

Opening the Kimono

Never mind the optics, feel the bandwidth

Thank you for reaching out to *Times* leaders. We want to share some learnings regarding office jargon. Two thousand workers polled by the jobs website Glassdoor have chosen their most hated phrases and now we empower you to enter our swim-lane and become part of the counter-irritating jargon Tiger Team. From this moment we are on a journey together.

Time is short so we won't try boiling the ocean. Rows and rows of ducks need to be lined up so that, going forward, we can, er, go forward. There is a whole strategic staircase to be mounted here. So never mind mere blue-sky thinking, this is an

invitation to be part of a thought shower, where we can all of us throw some ideas at the wall and see if anything sticks. Once that is done we can take a helicopter view of the situation and cascade what we observe.

But be aware, we are not just interested in plucking the low-hanging fruit. Anyone can think up examples of bases being touched, boxes thought outside, paradigms shifted and, ultimately, games changed. We are looking instead at moving the needle into a whole new jargon ecosystem.

What mental toolbox do we need to become true language champions? Radical change means

having the courage to open the kimono (sorry about that), revealing and then peeling the onion till we uncover core values. At that point we must drill down until we reach granularity. Of course this may mean dealing with some sacred cows. But all change is loss, and even if the optics are bad, you sometimes have to be prepared to punch the puppy.

The challenge will be to make our ideas scalable. But you ask, will we have the bandwidth to get our alternatives heard and then actioned? To which the only answer, surely, is that the least we can do is put on a record and see who dances.