

Business Meeting Buzzwords 4

B1 · Intermediate | Student Worksheet

bottom line (noun)

the most important point or final result

"The bottom line is that we need to increase sales this quarter."

win-win (noun)

a situation that is good for everyone involved

"The new agreement is a win-win for both companies."

synergy (noun)

the extra benefit that comes from people or things working well together

"There's real synergy between the marketing and sales teams."

heads-up (noun)

a warning or piece of advance information

"Just a heads-up, the meeting has been moved to 3pm."

on the same wavelength (phrase)

thinking or feeling the same way as someone else

"We're definitely on the same wavelength about this project."

keep someone posted (phrase)

to give someone regular updates

"I'll keep you posted on how the negotiations go."

get up to speed (phrase)

to learn the most recent information about something

"It took her a few days to get up to speed on the new system."

put out fires (phrase)

to deal with urgent problems as they happen

"Most of my day was spent putting out fires instead of doing planned work."

take the lead (phrase)

to be in charge of something

"She offered to take the lead on the new marketing campaign."

drop the ball (phrase)

to fail to do something you were responsible for

"We dropped the ball on following up with that client."

cut corners (phrase)

to do something in the easiest or cheapest way, often resulting in poor quality

"The company cut corners on safety to save money."

all hands on deck (phrase)

everyone needs to help with something

"It's all hands on deck this week before the product launch."

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Exercise 1: True or False

Read each statement below and write **True** or **False** on the line.

1. To "get up to speed" means to learn the most recent information. _____
2. If people are "on the same wavelength," they disagree completely. _____
3. To "drop the ball" means to fail to do something you were responsible for. _____
4. "All hands on deck" means only one person needs to help. _____
5. "Bottom line" means the least important detail. _____
6. To "put out fires" means to plan carefully in advance. _____
7. To "keep someone posted" means to stop giving them information. _____
8. "Synergy" means the extra benefit of people working well together. _____
9. A "heads-up" is a warning or piece of advance information. _____
10. A "win-win" situation is good for everyone involved. _____

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Exercise 2: Multiple Choice

Circle the phrase that best completes each sentence.

1. The _____ is that we need to cut costs this year.
a) bottom line b) heads-up c) synergy d) win-win
2. This deal is a real _____ for both sides.
a) heads-up b) synergy c) win-win d) bottom line
3. It's _____ this week before the product launch.
a) up to speed b) a heads-up c) on the same wavelength d) all hands on deck
4. Just a _____ — the client meeting starts earlier today.
a) bottom line b) synergy c) win-win d) heads-up
5. We really can't afford to _____ on this client relationship.
a) cut corners b) put out fires c) take the lead d) drop the ball
6. I'll definitely _____ about how the negotiations go.
a) drop the ball b) get up to speed c) keep someone posted d) take the lead
7. We seem to be _____ about the new strategy.
a) on the same wavelength b) all hands on deck c) up to speed d) posted
8. Most of my day was spent trying to _____ instead of doing planned work.
a) put out fires b) take the lead c) drop the ball d) cut corners
9. She offered to _____ on the new campaign.
a) take the lead b) drop the ball c) cut corners d) get up to speed
10. It took her a few days to _____ on the new software.
a) take the lead b) put out fires c) get up to speed d) cut corners

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Exercise 3: Matching

Match each phrase (1-12) with its correct definition (a-l). Write the letter on the line.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| 1. bottom line _____ | a) a warning or piece of advance information |
| 2. get up to speed _____ | b) to be in charge of something |
| 3. drop the ball _____ | c) thinking or feeling the same way as someone else |
| 4. keep someone posted _____ | d) the extra benefit that comes from people or things working well together |
| 5. put out fires _____ | e) the most important point or final result |
| 6. win-win _____ | f) to give someone regular updates |
| 7. cut corners _____ | g) everyone needs to help with something |
| 8. all hands on deck _____ | h) to learn the most recent information about something |
| 9. take the lead _____ | i) a situation that is good for everyone involved |
| 10. on the same wavelength _____ | j) to do something in the easiest or cheapest way, often resulting in poor quality |
| 11. heads-up _____ | k) to fail to do something you were responsible for |
| 12. synergy _____ | l) to deal with urgent problems as they happen |

