

FINANCE WORK 6:00am, Apr 12, 2022

Are you a corporate jargon offender?

Corporate speak is no longer confined to the

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expressions, researchers have found.

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A study by UK communications firm Enreach found 36 per cent of workers felt business jargon was outdated and was a potential indicator of an out-of-touch workplace.

“Our research shows that communicating effectively at work is vital, as so many of us haven’t got time to waste,” said Duncan Ward, chief executive of Enreach.

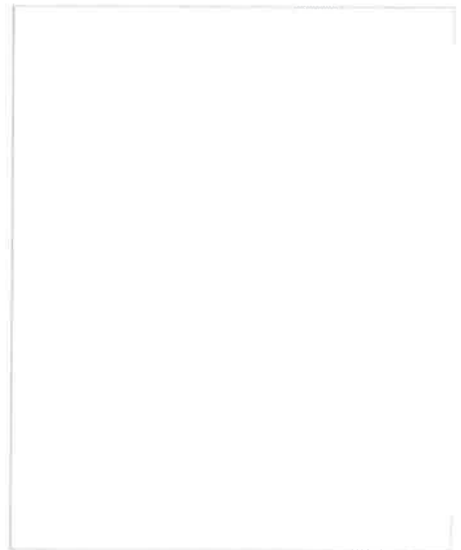
“Business jargon is clearly making that difficult, with the results from this study demonstrating that phrases like ‘blue sky thinking’ are unhelpful and even off-putting, and that people would prefer to understand more clearly what their colleagues mean.”

A further 68 per cent of people believe there should be an effort to make communication in business more straightforward, while 90 per cent of those surveyed believed jargon phrases were used to cover up a lack of knowledge or understanding of a topic.



Speak clearly and keep your audience in mind.
Photo: Getty Images.

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expert Tammy Tansley says corporate speak is not only confusing, but counterproductive and exclusive.

“It’s not particularly inclusive because it implies if you do understand it, you come from a shared understanding of where that’s come from,” she said.

“If you’re coming from a different culture where English might be your second or third language or just from a different country, you may not necessarily understand what that means and that’s not inclusive.

“So if you’re having to ask someone ‘what does that mean?’ that’s completely inconsistent in terms of what we’re trying to do with organisational culture which is make people feel part of something.

“Also some people use it because they think it makes them sound smart, but most people just have an eye-roll when they hear it.”

Much the same is true of using emojis in emails with researchers finding workers who use pictures and emojis in their emails or Zoom profiles are perceived as less powerful than those who use words.

However the use of emojis is now part of everyday culture, including work communications, and can be a useful way of making the tone of a text message more friendly or fun, according to Erica Dhawan, author of *Digital Body Language*.

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and give more meaning to messages, but she said people should always ensure their messages are appropriate to the reader and potentially other readers.

Tansley echoes this, cautioning that some people may perceive the overuse of emojis as an inability to properly articulate.

“Who is it going to? Are they going to be interpreting it in the same way I’m going to? Are there any overtones from a corporate culture or a broader culture,” she warned.

“So think before you emoji. We know if you have an overreliance on emojis there can be some connotations around your competence.”



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