

Lesson 22: Ethical Marketing

Mitch and Brent are business partners who work in advertising; they are debating whether to take on a particular project. Listen and answer the following questions:

Listening Comprehension

- 1. Mitch wants to take the job because...**
 - a. he'll make a lot of money
 - b. it's an intriguing project
 - c. the company will give him free products
- 2. The product is...**
 - a. a medicine
 - b. a vitamin
 - c. an energy drink
- 3. Why is Brent hesitant to advertise the product?**
 - a. its claims are exaggerated
 - b. it hasn't been approved by the government
 - c. it could make teenagers addicted
- 4. Mitch says if they don't accept the project...**
 - a. their reputation will be ruined
 - b. they won't have enough money to pay the bills
 - c. the client will work with a different advertiser
- 5. Brent is concerned about him and Mitch...**
 - a. facing legal trouble
 - b. getting sick
 - c. having to lie
- 6. Mitch proposes...**
 - a. adjusting the ads' messaging
 - b. partnering with another ad agency
 - c. waiting until the product is more popular
- 7. At the end, they decide...**
 - a. to accept the client
 - b. not to accept the client
 - c. to re-negotiate the contract

Conversation Text

Mitch: We've gotta think of a clever **slogan**. If this client likes our stuff, we'll be **rolling in dough**.

Brent: Whoa, **hold your horses**. Let's take it one step at a time. You know, I've been **having second thoughts** about whether we should even take on this job.

Mitch: What?! Come on, Brent, this is the top supplement company in the world! It's our chance to break into **the big leagues**.

Brent: But the product in question is kinda **dubious**. A very controversial new energy drink that hasn't been approved by the Food and Drug Administration... I'm not sure I can market that **in good conscience**.

Mitch: These energy drinks are **all the rage** nowadays! If we **come up with** a **killer** advertisement targeted towards teens, these drinks will be **flying off the shelves**.

Brent: Yeah, it's just that this product is still in a trial stage. If anything goes wrong,

Vocabulary

slogan = short, memorable phrase used in advertising

rolling in dough = (slang) having a LOT of money

hold your horses = (informal) wait; don't be so quick to take action

having second thoughts = reconsidering, doubting a previous decision

the big leagues = a high level of activity or competition

dubious = questionable, subject to doubts

in good conscience = without feeling guilty

all the rage = extremely popular

come up with = create

killer = (slang) excellent

flying off the shelves = selling very fast

it could be a **catastrophe** for the company – and for us, too. But once the FDA **okays** it, then sure – we can go for it.

Mitch: You wanna wait for the FDA? **Don't hold your breath.** They take forever to approve a product, and by the time they do, our client will have found a new advertising team. We will have **missed the boat.**

Brent: Missing the boat is better than **being smacked with a lawsuit** if people start getting sick from this energy drink. I'm not about to **risk my neck** for ten pounds of sugar, caffeine, and who knows what else **crammed** into a tiny bottle.

Mitch: What are the **odds** of us getting sued, though? People will go after the manufacturer, not the advertiser. You're being too cautious.

Brent: And you're being too **reckless.** Not only could we end up losing money on lawsuits, but we'd also lose our reputation – and that's not so easy to recover from.

Mitch: What if we take on the client, but **tone down** the messaging of the ads? And of course we'd have a disclaimer that the energy drink isn't FDA approved.

Vocabulary

catastrophe = very big disaster

okays = (informal) approves

Don't hold your breath = don't wait for it, because it will never happen

missed the boat = missed the opportunity

being smacked with a lawsuit = getting hit with legal action against you

risk my neck = take a risk that could result in a very serious disaster

crammed = put into a small space

What are the odds = what are the chances

reckless = being irresponsible; acting without being careful

tone down = make less intense, less shocking

Brent: I dunno, I've just **got a gut feeling** that this one's **a bad bet**. Plus, we've got **no shortage of** clients. Let's make our millions with a product we can actually be proud of.

Mitch: Okay... if you're **not sold on** this project, then we'll have to turn it down. It would be too much work for me to take on **solo**. ::sigh:: **So much for** our **big break**.

Brent: I'm sure another great opportunity will come along. And **look on the bright side...** at least we'll be able to **sleep better at night**.

Vocabulary

got a gut feeling = have a feeling of certainty that is deep and hard to explain rationally

a bad bet = a potential project that is likely to have bad results/consequences

no shortage of = no lack of (in other words, they have a lot of other clients)

not sold on = not convinced of the value of

solo = (informal) alone

So much for = this is the end of; this will not happen

big break = a fortunate moment when you become famous or successful

look on the bright side = consider the positive aspects

sleep better at night = be calm and not feel anxious or agitated

Vocabulary Quiz

Complete each sentence with a word from the box. Three words are not used.

a bad bet	catastrophe	missed the boat	reckless
all the rage	crammed	no shortage of	so much for
big break	dubious	not sold on	toned down
came up with	second thoughts	odds	

1. Don't tell me you're having _____ about moving to Atlanta. We've already bought a house there, we can't back out now!
2. He probably would have won the scholarship, but he didn't apply in time, so he _____.
3. I couldn't resist ordering the chocolate fudge cake for dessert... _____ my diet.
4. Sorry, but I'm _____ the need for such an advanced camera. The basic model will do just fine.
5. It's a very simple, safe operation. The _____ of any complications are next to nothing.
6. Our first attempt at starting a business was a _____; we lost our life savings.
7. She's still as _____ as ever - she was just caught driving drunk for the third time this year.
8. Skinny jeans are _____; I see people wearing them everywhere.
9. I can't take credit for that idea. Jerry was the one who _____ it.
10. The duo played at small local venues for years before their _____.
Now they're touring internationally.
11. There were fifty people _____ into a classroom designed to seat twenty.
12. I just went shopping, so there's _____ food in the house.

Speaking Task

There are two options for today's speaking task, so you can choose one to answer:

- a. Have you ever faced an ethical dilemma, when you weren't sure about the right thing to do? Describe the situation and how you decided to handle it.
- b. Do you believe "right" and "wrong" are absolute certainties, or do they depend on the context? Give an example to support your opinion.

Record your answer at www.speakpipe.com/espressoenglish or send the MP3 to homework@espressoenglish.net for feedback!

Answers

Comprehension Questions

1. a
2. c
3. b
4. c
5. a
6. a
7. b

Vocabulary Quiz

1. second thoughts
2. missed the boat
3. so much for
4. not sold on
5. odds
6. catastrophe
7. reckless
8. all the rage
9. came up with
10. big break
11. crammed
12. no shortage of