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**JOKES PLEASE - WE'RE BRITISH!**

**EMBARGOED UNTIL 00.01 WEDNESDAY 18<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2009**

**Press release from The Aziz Corporation**

**The stiff British upper lip is quivering.....**

A seismic shift in the acceptability of jokes and slang within the UK workplace has taken place over the last decade, according to a survey of more than 270 company directors by the spoken communications consultancy, The Aziz Corporation.

Company directors are ten times more likely to find politically correct jokes acceptable in the office than they did ten years ago, when nearly 40% believed jokes were unacceptable at all times.

In 1999 only 1% of respondents found politically correct jokes acceptable in internal office meetings, today the figure has increased to nearly 70%.

Another shift has taken place in the differentiation between offensive and inoffensive jokes. In the earlier survey 64% of directors thought politically incorrect jokes were acceptable in informal conversations with colleagues, if funny. Today the proportion has dropped to 47%.

Mild swear words in internal meetings were deemed unacceptable by all respondents ten years ago. Today 50% have no problem with this with nearly 20% even accepting strong swearing in the office.

Increasingly slang has become accepted with 64% of directors finding this appropriate even in internal meetings.

Khalid Aziz, Chairman of The Aziz Corporation commented: "British business has been stereotyped for its formality but this survey demonstrates a dramatic change.

"I suspect this process has accelerated during the recession when people are desperate for anything that will raise their spirits. Britain has a long standing tradition of gallows humour and that may also be a factor; what's the difference between a banker and pigeon? A pigeon can still make a deposit on a Porsche!"

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**Notes for Editors**

***The Aziz Corporation***

The Aziz Corporation is the UK's leading independent executive leadership and development consultancy. Its mission is to add value to businesses by ensuring their people are effective communicators. Consultancy services offered by The Aziz Corporation include presentation skills, media training, crisis management, image consultancy and voice development.

<http://www.azizcorp.com/>

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