them what I earn.

Michelle: I know what you mean. I'm not used to talking to people about money issues. But to be honest, I think it's a good thing if people start being more open about their finances. The first step in combatting the gender pay gap is making people aware of what their peers are earning.

Kyle: Yes, being open isn't necessarily a bad thing, but I think disclosing this kind of information could definitely make tensions run high in the office.

Michelle: Well, maybe a bit of tension will bring about some positive change. Secrecy doesn't promote trust. It leads to guesswork and vague notions of what your colleagues might be earning. I know I'd be more likely to apply for a role at a company that was upfront about the salary range on offer.

Kyle: Yes, I think pay transparency can definitely improve applicants' perception of a company, but I imagine some companies are reluctant to be completely transparent, as this could easily result in some negative fallout. Imagine find-

METROPOLITAN MAYHEM

[9] Time for transparency

Sion: This dialogue is based on the Finance article "Pay transparency: Say what you pay". The CEO of Metropolitan Mayhem has just posted about pay transparency on LinkedIn. Co-workers Michelle and Kyle share their thoughts on the post. Listen carefully because we'll test your understanding of the dialogue afterwards.

Kyle: Have you been on LinkedIn this morning?

Michelle: No, I've been in meetings the whole morning. Why?

Kyle: The CEO shared the average salaries of

ing out that a colleague who does exactly the same job as you is getting paid more for doing the same task and the same hours.

Michelle: Well, to be blunt, Kyle, as a woman, I don't have to imagine that — it's reality. We can only rectify these issues if employers start being completely open about their pay packages.

Sion: OK, let's test your understanding of the dialogue you have just heard. Complete the definitions of the words and phrases provided by choosing the correct option, **a)** or **b)**.

1. If you “disclose” a piece of information,...
 - a) you give people access to something that was previously secret.
 - b) you keep it a secret.

► The correct answer is **a)**. If you “disclose” a piece of information, you give people access to something that was previously secret.
2. “Combatting the gender pay gap” means...
 - a) “increasing the difference between what men and women earn”.
 - b) “fighting against the difference between what men and women earn”.

► The correct answer is **b)**. “Combatting the gender pay gap” means “fighting against the difference between what men and women earn”.
3. At work, your “peers” are...
 - a) your colleagues — usually people with similar positions to your own.
 - b) your long-term clients.

► The correct answer is **a)**. At work, your “peers” are your colleagues — usually people with similar positions to your own.
4. When “tensions run high”,...
 - a) the atmosphere is tense because people are upset.
 - b) people are stressed because of an increased workload.

► The correct answer is **a)**. When “tensions run high”, the atmosphere is tense because people are upset.
5. A “vague notion” is...
 - a) a concrete understanding of something.
 - b) an unclear idea about something.

► The correct answer is **b)**. A “vague notion” is an unclear idea about something.
6. If you are “upfront”,...
 - a) you are completely honest and open.
 - b) you are forward and assertive.

► The correct answer is **a)**. If you are “upfront”, you are completely honest and open.
7. If you “rectify” a problem,...
 - a) you try to understand what caused it in the first place.
 - b) you take a negative situation and put it right.

► The correct answer is **b)**. If you “rectify” a problem, you take a negative situation and put it right.

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

Business Spotlight 12/2023, pp. 18–21

CEO (chief executive officer)

➤ Geschäftsführer(in)

disclose sth.

➤ etw. offenlegen

issue ➤ Frage, Thema

pay gap ➤ Lohngefälle

peer ➤ gleichrangige(r)
Kollege/Kollegin

tensions ➤ Spannungen

secrecy ➤ Verschwiegenheit;
auch: Heimlichtuerei

guesswork ➤ Spekulation

vague

➤ unspezifisch, unkonkret

notion ➤ Vorstellung

apply for sth.

➤ sich für etw. bewerben

role ➤ hier: Position

upfront: be ~ about sth.

➤ keinen Hehl aus etw. machen

salary range

➤ Gehaltsspanne

applicant ➤ Bewerber(in)

perception ➤ Wahrnehmung

reluctant: be ~ to do sth.

➤ zögern, etw. zu tun

fallout ➤ Nachwirkung(en)

blunt: be ~

➤ hier: etw. deutlich sagen

rectify sth.

➤ etw. berichtigen, beheben

tense ➤ angespannt

upset ➤ aufgebracht,

verärgert

workload ➤ Arbeitspensum

forward ➤ unverföhren

assertive

➤ selbstsicher, bestimmt

rely on sb. ➤ auf jmdn. bauen,
angewiesen sein

skilled worker

➤ Fachkraft

[11] How to win the race for talent

A recent McKinsey report on the growing talent shortage found that about 90 per cent of organizations expect to have meaningful skills gaps in the near future. In the UK, for example, about 1.3 million jobs are currently unfilled, even though unemployment is at historically low levels in both Europe and the US.

