



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

*Brian Fugere, Chelsea Hardaway, Jon Warshawsky*

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*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:

- **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.
- **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.
- **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.
- **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!

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