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BusinessSpotlight

Language or behaviour?
Key tips for business success

ETAS: 31st Annual Conference and AGM

Bern, 24 January 2015

Ian McMaster, Editor-in-chief, *Business Spotlight*

Key words for business

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Unsere Produktpalette

SPOTLIGHT VERLAG: BESSER MIT SPRACHEN

6 Sprachlernmagazine für 5 Sprachen

- Spotlight (Englisch)
- Business Spotlight (Englisch für den Beruf)
- ADESSO (Italienisch)
- ECOS (Spanisch)
- Écoute (Französisch)
- Deutsch perfekt (Deutsch)

Online Services

- dalango (Online Video-Sprachkurs)
- sprachenshop.de (Online-Fachgeschäft für Sprachen)
- sprachtest.de (kostenloser Einstufungstest)

dalango
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Communication: a simple question...

Why is communication so difficult?

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Communication: a simple answer...

What exactly do you mean by difficult?

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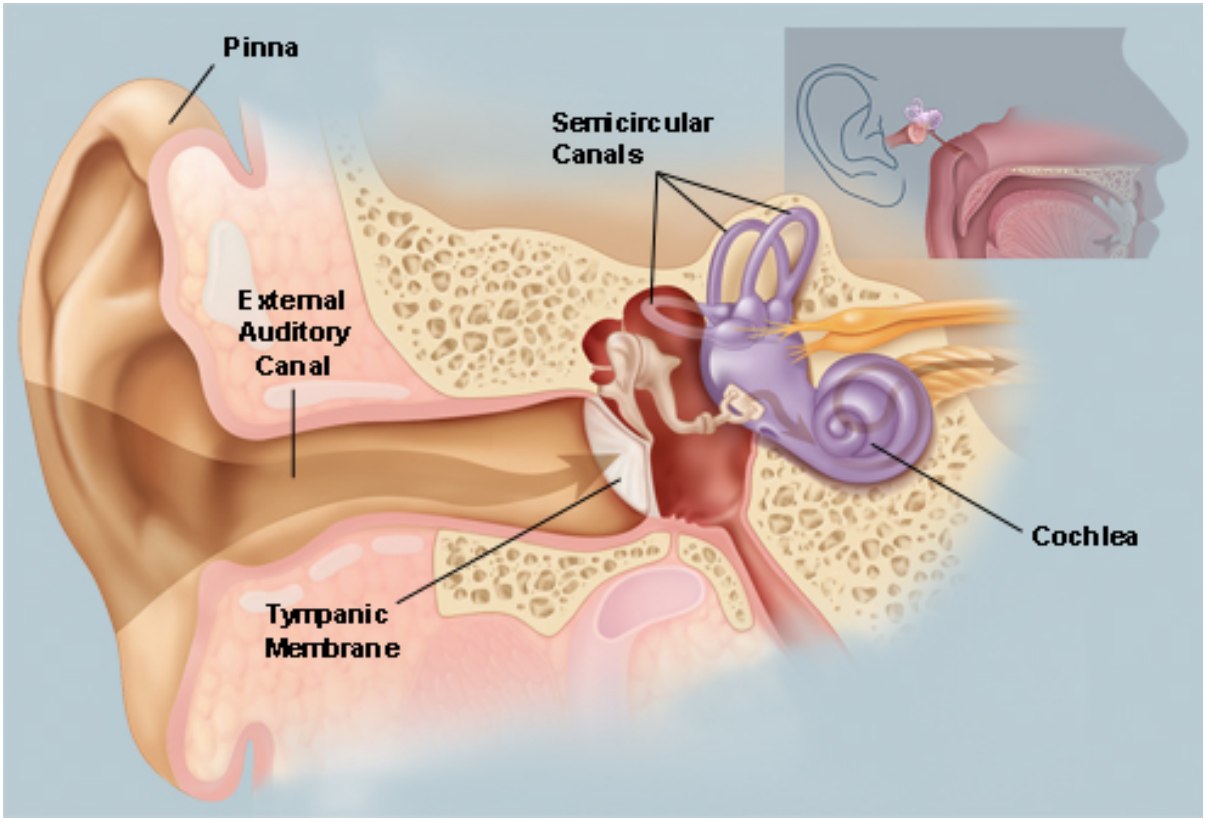
Not just this organ...