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Exercise 4: Gap Fill

Word Bank: get up to speed • bottom line • drop the ball • cut corners • heads-up • all hands on deck • synergy • win-win • keep someone posted • take the lead • on the same wavelength • put out fires

1. He offered to _____ on the new project.
2. The _____ is that we need to increase sales this quarter.
3. There wasn't time to plan; we just had to _____ all day.
4. New employees usually need a week to _____.
5. The team decided not to _____ on quality, even under pressure.
6. Just a quick _____: the deadline moved to Friday.
7. We can't afford to _____ on this deadline.
8. This new agreement is a real _____ for both companies.
9. There's great _____ between the two departments now.
10. It's _____ until the launch is finished.
11. I'll _____ about any changes to the schedule.
12. We're clearly _____ about how to solve this.

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Exercise 5: Word Order

Put the words in the correct order to make a sentence.

1. clear / bottom / is / The / line

2. She / to / the / take / offered / lead

3. quick / a / heads-up / Just / today

4. all / deck / It's / on / hands

5. We / can't / the / drop / ball

6. This / deal / win-win / is / a

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Exercise 6: Word Sort

Sort the phrases below into the correct category: Action, Thing, or Description.

Phrases: heads-up • win-win • keep someone posted • synergy • get up to speed • cut corners • on the same wavelength • take the lead • bottom line • all hands on deck • drop the ball • put out fires

Action	Thing	Description

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Exercise 7: Complete the Conversation

Two colleagues are talking about a busy week at work. Complete the conversation using the phrases in the box.

Word Bank: get up to speed • put out fires • keep someone posted • heads-up • cut corners • on the same wavelength • drop the ball • all hands on deck

Liam: Hey Priya, just a quick _____ — the client call moved to 2pm.

Priya: Thanks for letting me know. I'll _____ if anything else changes.

Liam: Sounds good. Are you still trying to _____ on the new reporting tool?

Priya: Mostly, yes. It's been _____ all week with everything going on.

Liam: I know. I've had to _____ instead of doing my normal tasks.

Priya: Let's make sure we don't _____ on the client presentation.

Liam: Agreed. I think we're _____ about the plan for tomorrow.

Priya: Great. As long as we don't _____ on quality, we should be fine.

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B1 · Intermediate | Teacher Answer Key

ANSWER KEY — DO NOT DISTRIBUTE TO STUDENTS

Answer Key

Exercise 1: True or False

1. True
2. False
3. True
4. False
5. False
6. False
7. False
8. True
9. True
10. True

Exercise 2: Multiple Choice

1. a) bottom line
2. c) win-win
3. d) all hands on deck
4. d) heads-up
5. d) drop the ball
6. c) keep someone posted
7. a) on the same wavelength
8. a) put out fires
9. a) take the lead
10. c) get up to speed

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ANSWER KEY — DO NOT DISTRIBUTE TO STUDENTS

Exercise 3: Matching

1. bottom line = e
2. get up to speed = h
3. drop the ball = k
4. keep someone posted = f
5. put out fires = l
6. win-win = i
7. cut corners = j
8. all hands on deck = g
9. take the lead = b
10. on the same wavelength = c
11. heads-up = a
12. synergy = d

Exercise 4: Gap Fill

1. take the lead
2. bottom line
3. put out fires
4. get up to speed
5. cut corners
6. heads-up
7. drop the ball
8. win-win
9. synergy
10. all hands on deck
11. keep someone posted
12. on the same wavelength

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B1 · Intermediate | Teacher Answer Key

ANSWER KEY — DO NOT DISTRIBUTE TO STUDENTS

Exercise 5: Word Order

1. The bottom line is clear.
2. She offered to take the lead.
3. Just a quick heads-up today.
4. It's all hands on deck.
5. We can't drop the ball.
6. This deal is a win-win.

Exercise 6: Word Sort

Action: keep someone posted, get up to speed, put out fires, take the lead, drop the ball, cut corners

Thing: bottom line, win-win, synergy, heads-up

Description: on the same wavelength, all hands on deck

Exercise 7: Complete the Conversation

1. Liam: heads-up
2. Priya: keep someone posted
3. Liam: get up to speed
4. Priya: all hands on deck
5. Liam: put out fires
6. Priya: drop the ball
7. Liam: on the same wavelength
8. Priya: cut corners