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| The ball is in your court | The ball is in their court now. Let’s wait for their decision. |
| be in hot water | Ken was in hot water about forgetting his wedding anniversary. |
| a long haul | Peter told his boss that he wouldn’t quit. He’s in it for the long haul. |
| know/learn the ropes | It took me a month to learn the ropes at my new job. |
| set the record straight | In a TV interview, the politician set the record straight about his experiences in the military. |
| line of work | The fireman said that injuries were common in his line of work. |
| burn your bridges | Jack tried to be kind to his boss when he quit in job because he didn’t want to burn his bridges. |
| get/be given the sack / sack (verb) | Alan got the sack for repeatedly coming into work late. |
| on the back burner | The project was put on the back burner while the company focused on a more immediate problem. |
| talk shop | Everyone agreed not to talk shop at the staff party. |
| start/get the ball rolling | It’s time we start the ball rolling on the new project. |
| get your foot in the door | Janice took a position as an administrative assistant to get her foot in the door at the famous fashion company. |
| small talk | After some small talk, the interview began. |
| put sth on hold | Greg had to put his weekend plans on hold and go into the office on Saturday for a few hours. |
| have your work cut out | If we want to finish this by Friday, then we’ve really got our work cut out for us. |
| see eye to eye | Mike and his father don’t see eye to eye on the issue of abortion. |
| up-and-coming | Roger is an up-and-coming hockey player from Toronto. |
| call it a day | It’s already 6 pm. Let’s call it a day. |
| twist sb’s arm | I really had to twist my sister’s arm to get her to pick me up from the airport. |
| be in the dark / keep sb in the dark | Most of the employees were kept in the dark about the merger until the last minute. |
| the bottom line | A: Doctor, what’s the bottom line? B: If you don’t quit smoking, you’ll die within a year. |
| call the shots | The boss told Janet to call the shots while he was away. |
| the fine/small print | My father reads the fine print on every contract he signs. |
| pick sb’s brains | Mike is a marketing genius. People often invite him to lunch or dinner so they can pick his brains. |
| be in the red | The company has been in the red since September. |
| a rule of thumb | As a rule of thumb, I don’t eat food that smells bad. |
| be on the same wavelength | The group members were all on the same wavelength, so they were able to finish their project quickly. |
| up to speed | After her holiday, it took Kate a few hours to get back up to speed on the recent developments in her company. |
| to be swamped | Wendy was swamped. She had so many papers on her desk; she didn't know where to begin. |
| headhunt | Todd was headhunted by his company’s main competitor. |
| breathe down sb’s neck | Jim found it hard to focus on his work with his boss breathing down his neck. |
| climb to the top of the career/corporate ladder | John was happy with his promotion to senior salesperson. He was slowly climbing the corporate ladder. |
| red tape | Mark’s visa application was held up for six months because of red tape. |
| Give sb free rein | When his father died, Mark was given free rein to do whatever he liked with the family business. |
| slack off / be a slacker | When the boss was on holiday, everyone at the office slacked off. |
| glass ceiling | The company has a glass ceiling that prevents women from being promoted to higher positions. |

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