Economists predict that finding talent will remain difficult for the next decade and even beyond. And if nothing is done to change this trend, the situation will continue to get worse and the cost to the world economy from unrealized revenues will be in the trillions.

In short, finding, recruiting and then retaining talented people has become critical to business success.

Finding talent

The race for talent is won by organizations that attract people rather than search for them. Such businesses have a strong brand and business culture, competent leadership and ambitious standards. High-flyers, who can usually change employers relatively easily, do not tolerate mediocrity or incompetence.

By building and nurturing relationships and by promoting the company, recruiters can start the process of identifying and attracting top talent for you. This involves marketing your or-

BUSINESS SKILLS

[10] On the hunt for talent

Sion: Companies rely on skilled workers, but it is becoming increasingly difficult to find the right talent. Ken Taylor's article on the race for talent offers practical advice on how to attract potential employees and hold on to them. Let's find out more.

ganization like a product. For example, attending university campus events leads to contact with potential recruits, which can make it easier to get them on board when the time is right.

Other ways to be noticed include participating in job fairs, sponsoring events and offering internships. Make use of social media by sharing information about your organization (such as recruiting films, photos from company events, employee testimonials) that shows it's a great place to work. Pay a bonus to current employees for referrals. If your employees have had a positive experience of working with candidates before, this lowers the risk of mis-hiring.

The aim is to be an employer of choice. By cultivating a progressive company culture, you can make it easier for potential employees to approach you. Manish Chandra, CEO of Poshmark, says: "An organization that focuses on its core values will find people who ... really connect to your mission."

Recruiting talent

Keep things as simple as possible. A time-consuming recruitment process will put people off. Your recruitment materials and interfaces must be suitable for mobile devices, and job postings should be short and to the point.

Recruit for potential rather than for roles. You want forward-looking people who enjoy a challenge and are prepared to grow. Give them a clear potential career path. Talented people are

motivated by opportunities — including promotions, skills development, etc.

A powerful employee value proposition (EVP) helps you to stand out for quality candidates. An EVP is the set of benefits you offer employees in return for their skills and experience. Your EVP outlines the benefits, financial rewards and career development opportunities employees have. It should also include your organization's vision and values, which will help find the right talent — people who understand your culture and believe in your vision.

Retaining talent

A reputation for people development helps to attract and retain talented staff. In surveys by McKinsey, the top reason given for quitting a job was the lack of career development and advancement. The most successful organizations have learned from this, setting up talent management programmes that encourage and develop their people — especially their high-flyers.

You need competency management processes for developing, monitoring and managing the development of skills, abilities, knowledge and behaviour within the workforce. This also gives you benchmarks, so you know top talent when you see it.

Training is the most common way to develop employees' skills, but another way is mentoring. This is a particularly good way to help new people understand the company culture

and develop professional skills. It's a highly effective retention tool, as people see that their potential is recognized and that the company is committed to helping them grow.

Talent management is also an important part of succession planning. By identifying successors to key positions in the organization, you can actively develop those people's skill sets. This works well with mentoring, especially when the mentee is the probable successor of the mentor.

If you are able to get the right person into the right job and nurture them properly, within an excellent company culture, you are well on the way to building a very talented and successful organization.

Business Spotlight 12/2023, pp. 30–32

shortage ▶ Mangel

gap ▶ Lücke; hier: Defizit

unfilled

▶ hier: nicht besetzt

predict sth.

▶ etw. prognostizieren

revenue ▶ Umsatz(Erlös)

trillion ▶ Billion(en)

recruit sb. ▶ jmdn. anwerben

retain sb. ▶ jmdn. halten

critical ▶ entscheidend, wesentlich

race (for)

▶ hier: Wettbewerb (um)

high-flyer ▶ Überflieger(in); hier: vielversprechende(r) Mitarbeiter(in)

mediocrity

▶ Mittelmäßigkeit

nurture sth. ▶ etw. pflegen

recruiter

▶ Personalreferent(in)

recruit

▶ neue(r) Mitarbeiter(in)

get sb. on board ▶ hier: jmdn. ins Unternehmen holen

job fair ▶ Jobmesse

internship ▶ Praktikum

testimonial

▶ Referenz, Bericht

referral ▶ Weiterempfehlung

mis-hire ▶ ungeeignete Mitarbeiter(innen) einstellen

approach sb.

