

English for Study Skills

Pre-Sessional English

Lesson objectives

Part 1: business idioms

Part 2: business vocabulary

Idioms

The background features a series of overlapping, semi-transparent geometric shapes in various shades of orange and yellow. These shapes are primarily triangles and polygons, creating a layered, abstract effect. The colors range from a light, pale yellow to a deep, dark orange. The shapes are positioned mostly on the right side of the frame, with some extending towards the center.

Introduction

Idioms

- ▶ a group of words,
- ▶ that have a different meaning,
- ▶ when together,
- ▶ for example:

“break a leg”

Meaning: good luck

Does not mean: damage your leg

Idioms

Think outside the box

Cut corners

Blue-sky thinking

Out of the blue

Raise the bar

Game changer

In the loop

Get the ball rolling

On the same page

Hit the ground running

Definitions

- ▶ **Think outside the box** - to think creatively, beyond the normal conventional or traditional ideas
- ▶ **Cut corners** - to do something quickly and without care or attention to detail
- ▶ **Blue-sky thinking** - to think about new and original ideas that are not limited by practical considerations
- ▶ **Out of the blue** - something unexpected or surprising
- ▶ **Raise the bar** - to set higher standards or expectations

Definitions

- ▶ **Game changer** - something that significantly changes the way things are done
- ▶ **In the loop** - to be informed or involved in a project or decision-making process
- ▶ **Get the ball rolling** - to start a project or process
- ▶ **On the same page** - to have a shared understanding or agreement
- ▶ **Hit the ground running** - to start something quickly and effectively

Synonyms

- ▶ **Think outside the box** - think innovatively, think creatively, think imaginatively
- ▶ **Cut corners** - take shortcuts, rush through, skimp on
- ▶ **Blue-sky thinking** - creative brainstorming, imaginative thinking, visionary planning
- ▶ **Out of the blue** - unexpected, sudden, unanticipated
- ▶ **Raise the bar** - improve, elevate, up the ante

Synonyms

- ▶ **Game changer** - breakthrough, game-changing innovation
- ▶ **In the loop** - up-to-date, in the know, well-informed
- ▶ **Get the ball rolling** - begin, initiate, kick-start
- ▶ **On the same page** - in agreement, in 'sync', on the same wavelength
- ▶ **Hit the ground running** - get off to a good start, start strong, begin on a 'high note'

Example sentences

- ▶ **Think outside the box** - Let's try to think outside the box and come up with a new solution to this problem
- ▶ **Cut corners** - We can't cut corners if we want to produce high-quality work
- ▶ **Blue-sky thinking** - Let's do some blue-sky thinking and come up with a completely new approach to marketing.
- ▶ **Out of the blue** - I received a job offer out of the blue
- ▶ **Raise the bar** - We need to raise the bar on customer service if we want to stand out from our competitors

Example sentences

- ▶ **Game changer** - The introduction of the internet was a game changer for the way people communicate and access information.
- ▶ **In the loop** - Make sure everyone is in the loop about the changes to the schedule.
- ▶ **Get the ball rolling** - Let's get the ball rolling on the new marketing campaign by brainstorming some ideas.
- ▶ **On the same page** - I think we're on the same page about the goals for this project.
- ▶ **Hit the ground running** - We need to hit the ground running on this new project if we want to meet our deadline.



Exercise #1

Match the meaning

Match each idiom with its meaning

1. Think outside the box	A. Make significant changes or improvements
2. Cut corners	B. Start something, initiate a plan or project
3. Blue-sky thinking	C. To innovate or think creatively
4. Game changer	D. To suddenly and unexpectedly happen
5. In the loop	E. To be knowledgeable or informed about something
6. Out of the blue	F. To be in agreement or understanding with someone
7. Raise the bar	G. To work hard and productively from the beginning
8. Get the ball rolling	H. To take shortcuts or do something in a quick and easy way
9. On the same page	I. To set higher standards or expectations
10. Hit the ground running	J. To approach a problem or task in a new or different way



Exercise #2

Fill in the blanks

Fill in the blanks:

1. We need to _____ if we want to come up with a creative solution to this problem.
2. I'm not sure where this idea came from. It just came to me _____.
3. Let's make sure everyone is _____ before we start the meeting.
4. He's always looking for ways to _____ and improve his performance.
5. Don't _____ just to save time. Do the job properly.
6. The new technology was a real _____ for the industry.
7. We need to _____ if we want to succeed in this project.

on the same page
out of the blue
game changer

think outside the box
in the loop
get the ball rolling

blue-sky thinking
raise the bar
hit the ground running

cut corners

1. We need to **think outside the box** if we want to come up with a creative solution to this problem.
2. I'm not sure where this idea came from. It just came to me **out of the blue**.
3. Let's make sure everyone is **on the same page** before we start the meeting.
4. He's always looking for ways to **raise the bar** and improve his performance.
5. Don't **cut corners** just to save time. Do the job properly.
6. The new technology was a **real game-changer** for the industry.
7. We need to **raise the bar** if we want to succeed in this project.
or we need to **be on the same page** if we want to succeed in this project.



