

The Devil's Dictionary for Business: "Corporate"

In 1881, American writer Ambrose Bierce began work on a series of short satirical definitions eventually published together as *The Devil's Dictionary*. If you've never read the entries, you're in for a sarcastic, cynical treat.

See how he defined "dictionary."

DICTIONARY, n. A malevolent literary device for cramping the growth of a language and making it hard and inelastic. This dictionary, however, is a most useful work.

I've decided that businesses need their own Devil's Dictionary. We navigate a world of bullshittified buzzwords, but they can only harm us if we take them seriously. With this dictionary, we luckily don't have to.

Today's word is "corporate." This one gets tossed around quite a lot.

CORPORATE, adj. A wonderfully versatile descriptor that comes in handy for scapegoating companies of any size, so long as they are bigger than yours and you don't like them. Guaranteed to elicit instant indignation.

"Our newspaper company may only be me and my uncle Bob sniffing glue in a basement, but at least we aren't like those four corporate sell-outs down at the corner store print shop."

What other words belong in this dictionary? This may be the start of a long series – Google knows we have a lot of business words left to define.