

LESSON 11

BOB DRIVES A HARD BARGAIN

Carol from the Village Market calls Bob to discuss Susan's Scrumptious Cookies. Carol and Bob discuss how much Bob will receive for each cookie.

Carol: Hi Bob. **How's it going?**

Bob: Fine thanks, Carol. How are you?

Carol: **Can't complain.** Bob, I've had a chance to **crunch some numbers.** I can pay you 50¢ per cookie.

Bob: That's **out of the question.** At that price, it's not **worth our while.** The ingredients alone cost us 30¢ per cookie.

Carol: Okay, let me **sweeten the deal** — 60¢ per cookie?

Bob: Carol, my wife and I need to **make a living** from this business.

Carol: Okay, okay, you've **twisted my arm.** I'll pay you 75¢ per cookie. **Take it or leave it!**

Bob: **Now you're talking!** We'll take it.

Carol: You **drive a hard bargain**, Bob.

Bob: Yes, but we make a good cookie.

Carol: Let's **get the ball rolling**. Bring me 2,000 cookies on Monday morning by 9 a.m.



IDIOMS – LESSON 11

can't complain – things are going well; I'm fine

EXAMPLE 1: "How's business, Mike?" – "**Can't complain**. I sold a lot of computers this month."

EXAMPLE 2: "How are things going at your new job?" – "**Can't complain**."

(to) crunch numbers – to perform calculations (especially financial calculations)

EXAMPLE 1: Scott loves to **crunch numbers**, so he decided to become an accountant.

EXAMPLE 2: Wendy spends all her time at work in front of the computer **crunching numbers** and analyzing sales data.

(to) drive a hard bargain – to be tough in negotiating an agreement; to negotiate something in one's favor

EXAMPLE 1: I wanted to pay less for the car, but the salesman **drove a hard bargain**.

EXAMPLE 2: Eric **drove a hard bargain** and got the company to raise their salary offer by \$15,000.

(to) get the ball rolling – to get started

EXAMPLE 1: Let's **get the ball rolling** on this project. We've only got one week to finish it.

EXAMPLE 2: If we don't **get the ball rolling** on our vacation plans soon, we'll end up going nowhere.

How's it going? – How are you?

EXAMPLE 1: "**How's it going?**" I asked Ted. "Everything's fine. How are you?" he replied.

EXAMPLE 2: "**How's it going?**" Vladimir asked me. "Not bad," I replied.

(to) make a living – to earn enough money to support oneself

EXAMPLE 1: Many people laugh at him, but Bill actually **makes a living** selling gourmet dog food.

EXAMPLE 2: Danny makes some money playing his guitar on street corners, but not enough to **make a living**.

now you're talking – you're saying the right thing

EXAMPLE 1: You want to offer me free tickets to the J. Lo concert? **Now you're talking!**

EXAMPLE 2: You'd like to offer me a \$10,000 raise and a corner office? **Now you're talking!**

out of the question – impossible

EXAMPLE 1: My friend Emily wanted me to climb Mount McKinley with her, but I told her it was **out of the question**.

EXAMPLE 2: You want to borrow my new car and drive it across the country? I'm sorry, but that's **out of the question**.

(to) sweeten the deal – to make an offer more attractive

EXAMPLE 1: IBM offered to **sweeten the deal** by giving John a company car if he agreed to work for them.

EXAMPLE 2: We really want you to take the job here at Magna Corporation, so let us know what we can do to **sweeten the deal**.

take it or leave it – accept or reject an offer, usually a final one

EXAMPLE 1: The highest salary we can offer you is \$50,000 a year — **take it or leave it**.

EXAMPLE 2: I'm offering to do the dishes for one week if you'll help me with my science project. **Take it or leave it**.

(to) twist (someone's) arm – to persuade someone; to convince someone

EXAMPLE 1: Ted didn't want to get another tattoo on his back, but Amber **twisted his arm**.

EXAMPLE 2: Okay, you've **twisted my arm**. You can borrow my new car and drive it across the country.

worth one's while – worthy of one's effort or time

EXAMPLE 1: It would be **worth your while** to audition for the game show *Jeopardy*. You'd probably win a lot of money.

EXAMPLE 2: Let me make it **worth your while** to work weekends. I'll pay you an extra \$10 per hour on Saturdays and Sundays.

 **PRACTICE THE IDIOMS**

Abe, owner of Honest Abe's Furniture Store, is talking to Jeff about a new advertising campaign for the store. Jeff owns an advertising agency. Complete the dialogue using these idioms:

get the ball rolling	drive a hard bargain
crunch some numbers	how's it going
out of the question	now you're talking
twisted my arm	make a living

Abe: Hi, Jeff. _____ ?

Jeff: Fine, thanks. I've only scheduled a half hour for this meeting, so we'd better _____.

Abe: Jeff, I need you to come up with a new advertising campaign for my furniture shop.

Jeff: I've had a chance to _____, and you'll need to pay me \$30,000 to come up with some new ideas.

Abe: Thirty thousand dollars? That's really _____!

Jeff: Listen, Abe, I need to _____ too. I've got a wife and seven children at home.

Abe: I'll pay you \$20,000.

Jeff: If you want quality work, you have to pay for it. Let's say \$25,000?

Abe: Okay, okay. You've _____. I'll pay you \$23,000.

Jeff: _____. That's a fair price.

Abe: You certainly _____.

Jeff: I know, but you'll be happy with my work.

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