

talkingpoint

catch-up



opportunities. This government's year 11 and 12 extension focus has been on attendance and retention, when arguably the focus should be on pathways to further education and work.

I do acknowledge the Government's work on the Jobs Action Plan in

partnership with Tasmanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Tasmanian Council of Social Service and I am interested in the progress of these initiatives. Experience in local government allows me to understand the value in place-based initiatives and a collaborative approach to

improving socioeconomic wellbeing.

Tasmanian Labor is committed to working with regional Tasmanians to plan together for growth and infrastructure requirements. Critical to this is a considered and strategic approach to working with local

government and continuing to advocate strongly for rural and regional Tasmanians.

Braddon Labor MP Anita Dow is Labor spokeswoman for regional development and small business and for local government and planning. She is a former Burnie mayor.

Giving short shrift to cliches in the office

Gary Martin drills down into the jargon we hear ramping up in our workplaces

THE next time you hear someone at work say they will "reach out", "fly something up the flagpole" or ask you to "buy in", "workshop it", "play hardball" or "move the goalposts", chances are you won't be the only one to cringe.

You see, "going forward" many workers are "hitting the ground running" in some "joined-up thinking" and are having the occasional "thought showers" (formerly known as brainstorming) to "drill down" on the unnecessary "ramping up" or "dialling up" of their bosses' workplace babble, which is causing workers and their bosses to be neither "on the same page" nor "on a level playing field".

Just in case that is not clear: workers are starting to lose faith and trust in their jargon-mongering bosses, who seem intent on using the latest cringeworthy cliches to convey their thoughts, ideas and directives.

The meteoric rise of digital technology may not have helped as "tech speak" such as "going offline", "unplugging it", "synergising" or "not having enough bandwidth" becomes more acceptable.

But what the jargon-mongering boss fails to realise is the very language they use to try to energise, motivate and provide clarity often backfires - with fed-up and frustrated workers forced to slow down as they attempt to decipher dished-up dribble to work out what is required.

When bosses says "we need to go for the low hanging fruit" and they are not talking about an apple orchard, are they really saying we should do the easy stuff requiring the least effort and commitment? Or are they saying we don't have the skills or drive to pick the better fruit higher up the tree?

If that is not bad enough, many irritated workers believe some bosses are deliberately babbling to obscure workplace nasties. In an endeavour to sidestep reality, expect to hear "cutting capacity", "delaying", "downsizing" and "right-sizing", "right-shored" and "moving to an outsourced model" - all phrases used to make sacking

or mass redundancies sound more palatable.

Other workers say the move by their boss to use the latest bewildering workplace jargon acts as an intelligence amplifier. They say that in a highly competitive and often insecure job market their managers make use of colourful language to appear competent, professional, on top of their game and in control of the workplace situation. Perhaps even more sinister is the belief by some that bosses regularly use babble to cover up their own blunders or something for which they might get blamed.



BRAINSTORM? Nah, it's a thought shower.

If bosses talk about "parking a project" it probably means an initiative failed under their direction. If you hear about "wrong-sizing the demographic" it could be the boss is referring to a situation where a group of core clients have become extremely disgruntled on their watch. Even more disconcerting is the concern that increasing jargon has allowed an aggressive or forceful undertone to filter into the workplace.

So look out for jargoners who say "we need to punch the puppy" (meaning: something unpleasant will need to take place to improve business), "you are killing it" (you did it very well), "bleeding edge" (translation: this is something totally new), "hammer it out" (find a resolution to a problem) or even engage in "guerrilla marketing", a term traced to guerrilla warfare.

"At the end of the day" though it may just be time for bosses to simply "touch base" with their use of jargon and take a "high altitude view" of exactly what impact their cringeworthy cliches are having. Such a review might just end up creating a "win-win" situation for all.

Professor Gary Martin is chief executive of the Australian Institute of Management Western Australia.

could one day be ours

Madagascar in 2018, associated with dry spells and tropical cyclones that cut cereal production. In Somalia, about 27 million people needed emergency food aid.

In our own region, Typhoon Manghut in mid-September resulted in crop and fishery losses that worsened food insecurity and malnutrition across the Philippines.

People on the move create an additional burden on food resources.

In just the first eight months of 2018, the report said, more than two million people globally were displaced by weather and climate

disasters, notably drought, floods and storms.

Displacement resulting from conflict in Somalia and Myanmar was exacerbated in both cases by climate-related events, notably flooding and drought. Myanmar refugees were afflicted by extreme flooding in Bangladesh, forcing 200,000 to flee the camps supposed to give them sanctuary.

In Somalia, both sudden and slow-onset weather events during the year combined with conflict to displace 883,000 people, leaving at the year's end a total of over a million displaced citizens.

The WMO report

highlights how climate events and conflict feed off each other, making a bad situation much worse. The miserable experience of these countries today is a guide to what unmitigated climate change can do, and Australia should take note.

Our government claims success against emissions targets using Kyoto land-carbon credits, long abandoned by almost every other country, to disguise steadily rising industry and transport emissions and to lull Australians into a false sense of security.

Our country's wealth shields us from the climate

impacts being felt in poorer places, but that too is false security. We should not forget that we are the driest of inhabited continents and one of the countries identified as being most at risk from climate change.

Global warming means what it says. Australia is not a world on its own. People's experiences today in Africa and Asia could one day be ours too. We need to start pulling our weight as global citizens.

Peter Boyer, who began his journalism career at the Mercury, specialises in the science and politics of climate change.