

## **KILLER CLICHES**

Lovers of plain English collect pet peeves like these overused clichés and buzzwords: a full plate, 24/7, bandwidth, push the envelope, like herding cats, think outside the box, get your arms around it, get your head around it, walk the walk and talk the talk, mission-critical, going forward, not rocket science, not brain surgery, deep dive into, drill down, at the end of the day, granular, robust, world-class, synergies, leverage, level the playing field, drink the Kool-Aid, result-driven mindset, game plan, monetize, scalable, supply chain, pursue other opportunities, spend more time with my family.

## **DARK SIDE OF CUTE**

Natasha Yergin writes: “I've got a little surprise Pacifica sighting. I'm reading a book that came out last year, 'The Great Beanie Baby Bubble: Mass Delusion and the Dark Side of Cute' by Zac Bissonnette. From Chapter 2: 'The stuffed-animal business has declined over the past couple of decades, but with a funny quirk: the people who find the most success in it seem almost without exception to come from deeply broken childhoods, and few of them ever really leave the industry. Ty Warner still goes to Toy Fair every year. Virginia Benes-Kemp, who was creative director at Dakin in the 1960s and remembers Warner's frequent drop-ins to discuss ideas for new products, is in her eighties now. Every day she goes to work at Down to Earth Designer Gifts, her store in Pacifica, California, where she sells—for reasons that will later become

clear—pretty much every major plush line except for Ty Inc.’ The short story of the ‘reasons that will later become clear’ is that Ty Warner was well known as a braggart and a jerk at Dakin.”

## **THE LAZY BAKER**

Summertime and the livin’ is easy. Don’t stress out in the kitchen. Try making this super-simple fruit cobbler. When it comes hot out of the oven, don’t resist making it a la mode with a scoop of vanilla ice cream. Okay, here is the recipe. Combine four cups of berries, a tablespoon of lemon juice, an egg, six tablespoons of melted butter, a cup of sugar, and a cup of flour. Bake 35 minutes at 375 degrees. This dish practically makes itself.

## **OLDIE BUT GOODIE**

Remember the 2007 Miss Teen USA contestant from South Carolina who was asked why so many Americans can’t find the United States on a world map? She answered: “I personally believe that U.S. Americans are unable to do so because, uh, some people out there in our nation don’t have maps and, uh, I believe that our, uh, education like such as, uh, South Africa and, uh, the Iraq, everywhere like such as, and, uh, I believe that they should, our education over here in the U.S. should help the U.S., uh, or, uh, should help South Africa and should the Iraq and the Asian countries so we will be able to build up our future, for our children.”

## **SWAMI SEZ**

“I used to work for a company that makes fire hydrants, but you couldn't park anywhere near the place.” (Steven Wright)

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