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## Why Business People Speak Like Idiots: A Bullfighter's Guide

Brian Fugere, Chelsea Hardaway, Jon Warshawsky  
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### *A bullfighter's guide*

Why many enterprise-oriented human capital assets consistently utilize complex linguistic architectures and niche-centric jargon to articulate many of their most important action items to their global constituencies, resulting in discernible disenfranchisement and disengagement for a part of each and every value-added stakeholder, who is consequently required at the end of the day to deploy more bandwidth toward drilling down into the communication than might otherwise have been required to maintain his or her comprehension of same *and how not to do that.*  
**Why business people speak like idiots**  
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**Brian Fugere, Chelsea Hardaway, Jon Warshawsky : Why Business People Speak Like Idiots: A Bullfighter's Guide** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Why Business People Speak Like Idiots: A Bullfighter's Guide:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. FantasticBy michael marottaSome books become less relevant with time. This isn't one of them. In fact, it's more relevant now than when it was written. The "Bullspotter's Guide" (a.k.a., glossary) alone makes this book worth ten times its price. It should be required reading in every college communication program.2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Hold that JargonBy Roberto Blatt"Hold

that jargon!". Monty Python couldn't have done better in destroying all that jargon we so much hate. "Downsizing", "reengineering", "aligning", "holistic", all these words get a paradigm shift (oops, sorry!); the authors have pushed the envelope (sorry again) in depicting the four capital traps in the language of business: obscurity, anonymity, hard-sell and the tedium trap. They do that with humor, as when they offer us a "Special Bonus Feature", the Stupid Generic Photograph (SGP), which, as they put it, "add mass without content at no additional cost" to PowerPoint presentations. They really know how to make us think outside the box (oh, no, not again!) and show us the thoughtware (that's enough!) we can get from people who show their humanity, like Warren Buffett and his plain English speeches when admitting his mistakes or from people like Virgin's Richard Branson, who "readily admits to his dyslexia and is generally ill at ease when interviewed in public". At the start, the book sounded repetitive, but, a few pages later, it started to sound very funny and instructive. A must read!<sup>2</sup> of 2 people found the following review helpful. A good read with some practical ideas  
By michael anderson  
If you are looking to get some ideas on communication this is a good book. I enjoyed the no-nonsense approach and the notion that communication should be done with honesty and not fluff. There were a few analogies that were used that I suspect as a woman they would have offended. Overall, it was good information and worth the money

Ole! If you think you smell something at work, there's probably good reason--"bull" has become the official language of business. Every day, we get bombarded by an endless stream of filtered, antiseptic, jargon-filled corporate speak, all of which makes it harder to get heard, harder to be authentic, and definitely harder to have fun. But it doesn't have to be that way. The team that brought you the Clio Award-winning Bullfighter software is back with an entertaining, bare-knuckled guide to talking straight--for those who want to climb the corporate ladder, but refuse to check their personality at the door. Why Business People Speak Like Idiots exposes four traps that transform us from funny, honest and engaging weekend people into boring business stiffs: bull; The Obscurity Trap: "After extensive analysis of the economic factors facing our industry, we have concluded that a restructuring is essential to maintaining competitive position. A task force has been assembled..." These are the empty calories of business communication. And, unfortunately, they're the rule. The Obscurity Trap catches idiots desperate to sound smart or prove their purpose, and lures them with message-killers like jargon, long-windedness, acronyms, and evasiveness. bull; The Anonymity Trap: Businesses love clones--easy to hire, easy to manage, easy to train, easy to replace--and almost everyone is all too happy to oblige. We outsource our voice through templates, speechwriters and email, and cave in to conventions that aren't really even rules. bull; The Hard-Sell Trap: Legions of business people fall prey to the Hard-Sell Trap. We overpromise. We accentuate the positive and pretend the negative doesn't exist. This may work for those pushing Ginsu knives and miracle Abdominizers, but it's dead wrong for persuading business people to listen. bull; The Tedium Trap: Everyone you work with thinks about sex, tells stories, gets caught up in life's amazing details, and judges everyone else by the way they look and act. We live to be entertained. We all learned that in Psychology 101, except for the business idiots who must have skipped that semester. They tattoo their long executive-sounding titles on their foreheads, dump pre-packaged numbers on their audience, and virtually guarantee that we want nothing to do with them. This is your wake-up call. Personality, humanity and candor are being sucked out of the workplace. Let the wonks send their empty messages. Yours are going to connect. Fast Company magazine named Why Business People Speak Like Idiots one of the ideas and trends that will change how we work and live in 2005. So grab your cape and sharpen your sword. It's time to fight the bull!

From Publishers Weekly  
Dull, verbose, evasive language that disguises empty-headed cliché with jargon-drenched hype is pilloried in this diverting indictment of everyday business-speak. The authors are consultants, and their familiarity with the subject, enhanced through their side job peddling "Bullfighter" anti-jargon software, gives their irreverent critique a funny, knowing edge. Besides ridiculing some ripe samples of corporate pseudo-communication, they offer advice on the art of "persuasion" in every genre, from the humble e-mail to the shareholders' address, and throw in tips on public speaking, dress and deportment. Much of their advice-keep things concrete and specific, talk about what your audience is interested in-is fine, but some suggestions, like spicing up corporate presentations with ethnic humor, sexual innuendo and mild profanity, are certain to backfire. The authors also open themselves to their own critique. They throw around buzzwords like "authenticity," vapid cliché like "being you is all you'll ever need" and meaningless hype like "one-quarter of the gross domestic product is linked to persuasion." One of their recommendations for making presentations "spontaneous" and "personal" is to download anecdotes from an anecdote Web site. An injunction to brevity is translated into a mindless bean-counting formula proscribing sentences longer than 21 words (a figure derived from the "Flesch Reading Ease Scale"). And while they complain that "technology...makes it too convenient to automate the one part of business that should never be outsourced: our voice," their signature remedy for turgid, jargon-riddled prose is to run it through their anti-jargon computer program. The authors deliver a scintillating diagnosis of the problems in business communications, but sometimes their cure for the disease is the disease. Photos. Copyright copy; Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.  
From Booklist  
"Let's face it. Business today is drowning in bullshit," say the

authors of this timely, highly entertaining guide to cutting through corporatespeak and communicating effectively. Fugere and his coauthors, Chelsea Hardaway and Jon Warshawsky, are all veterans of the consulting giant Deloitte, and they speak with a jaded insider's view of "hype-filled, self-aggrandizing product literature" and "elephantine" reports that "shed less than two watts of light on the big issues." The concise chapters focus on common communication traps of business executives, including the tendency to write obscure, colorless, template information rather than clear material that speaks directly to its audience. Throughout, excerpts of egregious corporatespeak offer amusing, cautionary examples, and an appended glossary includes more offending phrases, along with deliciously sardonic definitions. Best of all, the authors suggest plenty of practical ways to break the bad habits. In an era in which phrases such as "going-forward value proposition" are supposed to mean something, this is a crucial guide, filled with "value-added deliverables" for readers in all professions who yearn for basic, substantive communication. Gillian Engberg

Copyright copy; American Library Association. All rights reserved "Why Business People Speak Like Idiots follows its own advice. It's blunt, lively and chocablock with personality." The Wall Street Journal, March 1, 2005