▶ jmdn. kontaktieren

CEO (chief executive officer)

▶ Geschäftsführer(in)

core ▶ Kern

mission ▶ Leitsatz/-sätze

put sb. off

▶ jmdn. abschrecken

interface ▶ Schnittstelle

device ▶ Gerät

role ▶ hier: Position

grow

▶ hier: sich weiterentwickeln

career path

▶ berufliche Laufbahn

employee value proposition

▶ Auflistung der Vorteile eines Unternehmens als Arbeitgeber

stand out ▶ herausragen

benefit ▶ Zusatzleistung

outline sth. ▶ etw. umreißen

survey ▶ Umfrage

quit a job (jfm.)

▶ eine Stelle kündigen

workforce

▶ Personalbestand

benchmark

▶ Vergleichsgröße

retention ▶ Zurückbehaltung; hier: Bindung

committed: be ~ to doing

sth. ▶ sich engagieren, etw. zu tun

succession ▶ Nachfolge

skill set ▶ Kompetenzen

mentee

▶ Mentee, von einem Mentor / einer Mentorin betreute Person

[12] Essential phrases for winning the race for talent

Sion: In this exercise, you can practise some phrases that are useful for talking about winning the race for talent. 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 think carefully about what your company needs when hiring new talent.

- Ask a question using “what”, “skills gaps”, “that”, “we”, “need” and “close”.
- ▶ What are the skills gaps that we need to close?
- 2. You think about how to find talent.
 - Use “recruitment process”, “starts”, “making”, “our organization” and “known”.
 - ▶ The recruitment process starts by making our organization known.
- 3. You point out what is important when recruiting talent.
 - Use “we”, “need”, “offer”, “transparent”, “potential” and “career path”.
 - ▶ We need to offer a transparent potential career path.
- 4. You focus on retaining talent.
 - Use “how”, “would you like”, “mentor” and “young employee”.
 - ▶ How would you like to mentor a young employee?

Sion: Excellent. Well done!

Business Spotlight 12/2023, pp. 30–32

CAREER COACH

[13] Talking to your team

Sion: How do people communicate with each other in your team? I’m not talking about whether they use Slack, Teams or email — I’m talking about their use of language. Are they direct or indirect? Do they talk about problems, or do they avoid them? Career coach Frank Pe-

ters’s article explores this topic in more detail. Let’s check it out.

topic ▶ Thema

[14] What’s your team’s language?

What language does your team speak? English? German? Or maybe you speak German, but your presentation slides are in English and your boss is Spanish. I once had a boss who was British. One of the first things he did was give us a translation sheet to help us understand the things he said. I still remember one example. “When the British say: ‘That’s very interesting’, Germans understand: ‘He likes what I’m saying and wants to hear more.’ What the British mean is: ‘That’s clearly nonsense. Never mention that again.’”

Country-specific differences are fascinating. For a team, it’s even more important to understand what your specific language is. Is it a language of responsibility or a language of blame? Is it a language of victims or a language of doers and creators?

Team-specific language

Of course, if you ask yourself and your team this question directly, I suspect that you won’t get to the heart of the matter. But there’s a nice, playful way to find out what language your team speaks. But before we do that, ask yourself: why is it important to work on my team’s language?

When I work with teams, one of the most important things I do is listen: I listen to how people in the team talk to each other; how they talk to people outside the team and outside the company, like me. I pay close attention to the words they use and whether they talk in the past, present or future tense. Do they use short, crisp sentences and get straight to the point? Or do they beat around the bush in long, drawn-out statements? All of this is an indication of where the real problem lies.

Language should have a positive effect, a unifying effect on a team. After a while, each team develops its own specific expressions and sayings. For example, there may be a team that used to have a British boss, in which now the statement “That’s very interesting” is a running gag. Externalists won’t understand why team members find this funny.

Most teams aren’t really aware of the words and phrases that are part of their identity, or that their language gives them their identity at all. It is worth taking a closer look at the identity-building language you use in a team. Then, you can use it more consciously, and integrating new colleagues might be smoother if you introduced them to your language.

You might like to use one or two of your team meetings to make your language transparent. In my Toastmasters Club (in which we practise our public-speaking skills), we have a role

called “grammarian”. This person’s job is to collect all the nice (and not-so-nice) uses of language in the speeches that have been given and to report on what they’ve noticed. You could have a “team grammarian”, who notes down team-specific terms and expressions used by team members. It’s often fun to hear the words you regularly use as a team.

