ANSWER KEY WITH EXPLANATIONS

Speak Business English Like an American Lesson 10 Idioms and Expressions Test

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1	C	2	A	3	A	4	B	5	C	6	B	7	A	8	C				

Explanations

1. **Choose the best substitute for the phrase or sentence in bold:**

Our president gave everybody business card holders for Christmas. **I need another business card holder like a hole in the head**.
✓ C) I really don't need another business card holder.
I need (something) like a hole in the head is a humorous, sarcastic idiom. It means you do not want or need that thing at all. The speaker already has a business card holder, so another one is useless. Not **I'm happy to get another one**, because the idiom always shows that something is unwanted.

2. Installing that new computer software was **child's play** for Mark. He's got a PhD in computer science.
✓ A) very easy
Child's play means something very easy to do, as easy as a game for a child. The clue is that Mark has a PhD in computer science, so installing software is simple for him. Example: **For her, fixing the website was child's play.**

3. I agree with you that we may not be successful entering the market in China, but **nothing ventured, nothing gained**.
✓ A) we should take a risk and enter the Chinese market
Nothing ventured, nothing gained means you cannot achieve anything if you never take a risk. The speaker admits they may fail but still wants to try, so they should take a risk and enter the Chinese market. Not **we'll definitely succeed**, because the speaker has just said success is not certain.

4. If you can't figure out how to fix the jammed printer, let Adam **take a crack at it**.
✓ B) try to fix it
Take a crack at something is an informal idiom meaning to try to do something, often for the first time. Here it means let Adam try to fix the printer. Not **fix the crack in it**, because **crack** in this idiom has nothing to do with a broken surface.

5. The company **kicked off** the new fiscal year by announcing several exciting new products.
✓ C) began
Kick off means to begin or start something, like the kick that starts a football game. The company began the new fiscal year with an announcement. Example: **We kicked off the meeting with a short presentation.**

6. It won't be easy, but if you **put your mind to it**, you can study for your law degree while also working full-time.
✓ B) work hard at it
Put your mind to it means to focus all your attention and effort on something you want to achieve. The sentence says it won't be easy, but with hard work you can study and work at the same time. Not **think about it**, because the idiom means real effort and determination, not just thinking.

7. Sorry I couldn't get you the financial reports by Friday. I **gave it my best shot**, but I just couldn't finish on time.
✓ A) tried as hard as I could
Give it your best shot means to try as hard as you can. The speaker made a real effort but still couldn't finish the reports on time. Not **made a little effort**, because **best** shows the strongest possible effort.

8. If you want to work for IBM, call my cousin Alan. He's a **bigwig** there.
✓ C) senior executive
Bigwig is an informal word for an important, powerful person in an organization, such as a senior executive. That is why Alan could help you get a job at IBM. Example: **All the company bigwigs came to the annual meeting.**

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