

Keith **Speaking** Academy

Live Lesson Notes

Idioms

IDIOMS to talk about WORK



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Idioms dictionary online

<https://www.theidioms.com/>

English Idioms Online Youtube Channel full of useful idioms

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC1HH5tChfG8wfFr3tpqzBEQ/playlists>

List of 2,000 Useful **Idioms**

<https://phrases.org.uk>

British National Corpora - great to check idioms and get examples

<https://www.english-corpora.org/bnc/>

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Introducing Idioms and Idiomatic expressions

Idioms are **fixed** phrases whose meaning is **different** from the individual words

E.G.

Yesterday, I was talking to Jane and I decided **to spill the beans** about my new job.

(=to reveal a secret)

We use them to

get attention (especially news, blogs, articles...),

for **humour**

for **emphasis**

to add **colour**

Often idioms have a connotation = so be careful, try to learn the connotation

Idioms dictionary online

<https://www.theidioms.com/>

Idiomatic expressions

Idiomatic expressions make up a much wider group of expressions that include idioms, but also include some phrasal verbs and set phrases.

Some Phrasal verbs

Pack something in
= to stop doing something

I am going to **pack in** my job.

Cut down on
= to reduce (usually something you see as bad, eg. smoking)

I need to **cut down on** the time I spend in meetings

Spoken chunks

By the way (used to give extra information)

At a pinch
= if absolutely necessary

Idioms to talk about work

These are the idioms and idiomatic expressions found in the **video** in today' live lesson.

I've been **working like a dog**
= *working hard*

She had **a stinker of a day**
= *a terrible day*

This job is (way) **above her pay grade**
= *a job that someone more senior should do*

Her boss **went up the wall**
= *he was angry, he saw red, he flew of the handle*

He **came down on her like a ton of bricks**
= *to be strict on s.o. / punish them*

If she **gets over this bump in the road**, she'll be fine.
= *to overcome a problem*

If she **plays her cards right**, (*do the right thing*) she will **be up for** (*eligible, recommend her for*) a promotion

We work 9 to 5, we are **stuck in the rat race**
= *stuck in a boring routine*

We try our best to **climb the corporate ladder**
= *To move up in the company*

You need time to **find your feet** (=learn how to do new things) and to **learn the ropes**

You **get a golden handshake** (= *bonus when you retire*)

I am going to **pack it all in** and **throw in the towel** (=give up, quit)

He could **sell snow to the Eskimos**
= *he is very good at sales*

What do you like and dislike about your job?

My job has a number of **fringe benefits** (=non-financial benefits, e.g. free lunch, gym membership)

I have got **flexible working hours**

It's **challenging** but **rewarding** as well

There is too much **red tape** (=bureaucracy/ too many rules)

I always have to **burn the midnight oil** to meet all my deadlines.
= *work late into the night*

It's a **cushy number**
= *an easy job*

I **have a lot on my plate** these days
= *I am busy / things are hectic / I am snowed under*

I have hit a **glass ceiling**
= *I can go no higher in the company - no chance for promotion*

I was easy to get a **foot in the door**
= *to get an opportunity to enter...*

My boss is a **slave driver**
= *makes me work very hard*

I really **have my work cut out**
= *I have a difficult job to do*

I took a **busman's holiday**
= *I took holiday but I actually worked on holiday*

He is a **mover and shaker**
= *He is an important and well-connected person in the company*

She has a **good track record**
= *She has a good work history*

Model Answers

Q1. DESCRIBE YOUR REGULAR WORKING DAY.

A1. So, I get up at the same time most days. I have **a bit of** a routine that I like to follow **everyday**.

I like to go walking in the morning and then **I will come back home** and have a **hearty breakfast** to have lots of energy for the day.

I work from home, so it's **quite straight forward** for me.

I don't have to commute and can control my work time quite easily but **I tend to** do the same thing day after day.

Q2. Are you the main bread-winner? If so, how do you feel about it?

A2. Yes, I am the main bread winner in my family, although my wife does work, she works part-time, and I **bring home the bacon, by and large**, most months.

I am absolutely comfortable with that. I think, **a relationship is a balance** where both the husband and the wife, or both partners, have to **find a comfortable balance** where they both **contribute to the well-being** of the family.

There are things **beyond finance**. There are other things to take care of, like looking after the house, educating the children, bringing up a **happy family environment**.

So, I think both have to make equal contributions. I **am a big one for making a contribution** at home, whether that's washing the pots, tidying the house little bit, but we like to share responsibilities.

So, I think it's a shared responsibility issue.

Q3. What you want to change about your job?

A3. Well, as you may know, I am an online teacher so I spend **quite a bit of time** teaching and I also **dedicate quite a bit of time** to making videos and teaching online.

I really enjoy my job you know, its something that makes me happy, I am really engaged in my day to day work.

If there were one thing I could change, I think that one thing **might be**, I **would like to** rent or buy a space, better equipped for video recording.

At the moment, I **work form home** so as you can see, I have to record in our bedrooms and it's not the most professional or best quality and I would really like to **take the opportunity** to rent a place the has **better facilities** and **amenities** for **that aspect of my work**.

More Idioms from students about work

I like to **put my feet up** after work
= *to relax*

I need to **think on my feet** in my job
= *to think quickly and improvise*

I was going to volunteer to give the speech but then I **got cold feet**,
and decided not to do it.
= *got nervous*

Michael annoys me, he is always **dragging his feet** at work
= *working too slowly*

She has been here for a year now, she needs **to stand on her own feet**
= *be independent and look after herself*

I **put my foot in it** yesterday when I told me boss that nobody really
listens to him.
= *made a mistake / said an embarrassing thing*

I don't worry too much about small mistakes, I believe **every dog has
its day**
= *Everyone will be successful sometime*

I took a day off work yesterday, I was **as sick as a dog**
= *extremely sick / ill*

He **was in the dog house** with his boss after messing up the whole
project
= *his boss was angry with him*

Let's talk about a company you like

It **does a roaring trade**

= *to sell a lot*

It might **go belly up**

= *to go wrong, go bankrupt (lose all money)*

= *They **went bust***

This company has **gone to the dogs**

= *The quality of its work has dropped*

They wanted to dominate the China market and they have **pulled it off**

= *to be successful*

Their products **sell like hotcakes**

= *sell very well.*