How we say what we say

Once you’ve looked at the team-specific words and phrases, you should take a closer look at the kind of language you use. You’ll find the following exercise to be a real eye-opener for your team. Let’s play four rounds. In each round, one team member will have a speaking role, while the others listen. The scenario is the same for each round: imagine you’ve just spoken to your boss/manager/CEO about an issue that’s important to you, for example your salary, holidays, promotion, working hours, etc. After this conversation, you meet your colleagues in the canteen and tell them about it.

Round one: Questions

In this round, the storyteller can use only questions, for example: “Can you imagine what happened to me a few minutes ago? What was my boss thinking when she told me that I wouldn’t get a pay rise? Why did she come to that conclusion?” Do this for one to two minutes and then, have the storyteller and the audience think about the following:

- How did this conversation feel?
- How clear was the message?
- As the audience, how deeply did you get into the story?
- Did you feel a connection?

I've done this several times with teams, and there's no one, clear reaction. Some people find it difficult to get their message across in this way. Others like questions because they open the door for answers, for reflection and connection. Find out for yourself and listen carefully.

Round two: Passive

In this round, the storyteller is only allowed to talk in the passive voice, for example: "I was asked to provide a list of my achievements in the past 12 months. After that, I was told to wait because my boss was called away." Again, after one or two minutes, have the storyteller and the audience reflect on the same questions as in round one. Let me add one more: what was different compared with round one? Most of the teams mention that this time, the story sounded more distant and not very engaging.

Round three: Impersonal

This time, the storyteller takes an even more distant position, using only "one" or "you" (and not "I" or "me") when they talk about themselves. And they only speak in conditional phrases, such as: "You could have the impression..." or "One might think that..." Again, after

a couple of minutes, you stop and talk about the experience with the questions from round two. Here, you'll probably find that the story didn't sound very authentic and was not very clear.

Round four: Normal

People usually give a sigh of relief when I explain the task for this round. This time, the storyteller can tell the story as they normally would, in their own words. As before, allow one to two minutes followed by a round of reflection. In most cases, the storyteller tries to avoid using the questions, the passive or the conditional required in rounds one to three. On the one hand, that makes the story clearer. On the other, it hinders the flow.

After the four rounds, I have the participants discuss the following questions:

- Which round (one to three) is closest to your everyday situation at work? Are there differences depending on who you are speaking to?
- Which kind of language feels most and least comfortable to you, and why?
- Which elements would you like to see more of in your team's language and what do you want to hear less of?

There are no right or wrong answers here. There are teams who love to talk to each other clearly and directly. Others prefer keeping some distance. This exercise is not about what kind of language is best, but about making the

team aware of how they speak to each other and increasing their awareness of their team's language.

Business Spotlight 12/2023, pp. 38–41

slide ➤ Folie

sheet ➤ Blatt

doer ➤ Macher(in),
Handelnde(r)

suspect sth. ➤ etw. vermuten

heart: the ~ of the matter
➤ der Kern der Sache

crisp ➤ knapp und klar

beat around the bush
➤ um den heißen Brei herum-
reden, nicht Klartext reden

draw-out
➤ in die Länge gezogen

indication
➤ Hinweis, Anhaltspunkt

toastmaster (UK) ➤ Mann,
der Tischredner(innen)
ankündigt und Toasts ausbringt

grammarian
➤ Grammatiker(in)

term ➤ (Fach-)Ausdruck

CEO (chief executive officer)
➤ Geschäftsführer(in)

issue ➤ Problem, Thema

promotion ➤ Beförderung

pay rise (UK)
➤ Gehaltserhöhung

conclusion
➤ Schluss(folgerung)

audience ➤ Zuhörer(innen)

get a message across
➤ eine Botschaft überbringen

passive voice ➤ Passiv

achievement
➤ Leistung, Erfolg

engaging ➤ fesselnd

sign of relief
➤ Seufzer der Erleichterung

hinder sth. ➤ etw. hemmen

[15] Practising the passive voice

Sion: This exercise is based on the “Passive practice” section of “Essential phrases” at the end of the Career Coach article “What’s your team’s language?” The passive voice is mainly used when it is either unnecessary to know who is performing an action or it is unknown who is performing an action. Let’s take a look at an example of the difference between an active and a passive sentence:

- “Some builders built this house in 2011.”

Sion: This sentence is active, which means that the people doing the action (in this case, “some builders”) are the subject of the sentence. But the phrase “Some builders built” sounds repetitive. It is quite clear that the house was built by builders, so in this case, a passive sentence without any mention of the builders would sound more natural.

- “This house was built in 2011.”

Sion: This sentence is passive. It still tells us the most important information, and it sounds less repetitive. Here, the object of the active sentence becomes the subject of the passive sentence.

