BUSINESS NEWS LESSONS

one stop english

Life with digital calendars

1. Warmer

a. Ask students to discuss the questions as a whole class. If some do not use a digital calendar, ask what kind of calendar they use. For those who use a digital calendar, ask if there is anything they don't like about it. Ask them for some ideas about the possible advantages and disadvantages of open digital calendars at work. Point out that they will read about this in the article, and encourage them to make a list of their ideas for comparison with the ideas in the article.

2. Key words

a. Ask students to match the words with the definitions. Encourage them to scan the article to locate the words quickly. Seeing how a word is used in a sentence can help them decide whether they have chosen the correct definition. When they have finished, ask them to read the whole article carefully and to look again at how the words are used in context.

Key:
1. *transformative*
2. *warrant*
3. *denote*
4. *haggle*
5. *nuance*
6. *afford*
7. *staple*
8. *surveillance*
9. *convener*
10. *breakneck*
11. *ubiquitous*
12. *repurpose*

b. Ask students to use words from the previous activity to complete the sentences. Point out that not all of the words will be used. When you go over the answers, make sure that students understand all of the sentences and the key words.

Key:
1. *ubiquitous, staple*
2. *warrant*
3. *haggle, nuance*
4. *denote, transformative*
5. *afford*

3. Understanding the article

a. Ask students to reread the paragraphs in the activity and to choose the sentence that summarises the main idea of each paragraph. Remind them that the main idea is the general meaning or main point of a paragraph, not just one detail in a paragraph.

Key:
1. *b*
2. *a*
3. *a*
4. *b*
5. *b*
6. *a*
7. *b*
8. *b*

Advanced

4. Business Language – scheduling and office dynamics

a. Ask students to use the phrases in the box to complete the sentences. Encourage them to check their answers by scanning the article to see how each phrase is used in context. When you go over the answers, make sure students understand both the phrases themselves and the sentences they are used in.

Key:
1. *juggle deadlines*
2. *default calendar*
3. *time drag*
4. *streamline schedules*
5. *social dynamics*
6. *meeting slots*
7. *deep work time*
8. *agentic tools*

b. Ask students to complete the sentences from the article with phrases from task a. Again, encourage them to look back at the article to check their answers. When you go over the answers, check that they understand how the phrases are used in the contexts of the sentences.

Key:
1. *Social dynamics*
2. *default calendars*
3. *agentic tools*
4. *meeting slots*
5. *time drag*
6. *deep work time*

5. Discussion

a. Put students in pairs or small groups and ask them to discuss the questions. Point out that for the first question in section 1, they should refer to the article for the answers but that the other questions ask them to give their own opinions. Remind them to compare their ideas from the Warmer with the pros and cons mentioned in the article and to think of more ideas if possible.

b. If there is time remaining after the group discussion, you could do a quick survey for some of the questions to see if most of the groups had similar answers.

6. Wider business theme – AI in business

a. Put students in groups and ask them to read the questions below the lists of pros and cons. Point out that they should first decide what type of company they are managing because the type of company may affect their decisions about AI. Does it make a product, or does it sell a service? Is it a national or international company? Is it a large company or a small one?

Explain that once they have decided on the characteristics of their company, they should read the lists of pros and cons and then discuss questions 2, 3 and 4 in order to answer question 5. Point out that the Useful language list may give frameworks for some of their discussion.

b. Ask each group to say whether or not they would use AI in their company. If not, why not? If so, in what ways would they use it? Find out how many groups are in favor of using AI and how many are against the idea.