

# MUSIC IDIOMS

While some students of English may think that business English focuses on only technical and business terms and once you master the jargon (that is, know by heart a list of key words or phrases), you will use business English fluently and easily, the truth of the matter is that business English is so rich with idioms, colloquialisms, slang, neologisms, acronyms and abbreviations that a non-native speaker might feel confused, if not frustrated with the inability to always comprehend English used in the working environment by native speakers.

In some of the previous lessons you saw examples of sports idioms, war idioms and colour idioms used in the business context. This lesson will focus on music idioms. Have fun doing the exercises and hopefully, one day you will be able to show off your English when talking business.

**A. In the left-hand column you will find some music idioms. Match them with their definitions in the right-hand column.**

1. to call the tune	a. not to speculate about something until it is completed
2. it's not over until the fat lady sings	b. to do something without much preparation
3. to face the music	c. to buy or sell something at a very cheap price
4. change one's tune	d. to follow one's own ideas rather than being influenced by others
5. fine tuning	e. to accept the consequences of doing something wrong
6. to play by ear	f. to do everything one possibly can to achieve the result one wants
7. to pull out all the stops	g. to change one's ideas or the way one talks about them
8. to march to a different drummer	h. to make an important decision
9. to fiddle while Rome burns	i. to be busy doing unimportant things when one should be dealing with an important problem
10. for a song	j. small adjustments to improve something or to get it working

Key: 1h, 2a, 3e, 4g, 5j, 6b, 7f, 8d, 9i, 10c

**B. In the following exercise choose the music idiom which best completes each sentence.**

- Even if the campaign was a success, let's wait for the real figures because \_\_\_\_\_.
  - this is music to our ears
  - it's ringing a bell
  - it's not over until the fat lady sings
- I haven't had time to prepare for the meeting so I'll have to \_\_\_\_\_.
  - play by ear
  - be out of tune
  - be fit as a fiddle
- Banks \_\_\_\_\_ at debt-laden retailer HMV.
  - blow the horn
  - call the tune
  - ring a bell
- We thought we were getting the sofa \_\_\_\_\_ but we found out it had a stain. That's why its price was 50% off.
  - in tune
  - for a song
  - clear as a bell

- Keeping interest rate low on government debt is allowing us to not \_\_\_\_\_.
  - face the music
  - fiddle while Rome burns
  - hit the right note
- Shareholders of companies \_\_\_\_\_ than the concepts of sustainable development.
  - are marching to a different drummer
  - are blowing the whistle
  - are changing their tune
- After suggesting that he would retire once his contract expires, he suddenly \_\_\_\_\_.
  - blew the whistle
  - changed his tune
  - played second fiddle
- Environmentalists claim that the government \_\_\_\_\_.
  - is clear as a bell
  - is fit as a fiddle
  - is fiddling while Rome burns
- The County Mayor said any changes left to the budget at this point will just be some \_\_\_\_\_.
  - fine tuning
  - whistling in the dark
  - music to our ears
- Retailers will need \_\_\_\_\_ to make up for business lost to Hurricane Sandy.
  - to play second fiddle
  - to unring a bell
  - to pull out all the stops

Key: 1c, 2a, 3b, 4b, 5a, 6a, 7b, 8c, 9a, 10c

**C. Complete the sentences with one of the following music idioms: *clear as a bell, music to my ears, can't unring a bell, whistling in the dark, whistle for it, blowing his own trumpet, play second fiddle, out of tune, hit the right note, all that jazz.***

- The news of her resignation was \_\_\_\_\_. I didn't like working with her.
- In this economy, an intern in need of permanent employment may as well \_\_\_\_\_.
- Internal communications can sometimes \_\_\_\_\_ to a company's external marketing activity.
- The seminar \_\_\_\_\_ presenting energy efficiency innovations alongside high profile case studies.
- A lot of technical focus at the conference was on energy harvesting, but the business strategy was \_\_\_\_\_.
- The Prime Minister is now \_\_\_\_\_ for preventing the country joining the global slide into recession.
- I know it's all about team building and \_\_\_\_\_ but I'm sure we could have all had a great time at a Christmas party.
- Hardware was being built, and although we were \_\_\_\_\_, the technology worked in the end.
- Accountants can highlight areas where costs might be saved, and that should help in future, but unfortunately it \_\_\_\_\_.
- The new guide is \_\_\_\_\_ with current realities in the market and some provisions and terms allow room for ambiguity and conflict.

Key: 1. music to my ears, 2. whistle for it, 3. play second fiddle, 4. all that jazz, 5. clear as a bell, 6. blowing his own trumpet, 7. hit the right note, 8. whistling in the dark, 9. can't unring a bell, 10. out of tune

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za **individualnu**  
**nastavu** do  
31. kolovoza: cijena  
po satu **samo 119 kn!**