ANSWER KEY WITH EXPLANATIONS

Business Expressions Vocabulary Test 1

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Explanations

1. I thought this time things were going to be better. Losing the contract was _____ to swallow.
✔ **C) a bitter pill**
A bitter pill to swallow is something unpleasant that you have to accept. The words **to swallow** after the gap complete this idiom. Example: **Losing my job was a bitter pill to swallow.**

2. We've lost the contract thanks to your incompetence. You really _____, didn't you?
✔ **E) blew it**
Blow it (past: **blew it**) is an informal way to say you lost a good chance by making a mistake. The gap needs a past-tense verb, and the question tag **didn't you?** confirms this. Example: **I had one chance to impress them and I blew it.**

3. I'd be better off stopping my legal job and doing jobs for cash. The _____ is the only way to make money these days.
✔ **D) black economy**
The **black economy** is work that people are paid for in cash and hide from the government, so they pay no tax. The clue is **doing jobs for cash** instead of a **legal job**.

4. The product didn't work in the States. As they say there, it really _____.
✔ **C) bombed**
In American English, if a product or show **bombed**, it failed completely. The clues are **didn't work** and **in the States**. Example: **The film bombed at the box office.**

5. However, the same product sold really well in England. As they say there, it _____.
✔ **E) went like a bomb**
In British English, **go like a bomb** means to be very successful or sell very well. This is the opposite of the American **bomb** (fail). The clues are **sold really well** and **in England**.

6. - He used to work on the factory floor.

- Yes, he really started out as a _____ worker.
✔ **A) blue-collar**
A **blue-collar** worker does physical work, for example in a factory. The clue is **the factory floor**. The opposite is a **white-collar** worker, who works in an office.

7. There are many reasons why this should be a success. However, the _____ is that it has been a big flop.
✔ **A) bottom line**
The bottom line is the most important fact or final result of a situation. Here, after all the reasons it should succeed, the real result is that it was a **flop** (a failure). Example: **The bottom line is that we need more money.**

8. Production has been unable to keep pace with demand. We are doing our best to eliminate the _____.
✔ **E) bottlenecks**
Bottlenecks are places or stages where work slows down and holds up the whole process. The clue is that production **can't keep pace with demand**. We usually **eliminate** or **remove bottlenecks**.

9. We'll have to start again on this one. It's time to go _____.
✔ **E) back to the drawing board**
Go back to the drawing board means to start planning something again from the beginning because the first plan failed. The clue is **We'll have to start again**.

10. Don't leave out any details. I want a full _____ account of what happened in the meeting.
✔ **A) blow-by-blow**
A **blow-by-blow** account describes every detail of an event in the order it happened. The clue is **Don't leave out any details**. It is an adjective, so it fits before the noun **account**.

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