

Traffic terminology in business English

Some common expressions that are frequently used in business English in their metaphoric sense are phrases or words imported from the traffic terminology. In the table below you can find examples of such expression and discover what they mean in the business context.

A Match the expression in the left-hand column with their definitions in the right-hand column.

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| 1. to make a U-turn | a. working or performing effectively or properly |
| 2. to grind to a halt | b. to completely change one's opinion or plan of action |
| 3. to give the green light | c. the quickest but most competitive route to success |
| 4. in the slow lane | d. the amount of use or advantage you get from something |
| 5. mileage | e. an instruction to stop or discontinue |
| 6. in gear | f. to give permission for someone to do something or for something to happen |
| 7. collision | g. to stop slowly |
| 8. in the fast lane | h. the conflict of opposed ideas, wishes, attitudes, etc. |
| 9. out of gear | i. out of order; not functioning properly |
| 10. the red light | j. less successful than others |

Key: 1b, 2g, 3f, 4j, 5d, 6a, 7h, 8c, 9i, 10e

B Complete the following sentences with one of the expressions from the previous exercise.

1. The Government will have to _____ – this time on the charity tax.
2. I've got to get my brain _____ for the meeting this afternoon.
3. The country is expected to remain _____ of economic recovery.
4. If we don't do something soon, the industry could _____.
5. Their purchase of the company put them _____ of the mobile phone industry.
6. The government decided to _____ to Sunday trading.
7. The newspapers wanted to get as much _____ from the story as they could.
8. The loss of so much time at the beginning of the day threw the goods traffic _____.
9. The buss company gave route cut proposals _____.
10. Giving a big authority to two people dealing with the same thing will cause _____ of opinions.

Key: 1. make a U-turn, 2. in gear, 3. in the slow lane, 4. grind to a halt, 5. in the fast lane, 6. give the green light, 7. mileage, 8. out of gear, 9. the red light, 10. collision