

# Effortless English

**Neo:** adj. new

**Bedouins:** n. an Arabic nomadic tribe

**breed:** n. kind

**flourishing:** v. growing and succeeding

**roaming:** v. moving around

**nomadic:** adj. always moving, frequently moving

**wandered:** v. travelled, roamed  
**come to be known as:** v. started to be called

**armed with:** v. carrying, having

**access:** n. ability to get & use

**muffins:** n. kind of cupcake

**the world at large:** n. the rest of the world

**laying off:** v. firing

**contributing to:** adding to  
**insecurity:** n. safety, stability

**on the cheap:** adv. cheaply

**Palo Alto:** n. a town in Silicon Valley

**declares:** v. says

**innovation:** n. creativity

**mobile:** adj. able to move

**infrastructure:** n. public goods and services (ie. roads, phones.)

**emerged:** v. come out

**Kinkos:** n. a copy & print shop

**Wi-Fi:** wireless internet

**laptops:** n. portable computers

**revenge:** n. hurting or defeating someone after they hurt you

**the means of production:** n. the tools for making something

**hop:** v. jump

## Neo-Bedouins

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A new **breed** of worker, fueled by caffeine and using the tools of modern technology, is **flourishing** in the coffeehouses of San Francisco. **Roaming** from cafe to cafe and borrowing a name from the **nomadic** Arabs who **wandered** freely in the desert, they've **come to be known as** "bedouins."

San Francisco's modern-day bedouins are typically **armed with** laptops and cell phones, paying for their office space and Internet **access** by buying coffee and **muffins**.

San Francisco's bedouins see themselves changing the nature of the workplace, if not **the world at large**. They see large companies like General Motors **laying off** workers, **contributing to insecurity**. And at the same time, they see the Internet providing the tools to start companies **on the cheap**. In the Bedouin lifestyle, they are free to make their own rules.

"The San Francisco coffeehouse is the new **Palo Alto** garage," **declares** Kevin Burton, 30, who runs his Internet startup "Tailrank" without renting offices. "It's where all the **innovation** is happening."

The move toward **mobile** self employment is also part of what author Daniel Pink identified when he wrote "Free Agent Nation" in 2001.

"A whole **infrastructure** has **emerged** to help people work in this way," Pink said. "Part of it includes places like **Kinkos**, Office Depot and Staples." It also includes places like Starbucks and independent coffee shops, where **Wi-Fi** -- wireless Internet access for **laptops** and other devices -- is available.

"The infrastructure makes it possible for people to work where they want, when they want, how they want," said Pink.

Pink calls it "Karl Marx's **revenge**, where individuals own **the means of production**. And they can take the means of production and **hop** from coffee shop to coffee shop."

**Web worker:** n. person who works with the internet

**Wild West:** n. an area that is very free and open

**Ritual Roasters:** n. name of a coffee shop in SF

**epicenter:** n. the center or headquarters of something

**movement:** n. a trend in society

**packed:** v. filled, crammed

**buzzed:** v. went by (or through) quickly

**Segway Scooter:** n. a one person "pedestrian" scooter

**hip:** adj. cool

**locked up in:** v. trapped in

**Venerable:** adj. very old

**firm:** n. company

**clientele:** n. group of customers

**ensured:** v. guaranteed

**marine:** adj. related to the sea or ocean

**Parisian:** adj. related to or from Paris (France)

**North Beach:** n. a neighborhood in San Francisco

**hangouts:** n. place where people gather, meet, and chat

**joined the ranks:** v. joined the group

**It would figure:** idiom. it makes sense, its not surprising

**in action:** v. being used

**overhead:** n. fixed business costs (ex. rent, insurance,..)

**struck out on his own:** idiom. started by himself, went out by himself, did something independently

"There is nothing more free than being a **Web worker**," Om Malik says.

"There is no boss. You work for yourself. This is the new **Wild West**. The individual is more important. That's the American way. It's about doing things your own way. Web workers represent that. ... It's the future, my friend."

**Ritual Roasters** in San Francisco's Mission District is in many ways the **epicenter** of the bedouin **movement**. Ritual, on Valencia Street near 21st Street, is almost always **packed** with people working on laptops.

Every bedouin seems to have a Ritual story. There's the time someone **buzzed** through the cafe on a **Segway scooter**. Rubyred Labs, a **hip** Web design shop in South Park, had its launch party there. Teams from established Web companies such as Google Inc. and Flickr, a photo sharing site that's now owned by Yahoo, meet there. "You'd never know these guys were millionaires," said Ritual co-owner Jeremy Tooker.

As for why they're there, Sean Kelly said, "I'm visiting with my friends instead of being **locked up in** a big building in the South Bay."

Using a cafe to run a business is nothing particularly new. **Venerable** insurance **firm** Lloyd's of London was actually started in a coffee house, Kennedy points out. According to the Lloyd's of London Web site, "Edward Lloyd opened a coffee house in 1688, encouraging a **clientele** of ships' captains, merchants and ship owners -- earning him a reputation for trustworthy shipping news. This **ensured** that Lloyd's coffee house became recognized as the place for obtaining **marine** insurance."

Ernest Hemingway and F. Scott Fitzgerald wrote some of their best work in **Parisian** cafes. And in San Francisco, writers and poets of the Beat generation, such as Jack Kerouac and Allen Ginsberg, wrote in the cafes of **North Beach**.

Caffe Trieste was among the most popular North Beach **hangouts**. "To have a cappuccino, you come to North Beach, to Caffe Trieste," says Giovanni "Papa Gianni" Giotta, the founder.

Now Caffe Trieste has **joined the ranks** of Wi-Fi cafes. **It would figure** that the one laptop **in action** on a recent afternoon belonged to an art dealer. "A cappuccino for **overhead** isn't bad," said David Salow, 33. He **struck out on his own** three months ago, and has yet to open a gallery. "Sixty to 70 percent of what I do can be done with the standard tools available to everyone -- a phone, a computer and a laptop connection."

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