

Common Business Idioms

A. Look at the following idioms and decide if you know what they mean. Try and connect the meaning with the explanation given.

Idiom:

What it means:

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| 1. 24/7 | a. Means at risk. |
| 2. A tough break | b. Means to start something over again. |
| 3. Ahead of the curve | c. When something unfortunate happens. |
| 4. ASAP | d. Means to start something over again, and go back to the planning stage of something. |
| 5. At stake | e. An agreement or decision that is made without the public knowing about it. |
| 6. Back to square one | f. A very inexact estimate. |
| 7. Back to the drawing board | g. Means to be more advanced than the competition. |
| 8. Backroom deal | h. Means to be better or more successful than the competition. |
| 9. Ballpark number / figure | i. An acronym for "as soon as possible." |
| 10. Ahead of the pack / game | j. Means 24 hours a day, seven days a week. |

B. Now look at the following sentences and use the correct idiom in the right place.

- a. I'm not sure what a Super Bowl commercial costs, but to give you a _____, I'd say about three million dollars.
- b. It was a _____ for us when Caroline quit. She was one of our top performers.
- c. I think they got the government contract because of a _____.
- d. The convenience store on the corner is open _____.
- e. I'm a little nervous about giving this presentation. There's a lot _____.

- f. Our programmers identified what they thought the problem was with the software, but it turns out to be something totally different, so we'll have to go _____.
- g. The prototype wasn't successful. We have to go _____.
- h. If we want to stay _____, we're going to have to work really hard and continue to innovate.
- i. We're investing a lot of money in research and development so we can stay _____.
- j. I need to finish these reports. My boss needs them _____.