

Words of Wisdom from The Words Workshop

New government agency will protect the English language.

The government has today revealed plans for a new agency to protect the use of the English language in England and Wales; a similar scheme for Scotland and Northern Ireland is expected to be announced shortly. The English Language Protection Agency (ELPA) will monitor the use of English in all forms of media and will impose heavy fines on people and organisations who contravene its strict guidelines.

Television scriptwriters, particularly those who write for some of Britain's most popular soaps, are likely to be closely monitored by ELPA. In a controversial move, mobile phone operators will be required to report subscribers who send abbreviated text messages and e-mails, although special arrangements will be made for dyslexics.

A government spokesperson, who did not want to be identified said, "The standard of English in Britain is going from bad to worse and we simply can't go on like this. English is still the most beautiful language in the world and we must do all we can to protect it."



Wordsworth says ... Beware of comparisons and superlatives.

Comparisons

Comparisons are a great way of describing how good, bad or otherwise something is:

"Cadbury's chocolate is much creamier than Nestle."

However make sure you don't make empty comparisons.

"The product is much faster and safer."

Faster and safer than what? Comparisons lose their impact if you don't clarify what you are comparing something to.

Superlatives

Superlatives describe something of the highest order, quality, or degree; something that surpasses or is superior to all others.

"Majorca is the largest Balearic island."

However, superlatives are often used in an off-hand way to describe a personal opinion:

"Thailand is the best holiday destination." – This is a matter of opinion.

Do not use superlatives in marketing material unless it is factually justified.



Wordsworth's management speak to avoid ...

People often use complicated jargon and management speak to make themselves appear as though they know what they are talking about. A good example of this is the phrase 'idea showers' instead of just saying 'brainstorm'. Oh, that's right, people get offended by the word brainstorm don't they? Hands up all those offended No, thought not.

Wordsworth's quote of the month ...

"She had lost the art of conversation but not, unfortunately, the power of speech."

George Bernard Shaw

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Telephone: +44 (0)1908 695500

26 Swanwick Lane, Broughton
Milton Keynes, MK10 9LD

<http://www.thewordsworkshop.co.uk>

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