

## Buzzwords: What's the fuss about?

**Author :** Suresh Dinakaran

**Date :** August 30, 2015



It's an over communicated world. And the time for easy to understand, lucid communication seems to be over. RIP. Hearing some of the jargon, you feel as if you are staring down the barrel of a gun (where unlike present day communication, the threat is clear, present and danger). Whatever happened to using simple language to state what you actually mean.

I am certain most of us would have come across (and still coming to terms with) these buzzwords that keep sprouting like popcorn from the machine. In case you have not, let us do a **bilateral** to understand what these mean. Oops, by bilateral I meant a face to face, one on one meeting. And, all along I thought these kind of bilaterals were reserved for Heads of State, Diplomats etc. Nothing official about it, I dare say.

The other day I was quite tempted to reach out to my friends who love snorkeling (I am not the underwater type though my boat has been rocked many a times) to understand what it means when people say **deep dive**. In the good old world, it very definitely would have had to do with water, exploring for marine life, pearls, the quarrel for coral etc. Not any more. For the uninitiated deep dive means going in depth into understanding a subject and getting set for the next round of buzzwords...meetings or should I say *bilaterals*?

Now, being laid off or asked to leave is not exactly a very pleasant situation to be in and given that state of mind, how would you react if someone came and told you that you are being **reorganised** ...what if the person responds by saying that she is very organised? Sorry, won't help. Reorganised here means you are asked to leave or let go. Period. Won't seem to be such a gracious exit.

Do you have **bandwidth** was a common question posed when it came to mobile, telecom or

radio equipment. The dictionary meaning of bandwidth is ‘ the range of frequencies with a given band, in particular that is used for transmitting a signal ‘. In the present context, if a colleague asks you if you have bandwidth, it purely means do you have time to help out with a project. It might be sending out the wrong signals but well that is the reality.

**Narrative** is another flavour of the season. Once upon a time, we would equate this with screenwriting, story telling, essay writing etc. But ever since **President Obama** fell in love with this word, it has taken off exponentially but in a completely different context. Why has “narrative,” an ancient word, moved suddenly to center stage in today’s politics? I think it has something to do with the growing sophistication of the political spin industry and growing competition between media outlets for increasingly fragmented and polarized audiences. In other words, today’s audiences are no longer satisfied with choosing their own news outlets. They also want to choose their own versions of the reality that news covers. Whether they realize it or not, they’re shopping for their own “*narrative*.”

There is lots and lots more and you sometimes wonder what’s the fuss or should it be buzz about. **Strategic Fit, Quality Vector, Knowledge Management, Drill Down, Smartsise, Rightshoring**...the list is abuzz and goes on and on.

New words are added to the **Dictionary** every year. Last year, **selfie** and **hashtag** became part of **Merriam Webster’s Dictionary** in recognition of their popular usage. And new words and slangs reflecting the increasing use of technology are also added to the **Oxford Dictionary** every year. Looks as if the buzz is not going to stop. So, time to *mind your language* might as well come out with all guns *buzzing*!

**Image Source:** Sterling PR and Edelman