ANSWER KEY WITH EXPLANATIONS

Speak Business English Like an American Review for Lessons 6-10 Idioms and Expressions Test

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Explanations

1. We're not happy with our accounting firm. All of the mistakes they made with our taxes cost us a pretty _____.
✔ **B) penny**
The idiom **cost a pretty penny** means to cost a lot of money. Example: **That new car must have cost a pretty penny. Nickel** and **dollar** are not used in this fixed expression.

2. If the pharmaceutical company's new product is not approved by the Food and Drug Administration, they're going to be _____ deep trouble.
✔ **C) in**
The idiom is **in deep trouble**, meaning in a very serious or difficult situation. We are always **in** trouble, never **on** or **with** trouble.

3. Sales will probably be slow after the holidays. Let's think of a way to _____ up some business.
✔ **C) drum**
To **drum up business** means to work actively to get more customers or sales. Example: **We sent out flyers to drum up some business. Break up** means to end or separate, which does not fit.

4. Olivia is _____ two minds about quitting her job and starting her own business. On the one hand, it will be more exciting. On the other hand, she's afraid of taking a risk.
✔ **A) of**
To be **of two minds** about something (American English) means to be unable to decide. The clue is **On the one hand... On the other hand...**, which shows she can't decide. British English often says **in two minds**.

5. In the months following Google's initial public offering, the stock price went _____ the roof.
✔ **C) through**
To **go through the roof** means to rise very high, very quickly, for example prices or sales. Example: **Gas prices went through the roof last summer.** Not **up the roof**, because the idiom always uses **through**.

6. Your business has grown too large to run out of your home. You're going to need to _____ the bullet and rent some office space.
✔ **B) bite**
To **bite the bullet** means to finally do something difficult or unpleasant that you have been avoiding. Here, renting office space is a costly but necessary step. **Take a bullet** means to be shot, or to suffer harm for someone else, so it does not fit.

7. Our CEO kicked _____ the company holiday party by warning people not to drink too much champagne.
✔ **A) off**
To **kick off** an event means to start it. Example: **The mayor kicked off the festival with a short speech. Kick in** means to start having an effect (e.g. a medicine), not to begin an event.

8. If you want to bring some _____ blood into the company, put an advertisement on Monster.com or another online job search site.
✔ **C) new**
New blood means new people, especially young or fresh employees, who bring new ideas to an organization. The clue is the job advertisement. **Red blood** is just a literal description and is not an idiom here.

9. Jerry doesn't understand what's going on in the marketplace today. He's _____ touch with reality.
✔ **A) out of**
To be **out of touch with** reality means not to understand or know about what is happening now. The clue is **doesn't understand what's going on**. **Close to** and **far from** do not combine with **touch**.

10. Don't mince _____. Tell Heather what you really think about her performance.
✔ **A) words**
Don't mince words means say exactly what you think, directly, even if it is unpleasant. The next sentence, **Tell Heather what you really think**, is the clue. The idiom always uses **words**.

11. Irene wasn't sure she'd be able to prepare the financial reports by tomorrow's meeting, but she promised to _____ a crack at it.
✔ **B) take**
To **take a crack at** something means to try to do it, especially something difficult. Example: **I've never fixed a bike, but I'll take a crack at it.** Not **make a crack**, which means to make a joke or rude remark.

12. Ben pulled out all the _____ to ensure that his business partner from Chile enjoyed his visit to the United States.
✔ **B) stops**
To **pull out all the stops** means to make every possible effort to make something succeed. Example: **They pulled out all the stops for their daughter's wedding. Pull out all the tricks** is not an English idiom.

13. We've got a lot of employees just sitting around and playing Solitaire on their computers all day. It's time to _____ house.
✔ B) clean
In business, to **clean house** means to get rid of unwanted employees or practices in an organization. The clue is employees **playing Solitaire all day**. **Wash house** and **empty house** are not idioms.

14. If we don't roll _____ our sleeves and get started on this project, we're going to miss our deadline.
✔ C) up
To **roll up your sleeves** means to get ready to work hard. Example: **Let's roll up our sleeves and finish this report. Roll down** is the literal opposite and has no idiomatic meaning here.

15. Apple is a very innovative company. They're always dreaming _____ interesting new products.
✔ B) up
To **dream up** something means to invent or think of a new idea, often a creative one. The clue is **very innovative company**. Example: **She dreamed up a new way to package the product.**

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