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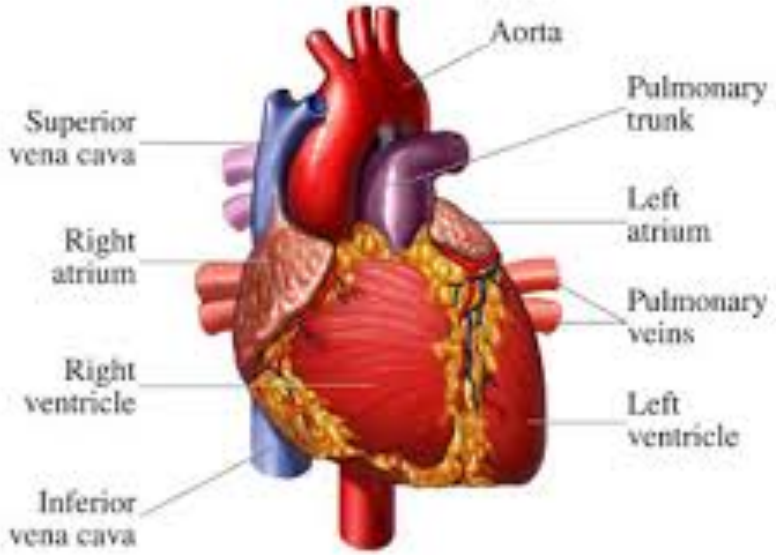
But also this organ (and others)...



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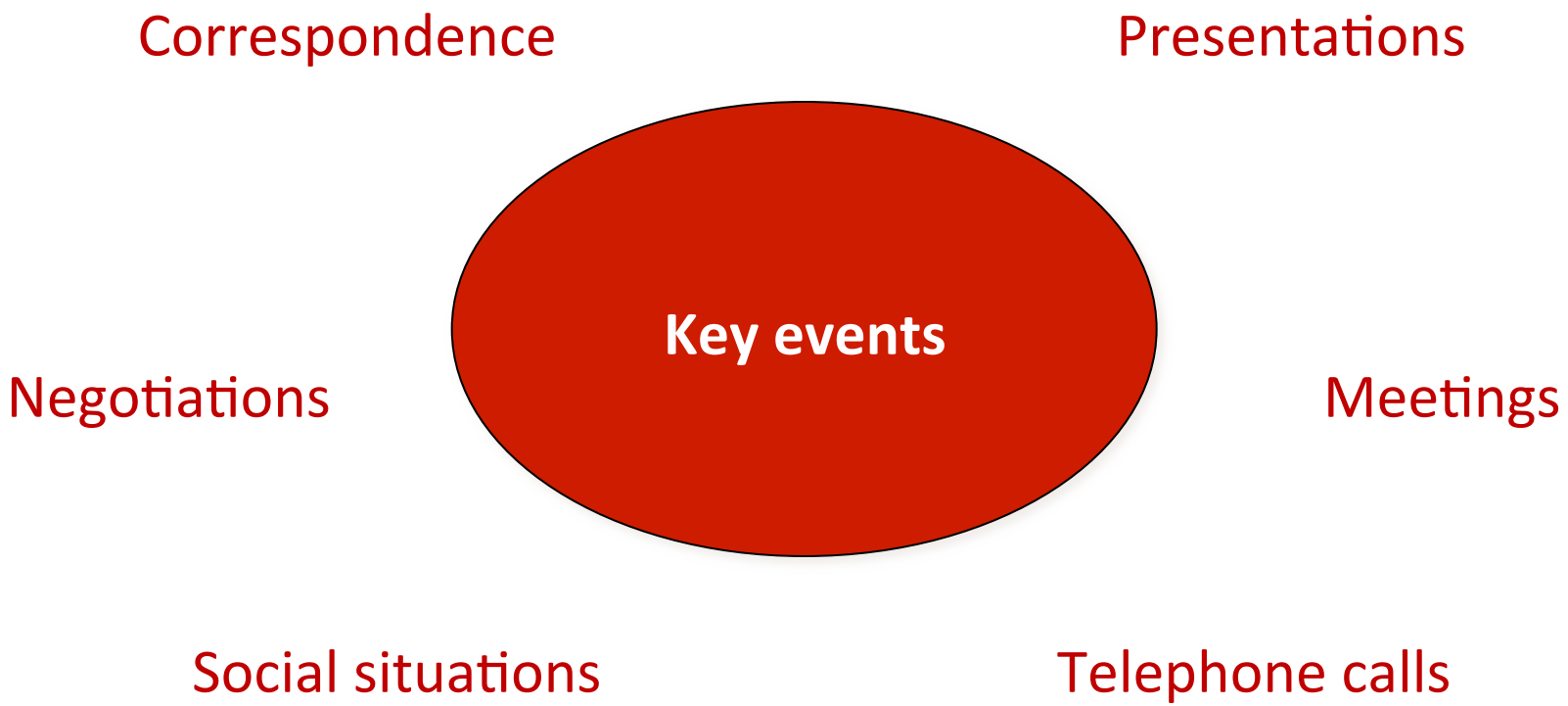
Traditional dimensions



