ANSWER KEY WITH EXPLANATIONS

Speak Business English Like an American Lesson 20 Idioms and Expressions Test

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

Explanations

1. **Choose the most appropriate response to the following:**

We'd better be careful what we say in the office.
✓ **A) That's right. The walls have ears.**
The walls have ears means someone may be listening secretly, so be careful what you say. It matches the idea of being careful in the office. **Likely story!** and **I wasn't born yesterday** both mean 'I don't believe you', which doesn't fit here.

2. Josh, we're going to have to ask you to take a 40 percent pay cut. But next year, I promise we'll triple your salary.
✓ **C) That's hard to believe. I wasn't born yesterday!**
The promise to triple Josh's salary sounds too good to be true. **I wasn't born yesterday** means 'I'm not naive; I won't believe that easily.' Not **Chill out**, because Josh isn't too excited; he doesn't believe the offer.

3. Megan is constantly flattering her boss and offering to do favors for him.
✓ **C) That's one way to climb the corporate ladder.**
To **climb the corporate ladder** means to move up to better jobs in a company. Flattering the boss is one (not very nice) way to try to do this. Not **butter him up instead**, because flattering and doing favors already is buttering him up.

4. I'm giving a presentation to our CEO in half an hour. I'm so nervous!
✓ **B) Chill out!**
Chill out! is an informal way to say 'relax, calm down'. It is a natural reply to someone who feels nervous. **Likely story** means 'I don't believe you', so it doesn't fit.

5. I spent three hours helping Bob with his financial projections, and he didn't even say thank you.
✓ **B) I'm sure you'll think twice before helping him again.**
To **think twice** means to consider something carefully before doing it again. After Bob didn't thank the speaker, they will probably be careful before helping him again. Not **climb the corporate ladder**, because nothing suggests Bob was trying to get promoted.

6. Maria works at least 60 hours a week at the law firm and always volunteers for extra work. She's an excellent employee.
✓ **A) She'll definitely get ahead.**
To **get ahead** means to be successful and make progress in your career. Maria works very hard, so she will surely succeed. **It's a dog-eat-dog world** describes fierce, unfriendly competition, which isn't the point here.

7. Paul was arrested for stealing millions of dollars from his company.
✓ **C) I don't know how he can look at himself in the mirror.**
If you can't **look at yourself in the mirror**, you feel ashamed of what you have done. The reply means 'I don't know how he isn't ashamed of stealing.' A **yes man** just agrees with the boss all the time, which has nothing to do with stealing.

8. You're the best boss I've ever had and definitely the smartest!
✓ **B) Are you trying to butter me up?**
To **butter someone up** means to flatter them, often because you want something from them. Strong praise like this can make a boss ask **Are you trying to butter me up?** Not **out for yourself**, which means caring only about your own interests, not praising someone.

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