

News Release
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Record numbers at the 2012 English UK Management Conference

Massaging our neighbours in the opening plenary session, drinking and conversing next to shrunken heads and totem poles, the Curious Case of the Missing Sorbet, these are some of the abiding memories of the seventh iteration of the English UK Management Conference, held at St. Anne's College Oxford on 2 and 3 March. The Management Conference was supported by Cambridge ESOL. A number of speakers touched on themes of family and community, appropriate to an event which asked us to consider what we can do together to professionalize our industry further and provide a framework in which both the needs of our learners and our own career goals can be met and enhanced.

George Pickering's opening plenary, 'The 2020 Manager' provided a perfect start to the conference with good humour, props and jokes. This session looked at the skills managers need in a changing professional environment, how they can go about acquiring these skills and minimize the constraints on them doing so by harnessing willpower, managing interruptions and developing specialities.

The evening's panel discussion, expertly chaired by Fiona Dunlop, struck an incredibly positive note for UK ELT with its stories of how the panel and others have prospered in the industry while pursuing very different career paths and goals. Pete Sharma outlined key issues, controversies and outcomes; the session ended with the opportunity for delegates to personalize their responses by discussing deceptively simple but practically complex questions such as 'should we require our learners to switch off their smartphones in class?'

Oxford University Press provided the Friday evening entertainment, with a sponsored reception at the Pitt Rivers museum. With an evening of canapés, drinks and jazz, there was no shortage of conversation starters.

Will Kinsman closed the conference by looking afresh at the eternal question of how we can value our customers as individuals and, crucially, control our costs without damaging the customer experience. Terms such as the 'Tesco Bingo Test', the 're-imagination clinic' and 'the tyranny of or' should by now be part of our lexicons and we left loved-up on Love Hearts.

In all, 105 delegates attended over the two days. This is approximately 20% up on 2011 and provides evidence that ELT management in the UK is in rude health.

Summing up the conference, Cambridge ESOL's Lee Knapp said "there really is no better event for ELT management professionals to learn about key issues in our industry".

Notes to Editors

1. English UK is the world's leading language teaching association, with more than 450 accredited centres in membership. It covers university and further education college language departments, international study centres in independent schools,

educational trusts and charities, and private sector colleges. English UK is a UK registered charity (www.englishuk.com).

2. The English UK ELT Marketing Conference was supported by Cambridge ESOL.
3. For more information, please contact Huan Japes (Deputy Chief Executive – Professional Services) on huan@englishuk.com.

English UK Ltd
219 St John Street
London
EC1V 4LY

w: www.englishuk.com

e: info@englishuk.com