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Communication: typical phrases (1)

"Could I leave a message, please?"

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Communication: typical phrases (2)

"How was your flight?"

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Communication: typical phrases (3)

"If you offered us a discount of three per cent, then we would order..."

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Communication: typical phrases (4)

"OK, shall we get started? The first point on the agenda is..."

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Communication: typical phrases (5)

"If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me."

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Communication: typical phrases (6)

"Now I'd like to move on to look at..."

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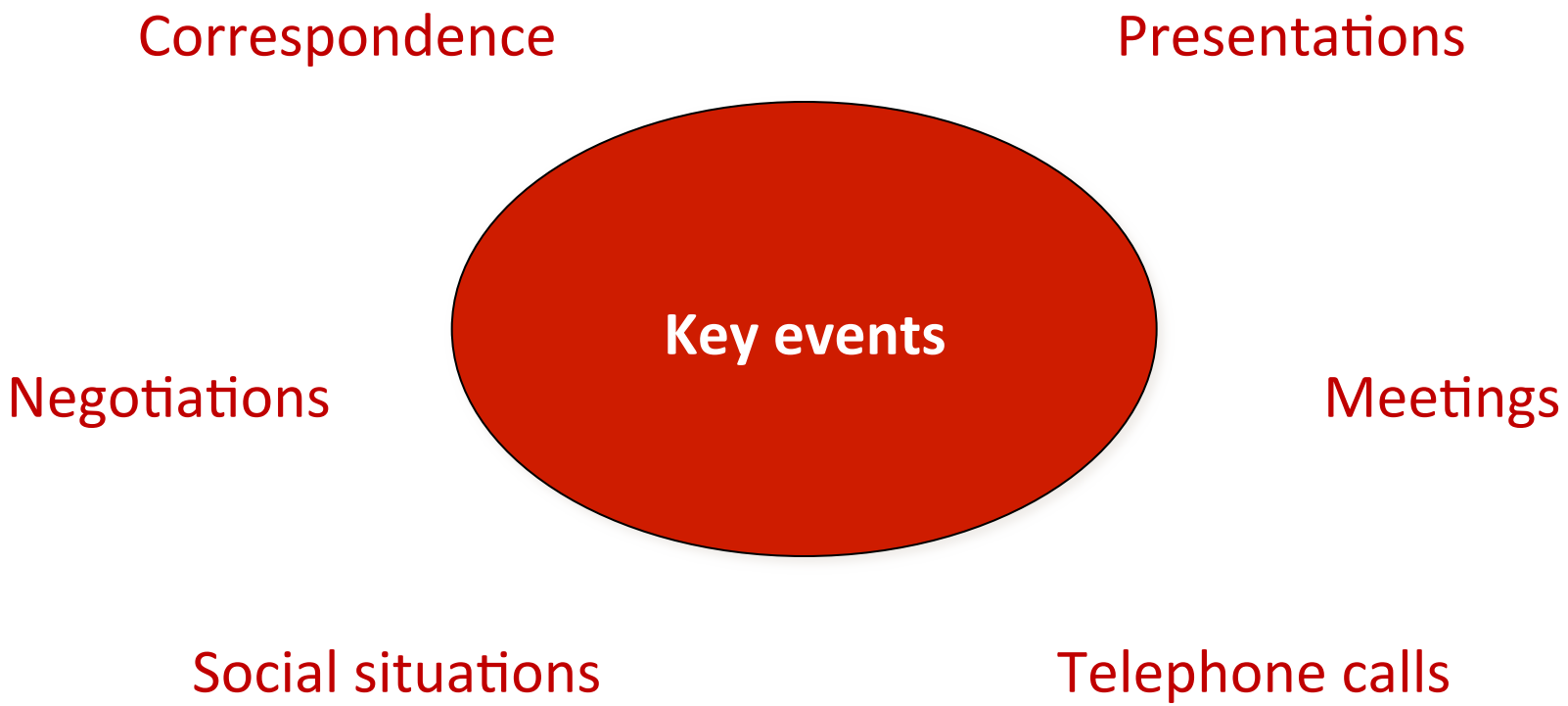
Traditional dimensions