Exercise #3

Select the correct idiom

Choose the correct idioms:

1. We need to _____ if we want to come up with a new solution to this problem. (think outside the box / cut corners / blue-sky thinking)
2. I got a job offer _____ last week. (out of the blue / in the loop / game changer)
3. We need to _____ if we want to stay ahead of our competitors. (raise the bar / get the ball rolling / on the same page)
4. Let's have some _____ about how we can improve our products and services. (blue-sky thinking / cut corners / think outside the box)
5. The invention of the smartphone was a _____ for the tech industry. (game changer / out of the blue / hit the ground running)

Choose the correct idioms:

6. We need someone who can _____ and take charge of the project from day one. (cut corners / hit the ground running / get the ball rolling)

7. Make sure everyone is _____ about the changes to the schedule. (in the loop / on the same page / think outside the box)

8. We can't _____ if we want to produce high-quality work. (cut corners / raise the bar / get the ball rolling)

9. Let's try to use _____ and come up with a new solution to this problem. (blue-sky thinking / hit the ground running / out of the blue)

10. I think we're _____ about the goals for this project. (on the same page / raise the bar / cut corners)

Group Reading Exercise

Reading text 1

Mary was the newest member of the team. She was excited to start her new job, but she was also nervous. She wanted to make a good impression and _____.

On her first day, she arrived early, dressed professionally, and ready to work. Her new boss welcomed her and introduced her to the rest of the team. They all seemed friendly and welcoming. However, Mary quickly realized that they had their own way of doing things.

She had to learn the new processes and _____ to keep up with her colleagues. She decided to ask her new colleagues for help, and they were happy to show her the ropes. After a few weeks, Mary felt like she had _____ and was working well with the team.

Reading comprehension

Answer the following questions:

1. Who is Mary?
2. How did Mary feel on her first day?
3. What did Mary need to do to keep up with her colleagues?
4. How did Mary feel after a few weeks?
5. Did Mary ask for help from her colleagues?

Reading text 2

John's birthday was coming up, and his friends wanted to throw him a surprise party. They knew they had to _____ and come up with something really special.

After some _____, they decided to have the party at a park near John's house. They rented a big tent, bought decorations and food, and invited all of John's friends. They were excited to see John's reaction when they jumped out and yelled "surprise!" However, things didn't go according to plan.

It started raining heavily just as the party was about to start. They quickly moved everything under the tent, but it was still crowded and wet. Despite the weather, they all had a good time and John was happy to see his friends.

Reading comprehension

Answer the following questions:

1. Whose birthday was coming up?
2. What did John's friends want to do for his birthday?
3. Where did they decide to have the party?
4. What went wrong on the day of the party?
5. Was John happy to see his friends at the party?

Reading text 3

The company was struggling to come up with a new product. They had tried everything, but nothing seemed to work. They needed to _____ and come up with something truly innovative.

One day, a new employee joined the team. His name was Tom, and he had a reputation for _____ and coming up with new ideas. The team was skeptical at first, but Tom quickly proved himself.

He suggested a new product that no one had ever thought of before. Everyone was amazed by his _____ and creativity. The team worked hard to develop the product, and it ended up being a huge success.

Reading comprehension

Answer the following questions:

1. What problem was the company facing?
2. Who was the new employee?
3. What was Tom's reputation?
4. What did Tom suggest?
5. Was the product successful?

Example situations

Give an example of a situation where someone might need to:

- ▶ Get the ball rolling
- ▶ Hit the ground running
- ▶ Cut corners
- ▶ Think outside the box
- ▶ Raise the bar

Questions?

Business vocabulary

The background features a series of overlapping, semi-transparent geometric shapes in various shades of orange and yellow, creating a dynamic, layered effect on the right side of the page.

Vocabulary

1. Entrepreneurship
2. Business model
3. Business plan
4. Market research
5. Competitive advantage
6. Minimum viable product (MVP)
7. Business startup
8. Customer analysis

Vocabulary

Competitive advantage

- ▶ advantage
- ▶ competitor
- ▶ competitive

Minimum viable product (MVP)

- ▶ product
- ▶ viable product
- ▶ minimal

Definitions

- ▶ **Entrepreneurship:** The activity of setting up a business or businesses, taking on financial risks in the hope of profit.
- ▶ **Business model:** A plan for how a business will make money and be successful.
- ▶ **Business plan:** A written document that describes a business, its objectives, strategies, and expected financial results.
- ▶ **Market research:** The process of gathering and analyzing information about a market, including customers and competitors, to help make business decisions.