OK, now it’s time to build some passive sentences yourself. You will hear a situation, then you will be asked to form the correct passive sentence for the situation. Ready? Let’s go.

1. A client calls you to find out when he will receive the report he requested. The client asks you, “When will I receive the report?” The report will be ready this week.
 - Answer this question using the verb “finish” in the simple future passive voice.
 - The report will be finished this week.
2. A colleague wants to know how a recent presentation went. Audience members interrupted the speaker several times during his presentation. Your colleague asks you, “How was the presentation?”

- Answer this question using the verb “interrupt” in the past simple passive voice.
 - ▶ The speaker was interrupted several times during his presentation.
3. The CEO has called a company-wide meeting for this afternoon. Your colleague Carol seems to have forgotten about the meeting as she is about to plan a call with her client at the same time as the meeting.
- Remind her about the meeting using a sentence with the verb “call” in the present perfect passive voice.
 - ▶ A company-wide meeting has been called for this afternoon.
4. Tom from the sales department wants to know if a client already placed an order. You know that they are negotiating the final details of the deal right now. He asks you, “What stage is the deal at?”
- Answer this question using the verb “finalize” in the present continuous passive voice.
 - ▶ The deal is being finalized right now.

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

Business Spotlight 12/2023, pp. 38–41

repetitive

• sich wiederholend

audience ▶ Zuhörer(innen)

CEO (chief executive officer)

• Geschäftsführer(in)

sales department

• Vertrieb

negotiate sth.

• etw. verhandeln

[16] British indirectness: Interview with Kirsten Florentine Weber

Sion: In the following interview, a German climate scientist shares her experience of studying at a British university and receiving feedback on her work from British professors. This is a real-life example of navigating cultural differences through language when living abroad.

Melita Cameron-Wood: OK, so today, I am joined by Kirsten Florentine Weber, a physicist from Bonn. Hello, welcome. Thank you for joining me.

Kirsten Florentine Weber: Hello, thank you!

Melita: Could you tell us a little bit about your job and what took you to the UK?

Kirsten: Yeah, of course. Well, in 2017, I started my PhD in the UK, in Sheffield. It was in climate science, and the topic — “Why is our atmosphere becoming drier?” With a background in physics, that was quite new for me. And, well, I stayed in the UK, in Sheffield, for five years. Afterwards, I became a climate scientist, and now, I’m a weather researcher and hydrologist.

Melita: You were using English during your PhD. What was that experience like? Were there ever any situations that you found a bit difficult?

Kirsten: Yeah, well, it was actually the very first time I went to a country where people speak only English, so speaking with native speakers was quite a challenge for me in the beginning,

but everyone was so friendly and welcoming that I didn't feel too shy to speak. And understanding as such wasn't an issue at all. I could always ask questions about different words. It was more the language behind the words.

Melita: Did you find that there were ever any misunderstandings while you were speaking in English?

Kirsten: Yeah, totally. You remind me of a situation. I had four PhD supervisors — all of them British, all of them very friendly and we did fantastic research together. When it came to my work, for example texts I had written about my research, and I submitted them for them to give me feedback, and they gave me feedback like, “Oh, that's quite good.” And I felt happy, like, “Wow, I wrote a text, and they said that it's great, basically. Well, like it's not great, but it's almost great, you know? The text was almost done,” I thought. But what they actually meant was more like, “Well, you still need to do a bit of work or quite some work before you could really submit them.” Same with comments like, “It just needs a little bit of tweaking”, or “I have some minor comments”. I wouldn't have expected that actually “some minor comments” would mean you need to rewrite the text.

Melita: I mean I can definitely relate to that. I remember when I lived in the UK that this kind of feedback was quite standard. People rarely say exactly what they mean. People often con-

sider it a bit impolite in the UK to be very direct, so it would be very rare to get feedback like, “This needs a total rewrite!” Well, thank you very much for telling me about your time in the UK and your experience working with British people. And if anyone listening has an experience that they would like to share — maybe something that you think might be helpful for other learners of business English — then don't hesitate to get in touch with the editorial team. Thanks, Kirsten.

Kirsten: Thank you very much for having me.

Melita: Bye.

Kirsten: Thank you. Bye. Have a good day.

Melita: You, too! Take care. Bye.

Business Spotlight 12/2023, pp. 38–41

physicist ➤ Physiker(in)

PhD ➤ Promotion

topic ➤ Thema

researcher ➤ Forscher(in)

hydrologist

➤ Hydrologe/Hydrologin

issue ➤ Problem

supervisor

➤ hier: Doktorvater, -mutter

research ➤ Forschung

submit sth.