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But what do you need to do?

???

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Alternative dimensions

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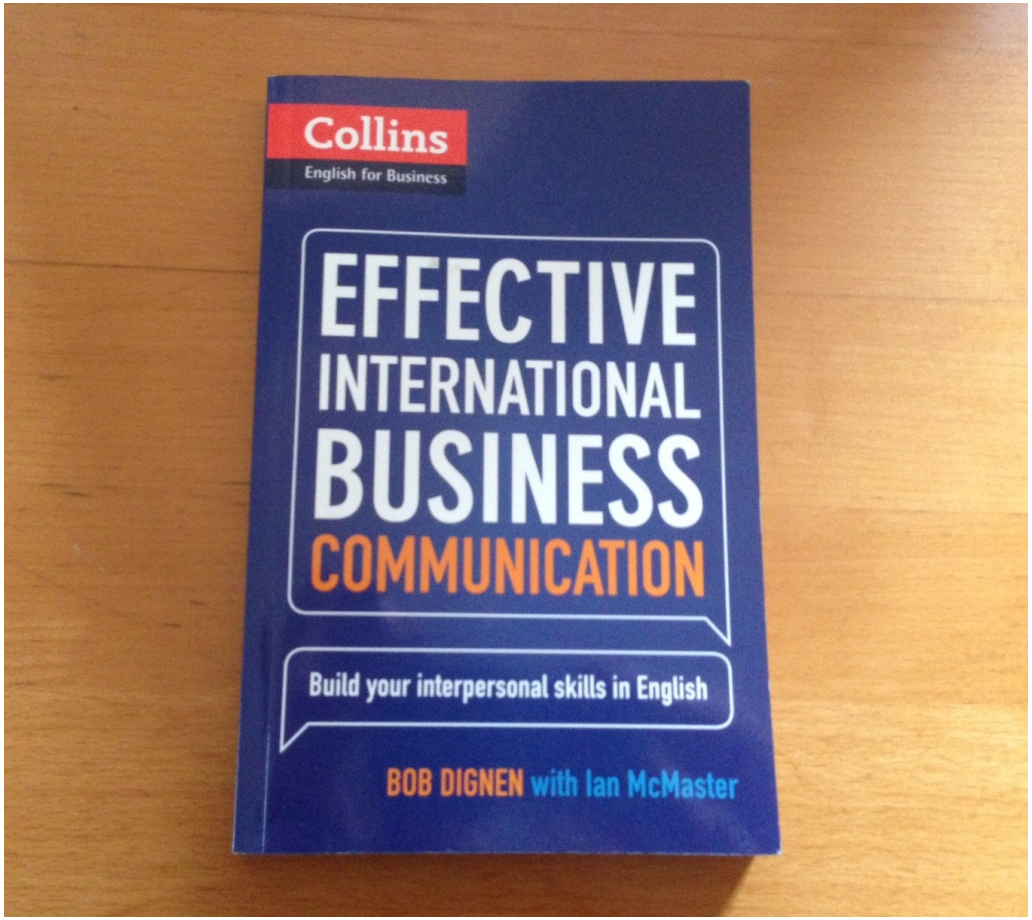
An alternative approach…



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A key word for business

_ _ _ _ _

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A key word for business

T R U S T

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The importance of trust

"You must trust and believe in people or life becomes impossible."

