

TRAFFIC PHRASES IN BUSINESS ENGLISH

In some of the previous lessons we looked at some phrases and idioms related to sport and war that are also used in business English in their metaphorical sense. In this lesson we shall focus on some phrases or words normally encountered in the context of traffic that are used in different business contexts.

A. For starters, try to complete sentences a to e with one of the traffic phrases that you will find in italics in sentences 1 to 5.

- The collision occurred as his car, which was *in the slow lane*, was passing on the truck's right.
- The timing of the light was changed so that more cars can make it through *the green light*.
- How important is the *mileage* on a used car?
- I saw the car *grind to a halt* right in the middle of the road.
- He was charged with *making a U-turn* on a motorway.

- The government has given _____ to Sunday trading.
- If we don't do something soon, the industry could _____.
- Critics accused the prime minister of _____ on his promise to increase education spending.
- The country is expected to remain _____ of economic recovery.
- The newspapers wanted to get as much _____ from the story as they could.

Key: 1d, 2a, 3e, 4b, 5c

B. Complete the following pairs of definitions with one of the phrases or words that you used in the previous exercise: *green light, mileage, slow lane, U-turn, grinds to a halt*

- Traffic: _____ is the part of a large road where vehicles drive more slowly than the other vehicles on the road.
Business: If a company or an organization is in the _____, it is less successful than others.
- Traffic: _____ is a traffic light that shows cars they can go forward.
Business: If you give the _____ to something it means you give permission for someone to do something.

- Traffic: _____ is a turn made by a vehicle in order to go back in the direction from which it has come.
Business: Make a _____ is a disapproving phrase meaning a complete change from one opinion or plan of action to an opposite one.
- Traffic: If a vehicle _____ it means that it stops moving or continuing.
Business: If an activity _____ it means that it stops operating.
- Traffic: _____ is the total number of miles that a motor vehicle has travelled.
Business: _____ is the amount of use or advantage that you get from something.

Key: 1. slow lane, 2. green light, 3. U-turn, 4. grinds to a halt, 5. mileage

C. Complete the following pairs of sentences with one of the following phrases or words: *in gear, fast lane, U-turn, slow lane, collision*

- Traffic: There is a reduction in mean speed in the _____ from 99 km/h to 74 km/h.
Business: According to the IMF, global economy is emerging - with developing countries doing well, the US on the mend, and Europe stuck in the _____.
- Traffic: A driver was severely injured in a head-on _____ between a car and a taxi yesterday afternoon.
Business: Giving a big authority to two people dealing with the same thing will cause _____ of opinions.
- Traffic: Going slow in the _____ is worse because drivers usually assume that vehicles in the fast lane are at least doing the speed limit.
Business: Their purchase of the company put them in the _____ of the mobile phone industry.
- Traffic: The car should be _____ and clutch engaged at all times when driving.
Business: I've got to get my brain _____ for the meeting this afternoon.
- Traffic: I made a _____ and quickly drove back to the restaurant.
Business: He was forced into another humiliating _____ today - this time on the charity tax.

Key: 1. slow lane, 2. collision, 3. fast lane, 4. in gear, 5. U-turn



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