

Idioms Practice Workbook

Vocabulary & Roleplay Exercises for Business English

Exercise 1: Match the Idioms

Instructions: Read the definitions in the left column and write the correct idiom from the Word Bank in the blank spaces [].

Definition	Idiom
1. Do nothing to help someone	[]
2. Explain in detail	[]
3. Somewhere you are not allowed to go	[]
4. Do something very quickly or immediately	[]
5. Suffer the consequences of doing something	[]
6. A person who isn't willing to try anything new	[]
7. Impossible or not allowed	[]
8. Arrive or do something exactly on time	[]
9. When competitors in a race are so close you don't know who is winning	[]
10. Not known or popular with many people; in a remote location	[]
11. Very annoying	[]
12. Do something to help you succeed	[]
13. Give less than someone expected	[]

Word Bank:

- neck and neck
- not lift a finger
- off limits
- off the beaten track
- on the dot
- on the double
- out of the question
- pain in the neck
- pay the price
- play your cards right
- short change someone
- spell something out
- stick in the mud

Exercise 2: Fill in the Blanks

Instructions: Complete the sentences using the correct idiom from the Word Bank above. You may change the verb tense if necessary (e.g., paying the price or played your cards right).

1. I arrived at the meeting at 9:00 AM _____. I hate being late!
2. Going to that party on a school night is _____. Your parents said no.
3. If you _____, the boss might give you a promotion next month.
4. The military base is completely _____ to civilians. You cannot enter.
5. We found a beautiful, quiet beach that was totally _____, far away from all the tourists.
6. My sister didn't _____ to clean the house; she just sat on the couch all day.
7. Finding a parking spot downtown during rush hour is a real _____.
8. The two runners were _____ until the very last second of the race.
9. If you don't study for the final exam, you will have to _____ and repeat the class.
10. Come here _____. We need to leave for the airport right now.
11. Stop complaining and just tell me exactly what you want; you don't need to _____ for me.
12. Don't be such a _____! Come to the karaoke bar with us tonight.
13. I felt like the store _____ me because the service was terrible for what I paid.

Exercise 3: Corporate Roleplay Scenarios

Instructions: Work in pairs. Choose a scenario, review your character's objective, and improvise a professional conversation. You **must** naturally integrate your assigned idioms into the dialogue.

Scenario 1: The Project Deadline Panic

Situation: Two colleagues are stressing out in the office breakroom. A major client presentation is tomorrow, the competition with another company is fierce, and a lazy teammate is causing problems.

- **Character A (Project Manager):** You are highly stressed about tomorrow's deadline. You need to push your colleague to work faster and complain about a lazy teammate.

Idioms to use: neck and neck, on the double, pain in the neck

- **Character B (Team Member):** You are trying to stay calm and realistic. You want to convince the manager that everything will be fine if you follow the strategy, despite your lazy teammate.

Idioms to use: play your cards right, not lift a finger, stick in the mud

Scenario 2: The Missing Supplier Shipment

Situation: A manager is confronting a procurement specialist because a crucial vendor delivered less equipment than ordered, arrived hours late, and used a strange excuse.

- **Character A (The Manager):** You are furious. The shipment was late, items are missing, and you want to make sure the employee understands that this is unacceptable.
Idioms to use: **on the dot, spell something out, pay the price**
- **Character B (Procurement Specialist):** You are trying to defend yourself and explain the situation. The truck got lost in a remote area and the vendor made a mistake with the package count.
Idioms to use: **off the beaten track, short-change someone, out of the question**

Scenario 3: The Restricted Server Room

Situation: A marketing employee needs to access old physical files stored inside the secure IT server room, but the IT administrator stops them at the door.

- **Character A (Marketing Coordinator):** You are in a huge rush to get some old files. You try to convince IT to let you in just for a minute, even if it's against the rules.
Idioms to use: **pain in the neck, on the double**
- **Character B (IT Administrator):** You are responsible for data security. You must strictly deny access to the room and reject any requests to bypass company protocols.
Idioms to use: **off limits, out of the question**