
BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

The English We Speak

To shout it from the rooftops



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This is not a word-for-word transcript

Neil

Hello, I'm Neil...

Feifei

... and hello, I'm Feifei and welcome to The English We Speak.

Neil

Now Feifei, here's a question for you. If you had some news what would do?

Feifei

Hmm, I would tell someone of course.

Neil

Yes but some good news, some amazing, incredible news about yourself – like for example, I'm having a baby.

Feifei

Are you really?

Neil

Of course not – but if you had exciting news like that, how would you tell people?

Feifei

I'd use social media... tell all my friends... tell everyone in the office... I would shout about it – but not literally.

Neil

Exactly! Which is why, in English, we say we would 'shout it from the rooftops' which means we would share some information publicly so everyone knows.

Feifei

I guess this is how people shared important news before TV, radio and the internet had been invented.

Neil

Exactly. They would climb up somewhere high and shout it out! Let's hear some examples...

Examples

Congratulations for getting a first in your degree, you should go and shout it from the rooftops!

I know you won the lottery but don't shout it from the rooftops; otherwise everyone will be after your money!

We all know Ming is in love with JiYuen, he's been shouting it from the rooftops!

Feifei

So to shout something from the rooftops means to tell everyone your good news. Hold on a minute Neil, I do have some good news... I am getting a pay rise!

Neil

Sorry, what did you say?

Feifei

I am getting a pay rise!

Neil

OK, no need to shout. Feifei, be careful, there are some things you don't want to shout from the rooftops – that news will just upset people.

Feifei

Like who?

Neil

Like me. I didn't get one. But congratulations anyway.

Both

Bye.