

# SPORTS IDIOMS IN BUSINESS ENGLISH

Sports idioms normally come from specific sports, such as football, sailing, tennis, baseball, etc. Nowadays they are frequently used in business contexts since they are very picturesque in their meaning, and as such add visual and/or audio images to certain situations. Once you go through the following examples and exercises, use these idioms in your everyday life and sound like a pro when doing business.

**I Match the following sports idioms on the left with their meanings on the right.**

- |                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| a) <b>hold all the aces</b>         | 1 ready and able   |
| b) <b>skate on thin ice</b>         | 2 equal for everyone                                       |
| c) <b>across the board</b>          | 3 an easy victory  |
| d) <b>the ball is in your court</b> | 4 expected to win or succeed                               |
| e) <b>learn the ropes</b>           | 5 a break  |
| f) <b>on the ball</b>               | 6 do something risky, take a chance                        |
| g) <b>time out</b>                  | 7 give up  |
| h) <b>win hands down</b>            | 8 understand new things                                    |
| i) <b>under the table</b>           | 9 it's your decision or responsibility to do something now |
| j) <b>throw in the towel</b>        | 10 illegally   |

Key: a4, b6, c2, d9, e8, f1, g5, h3, i10, j7

**II Choose the correct expression from the list and complete the gaps.**

call the shots   not up to par   a head start   win hands down  
in your court   a fair shake   got off the hook  
take the bull by the horns

- a) You should give Jack \_\_\_\_\_ before you decide he isn't good enough for the job.  
b) We're afraid your work experience is \_\_\_\_\_ for this engineering position.  
c) Maria \_\_\_\_\_ for stealing because the security camera was broken.  
d) If I get \_\_\_\_\_, I'll beat the afternoon traffic.

- e) While our boss is on vacation, Ms Parker will \_\_\_\_\_.  
f) Even though this new job means relocating, I think you should \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ once.  
g) Our opponents will \_\_\_\_\_ because they have better players than us.  
h) Now that you have all the data, the ball is \_\_\_\_\_ - you need to decide what to do next.

Key: a) a fair shake, b) not up to par, c) got off the hook, d) a head start, e) call the shots, f) take the bull by the horns, g) win hands down, h) in your court

**III Choose the idiom which best completes each sentence:**

- 1) No one makes better cars than Ferrari. I think they are \_\_\_\_.
- a) **a level playing field**  
b) **a two horse race**  
c) **in a league of their own**
- 2) It is a \_\_\_\_\_ between Microsoft and Mac in the computer world.
- a) **hit the ball out of the park**  
b) **two horse race**  
c) **approach the finishing line**
- 3) Apple \_\_\_\_\_ by always thinking of new exciting products.
- a) **stay ahead of the game**  
b) **score an own goal**  
c) **are plain sailing**
- 4) This was a great presentation, Susan. You really \_\_\_\_.
- a) **hit it out of the park**  
b) **dropped the ball**  
c) **approached the finishing line**
- 5) The government have \_\_\_\_\_ by introducing new laws, making it fairer for all businesses.
- a) **staying ahead of the game**  
b) **levelled the playing field**  
c) **dropped the ball**
- 6) The bank \_\_\_\_\_ by introducing unpopular charges. They lost a lot of customers.
- a) **were on the ropes**  
b) **were on the ball**  
c) **scored an own goal**

Key: 1) c, 2) b, 3) a, 4) a, 5) b, 6) c



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Za individualnu nastavu koja se održava tijekom dana (do 15h) u prostorijama Vaše tvrtke posebna cijena: **120,00kn/h\*!**

Akcija vrijedi za sve pravne osobe koje ugovore tečaj do 31. siječnja 2013.

\*cijena ne uključuje PDV i vrijedi za ugovorene tečajeve u Vašem uredu

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