➤ etw. einreichen, abgeben

tweak sth. ➤ etw. verbessern

relate to sth.

➤ etw. nachvollziehen

hesitate ➤ zögern

get in touch with sb.

➤ sich mit jmdm. in Verbindung setzen

editorial ➤ Redaktions-

ENGLISH FOR...

[17] Exercise: Airport security

Sion: This dialogue is based on the English for... section of the magazine. Sandra, a South Afri-

can business owner, is in London on business. She tells her British business partner about her eventful arrival at London Heathrow airport. Listen carefully because we'll test your understanding of some of the words and phrases used in the dialogue afterwards. Ready? Let's go.

Julie: Hi, Sandra! I'm so glad you could make it to London for the final stages of this project. How was your flight?

Sandra: The flight itself was fine. The problems started when I touché down in London.

Julie: Oh, no. What happened?

Sandra: Well, all the passengers from my flight were waiting in line at passport control, and suddenly, there was an announcement that the part of the airport we were in was going to be evacuated.

Julie: Why? What had happened?

Sandra: A bomb threat had been reported to the police. The explosive device had apparently been placed in a bin in the east wing of the airport. Immediate police action was required.

Julie: Oh, wow. How scary. It's bad enough managing the passenger flow when everything is running smoothly, let alone when there's a major security threat like that. It must have been absolute mayhem.

Sandra: To be honest, I thought airport staff dealt with it very professionally. I was a little nervous and was keen to get out of the building, but one man started getting angry because

he was going to miss his connecting flight. He started flapping his boarding card in the police officer's face and refused to move.

Julie: How annoying. Wasn't he fazed by the fact that a bomb might be detected any minute?

Sandra: No, he just wanted to pass through security and get on his connecting flight.

Julie: How ridiculous. I'm guessing the police eventually managed to safely evacuate everyone, right?

Sandra: Yes, they did, thankfully. It was actually a false alarm, but I must admit it shook me up a little. I usually feel really safe in airports because of all the security measures in place like X-ray screening, chemical sniffers and walk-through metal detectors. But it goes to show that you always need to be alert when travelling.

Julie: Sorry you had to go through that, Sandra. It sounds very stressful. Why don't you take the rest of the day off? We can talk business tomorrow.

Sandra: Thanks so much, Julie. Yes, if you don't mind, I think I'll do that. I need a bit of time to process it, to be honest.

Sion: OK, now it's time to test your understanding of some of the words and phrases used in the dialogue. Here are a series of sentences with a missing word or expression. Choose the right option, **a)** or **b)**, to complete the sentences. Ready? Let's go.

1. When a plane [beep], it lands.
a) touches down **b)** turns down
 ▶ The correct answer is **a)**. When a plane “touches down”, it lands. If you “turn down” an offer, then you choose not to accept it.
 2. [beep] is where people’s ID cards and passports are checked.
a) Identity station **b)** Passport control
 ▶ The correct answer is **b)**. “Passport control” is where people’s ID cards and passports are checked.
 3. If people are [beep] from a building, they are taken outside of it and brought to safety.
a) evacuated **b)** evaporated
 ▶ The correct answer is **a)**. If people are “evacuated” from a building, they are taken outside of it and brought to safety. The verb “evaporate” is used to talk about water turning into water vapour.
 4. A [beep] is an emergency situation in which there is a danger that an explosive device has been left somewhere to cause harm to others.
a) bomb threat **b)** bomb announcement
 ▶ The correct answer is **a)**. A “bomb threat” is an emergency situation in which there is a danger that an explosive device has been left somewhere to cause harm to others.
 5. [beep] refers to the movement of air travellers through the airport.
a) Passing flow **b)** Passenger flow
 ▶ The correct answer is **b)**. “Passenger flow” refers to the movement of air travellers through the airport.
 6. In order to get on a plane, you’ll need to present your [beep].
a) boarding card **b)** boarding ticket
 ▶ The correct answer is **a)**. In order to get on a plane, you’ll need to present your “boarding card”.
 7. A more formal way of saying “find” is [beep].
a) deteriorate **b)** detect
 ▶ The correct answer is **b)**. A more formal way of saying “find” is “detect”. “Deteriorate” means “get worse”.
 8. You [beep] security.
a) pass through **b)** pass by
 ▶ The correct answer is **a)**. You “pass through” security. If you “pass by” somebody’s house, you visit them.
- Sion:** Did you get all those right? If not, listen to the dialogue again and try the exercise once more.

Business Spotlight 12/2023, pp. 42–43

touch down ➤ landen

explosive device

➤ Sprengsatz, -körper

bin (UK) ➤ Müllbehälter

scary (jfm.)

