

CEO Europe Files



Crouching Tiger – Hidden Message Why plain English makes sense.

Mr C Onfusion, the owner of Oh No Ltd sits waiting to be called forward in the surgery waiting room.

- Receptionist: Mr Onfusion, The Business GP will see you now.
- Mr O: Thank you.

Mr O makes his way down to the door of his Business GP. 'Come in' says a friendly voice in response to his assertive knock.

- GP: Good morning Clive, how may I help you?
- Mr O: Well I....er.....um...it is a little embarrassing.
- GP: Clive (smiling and leaning forward), you are amongst friends, please feel free to express yourself.
- Mr O: I know that (looking worried), but nobody seems to understand me.
- GP: (Leaning forward) Please carry on.
- Mr O: Let me explain. The other day....
- GP: (Nods)
- Mr O:I was sat with my operations team. I asked them to submit a report to me explaining why the ERP system was not demonstrating the ROI we needed. Why the e-CRM component was not showing an increased rate of acquisition and retention, and growing our AWOP, ARP and GP.
- GP: And what happened?
- Mr O: Well they all looked at me blankly.
- GP: I wonder why? (Looking blankly still)
- Mr O: What do you mean?
- GP: Well I am not sure if the problem is the ECG, BP, BCG, TB or even the HDTV.
- Mr O: (Sits back, looks, and pauses for a moment) Pardon?
- GP: Well at least I know the problem.
- Mr O: You do – what is it?
- GP: You have an acute case of 'jargonitus' it hits many senior managers in many businesses.
- Mr O: Is it serious?
- GP: It can be but I can help.

The GP takes out his notepad and starts writing. Taking a few seconds to carefully craft something. Mr O tries to see what is being written but it is too well shielded, so he waits patiently.

After a minute the GP presents him with a piece of paper.

ARP+ROI+ERP+AWOP+GP = Jargonitus

- Mr O: (Looking puzzled) Jargonitus???
- GP: Yes a disease of the business executive. The ability to stop talking in plain English to those around you.
- Mr O: Is there a remedy?

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- GP: There is, and it is simpler than you may think (GP starts scrawling on his prescription pad and hands it to Mr O)
- Mr O: (Reading the pad) A dose of plain English every day for six weeks?
- GP: Yes, if you write or say something that an 8 or 9 year old wouldn't understand – then don't say it or write it.
- Mr O: Thank you so much.
- GP: I will test you again in six weeks time.

Mr O leaves, a big smile on his face shows his relief.

The GP phones Jean his receptionist 'Jean can you show Mr Sugar in for his 12.30 please.'

About the author

Marc Lawn is an experienced Director with experience across the globe, and through many disciplines (sales, marketing, operations, HR and strategy) and sectors (media, leisure, automotive, food, drink and retail). He is also the successful author of Renaissance Management which is the Aesop's Fables of business.

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