



11

2020

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Schwerpunktthema: Jahresende

Year end

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BUSINESS WRITING

Can we celebrate?

2020 looks very different today from what it did in early January – here we take a look at how to deal with the end of a year that nobody expected and how to deal with what others may be doing to mark it. **p.2**



BUSINESS TALK

Greetings

Cheery Christmas greetings may not be appropriate but marking the end of the year is still important for most people so read on for our ideas on what sort of messages to send this year. **p.8**



SPECIAL

Any parties?

Some colleagues will want life to go on as though nothing has changed, others will be wary. Read what this group of colleagues think about the whole idea of Christmas parties right now: **p.5**



QUIZ

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MEDIUM



Can we celebrate?

Können wir feiern?

2020 looks very different today from what it did in early January – here we take a look at how to deal with the end of a year that nobody expected and how to deal with what others may be doing to mark it.

The broad answer

The past months have brought most of us a very different world from the one we thought we might be getting when we looked to the future this time last year. As this year draws slowly to an end many of our readers may be asking how to mark the end of such a tumultuous stretch. Can we celebrate? The easy answer is yes of course – we can usually find something to celebrate, even if it's only the fact that the sun is still rising every 24 hours. Whether or not we should still be celebrating is a very personal question and one which each person has to find their own answer to. For companies, there is a fine line between offering employees a bright spot in the calendar at year's end and throwing a glaringly insensitive gala which will no doubt reflect very badly on the sponsor.



Fine tuning: can we celebrate?

Personally, you may or may not wish to celebrate the Christmas or holiday season in any way at all, but your company might wish to mark the end of the year in some way. Or the other way around... the thing to remember, whatever happens, is to be sensitive to the many tragedies that this year has brought while allowing those who wish to get involved in a celebration to do so to at least a certain degree.

Decisions

Back in the spring many companies were already having to make decisions about whether or not to book venues and organise entertainment for the end of the year – something almost impossible to do when nobody knew what the end of the year would bring. The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) posted an article towards the end of the summer stating that up to three quarters of people thought that some form of company event would mark the end of this year, although at that point some still felt it was too early to say whether this would be possible. The conclusion was that some form of event, definitely far more muted would take place, always with measures to ensure staff safety being of prime importance. The general feeling seems to have been that after so much misery for so long, staff would truly appreciate the opportunity to forget their woes for a time.

However, now that it looks certain that some form of lockdown will affect many of us around the world, parties as we knew them this time last year will not be on the cards for most. This of course will affect not only those whose partying is being curtailed but also those businesses that depend on such end-of-year revenue – caterers, party organisers, MCs, venues and so on.



☺ VOCABULARY

tumultuous	stürmisch
glaringly	offensichtlich
insensitive	gefühllos (hier: lieblos)
muted	leise, gedämpft
misery	Elend
woes	Leiden
to be on the cards	von etw. ist auszugehen

📖 INTERNET TIP!

Read the CIPD article on what Christmas parties might look like here:

► <https://bit.ly/3kYf27c>

THE LANGUAGE LEVELS

in **business english trainer** relate roughly to *The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*:

Easy = Level A2
Medium = Level B1 – B2
Difficult = Level C1 – C2

To find out about your level of English download our overview at:

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The answers

For many companies, especially for those who wish to show gratitude to staff or to reassure them that the business is still in good shape, marking the end of the year even in a small way, will be essential. For once, it's not too late to plan many types of event, ensuring that it is sensitive to trauma, allows for different levels of participation and still lets employees feel appreciated. Many of us would really like the chance to forget some of the difficulties of the year at least for a short while, so quieter festivities will be welcomed by many. Depending on location and local restrictions, solutions could include:

- use of venues that can ensure social distancing measures
- drastically scaled down guest lists (spouses, partners and significant others will probably not be invited to most external events this year, though of course if employees are celebrating at home then others can be welcomed to join in)
- multiple small local events rather than large ones.

