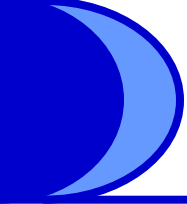


# Business World Speaks English



Success in business nowadays is often **hinged** on one single important word – communication; and most of it happens in English. As the **Fastest-spreading language in human history**, English is spoken at a useful level by some 1.75 billion people worldwide - that's one in every four of us. There are close to 385 million native speakers in countries like the U.S. and Australia, about a billion fluent speakers in formerly colonized nations such as India, Nigeria, and Philippines and millions of people around the world who have studied it as a second language. An estimated 565 million people use it on the internet.

Adopting the international language is not easy, and companies **invariably** stumble along the way. It's **radical**, and it's almost certain to meet with **staunch** resistance from employees. Many may feel **at a disadvantage** if their English isn't as good as others', team dynamics and performance can suffer, and national pride can **get in the way**. But to survive and **thrive** in a global economy, companies must overcome language barriers—and English will almost always be the **common ground**, at least for now.



## Vocabulary:

**hinged** - to consider or make (something) dependent on something else

**invariably** – always; constantly happening

**radical** – extreme; excessive

**staunch** – strong, firm

**thrive** – to be successful

## Expressions:

**‘get in the way’** - to prevent something from happening

**‘common ground’** - shared opinions between two people or groups who disagree about most other subjects

**‘at a disadvantage’** - in a position that gives one person an advantage over another

## Topic discussions:

1. Tell me in what situations in business where English is necessary?
2. In what opportunities do you speak English?
3. How often do you speak English at work?
4. How important is English at work?
5. Do companies require employees to speak English at work these days?
6. Imagine a world without an international language, what do you think could possibly happen?