➤ erschreckend, schaurig

let alone ➤ geschweige denn

mayhem ➤ Chaos

flap sth. ➤ etw. schlagen

annoying ➤ ärgerlich

fazed: be ~ (jfm.)

➤ hier: beunruhigt sein

shake sb. up

➤ jmdn. erschüttern

X-ray screening

➤ Röntgenschulung

chemical sniffer

► „elektronische Nase“ (Sensorggerät zur Identifizierung von Chemikalien)

walk-through metal detector

► Durchgangsmetall-detektor
it goes to show that... (ifml.)
 ► daran sieht man, dass ...

alert

► wachsam
off: take (time) ~
 ► hier: sich (für ...) freinehmen

ID (identity) card

► Personalausweis

water vapour

► Wasserdampf

emergency

► Notfall

[18] 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 refers to a document that is legally accepted. Translate the following German word into English.

German: gültig

English: valid

Sion: Don't say "guilty", as this word is used for someone who is responsible for having done something illegal. The English translation of the German word gültig is "valid".

German: Mein Pass ist nur noch bis Februar nächsten Jahres gültig.

English: My passport is only valid until February next year.

[19] Exercise: Don't confuse

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

- The accused was found [beep] of forging passports.
 ► The accused was found guilty of forging passports.
- Airline tickets are also [beep] on airport shuttle services.
 ► Airline tickets are also valid on airport shuttle services.
- There are two beeps in the next sentence.
 The air-cargo operator was found [beep] of importing goods without [beep] customs documents.
 ► The air-cargo operator was found guilty of importing goods without valid customs documents.

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

Business Spotlight 12/2023, pp. 42–43

accused ► Angeklagte(r)

forge sth. ► etw. fälschen

air cargo ► Luftfracht

customs ► Zoll

SKILL UP!

[20] Exercise: Essential words and phrases for health and sickness 📖

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

1. If someone becomes ill with a cough and a runny nose, they...

- a)** grip a cold. **b)** catch a cold.

► **b)** is right. If someone becomes ill with a cough and a runny nose, they “catch a cold”.

2. If you refer to someone’s emotional and psychological well-being, you talk about their...

- a)** spiritual health. **b)** mental health.

► **b)** is right. If you refer to someone’s emotional and psychological well-being, you talk about their “mental health”.

3. If someone feels extremely tired, they feel...

- a)** exhausted. **b)** expired.

► **a)** is right. If someone feels extremely tired, they feel “exhausted”. Documents “expire” if they become invalid.

4. If someone’s throat hurts, they suffer from a...

- a)** sore throat. **b)** rough throat.

► **a)** is right. If someone’s throat hurts, they suffer from a “sore throat”.

5. A chair that is designed to help improve someone’s posture is an...

- a)** economic chair. **b)** ergonomic chair.

► **b)** is right. A chair that is designed to help improve someone’s posture is an “ergonomic chair”.

6. A machine that stores, cools and releases water is called a...

- a)** water dispenser. **b)** water spreader.

► **a)** is right. A machine that stores, cools and releases water is called a “water dispenser”.

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

Business Spotlight 12/2023, pp. 44–47

posture ➤ Körperhaltung

store sth. ➤ etw. speichern

release sth. ➤ etw. abgeben

[21] Text and exercise: Collocations 📖

Sion: This collocations exercise is based on the box of collocations in the Skill Up! section. Collocations are words that frequently go together to form word partnerships. Listen carefully to this memo to all employees of a company regarding infections and illnesses in the winter. We’ll then do an exercise on it.

To limit the amount of absenteeism and number of **sick days** — and to stop infections

spreading — we kindly ask you to follow these instructions:

We no longer have a **sick bay** on site, so if you have a high temperature, a cough or **feel sick**, please inform your supervisor that you need to **go home sick**.

If you feel better within the next two days, you do not need to do anything else. However, if you continue to feel unwell and need to go on **sick leave**, you must ask your doctor to **write you off sick** and make sure your **sick note** is sent to the HR department.

Sion: In this exercise, you'll hear the beginning of a sentence describing a situation. In the pause, complete the sentence using the matching collocation with "sick" from the text that you have just heard. This can be a noun phrase or a verbal phrase. Then, you'll hear the correct answer. OK, here's the first sentence.

1. A day when you are unable to go to work because you are ill is called a...
 - ▶ **sick day**. A day when you are unable to go to work because you are ill is called a "sick day".
2. If you do not feel well, you...
 - ▶ **feel sick**. If you do not feel well, you "feel sick".
3. A room set aside for the treatment of ill or injured people is a...
 - ▶ **sick bay**. A room set aside for the treatment of ill or injured people is a "sick bay".

