

LESSON 17

CAROL TELLS BOB THE GOOD NEWS

Carol phones Bob to tell him the cookies are selling very well and that she needs another 1,000 by the morning. Bob isn't sure he can make the cookies so quickly, but Carol insists.

Carol: Bob, your wife's cookies are **selling like hotcakes!**

Bob: How many did you sell, Carol?

Carol: We've **sold out**. I need more **right away!** Bring me another 1,000 by tomorrow at 9 a.m.

Bob: That's a **tall order**, Carol.

Carol: Don't **blow it**, Bob! Susan's Scrumptious Cookies could really **take off**.

Bob: I know, but I'm not sure we have enough time to bake all those cookies.

Carol: Bake all night if you have to. **Burn the midnight oil!** If you work hard now, you'll be **sitting pretty** in a few years.

Bob: **Rest assured** that I'll **do my best** to deliver the goods.

Carol: Okay, now let's stop the **chitchat**. You've got work to do!



IDIOMS – LESSON 17

(to) blow it – to spoil an opportunity

EXAMPLE 1: The actress got nervous and forgot all of her lines. She really **blew it**!

EXAMPLE 2: I'll give you one more chance, but don't **blow it** this time!

SYNONYM: to screw up [slang]. Example: I can't believe you **screwed up** during the interview by asking for six weeks of vacation before you even got the job offer!

(to) burn the midnight oil – to stay up late studying or working

EXAMPLE 1: Michael **burned the midnight oil** studying for his algebra test.

EXAMPLE 2: The project is due tomorrow and we're far from finished. We're going to have to **burn the midnight oil** tonight.

chitchat – casual conversation; gossip

EXAMPLE 1: Peter told Heather to stop the **chitchat** and get back to work.

EXAMPLE 2: Okay, enough **chitchat**! Let's start discussing this week's reading assignment.

SYNONYM: to shoot the breeze

NOTE: Chitchat can also be a verb. Example: Amber and Ted were **chit-chatting** all night long.

(to) deliver the goods – to meet expectations; to do what's required

EXAMPLE 1: Peter thought Bob wasn't **delivering the goods**, so he fired him.

EXAMPLE 2: I'm depending on you to finish the job on time. I know that you can **deliver the goods**!

SYNONYM: to cut the mustard. Example: If you can't **cut the mustard** here, you'll have to find a new job.

(to) do one's best – to try as hard as possible

EXAMPLE 1: Although Ted **did his best**, he still failed his chemistry test.

EXAMPLE 2: You might not get a perfect score on your history test, but just **do your best**.

SYNONYM: to give it one's all

rest assured – be sure

EXAMPLE 1: **Rest assured** that the police will find the thieves.

EXAMPLE 2: **Rest assured** I'll take good care of your dog while you're on vacation.

right away – immediately

EXAMPLE 1: When Meg realized her house was on fire, she called the fire department **right away**.

EXAMPLE 2: You need some sugar for your cookies? I'll bring some over **right away**.

(to) sell like hotcakes – to sell fast; to be a popular item

EXAMPLE 1: Those new Fubu blue jeans are **selling like hotcakes**. All the girls love them.

EXAMPLE 2: Stephen King's new novel is **selling like hotcakes**.

(to be) sitting pretty – in a good position (often financially)

EXAMPLE 1: After Chad won the lottery, he was really **sitting pretty**. He quit his job and bought a mansion in Malibu, California.

EXAMPLE 2: Gina was one of the first people to work at Amazon.com, and she made millions on her stock options. Now she's **sitting pretty**.

sold out – completely sold

EXAMPLE 1: Becky was really disappointed when she found out that the Britney Spears concert was **sold out**.

EXAMPLE 2: Susan's cookies were very popular at the bake sale. In fact, they **sold out** in just 20 minutes!

(to) take off – to become popular; to grow suddenly

EXAMPLE: Julia Roberts' career **took off** with the film "Pretty Woman."

NOTE: "Take off" has several other meanings:

1. Remove. Please **take off** your shoes before coming inside our apartment. We just vacuumed this morning.
2. To leave. We're **taking off** now. See you later!
3. To deduct. The waiter forgot to bring us drinks, so he **took \$10 off** the bill.
4. To leave the ground. The airplane **took off** on time.

tall order – a task or goal that is difficult to achieve

EXAMPLE 1: It'll be a **tall order** to find a new governor as popular as the current one.

EXAMPLE 2: You want me to figure out how to clone your pet rabbit? That's a **tall order**!

PRACTICE THE IDIOMS

Choose the most appropriate reply to the following statements:

- 1) "Bob, your cookies are delicious. They're selling like hotcakes."

Bob's reply:

- a) "I'm not surprised. My family has always loved them."
- b) "What? I thought people would buy more."
- c) "Yes, they are best when served hot."

- 2) "Bob, I know you can get me 1,000 cookies by morning. Don't blow it!"

Bob's reply:

- a) "I never blow on the cookies. I let them cool down by themselves."
- b) "Don't worry. I'll be sure to get you the cookies by 9 a.m."
- c) "Thanks. I'll take my time then."

- 3) "Bob, I've got some great news for you. All of your chocolate chip cookies have sold out!"

Bob's reply:

- a) "Great. I'd better make more."
- b) "I guess people don't like them."
- c) "How many are left?"

- 4) "Ted, if you and Amber don't stop the chitchat, you'll never finish your homework."

Ted's reply:

- a) "Okay, we'll stay up all night talking."
- b) "Okay, we'll stop talking and start hitting the books."
- c) "Yes, Amber is helping a lot with my homework."

- 5) "Ted, ask Amber to come over right away to help bake cookies."

Ted's reply:

- a) "Okay. I'll tell her to come over next Saturday."
- b) "Okay. I'll tell her to come over immediately."
- c) "Okay. I'll ask her to go away."

- 6) "Bob, if you work hard now, you'll be sitting pretty in a couple of years."

Bob's reply:

- a) "Thank you. I am looking forward to feeling pretty."
- b) "I don't enjoy sitting for long periods of time."
- c) "Great. I'd love to be able to stop working and start relaxing more."

- 7) "Nicole, getting elected to the United States Senate is a very tall order."

Nicole's reply:

- a) "I know, but I love a good challenge."
- b) "I agree. It should be very easy."
- c) "I know. I've already put in my order."

- 8) "Bob, I suggest you burn the midnight oil and make 1,000 cookies tonight."

Bob's reply:

- a) "Okay. I'll go to sleep at midnight and wake up at 10 a.m."
- b) "Yes, we'll need quite a bit of oil for the cookies."
- c) "Okay. I'll work all night and finish up by morning."

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