Anton Checkhov, Russian author and playwright

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Possible strategies to build trust

- Display competence
- Display similarity: background, experiences
- Show empathy and caring
- Keeping people informed (openness: information)
- Reliability, keeping promises
- Sharing emotions (openness: emotion)
- Trusting others

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Situations: Building trust

Situation

- Presentations
- Correspondence
- Negotiations
- Social situations
- Meetings
- Telephone calls

Language

- How are things going?
- If you need any help, ...
- Just ask me if you need some support.
- I want to communicate openly about...
- As promised, here is the report on…
- I have complete confidence in you to...

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Business Skill: Dealing with conflict

From: Bill Benson
To: Carole Schlautmann
Subject: Jacques Sampers

Carole

I've just come back from a meeting with Jacques. As his line manager, I am worried about how much pressure you are putting him under in your project team.

Anyway, Jacques and I had a long talk today and he is now confident that he can deliver the results you expect.

In future, I think we should communicate more openly to avoid this kind of problem coming up again.

Regards
Bill

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Sharing responsibility

- Don't react (negatively) too quickly
- Read for positive intention
- Focus on the process, not the person
- Challenge negativity in others

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Alternative dimensions

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Business Skill: Listening

1. Why should we listen to other people?
2. What stops us from listening effectively?
3. How can you become a better listener?

The ROI on listening effectively in the workplace

- Better relationships with greater trust
- More motivated staff
- Higher productivity
- Improved quality
- More efficient information flow
- Fewer mistakes and lower costs
- Happier customers

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Business Skill: Speaking

Often, we can use relatively simple language to carry out very important tasks in business.

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Problems with native speakers

• Speak too quickly	86 %
• Use unknown expressions	60 %
• Use idiomatic language	57 %
• Use difficult words	56 %
• Don't speak clearly enough	56 %
• Have strong accents	45 %

Source: *Business Spotlight* Survey 2007

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An interesting paradox

"Sometimes, the ELT community reinforces the idea that *more* English is needed to be a better international communicator. It might actually disadvantage you. It might make more sense to learn different skills, such as relationship building or influencing people — or to use language more intelligently and creatively."

Bob Dignen, Director, York Associates, *Business Spotlight* 1/2013

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But remember...

"It is impossible to speak in such a way that you cannot be _____."

Karl Popper, Austro-British philosopher

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But remember...

"It is impossible to speak in such a way that you cannot be misunderstood."

Karl Popper, Austro-British philosopher

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In other words...

"If you operate on the assumption that you're being misunderstood a lot of the time, you're probably closer to the truth."

Bob Dignen, Director, York Associates, *Business Spotlight* 1/2013

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What does this mean?

"Have you finished that report yet?"

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Possible meanings

- Criticism
- Factual
- Support
- Other???

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Possible strategies

- Give background information to help the listener interpret the message.
- Express the message in a way that the listener recognizes as polite.
- Surface positive motivation.
- Say what you are *not* saying to reduce risk of misinterpretation.
- Include appreciation of the circumstances of listener.

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A possible alternative

"Sally. Juan in Spain has just sent me an email asking for your report asap? Sorry, but have you finished it yet? I just wanted to see if I could send it to him this morning because he needs it for a meeting in the afternoon. But I didn't want to put you under pressure as I know you're busy."

