

Business idioms 2

Lesson code: LHZV-E2RE-ZCDR

UPPER INTERMEDIATE +

1 Common idioms in business

Match the underlined idiomatic expressions with their correct meaning below.

1. There are a lot of audits in our industry, so it is important to do everything by the book.
 2. We needed to raise \$1 million to invest in the marketing plan. Unfortunately, we came up short.
 3. It has been difficult to become a successful search engine since Google cornered the market.
 4. We really need to get the ball rolling on this project. The deadline is next month.
 5. Jack took a low-paying job at a large law firm just to get a foot in the door.
 6. Last month was incredible! Our sales went through the roof.
 7. The company is going to close the books at the end of December.
 8. Our boss decided to give us the green light to begin work on the new marketing campaign.
- a. 100% according to the rules
 - b. dominated a particular sector
 - c. failed to achieve a goal completely
 - d. give (someone) permission to start doing something
 - e. increased very quickly
 - f. start something (usually a work project)
 - g. stop taking orders in order to end a bookkeeping period
 - h. take a low-level position with a company with the goal of eventually getting a better position with the same company in the future

2 Talking point

Discuss any of the following questions:

1. Do you always do things by the book in your business?
2. Does your company always achieve its goals or do you sometimes come up short?
3. Is it easy to corner the market in your industry?
4. Did you need to get a foot in the door at the start of your career? What did you do?
5. Do you always get the ball rolling early on projects or are there often delays?
6. Who is responsible for giving the green light on work projects in your company?



3 More business idioms

Match the following expressions to their definitions on the right.

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|----------------|--|
| 1. in the red | a. excessive rules and procedures |
| 2. red tape | b. not easily categorised |
| 3. a grey area | c. not profitable, operating at a loss |
| 4. a long shot | d. something that has a low probability of happening |
| 5. a safe bet | e. something that will probably happen |

Now complete the sentences below:

1. Personally, I believe the new marketing strategy is a bit of a _____. It's pretty unlikely to succeed.
2. The company has been _____ since the price of oil began to rise rapidly.
3. It's a _____ to invest in smartphone technology. It's certain to become even more profitable in the future.
4. The lawyers were not sure if the product was completely legal. They said it was a _____.
5. There is a lot of _____ in our industry. It's costing us a great deal in legal fees.

4 Talking point

Discuss any of the following questions:

1. Is there a lot of red tape in your industry?
2. What would you describe as a safe bet in your industry? What would you describe as a long shot?
3. Can you think of any grey areas?
4. Do many companies in your industry operate in the red?



1 Common idioms in business

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|------|------|------|------|
| 1. a | 2. c | 3. b | 4. f |
| 5. h | 6. e | 7. g | 8. d |

3 More business idioms

Students work individually and check in pairs. Go through the answers with the class.

- | | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1. c | 2. a | 3. b | 4. d | 5. e |
|------|------|------|------|------|

1. long shot
2. in the red
3. safe bet
4. grey area
5. red tape

