

Lesson 2 - Business Idioms: “Talking about financial issues”

Mike and John work in the finance department. They need to discuss the financial projections for a new product line.

A: I'm really excited about the launch of our new product.

B: Me, too. But before we go any further, we'd better double check and see if this product is going to be profitable.

A: Good idea.

B: Actually, yesterday I did some **back-of-the-envelope calculations**.

A: Really?

B: That's right. Here, take a look.

A: Hmm....this looks good. However, where did you get this figure?

B: Oh that....well, that figure is an **educated guess** based on last year's results.

A: I see.....I think you need to double check that again.

B: Really, What for?

A: From my experience, using past figures can sometimes get us **in hot water**.

B: Okay, I get it. No problem. I'll check with our vendor and get a price quote right away.

A: Well....let me ask you a question.

B: Okay.....shoot.

A: Do you have sense for market demand?

B: What do you mean?

A: I mean.....We need to ask our Budget Team for business forecasts before we **crunch the numbers**.

B: Actually, I already did.

A: You did?

B: Yes, that's right. However, the Budget Team said the forecasts are going to be ready next week.

- A: It just **blows my mind** that the Budget Team thinks we can **run numbers** before they give us any figures!
- B: I agree. If we go **in the red**, it's going to be our **heads on the chopping block**, not the Budget Team!
- A: That's right. Our boss won't **give this project the green light** until he sees all of the numbers.
- B: That's a good point.
- A: And....if it doesn't look like our company will at least **break even** or make any money, then,
- B: Then, what....?
- A: Our boss might **pull the plug** on our new product.

Key idioms:

- 1. back-of-the-envelope calculations.**
Definition: informal or casual calculations on a piece of paper
- 2. educated guess**
Definition: a guess based on experience
- 3. in hot water**
Definition: in trouble
- 4. (to) crunch the numbers**
Definition: to perform financial calculations
- 5. blows my mind**
Definition: surprises me/amazes me/bothers me
- 6. in the red**
Definition: lose money
- 7. run (the) numbers**
Definition: to perform financial calculations
- 8. head on the chopping block**
Definition: to have the possibility to be fired or get in big trouble
- 9. give the green light**
Definition: to give the approval or the go sign
- 10. break even**
Definition: to not make a profit or loss
- 11. pull the plug**
Definition: to stop something from continuing/to discontinue a project