And should none of the above prove feasible, parties are always an option, with:

- all those participating receiving an appropriate parcel containing food, drink and so on to be consumed at home, perhaps while some of the other options are taking place
- Secret Santa by post or courier (colleagues are asked to supply a small gift, up to a certain value, to another colleague chosen at random)
- virtual drinks and toasts
- fancy dress conference calls



- virtual Christmas dinner party – a Zoom call while you eat!
- games and activities can also be online: Zoom karaoke, anyone?

Conclusion

Large office parties at exciting venues may not be reality for many years yet, so we have to get used to the new reality: it may be that summer parties become preferable to winter festivities. There is fun to be had for those who are in the mood for it and those who are not should not feel forced to join in – it will be easier to duck out than in previous years, that's one thing that is for sure, as the perfect excuse is now literally at our fingertips: 'Bandwidth issues', anyone...

VOCABULARY

curtailed	begrenzt
caterer	Essenslieferant
MC	Abk. für Master of Ceremonies
gratitude	Dankbarkeit
scaled down	abgespeckt
feasible	machbar
to duck out	sich vor etw. drücken

LISTEN AND PRACTISE

EASY

Any parties?

Gibt es Feiern?

Some colleagues will want life to go on as though nothing has changed, others will no doubt be very wary of any holiday festivities. Read what this group of colleagues think about the whole idea of Christmas parties right now:



Any parties?

The scenario

Juan, Rose, Qiaolin and Sam (their manager) are having their weekly Zoom check in, an opportunity in their schedules to touch base with colleagues over coffee (or tea!) at a time when face-to-face contact has all-but disappeared.

Juan: So, it's that time of year again. Has anyone heard anything about a Christmas party? I mean, usually we've had invitations by now, such a strange time...

Rose: I can't believe you would even be thinking about a party right now, Juan. I mean, surely you're more concerned about your family in Madrid than about whether or not there's going to be a party this year?

Qiaolin: No need to guilt-trip him Rose. It's a fair question and I'm sure we've all wondered what is going on. It would be nice to have something a bit more normal to think about quite honestly.



Sam: Well, normal it sure won't be. Not after the year we've all had. I for one am just glad to still have a job, so many in our department, across the whole company even, were made redundant, I don't think parties are a priority but it might be good to mark the end of the year somehow.

J: Thanks, guys. Rose, of course I'm concerned about what's happening back home. As I'm sure Qiaolin is. But life goes on, you know.

R: You're right, sorry, Juan. I'm just so worried about my mum and how we'll celebrate anything with her this year, it's a really touchy subject for me.

S: She's in a care home isn't she, Rose?

R: Yes, that's right. So we didn't get to see her for months and now it's weekly half-hour visits, socially distanced of course. Madness. And cruel.

J: Oh, that is so difficult for the whole family. For so many families, I know. I'd hoped to go home over the holiday period this year, to take the kids to see their grandparents, but it seems impossible now.

Q: I wasn't planning a trip until next summer but even that may not be possible.

S: I feel so fortunate that my family are all here and still all healthy. I can't imagine what you're all going through. but you know, Juan is right. We should perhaps not celebrate but at least do something. I know the MD was talking about it at the last board meeting but I don't know if anything ever came of that.

Q: Perhaps we could organise our own little get-together.

R: Now that's a great idea! How, though?

VOCABULARY

to touch base	sich in Verbindung setzen
all-but	fast
guilt-trip	Schuldgefühl
redundant	überflüssig
touchy	empfindlich
care home	Pflegeheim

LISTEN AND PRACTISE



Any parties?

Q: I don't know. Can we actually meet, in a restaurant, perhaps?

J: The restrictions keep changing, who knows what will be possible next week let alone a month or so from now.

S: Well, we can meet online, as we are now.

R: And do what?

J: We could all cook and then eat together...

S: Hmm, I don't really want to eat a large meal on camera, not my idea of appealing!

Q: I hear you! How about drinks, though?

J: That would work, right? Cocktails, maybe?