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An alternative approach…

S & E

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A new approach…

- Strategic

  &

- Explicit

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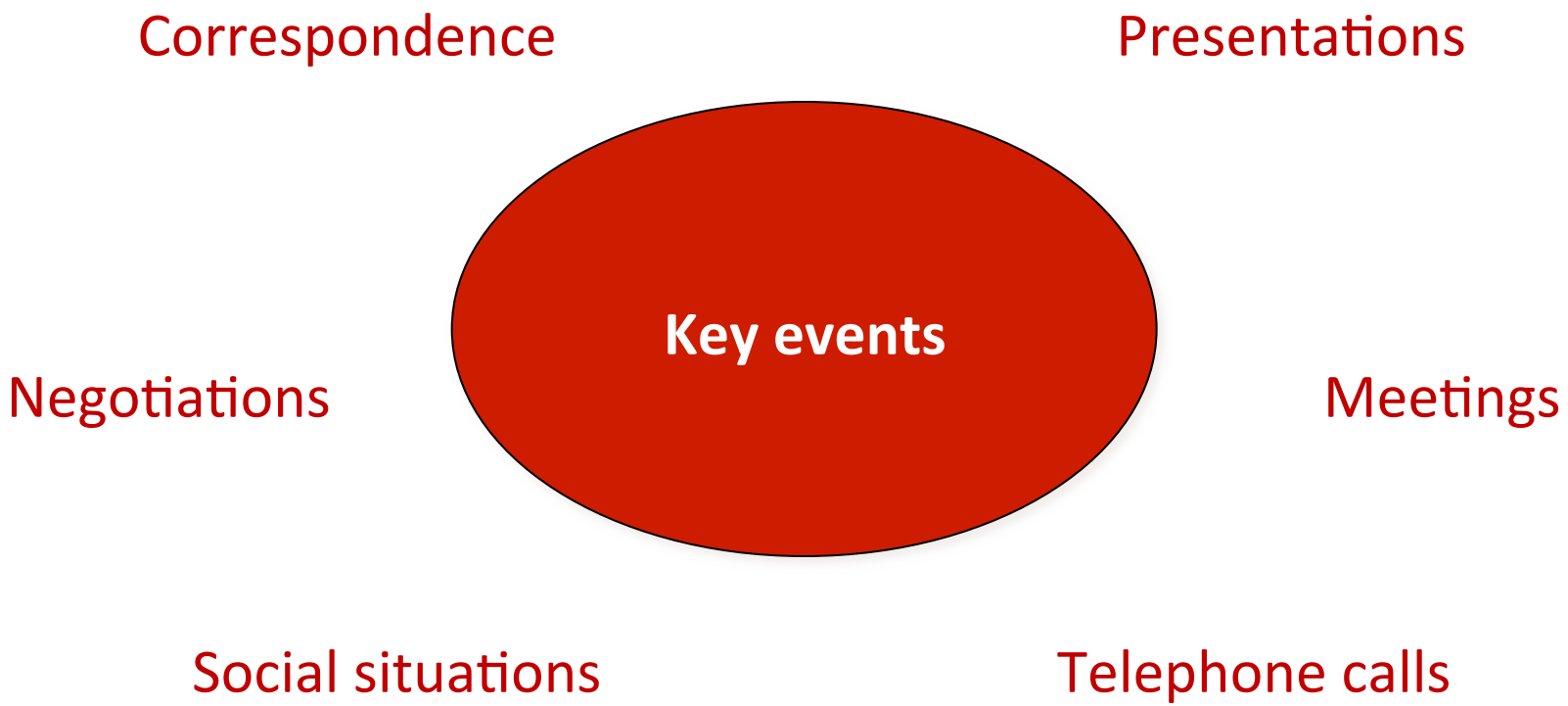
Traditional dimensions



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Telephoning: other key phrases (1)

"I think it's better to talk about this on the phone because…"

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Telephoning: other key phrases (2)

"Do interrupt me at any time if something is unclear."

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Telephoning: other key phrases (3)

"Many thanks for your time today. See you at the conference in Barcelona next month."

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Meetings: other key phrases (1)

"I think we are making good progress."

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Meetings: other key phrases (2)

"Why do you say that?"

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Meetings: other key phrases (3)

"What is the evidence for…?"

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Negotiating: other key phrases (1)

"Would you prefer to discuss this face-to-face?"

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Negotiating: other key phrases (2)

"Do you need to get authority to decide this?"

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Negotiating: other key phrases (3)

"Did I understand you correctly? You feel that…"

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A final phrase: Do you teach this one?

“ ”

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Contact

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