

Lesson 1

BOB'S DAY AT WORK

Bob works as a manager in a furniture store. Peter, his boss, is not happy about sales. Bob's new advertising campaign hasn't helped. Peter decides to fire him.

Bob trabaja de encargado en una tienda de muebles. Peter, su jefe, no está satisfecho con las ventas. La nueva campaña publicitaria de Bob no ha ayudado. Peter decide despedirlo.

Peter: Bob, I hate to **break the news**, but our sales were down again last month.

Bob: Down again, Peter?

Peter: Yeah. These days, everybody's shopping at our competition, Honest Abe's Furniture Store.

Bob: But everything in there **costs an arm and a leg!**

Peter: That's true. They do charge **top dollar**.

Bob: And their salespeople are very strange. They really **give me the creeps!**

Peter: Well, they must be doing something right over there. Meanwhile, we're **about to go belly-up**.

Bob: I'm sorry to hear that. I thought my new advertising campaign would **save the day**.

Peter: **Let's face it:** your advertising campaign was a **real flop**.

Bob: Well then I'll **go back to the drawing board**.

Peter: It's too late for that. You're fired!

Bob: What? You're **giving me the ax?**

Peter: Yes. I've already found a new manager. She's as **sharp as a tack**.

Bob: Can't we even **talk this over?** **After all**, I've been working here for 10 years!

Peter: There's **no point in** arguing, Bob. I've already **made up my mind**.

Bob: Oh well, **at least** I won't have to **put up with** your nonsense anymore! Good-bye to you and good-bye to this **dead-end job**.

Peter: Please leave before I **lose my temper!**



IDIOMS – LESSON 1

about to – ready to; on the verge of
a punto de, listo para

EXAMPLE: It's a good thing Bob left the furniture store when he did. Peter was so angry, he was **about to** throw a dining room chair at him.

after all – despite everything; when everything has been considered
después de todo, a pesar de todo

EXAMPLE: You'd better invite Ed to your party. **After all**, he's a good friend.

at least – anyway
por lo menos

EXAMPLE: We've run out of coffee, but **at least** we still have tea.

NOTA: La segunda definición de esta frase es "no menos de": There were **at least** 300 people waiting in line to buy concert tickets.

(to) break the news – to make something known

dar la noticia

EXAMPLE: Samantha and Miguel are getting married, but they haven't yet **broken the news** to their parents.

(to) cost an arm and a leg – to be very expensive

costar mucho, costar un ojo de la cara

EXAMPLE: A college education in America **costs an arm and a leg**.

SYNONYMS: to cost a small fortune; to cost a pretty penny

dead-end job – a job that won't lead to anything else

trabajo sin perspectivas de futuro, trabajo sin futuro

EXAMPLE: Diane realized that working as a cashier was a **dead-end job**.

(let's) face it – accept a difficult reality

aceptar algo difícil, asumirlo

EXAMPLE: **Let's face it**, if Ted spent more time studying, he wouldn't be failing so many of his classes!

(to) give one the creeps – to stir in someone a feeling of disgust or horror

darle repugnancia

EXAMPLE: Ted's friend Matt has seven earrings in each ear and an "I Love Mom" tattoo on his arm. He really **gives Nicole the creeps**.

(to) go back to the drawing board – to start a task over because the last try failed; to start again from the beginning

volver a empezar desde el principio

EXAMPLE: Nobody liked the architect's plan for the house, so he had to **go back to the drawing board**.

(to) go belly-up – to go bankrupt

quedar en bancarrota

EXAMPLE: Many people lost their jobs when Enron **went belly-up**.

(to) give someone the ax – to fire someone

despedir

EXAMPLE: Mary used to talk to her friends on the phone all day, until one day her boss finally **gave her the ax**.

SYNONYMS: to send someone packing; to can someone; to let someone go

(to) lose one's temper – to become very angry

perder la paciencia

EXAMPLE: Bob always **loses his temper** when his kids start talking on the telephone during dinner.