R: And mocktails! I don't drink alcohol, remember!

J: Of course, they don't have to include alcohol. We could each choose a recipe for a cocktail...

R: Or a smoothie!

J: Yes, or a smoothie. Then we could send each other the ingredients and each make all four drinks, have a tasting session!

Q: We could choose drinks that have alcoholic and non-alcoholic versions, perhaps?

S: I think this is a great idea! And departmental funds should just about stretch to cover ingredients for everyone, alcohol or none!

R: Oh Sam, that's really wonderful! How generous! Should we invite partners?

Q: No, online with people we don't know is hard, especially when we're trying to socialize - it'll be nice to just have the chance to chat with each other.

S: Right, just us I think. Now all we have to do is to set a time, the place is easy!

J: Great, this will be something to really look forward to! A fun evening for us all.

S: Let's limit it to an hour, these online calls are a bit tiring sometimes, not that it's anyone's fault but just being on camera. We can plan an hour's fun with trying the drinks and no chat about work!

R: Awesome! So, suggestions for day and time...?

VOCABULARY

restriction	Beschränkung
appealing idea	verlockende Idee
mocktail	alkoholfreier Cocktail
ingredient	Zutat
funds	Gelder
to stretch	reichen



LISTEN AND PRACTISE

MEDIUM



Greetings

Begrüßungen

Cheery Christmas greetings may not be appropriate but marking the end of the year is still important for most people so read on for our ideas on what sort of messages to send this year.



Greetings

Business as usual?

Even for the lucky few who have not been too adversely affected by the pandemic it would be hard to claim that it had been a year of business as usual. If your business has not been too badly affected it is one of the fortunate ones – this is certainly not the year to write glowing reviews of successes but rather to acknowledge good fortune together with the fact that it may not have been so good for everyone. Business as usual it has not been in 2020, so let's look at how that can best be recognized, focusing on what is positive but not pretending the negative can't or hasn't happened in our end-of-year messages.

Cultural differences

Not everyone celebrates Christmas, or even marks a year end in December: different cultures celebrate at different

times of year – the Chinese Lunar Year generally begins in March, Nowruz, the Persian New Year, is also in spring and the Jewish New Year in September, for example – and will have different ways of celebrating the new year. Some culturally specific greetings for this unprecedented new year include the Chinese 'bai du bu qin' (meaning 'may you be immune from 100 toxins'), which has replaced the older 'gong xi fa cai' or 'may you attain great wealth' that is taught in schools around the world.

In India wishes for good health have been paramount, for example Hindus have used 'Wishing you and your family a very happy and vibrant New Year and auspicious Navratri'.

General greetings

We all share many of the same universal human desires for good health and abundance even if this year is not the year

🗨️ VOCABULARY

adversely	widrig
glowing	strahlend
to pretend	vortäuschen
unprecedented	beispiellos
paramount	hervorragend

📰 INTERNET TIP!

Read more about how the Chinese New Year festivities this year have changed from what they have been in the past in this BBC article:

► <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/51286633>



🔊 LISTEN AND PRACTISE



to focus on the third common wish: prosperity. Most general greetings can be used across different cultures and religions, whenever in the year they may be needed, for example:

- Wishing you and yours good health through 2021; thank you for your business.
- Thank you for your business in 2020; we look forward to continuing our business relationship in the new year and wish you all the best.
- We have enjoyed our business relationship with you over the past year and are looking forward to what lies ahead – wishing you and yours all the best for a healthy New Year!

- It's been a pleasure to do business with you and we look forward to continuing our business relationship through 2021.
- As a difficult year for so many comes to an end, we wanted to take a moment to wish you and yours all the best for 2021.
- We wish you a relaxing Holiday season and a peaceful and healthy New Year.

