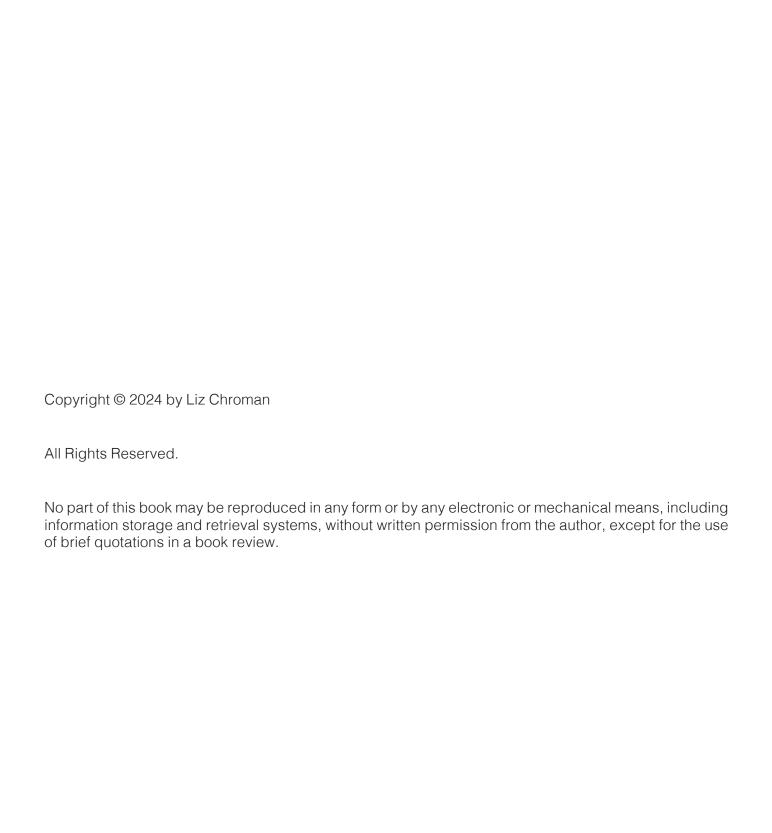
AMERICAN IDIOMS FOR SALES

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Introduction

Welcome to the sequel of *American Idioms for Business*, a book that recognizes the unique and colorful language that Americans use at work. Responding to your requests, we now delve into the art and science of sales.

Sales is a key component of business that requires excellent communication and rapport. That means mastering the special language of selling. *American Idioms for Sales* defines and explains the expressions used among salespeople and in meetings with leads and customers.

By understanding the idioms of sales, you will gain a skill you can use immediately. You will improve your mastery of both written and spoken English, understanding others and expressing yourself better.

Understanding and using American idioms in sales can unlock the doors of opportunities. Idioms enrich conversations, giving them personality and depth. They go beyond the literal meanings of words. They're how people communicate in sales situations. From sparking initial interest by "testing the waters" to "sealing the deal" for a win-win agreement, this book guides you step-by-step through the special language that can lead to successful sales.

For those new to American English, navigating sales discussions can seem difficult, even scary. "Cold calling," speaking to strangers you don't know, and who may not want to know you, is terrifying enough. Just as your goal is to warm up these chilly leads and get them to nibble at your bait, our goal is to help you excel, slowly but surely, idiom by idiom.

An idiom might not translate directly into your native tongue, but they're key to understanding and engaging with clients and colleagues. Imaginative pictures for each idiom will help you remember and understand each expression. Even American-born

speakers will discover the strategic edge that idiomatic fluency can provide.

We've divided the sales process into five chapters, each for a step in the journey: generating leads, presenting your offer, negotiating an agreement, closing the deal, then following through with customers. Through pictures, definitions, explanations, dialogues, and quizzes, we aim not just to inform and educate but to entertain. We want to make mastery of idioms a pleasure.

American Idioms for Sales is your trusted companion, helping you to improve your communications and your selling.