SYNONYMS: to hit the roof; to blow one's top; to blow a fuse

(to) make up one's mind – to reach a decision

decidirse

EXAMPLE: Stephanie couldn't **make up her mind** whether to attend Harvard or Stanford. Finally, she chose Stanford.

no point in – no reason to; it's not worth (doing something)

no hay motivo para, no vale la pena

EXAMPLE: There's **no point in** worrying about things you can't change.

(to) put up with – to endure without complaint

soportar, aguantar

EXAMPLE: For many years, Barbara **put up with** her husband's annoying and obnoxious behavior. Finally, she decided to leave him.

real flop or flop – a failure

fiasco, fracaso

EXAMPLE: The Broadway play closed after just 10 days – it was a **real flop!**

(to) save the day – to prevent a disaster

impedir un desastre

EXAMPLE: The Christmas tree was on fire, but Ted threw water on it and **saved the day**.

(as) sharp as a tack – very intelligent

muy perspicaz, muy inteligente

EXAMPLE: Jay scored 100% on his science test. He's as **sharp as a tack**.

(to) talk over – to discuss

discutir, hablar de

EXAMPLE: David and I spent hours **talking over** the details of the plan.

top dollar – the highest end of a price range; a lot of money

mucho dinero

EXAMPLE: Nicole paid **top dollar** for a pair of jeans at Banana Republic.

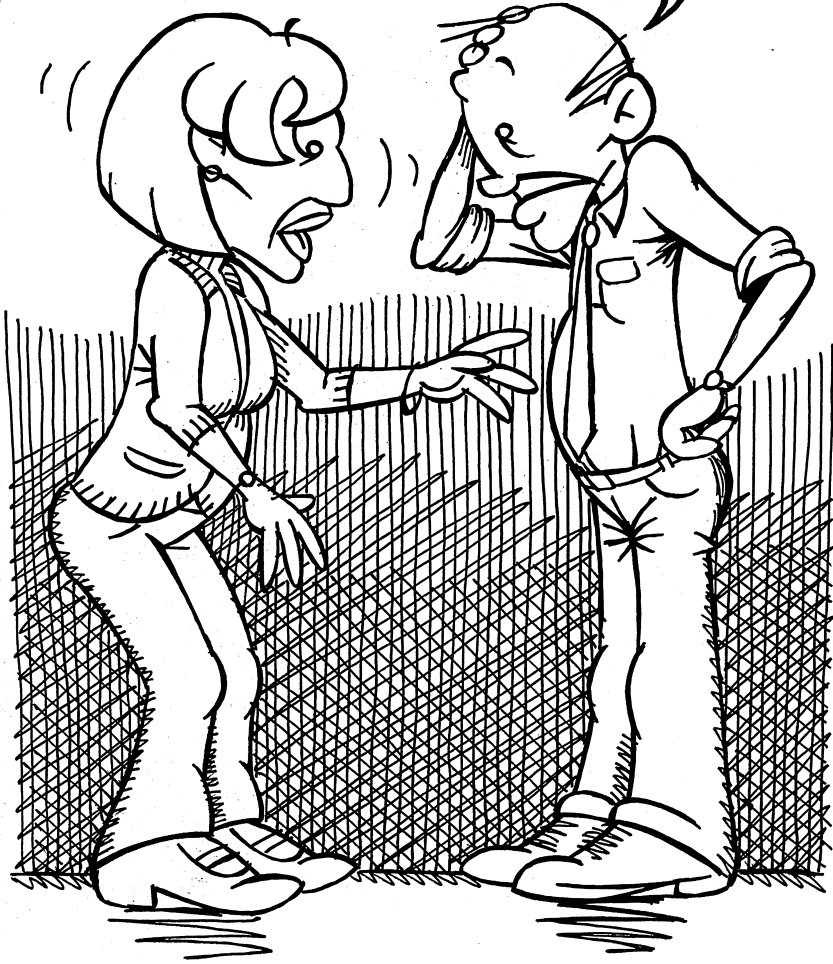
 **PRACTICE THE IDIOMS**

Fill in the blank with the missing word:

- 1) I can't believe you bought a couch at Honest Abe's. Everything in that store costs an arm and a _____.
a) foot b) leg c) hand
- 2) After Bob found out that his advertising campaign failed, he wanted to go back to the drawing _____.
a) board b) table c) room
- 3) When somebody isn't listening to you, there's no ____ in trying to argue with them.
a) edge b) tip c) point
- 4) José is really smart. He's as sharp as a _____.
a) tack b) nail c) screw
- 5) The salespeople at Honest Abe's always look angry and never speak to anybody. No wonder they ____ Bob the creeps.
a) take b) give c) allow
- 6) Bob got fired. He isn't looking forward to _____ the news to his family.
a) breaking b) cracking c) saying
- 7) Bob thought his new advertisements would bring in lots of customers and save the _____.
a) morning b) night c) day
- 8) Fortunately, Bob no longer has to put ____ with his stupid boss at the furniture store.
a) over b) in c) up

What's
the
matter?

I got
canned
today!



Lesson 2

BOB RETURNS HOME WITH BAD NEWS

Bob tells his wife Susan that he lost his job. Susan suggests that he start his own business.

Bob le dice a su mujer, Susan, que se ha quedado sin trabajo. Susan sugiere que ponga su propio negocio.

Susan: **What's the matter**, dear?

Bob: Susan, I **got canned** today at work.

Susan: But Bob, you were Peter's **right-hand man**!

Bob: Yes, and he **stabbed me in the back**.

Susan: **Keep your chin up**. Maybe he'll **change his mind** and take you back.

Bob: **When pigs fly!** Once he **makes up his mind**, he never changes it. Besides, I **told him off**.

Susan: **Look on the bright side**: you won't have to **set eyes** on Peter ever again.

Bob: **Thank goodness** for that!

Susan: **Hang in there**. I'm sure you won't be **out of work** for long.

Bob: In the meantime, we'll have to **live from hand to mouth**.

Susan: Don't get too **stressed out**, Bob. We'll **make ends meet**.

Bob: I can always get a job at McDonald's as a **last resort**.

Susan: I don't think they're hiring right now.

Bob: If **worse comes to worst**, we can sell our home and move into a tent.

Susan: Let's **think big!** Maybe you can start your own business.

Bob: **Easier said than done!**



IDIOMS – LESSON 2

(to) change one's mind – to alter one's opinion or decision
cambiar de idea

EXAMPLE: Brandon wasn't going to take a vacation this year, but then he **changed his mind** and went to Bora Bora for two weeks.

easier said than done – more difficult than you think
más difícil de lo que parece, del dicho al hecho hay un gran trecho

EXAMPLE: Moving into a new home is **easier said than done**.

(to) get canned [slang] – to lose one's job; to get fired
ser despedido

EXAMPLE: After Chris **got canned**, it took him a year to find a new job.
SYNONYMS: to get sacked; to be given the ax

(to) hang in there – to persevere; to not give up
aguantar un poco más

EXAMPLE: I know you're four games behind, but you can still win the tennis match. Just **hang in there!**

if worse comes to worst – in the worst case
en el peor de los casos

EXAMPLE: Ted's car isn't running well. **If worse comes to worst**, he can take the bus to school.

NOTA: Existe la variación "if worst comes to worst".

(to) keep one's chin up – to stay positive

no desanimarse

EXAMPLE: Even when he was unemployed and homeless, Bill managed to **keep his chin up**.

last resort – the only alternative left; the last solution for getting out of a difficulty

último recurso

EXAMPLE: David was locked out of his house. He knew that as a **last resort**, he could always break a window.