Definitions

- ▶ **Competitive advantage:** A unique advantage that allows a business to be more successful than its competitors.
- ▶ **Minimum viable product (MVP):** A product that has just enough features to satisfy early customers and provide feedback for future development.
- ▶ **Business startup:** A new business venture, usually with limited resources and high uncertainty.
- ▶ **Customer analysis:** The process of understanding and studying customer behavior, needs, and preferences to improve business decisions.

synonyms

- ▶ **Entrepreneurship:** business, commerce, trade, start-up, enterprise
- ▶ **Business model:** revenue model, profit model, operating model, economic model
- ▶ **Business plan:** blueprint, strategy, roadmap, outline, proposal
- ▶ **Market research:** market analysis, consumer research, market intelligence, market survey

synonyms

- ▶ **Competitive advantage:** edge, benefit, advantage, superiority, strength
- ▶ **Minimum viable product (MVP):** basic product, initial release, prototype, trial product
- ▶ **Business startup:** new venture, start-up company, business launch, entrepreneurship
- ▶ **Customer analysis:** customer research, customer profiling, customer behavior analysis

Example sentences

- ▶ **Entrepreneurship:** She showed entrepreneurship by starting her own company.
- ▶ **Business model:** The company's business model involves selling its products online.
- ▶ **Business plan:** The business plan outlines the company's goals and how it will achieve them.
- ▶ **Market research:** The company conducted market research to better understand its target audience.

Example sentences

- ▶ **Competitive advantage:** The company's superior customer service is its competitive advantage.
- ▶ **Minimum viable product (MVP):** The company released an MVP to test the market before investing more resources into the product.
- ▶ **Business startup:** The entrepreneur's business startup was successful due to hard work and dedication.
- ▶ **Customer analysis:** The company's customer analysis revealed that customers prefer fast shipping.



Exercise #1

Fill in the blanks

Fill in the blanks:

1. A _____ is a person who starts a new business venture.
2. A _____ is a framework that outlines how a business will create, deliver, and capture value for its customers.
3. To be successful, a business needs to have a _____ over its competitors.
4. Before starting a business, it's important to do _____ to understand the market.
5. A _____ is a product or service with just enough features to satisfy early customers.
6. A _____ is a detailed document outlining a company's goals and strategies.
7. _____ involves taking risks to start a new business.
8. _____ helps businesses understand their customers' needs and preferences

Entrepreneur business model business plan

Market research customer analysis business startup

Competitive advantage Minimum viable product (MVP)



Exercise #2

Select the correct term

Choose the correct terms:

1. A _____ outlines a company's plan for generating revenue. (Business plan / Competitive advantage)
2. Market research helps companies understand their _____. (Competitive advantage / Customers)
3. A business plan includes a company's _____ projections. (Market research / Financial)
4. Entrepreneurship involves taking risks to start a new _____. (Business startup / Minimum viable product)

Choose the correct terms:

5. A _____ is a product or service with just enough features to satisfy early customers. (Minimum viable product / Business model)

6. Customer analysis helps businesses understand their _____ needs and preferences. (Market research / Business model)

7. A(n) _____ is a person who organizes and manages a new business venture. (Entrepreneur / Customer)

8. A _____ outlines how a company creates, delivers, and captures value. (Business model / Business plan)

Exercise #3 Match the term & the meaning

Match each term with its meaning

1. Entrepreneurship	a. A document outlining the goals for a business.
2. Business model	b. The process of identifying, researching, and analyzing the market to determine customer needs and preferences.
3. Business plan	c. Unique advantage that a company has over its competitors
4. Market research	d. A product with just enough features to provide feedback for future development.
5. Competitive advantage	e. The process of starting a new business or organization.
6. Minimum viable product (MVP)	f. The process of creating a framework for how a business will operate and generate revenue.
7. Business startup	g. A person who organizes, manages, and takes on the risks of a business venture.
8. Customer analysis	h. A framework that outlines how a business creates, delivers, and captures value.

Group Reading Exercise

Reading comprehension

Answer the following questions:

1. What is market research?
2. Why is market research important for businesses?
3. What kind of information can be collected during market research?
4. How can market research help a business gain a competitive advantage?
5. Can you give an example of how a company can use market research to differentiate itself from its competitors?

Reading text

Market research is important for any business to gain a better understanding of their customers and competition. It involves collecting and analyzing information about the market, such as customer needs and preferences, industry trends, and competitors' strengths and weaknesses.

By conducting thorough market research, businesses can gain a competitive advantage over their rivals. For example, a company that learns about its customers' preferences can create products or services that meet those needs, which can help differentiate the business from its competitors.

Similarly, a company that understands its competitors' strengths and weaknesses can identify opportunities to differentiate itself and gain a competitive edge.

Reading comprehension

Answer the following questions:

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5. Can you give an example of how a company can use market research to differentiate itself from its competitors?

Thank you!
any questions?