

Language review

Headlines

Newspaper headlines are often written in a special style which can make them difficult to understand. They often:

- 1 contain groups of several nouns: *software company takeover battle*
- 2 leave out articles and the verb *to be*: *Wal-Mart and Asda close to deal*
- 3 contain simple tenses instead of progressive or perfect forms, and use the present simple for past events: *Shell confirms China stake*
- 4 contain words used both as nouns and verbs: *French company targets UK media group; UK media group becomes takeover target*
- 5 refer to the future with infinitives: *Wal-Mart to acquire Asda*

➔ see page 136

A Look at these headlines. Which of the features described in the Language review box do they show? (Some headlines show more than one feature.)

- 1 Renault on brink of two alliances
- 2 Moulinex and Brandt near merger deal
- 3 Austin Reed rejects offer as unwelcome
- 4 Biotech groups agree merger
- 5 Wal-Mart in £6.7bn bid for Asda
- 6 Melrose to raise £5.8m via London flotation
- 7 Rivals in final United Biscuits fight
- 8 Takeover target Esat hints at a white knight
- 9 AOL deal calls rivals' web plans into question
- 10 United News to dispose of US magazines

B Write out the headlines above in full. For example, *Renault is on the brink of two alliances.*

C Certain words are used more commonly in headlines, often because they are shorter or more dramatic than their alternatives. Match the italicised words in the headlines on the left to their meanings on the right.

- | | |
|---|---------------------------|
| 1 Renault on <i>brink</i> of two alliances | a) offer to buy a company |
| 2 Mannesmann investors <i>split</i> over bid | b) connection |
| 3 Banks in merger credits <i>deal</i> | c) about, concerning |
| 4 KPN seeks new partners after Telefonica <i>blow</i> | d) edge |
| 5 Deutsche chief criticised <i>over</i> Dresdner deal | e) announce |
| 6 Rivals study EMI-Warner <i>link</i> | f) disagree |
| 7 Treasury seeks peace deal in takeovers <i>row</i> | g) agreement |
| 8 Wickes fights hostile <i>bid</i> | h) support |
| 9 Brussels pressed to <i>block</i> merger | i) look for |
| 10 Aircraft group <i>seeks</i> £300m merger savings | j) disagreement |
| 11 WPP and Y & R set to <i>unveil</i> \$4.4bn merger | k) obstruct |
| 12 Takeover <i>backing</i> for Union Fenosa | l) bad news |

Skills

Summarising in presentations

A Jeremy Keeley, an independent management consultant, is giving a presentation to a board of directors involved in a takeover. Before you listen match these words that he uses to their meanings.

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| 1 pitfalls | a) things that limit your action |
| 2 rigorous | b) thorough |
| 3 constraints | c) to work together to produce something |
| 4 confidential | d) unexpected difficulties |
| 5 hamstrung | e) those who try to please important people |
| 6 sycophants | f) competing for |
| 7 vying (for jobs) | g) intended to be kept secret |
| 8 collaborate | h) prevented from doing something |

B 13.4 You will hear part of the final section of Jeremy's presentation. He is giving a summary of common mistakes that managers make. Which of the four points in his presentation notes below does he *not* make?



Avoiding the pitfalls

- Recognise the constraints
- Pay attention to the cultural differences
- Beware of the sycophants
- Refer to core meaning/purpose

C 13.4 Study the Useful language box. Then listen again and tick the phrases that you hear.

Useful language

Referring back

As I mentioned earlier in my presentation ...
So as you were saying a few minutes ago ...

Making points in threes

You really have to plan carefully, be rigorous in your analysis and be flexible ...
It's a long process. It's expensive. It can also be very profitable.

Asking rhetorical questions

What are the advantages of the merger?
But what are the sort of things that the experts forget generally?

Ordering

Firstly ..., then ..., finally ...
There are three things in my mind and the first thing is ...

Using emotive language

Beware of the sycophants in your organisation ...
It is commercial suicide ...

Repetition

They're going to be saying Yes! Yes! Yes!
It won't work. It just won't work.

Exemplifying

For instance ...
... for example, caring as their primary task.

Asking for feedback

Is there any area I haven't covered?
What's missing?

D Work in two groups, A and B. Group A discuss some of the advantages of takeovers and mergers. Group B discuss the problems associated with them. Then form pairs – one from Group A and one from Group B. Give a short presentation summarising the points you discussed in your group.