(to) live from hand to mouth – to barely have enough money to survive

vivir al día, tener lo justo para vivir

EXAMPLE: Jenny was earning \$5 an hour at McDonald's. She was really **living from hand to mouth**.

(to) look on the bright side – to be optimistic; to think about the positive part

ser optimista, ver el lado bueno de las cosas

EXAMPLE: Dan was upset that his soccer game was canceled. His mother said, "**Look on the bright side**, now you can stay home and watch TV."

(to) make ends meet – to manage one's money so as to have enough to live on

pasar con lo que se tiene, tener suficiente dinero para vivir

EXAMPLE: Kathy wasn't able to **make ends meet** so she had to ask her parents to pay her rent.

(to) make up one's mind – *Vea el capítulo 1*

out of work – unemployed; not working

desempleado

EXAMPLE: Gary was **out of work** for six months before finding a new job.

right-hand man – the most helpful assistant or employee

el empleado más importante, la mano derecha

EXAMPLE: Juan's **right-hand man** helps him make all his decisions.

NOTA: También existe la expresión "right-hand woman" para referirse a una mujer, pero "right-hand man" es más común.

<p>(to) set eyes on – to look at <i> echar la vista encima</i></p> <p>EXAMPLE: Ted was in love from the moment he set eyes on Amber.</p>
<p>(to) stab someone in the back – to betray someone <i> traicionar</i></p> <p>EXAMPLE: Jill and Heather were friends, until Heather stabbed Jill in the back by stealing her boyfriend.</p>
<p>(to be) stressed out – under severe strain; very anxious <i> estresado, tenso</i></p> <p>EXAMPLE: Joe is so stressed out about his job that he can't sleep at night.</p>
<p>(to) tell off – to scold; to tell someone in strong words what one really thinks <i> regañar</i></p> <p>EXAMPLE: When Ted showed up for chemistry class a half an hour late, his teacher really told him off.</p> <p>SYNONYM: to give someone a piece of one's mind</p>
<p>thank goodness – I'm grateful; I'm relieved <i> gracias a Dios</i></p> <p>EXAMPLE: When Ted came home at 4 a.m. last Sunday, his mother said, "Thank goodness you're home! I was so worried about you."</p> <p>SYNONYMS: thank God; thank heaven</p>
<p>(to) think big – to set high goals <i> crearse objetivos ambiciosos</i></p> <p>EXAMPLE: Why run for Governor of New York? Think big: run for President of the United States!</p>
<p>What's the matter? – What's the problem? <i> ¿qué pasa?</i></p> <p>EXAMPLE: What's the matter, Bob? You don't look very happy.</p> <p>SYNONYM: What's wrong?</p>
<p>when pigs fly [slang] – never <i> nunca</i></p> <p>EXAMPLE: Will Ted teach Nicole how to play the guitar? When pigs fly!</p> <p>SYNONYMS: when hell freezes over; never in a million years</p>

 **PRACTICE THE IDIOMS**

Fill in the blank with the missing word:

- 1) What's the _____? You look upset.
a) situation b) issue c) matter
- 2) I know I can trust you. You would never stab me in the _____.
a) leg b) back c) arm
- 3) If Bob and Susan run out of money, they can always borrow money from Susan's sister as a _____ resort.
a) final b) first c) last
- 4) You look really stressed _____. Why don't you sit down, relax, and have a cup of tea?
a) about b) in c) out
- 5) Bob, everything will be fine. You just need to keep your chin _____ and remember that tomorrow is another day.
a) up b) down c) above
- 6) I just can't make up my _____ whether to order chicken or fish.
a) head b) brain c) mind
- 7) Nicole accidentally stepped on Ted's guitar. Ted got really angry and told her _____.
a) off b) out c) away
- 8) Your husband left you for his psychologist? Hang _____ there! I'm sure he'll realize she's crazy and then come back to you.
a) up b) in c) out