CHAPTER ONE

Fishing for Customers

In sales, generating leads is like setting sail in search of new business. One "tests the waters" for initial engagement and "casts nets wide" to catch customers, sometimes using "click-bait."

Agricultural idioms like "planting the seeds" signify groundwork for future growth, hoping they will take root and grow. Sales involve warming up "cold leads" to turn them into "hot prospects."

Engagement with leads means "getting a foot in the door" through persistent "legwork" to "get a leg up" over competitors.

Igniting interest sometimes requires a "jump-start," like reviving a vehicle with a dead battery.

"Drumming up" business requires rhythmic persistence and the sales team "singing from the same sheet." Each idiom can be an engaging way to connect with customers and bring you closer to a deal.



IN CONVERSATION

It's a kickoff meeting, designed to get the team aligned and moving in the right direction. Elizabeth, the sales director, sets the tone and emphasizes the need for speed. Jane and Max, junior staff, are eager to please and agree.

Elizabeth: "Team, it's imperative we get off to a fast start this quarter. Let's begin by testing the waters with our latest product line."

Jane: "I've already cast the net widely among our newsletter audience. My goal is to drum up business by promoting the features that resonate most with their requirements."

Max: "Great start, Jane. Making those first cold calls can be daunting, yet it's crucial to warm those leads until they become hot prospects."

Elizabeth: "Precisely. Getting a foot in the door is essential for gaining an advantage over our competitors by preparing the groundwork strategically."

Max: "Sometimes you just need to connect and inject some energy. Even a small spark, can jumpstart the engine that leads to a deal."

Elizabeth: "Excellent. In this field, You never know which efforts will bear the most fruit, but our job is to plant those seeds with care."



TESTING THE WATERS

Trying something new to check reactions or outcomes

The idiom "testing the waters" is a common sales expression that suggests a cautious approach to new ventures, a bit like dipping a toe into a pool or into the sea to measure its temperature before jumping in. The opposite approach is suggested when you "throw someone into the deep end"—without preparation—to see if they will sink or swim. It's a risky proposition!

Selling involves trying different things to see what works best. Your challenge as a salesperson is to figure out the perfect way to connect and communicate with each customer. Your ability to use idioms correctly can help you succeed with customers and colleagues alike.



CASTING A WIDE NET

Broadly searching for prospects or opportunities

The idiom "casting a wide net" is inspired by the analogy of sales to fishing, and the tradition of fishermen spreading their nets wide over the sea to ensnare as many fish as possible. This wide-reaching search is akin to seeking sales leads and then trying to haul them in.

Salespeople are often reassured that there are "many fish in the sea," endless opportunities and prospects awaiting discovery. This phrase is often said as encouragement after failure, such as the legendary lament of every empty-handed fisher-person about "the big one that got away."

The world of digital marketing has brought us the familiar expression "click-bait," referring to the cunning use of enticing offers to "hook" interest and induce clicks. When a prospect "nibbles on the worm," showing interest in the offer, it's the salesperson's job to "reel them in."



PLANTING THE SEEDS

Initiating actions today that will yield future benefits

The idiom "planting the seeds" draws from the analogy of farming, where seeds are sown in hopes that they will grow into a bountiful harvest. The expression describes initial efforts that may not yield immediate results but are essential for long-term success. Coupled with "laying the groundwork," the idea of "preparing the ground" creates fertile conditions for cultivation.

"Cultivating relationships," like nurturing crops, involves regular care to ensure healthy growth. This process is similar to building and keeping connections with clients, nurturing leads into fruitful opportunities. "Harvesting the rewards" is the goal, gathering crops when they are ripe. But our seedlings have not yet grown: let's not get ahead of ourselves!



COLD CALLING

Initiating contact with potential customers without prior interaction

The "cold call" is an art form, because not many people love getting calls from a stranger trying to sell them something. This sales tactic involves reaching out to potential clients without any prior connection, attempting to spark interest. The term "cold lead" further emphasizes the initial lack of warmth or connection.