For those who have felt the effects of Corona virus, a great deal of tact and a more muted message will obviously be necessary:

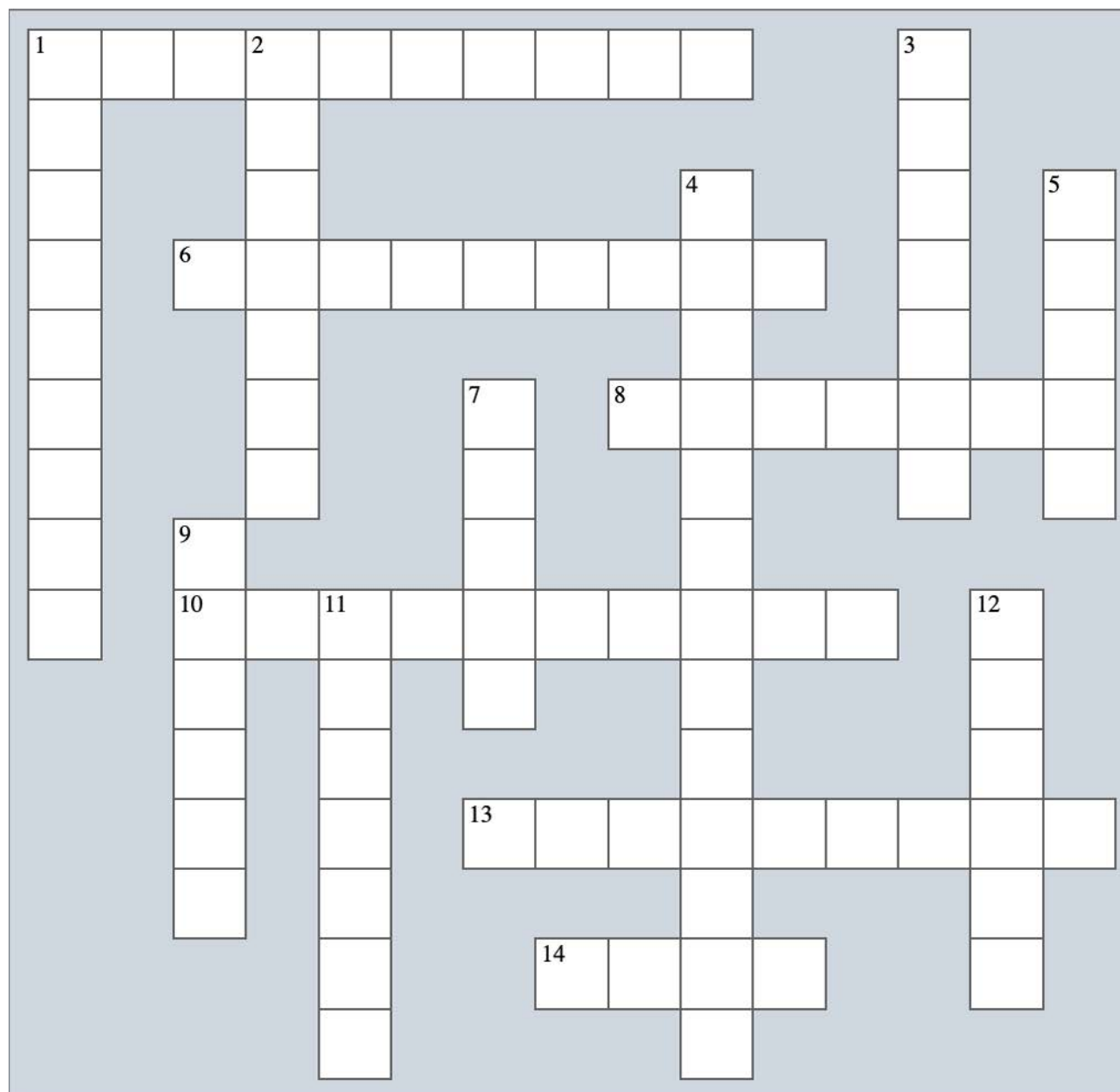
- We recognise that 2020 has been a difficult year in so many ways; we wish you all a healthy 2021 and look forward to continuing doing business with you in the New Year.
- Despite the difficulties this year has brought to us all, you have remained a reliable business partner and we look forward to doing business with you through 2021 and beyond.
- Wishing you all the best for the coming year; we look forward to working with you in 2021.

