

Mike Seymour

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Von Denglish to English
Die 100 besten Tipps von
Mike Seymour

Easy booklet



Mike Seymour, Autor von Business Spotlight, fallen bei seinen Coachings immer wieder typische Denglisch-Sätze auf. Kurz und knackig formuliert er sie in ein professionelles Englisch um. Diese 400 Tipps von Denglisch - Englisch haben wir in eine Reihe von vier easy booklets gedruckt.

Mike Seymour ist selbständiger Sprachtrainer und Coach. Nach abgeschlossenem Studium als Dolmetscher und Übersetzer arbeitet er schon seit über 18 Jahren in der Branche der Erwachsenenbildung, unter anderem an der Wirtschaftsuniversität Wien, der Universität Bonn, der Fachhochschule Bonn Rhein-Sieg sowie in zahlreichen renommierten deutschen Unternehmen.

1 Be careful when using the word ,respectively'. It is used to link two pairs of things such as names, ages, figures etc. For example a mother could say „My two sons Jamie & Michael are 27 and 33 respectively“. Therefore you know that the first age goes with the first name (Jamie is 27) and the second age with the second name (Michael is 33). Or she could say „My two sons Jamie & Michael studied in Sheffield and Edinburgh respectively“. Or you could use it to talk about sales. Sales rose in 1998 and 1999 by 10% and 15% respectively. Please note too that the word is placed at the end of the sentence.

2 The abbreviation i.e., means ,that is (means)“ and comes from the Latin ,id est'. It does NOT mean ,in example'!

3 Though the distinction is fading somewhat these days there are rules to apply when beginning and ending a business letter. If you address the person by name, e.g., ,Dear Mr Cassidy' you should end the letter with ,Yours sincerely'. If you do not know the addressee's name and write ,Dear Sir/Madam' you should end with ,Yours faithfully'.

4 We do NOT say shares or stocks or a stake ,of' a company; it is more correct to say shares, stocks, holdings, a stake ,in' a company.

5 If you go to the cinema and you find Julia Roberts speaking French to Richard Gere, Meg Ryan faking an orgasm in Katz' Deli in New York in German or Sean Connery introducing himself as Bond, James Bond in Pnjabi then the film has been ,dubbed' not synchronised into the respective foreign language.

6 Be careful with the word ,holding'. A holding company is an organisation or corporation which has holdings in various other companies or organisations. The ,holding' is the stake the company has, not the actual company.

7 When talking about time / duration many foreign learners often confuse the verbs ,to take' and ,to last'. We use ,to last' for fixed durations, i.e., for films, concerts, operas etc. We use ,to take' when the duration may vary as a result of external factors. Examples: Hamlet lasts over 5 hours; the flight from Cologne to Leeds takes one hour; the exam lasted 3 hours but it took me 40 minutes to understand the first question. It is not usual to say ,I need 40 minutes to drive to work', instead say ,it takes me 40 minutes...'

8 Another word for ,to buy' is ,to purchase' but the stress is on the first syllable: ,to PURchase' not to ,purCHASE'. Also it is the ,PURchasing Department'.

9 Another word for ,to buy' is ,to purchase' but the stress is on the first syllable: ,to PURchase' not to ,purCHASE'. Also it is the ,PURchasing Department'.

10 Don't confuse the verb ,to start' with ,to leave' or ,to set off'. The verb ,to start' means ,to begin', e.g., the meeting starts at three o'clock. If you are talking about leaving home or the office to go elsewhere or to go on holiday, for example then it would be more correct to use ,to set off' or ,to leave'. Examples are: „We want to set off in the middle of the night to avoid the traffic“, „I am just leaving for the stadium“, „I'm leaving for England on Sunday“.

11 The word ,incentive' doesn't only refer to money. The Collins English Dictionary defines it as ,a motivating influence or a stimulus'. Don't forget that there is an antonym too: a disincentive, i.e., something that acts as a deterrent.

12 In English it is more common to say to RUN a department or a division or a country rather than to lead it. But the person is usually called the HEAD of the Department.

13 In British English many government ,ministries' are actually known as Departments, e.g., the Department of Health, the Department for Education and Employment etc. Exceptions are the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food and the Ministry of Defence. The most important person in the respective Department (i.e. the Cabinet Member and Government Minister) is often known as the ,Secretary of Statefor...', which might be confusing for some readers. Other exceptions are the Home Office (run by the Home Secretary), the Foreign Office (run by the Foreign Secretary) and the Treasury (run by the Chancellor of the Exchequer).

14 The main London stock market index is the FTSE -- commonly known as the ,Footsie'. This was probably originally an in-joke among stockbrokers revolving around the phrase ,to play footsie' meaning flirtation involving the touching of feet, knees etc , usually out of sight of other people. Let's face it, stockbroking was a pretty boring job so they needed all the thrills they could get!!

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