The expression of "breaking the ice" or "thawing" (melting) a frozen contact reflects the need to warm up a prospect through persistent and clever communication. An "icebreaker" at the start of the interaction is an attempt to break through the initial chill and establish a warm connection. These idioms highlight the need for patience, persistence, and strategy in heating up cold prospects, transforming indifference into engagement.



HOT PROSPECT

A potential customer showing interest or likely to buy soon

Coming in from the cold with a lead, with "hot prospects" we find ourselves in a warmer climate. These terms signify a gradual increase in the temperature of a business relationship, reflecting the growing readiness of the customer to consider a purchase. A "warm lead" is one who has shown interest, perhaps engaging with marketing materials or initiating a contact. The hotter the prospect, the further along they may be in the conversion process.

The process is like slowly heating water until it boils, reaching a readiness to buy. This transition is like "lighting" or "stoking" a fire. Both involve igniting interest and building momentum toward a sale. This sales strategy is called "keeping the pot boiling," ensuring that the interest continues to simmer with high intent until the prospect is converted into a customer.



JUMPSTART THE ENGINE

To quickly stimulate interest or restart momentum

The idiom "jumpstart the engine" evokes the image of using jumper cables to revive a car's dead battery, sparking a surge of energy that brings a dormant machine to life. In sales, it describes the act of injecting enthusiasm into a stalled situation or a lead that has cooled. It's all about reigniting interest, turning a passive observer into an active participant.

To extend this automotive analogy, one can "rev the engine," increasing engagement with a prospect and accelerating a prospect's progress from consideration to decision. "Shifting gears" is a change in tactics to align better with the prospect's current state or changing market conditions.



DRUMMING UP BUSINESS

Actively seeking out and attracting new clients or sales

The musical image "drumming up business" calls up the image of a drummer creating a beat that gathers attention and draws a crowd. In the realm of sales, it refers to proactive efforts to attract new clients or generate interest in products or services. This involves creating a buzz or excitement around what's being offered, just as a drumbeat often can be heard from far away.

Expanding on this musical metaphor, "playing to the crowd" reflects a tailored approach intended to resonate with a specific target audience. Just as a musician alters their performance to captivate listeners, you need to adjust your sales pitches to the needs and interests of potential clients. "Hitting the right note" is when this targeting works as intended, delivering the right message at the right time.



A FOOT IN THE DOOR

Initiating a small but significant first step in a sales process

The idiom "a foot in the door" comes from placing one's foot at the door threshold to prevent it from closing. In the sales context, this means a first step to secure a minor commitment that might lead to larger opportunities. This tactic emphasizes the importance of starting small to gain a preliminary "yes" that can pave the way for more substantial engagement. If you take risks to get there, it's called "going out on a limb" as if one is climbing on a branch.

Speaking of limbs, "getting a leg up" refers to an advantage that pushes you ahead of the competition. Like a helping hand that lifts you onto a horse, it helps you gain a higher position from which to proceed. That may mean leveraging a unique value proposition or another benefit to secure a deal. "Leg work" underscores the hard work required to advance in sales.

QUIZ YOURSELF

1. To evaluate market interest before a full launch, it's wise to first.
2. First aim to, with broad outreach so that no lead is overlooked.
Initial efforts in relationship-building can be likened to for future sales.
4. Reaching out to someone without a prior connection is known as
5. A contact who has shown keen interest may be referred to as a
6. To spark interest in a stagnant prospect or market, one might need to
7. Proactive efforts to attract new prospects can be described as
8. Achieving a small initial commitment can be crucial for getting your

YINSMEKS

- 1. Test the waters
- 2. Cast a wide net
- 3. Planting the seeds
- 4. Cold calling
- 5. Hot prospect
- 6. Jumpstart the engine
- 7. Drumming up business
- 8. Foot in the door