Conclusion

Business is not as usual, but one way or another it will certainly carry on: maintaining good business relationships will be even more important during this difficult period, so don't neglect your business partners even if you personally feel there is little to celebrate. A brief greeting shows they are not forgotten!

VOCABULARY

abundance	Reichtum
prosperity	Wohlstand
muted	gedämpft



Across

- 1. doing well, wealth
- 6. no longer required or necessary
- 8. to act as though the unreal is real
- 10. foodstuff required perhaps for a recipe
- 13. a plentiful supply or amount
- 14. sorrows or problems

Down

- 1. the most important
- 2. to make larger or longer, to make sufficient
- 3. a person or company providing food and drink
- 4. never before, without precedent
- 5. monies, assets
- 7. quiet, restrained
- 9. sadness
- 11. bright, gleaming
- 12. sensitive, quick to feel offence or hurt




Odd one out

From the following groups of synonyms, decide which word does not match the group:

1	festivity	celebration	party	joy	event
2	meal	snack	banquet	feast	spread
3	bug	grub	tuck	nosh	food
4	beverage	lunch	drink	tipple	brew
5	gulp	swallow	pint	slurp	taste
6	sarnie	boat	sandwich	sub	butty
7	stand	sit	counter	board	stall
8	assets	funds	deposit	reserves	resources
9	chart	strategise	plan	plot	organise
10	relaxed	home	comfortable	comfy	easy
11	wealthy	rich	affluent	comfortable	deprived
12	unfortunate	reduced	noble	modest	insignificant
13	extravagant	thrifty	indulgent	decadent	elaborate
14	unnecessary	extreme	unwarranted	undue	moderate
15	sensible	reasonable	excessive	judicious	restrained
16	normal	extreme	balanced	average	ordinary

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Sentence matching

Match the two halves of the sentences:

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. The secret of change is to focus all of your energy, not on fighting the | a) going that way. |
| 2. What you don't | b) put in at work, instead of the quality of time we put in. |
| 3. Tough times never last, | c) lies opportunity. |
| 4. Courage is not the absence of fear, but rather | d) endure the darkness because it shows me the stars. |
| 5. We think, mistakenly, that success is the result of the amount of time we | e) the assessment that something else is more important than fear. |
| 6. If Plan A doesn't work out | f) it is not getting up again. |
| 7. The secret of crisis management is not good | g) old, but on building the new. |
| 8. Don't look back, you're not | h) then keep going. |
| 9. Look at how far you've come, | i) journey, not the destination. |
| 10. Losing your head in a crisis | j) we get stronger and more resilient. |
| 11. Focus on the | k) do determines what you can do. |
| 12. I will love the light for it shows me the way, yet I will | l) vs. bad, it's preventing the bad from getting worse. |
| 13. Life doesn't get easier or more forgiving, | m) the alphabet has 25 more letters. |
| 14. In the middle of difficulty | n) wonder of the weekend into your week and your work. |
| 15. Failure is not falling down, | o) is a good way to become a crisis. |
| 16. Always take some of the play, fun, freedom, and | p) tough people do. |



Quiz Questions: Test Yourself: Forms of Address for UK

Have a look at the following titles and choose the right form of address for an oral address, a letter and a salutation on an envelope.

Don't put your foot in your mouth!

Title	Oral address	Salutation on envelope	Form of address in a letter or email
1. Baronet			
2. Viscount			
3. Privy Counsellor			
4. Recorder			
5. Knight			
6. Member of the House of Lords (Duke...)			
7. Dame			
8. Lord Chief Justice			
9. Lord High Commissioner (Scotland)			
10. Bishop			



Exercise: forms of address in the UK

You never know when you will have to write a letter or give a speech to people where getting it right as regards the correct form of address is paramount. Test your knowledge here in the following – further clues are given in this month's quiz.

