ANSWER KEY WITH EXPLANATIONS

Softening and Strengthening Adverbs Quiz: Slightly, Utterly

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1	**A**	2	**A**	3	**B**	4	**C**	5	**A**	6	**D**	7	**B**	8	**C**	9	**A**	10	**B**
11	**C**	12	**D**	13	**B**	14	**C**	15	**D**										

Explanations

1. The second draft is ___ better than the first, but it still needs work.
✔ **A) slightly**
Slightly softens comparatives: slightly better, slightly worse. The other adverbs don't go with better.

2. In a formal letter: "We were ___ surprised by your decision to close the branch."
✔ **A) somewhat**
Somewhat means a little, in a careful, formal way. Dead is very informal.

3. Unemployment is ___ higher than last month: 4.1% instead of 4.0%.
✔ **B) marginally**
Marginally higher means higher by a tiny amount, as here.

4. My joke didn't get a laugh; the boss just looked ___ amused.
✔ **C) mildly**
Mildly amused means you find something a little funny: a small smile, no laugh.

5. My uncle's tie was ___ ridiculous, nothing too bad, but his plan to drive to Australia was ___ ridiculous.
✔ **A) faintly … utterly**
Faintly ridiculous is a little silly; utterly ridiculous is completely silly. Both need the -ly adverb.

6. The restaurant is lovely, if ___ expensive.
✔ **D) a touch**
A touch expensive means a little too expensive. It is a gentle, informal British complaint.

7. Compared with other European capitals, Budapest is ___ cheap.
✔ **B) relatively**
Relatively cheap means cheap when you compare it with similar places.

8. To be honest, I'm ___ that this is a good idea.
✔ **C) not entirely sure**
Not entirely sure is a polite way to say you have doubts. Not comes first.

9. The newspaper's figure was ___ inaccurate: 10,000 instead of 1,000.
✔ **A) wildly**
Wildly inaccurate means very far from the truth. The other three make the mistake sound small.

10. After the cleaners left, the flat was ___ clean.
✔ **B) spotlessly**
Before an adjective you need the adverb: spotlessly clean. Spotless alone is also fine: the flat was spotless.

11. The manager made it ___ clear that nobody could leave early.
✔ **C) abundantly**
Make it abundantly clear means say something so clearly that nobody can misunderstand.

12. The tourists sunbathed, ___ that a storm was coming.
✔ **D) blissfully unaware**
Blissfully unaware means happy only because you don't know about a problem.

13. As the youngest person in the meeting, Tom was ___ aware that everyone else was older.
✔ **B) acutely**
Acutely aware means you feel something sharply, often with embarrassment.

14. All the streets looked ___ similar, and soon we were ___ lost.
✔ **C) strikingly … hopelessly**
Strikingly similar means so alike that you notice at once. Hopelessly lost means you have no idea where you are.

15. My grandmother is ___ independent: she says the bus app is ___ easy and refuses lifts.
✔ **D) fiercely … dead**
Fiercely independent means you want to do everything yourself. Dead easy is informal British for very easy.

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