4. If you have to leave work because you suddenly do not feel well, you...
 - ▶ **go home sick**. If you have to leave work because you suddenly do not feel well, you "go home sick".

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

Business Spotlight 12/2023, pp. 44-47

absenteeism ▶ Fehlzeit(en)

site ▶ hier: Standort

supervisor

▶ Vorgesetzte(r)

HR (human resources) department

▶ Personalabteilung

set aside ▶ hier: bereitgestellt, eingerichtet

QUIZ

[22] The business of Christmas 📺

Sion: Christmas is an expensive time for many of us. With extra costs for food, travel, gifts and socializing, people's purse strings feel the pinch in December. Find out more about the business of Christmas around the world.

1. Which character first appeared in 1939, when the US department store Montgomery Ward asked a copywriter to create a Christmas story to give away to shoppers?

- a) the Grinch
 - b) Mrs Santa
 - c) Rudolph the red-nosed reindeer
- ▶ The correct answer is c). The character of Rudolph the red-nosed reindeer first ap-

- peared in 1939, when the US department store Montgomery Ward asked a copywriter to create a Christmas story to give away to shoppers.
2. Compared to their average monthly income, the households of which nation were expected to spend the most on Christmas in 2022?
 - a) Lebanon b) United Kingdom c) India
 - ▶ The correct answer is **a)**. Compared to their average monthly income, Lebanese households were expected to spend the most on Christmas in 2022 — an amount equal to 688 per cent of their average monthly income.
 3. In 2020, American Express found that Brits spend an average of ____ on stocking fillers.
 - a) £10 b) £45 c) £99
 - ▶ The correct answer is **b)**. In 2020, American Express found that Brits spend an average of £45 on stocking fillers.
 4. The Christmas cracker was invented in the 1840s, and a British Christmas without them is now unthinkable. Around how many Christmas crackers are sold in the UK each year?
 - a) 1 million b) 150 million c) 300 million
 - ▶ The correct answer is **b)**. Around 150 million Christmas crackers are sold in the UK each year.
 5. What event devastated turkey farmers in the USA and in the UK before Christmas 2022?
 - a) an outbreak of avian influenza
 - b) a series of winter storms
 - c) a long drought
 - ▶ The correct answer is **a)**. An outbreak of avian influenza devastated turkey farmers in the USA and the UK before Christmas 2022. The word “avian” means “related to birds”.
 6. What percentage of Americans travelled during Christmas 2022?
 - a) 11% b) 25% c) 47%
 - ▶ The correct answer is **c)**. 47% of Americans travelled during Christmas 2022.
 7. In the UK, charitable donations _____ at Christmas.
 - a) increase by 5%
 - b) decrease by 10%
 - c) remain the same
 - ▶ The correct answer is **a)**. In the UK, charitable donations increase by 5% at Christmas.
 8. Which popular Christmas gift was designed by a professor of architecture in Budapest to teach students about spatial awareness?
 - a) tangrams b) Rubik's Cube c) Lego
 - ▶ The correct answer is **b)**. The Rubik's Cube was designed by a professor of architecture in Budapest to teach students about spatial awareness.
 9. When was the first commercial Christmas card sent?
 - a) 1843 b) 1943 c) 1963
 - ▶ The correct answer is **a)**. English illustrator

John Callcott Horsley designed the first commercially produced Christmas card.

10. In 2022, what percentage of Americans said they were going to buy traditional gifts (instead of homemade presents or experiences)?

a) 10% b) 74% c) 99%

► The correct answer is **b)**. 74% of Americans said they were going to buy traditional gifts (instead of homemade presents or experiences).

Sion: Well done!

Business Spotlight 12/2023, p. 50

socializing ► Geselligkeit

purse strings

► hier: Finanzen

feel the pinch (UK)

► die Belastung spüren

department store

► Kaufhaus

copywriter

► Werbetexter(in)

reindeer ► Rentier

stocking fillers (UK)

► kleine Geschenke, mit denen Weihnachtsstrümpfe befüllt werden

Christmas cracker (UK)

► Knallbonbon

devastate sb.

► jmdm. schwer zusetzen

turkey ► Truthahn

avian ► Vogel-

drought ► Dürre

charitable donation

► Spende an eine karitative Einrichtung

spatial ► räumlich; Raum-

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Sion Dayson (US): Anmoderation

Sibaphive Matiyela (SA): Names

and News, English for...

Richard Mote (AU): Business

Skills, English for...

Rachel Preece (UK): Head-to-

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CONCLUSION

[23] Until next time... 🌱

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