1. I met the Queen last spring, wow! When I spoke to her, I addressed her as '_____.'
2. Next month I have to give a speech at our charity's AGM. Our sponsor is the Duchess of Cambridge. I will begin the speech with 'Your _____, Ladies and Gentlemen...'
3. I am fundraising for women in the sports business. Perhaps the Baroness Virginia Bottomley is able to help. I will write a letter, but how should I start? 'Dear _____,'
4. Member of the Bee Gees Barry Gibb was the most recent person to be knighted in the honours list. Now, as a journalist, when I interview him, I have to address him as 'Sir Barry or '_____.'
5. Vivian Westwood, the iconic fashion designer is now _____ Westwood. If you address an envelope with a letter to her, you need to write '_____'. The letter should begin... 'Dear _____.'
6. We are welcoming the Archbishop of Canterbury to our city next month. In addition to his engagements in the Cathedral, he intends give a speech in the town hall. How should the mayor introduce him? Does he say: I am honoured to welcome his _____...?
7. I have been asked by our Alumni Association to give the keynote speech at our annual gathering this year

and the special guest will be the first female alumna of our college to become Justice of the Supreme Court. I will write her a letter with details of the event and address the envelope with '_____ Lady Smith...'

8. The Chancellor of Edinburgh University is due to give a speech at our annual company dinner about innovation. How should I address him on the podium? – Easy: You say: 'Welcome, _____'
9. I need to write a letter with an official contract in it to Professor Harrison. How do I address the envelope? – Just '_____ will do!

Food for Thought

"My mother told me to be a lady. And for her, that meant be your own person, be independent."

Ruth Bader Ginsburg,
Associate Justice of the
U.S. Supreme Court

False friend

Briefertasche

How do you say this
in English?

1. wallet/pocketbook
2. briefcase

Answer:

Daily vokabelmail

make or break

"The company is about to sign a make-or-break deal with a competitor."


Do you know what this means?

1. Either the deal saves the company or ruins its chances of survival, no middle ground.
2. The company has signed a strategic deal that will allow it to collaborate with the competitor.

Answer:

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1



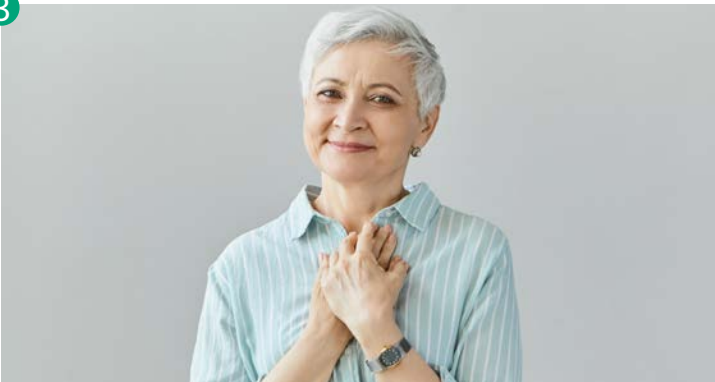
- A. It seems a long time ago that we invited our Southeast Asian business partners to celebrate with us at the annual sales conference.
- B. A renowned consultant was invited to give the keynote speech on risk management at the AGM.
- C. The new branch manager for Malaysia flew in to review the resumes of suitable candidates and to discuss hiring.

2



- A. The personal assistant to the CFO is in charge of managing the publishing process for the annual report.
- B. The airline has been criticised because attendants are wearing their normal uniforms.
- C. The company flies its personnel on charter planes where careful preventative measures are implemented as a result of the pandemic.

3



- A. Preparing the annual report requires an extremely high standard of informational graphics.
- B. Our older employees are truly grateful for the new flexible teleworking options that HR has introduced.
- C. The inventory managers conduct an internal audit at year-end, starting with an inspection of the warehouse.

IMPRESSUM

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