Recent research suggests that the most annoying phrase used in the workplace in 2017 (and retaining its ‘title’ from 2016) was ‘Think outside the box’. Other contenders include ‘Blue-sky thinking’ and ‘Get the ball rolling’. We asked a number of industry experts which phrase(s) now prevalent in the workplace annoy them and why? We found a clear winner...

**Jim Meier, Day2**
Lots of people are talking about opening books – can’t they afford a Kindle? I seem to be spending too much time ‘reaching out’ to clients. I used to phone them!

**Nick Lyons, Alpha Scotland**
Most annoying phrase? I think it’s pretty common (sadly) across a number of industries; it’s got to be...’can we join the dots on this’.

**Gill Parker, BDG architecture + design**
The buzzword of 2017 was ‘co-working’! It’s a term that is now used too often, to describe a subject that is too wide in definition. Is it a verb or an adjective? It seems to be the current replacement for ‘hot desking’ as the workplace buzzword that everyone has an opinion on. Others include ‘where is the ‘new’ blue sky thinking’ and the perennial ‘reaching out’!

**Mark Simpson, BDP**
So! An interesting question this. I don’t use irritating work jargon, obvs, and being short on bandwidth I had to reach out to colleagues to leverage some Blue-Sky in an ideas shower. Collaboration really does add value and there was lots of low hanging fruit to be had. We settled however on ‘Swim Lanes’. Not a term I had on my radar until relatively recently – but one I’m already beginning to loath. If I’m ever heard using it going forward, you have my permission to shoot me!

**Nathan Lonsdale, Spacelab**
My most annoying phrase is definitely ‘reaching out’. This is because it’s jargon and too much of an Americanism. ‘Thanks for contacting me’ is just fine!

**Paul Butterworth, KKS**
My phrase has to be ‘reaching out’ – thanks for ‘reaching out’! What’s wrong with saying thanks for contacting me? It makes it sound as if I have a deep personal problem that I need to share. It suggests that I am not in control and I have had to ask a colleague for help as I can’t cope. It’s embellishing the idea of contacting someone with more gravitas than it needs to have. Just say ‘thanks for contacting me’.

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