

Chapter 15: Fast Track A Project

Pronunciation focus: (oa) Like boat

Lee: Michelle, Wes said that he needed you to **fast track** the Raycoal project.

Michelle: Why? I had a meeting with him yesterday and he said that we had more **pressing issues** that needed to be handled. This is *totally* **out of the blue**. I mean, we just discussed this.

Lee: What can I tell you? **Don't shoot the messenger**. I *don't call the shots* around here. I'm just passing along his request.

He just said that you needed to get right on the Raycoal account, and that it was now a **top priority**.

Michelle: Am I supposed to just **drop everything** I'm working on? I am in the process of *closing* the Morgan account.

Lee: Sometimes, you just got to **think on your feet**. I'm sure you'll be able to find a way to **juggle both projects**.

Michelle: Well, all I can say is that I *hope* you are right.

Breakdown

A) Fast Track A Project: This means to speed up the development or progress of a person or project.

1) We just got a call from Lex over at Colvin Inc. and he said that they have a project we need to **fast track**. They need to get this device on the market asap.

2) She just started working here six months ago and she has already been promoted. Without a doubt, she is on the **fast track** at this company.

B) Pressing Issues: These are issues, problems, matters and situations that need to be dealt with immediately.

1) Bruce, I can understand that location is an important issue. However, the most **pressing problem** we have is the financial issue. We need to take care of it first.

2) It seems to me that we have several serious problems. What do you feel is the most **pressing issue** we have? Why don't we vote and go from there?

C) Out Of the Blue: This is an idiom that means something happens unexpectedly or suddenly. It is used when an unanticipated event happens or occurs.

1) The strangest thing happened to me yesterday. I got a phone call from an old high school classmate who I hadn't spoken to in twenty years. It was totally **out of the blue**.

2) The best thing happened today, and it was totally **out of the blue** - I got promoted at work.

D) Don't Shoot The Messenger: This is used to warn somebody not to be angry with the person who tells them something bad.

1) I'm just telling you what the boss said. **Don't shoot the messenger**. If you are angry about it, go and yell at him. I didn't do anything to you.

2) Everyone please come here. Before I tell you what the management said, I would like to remind you to not **shoot the messenger** please.

E) Call The Shots: The person who calls the shots in an office is the one who makes the decisions. It is usually the boss or the manager.

1) I totally agree with you, and I can see how that would have a positive effect around here. However, I'm not the one **calling the shots** around here. Go talk to Terry.

2) Why do you always ask him for approval? Please understand that I am the one **calling the shots** around here.

F) Top Priority: This is something that is given special attention. It is a situation or matter that is more important than others.

1) Our **top priority** is finding the bug that is causing our system to crash. We need to get it done as soon as possible. We need to get our system back online at once.

2) We can't deal with that right now. This is our **top priority**. Everything else will have to wait until we finish this.

G) Drop Everything: This means to stop doing whatever you are doing. This expression is usually used when something more important that needs to be done comes along.

1) Everyone please **drop everything** and please come to the conference room. Something important has come up that needs our immediate attention.

2) I know that what you need is crucial. However, I am currently working on two projects. I just can't **drop everything** right now. Ask someone else to help you.

H) Think On Your Feet: To make a quick decision or give an answer quickly. It's used in pressure situations.

1) I didn't expect our client to ask that question. I needed to **think on my feet**, but I feel that I was able to give them an appropriate answer.

2) One of the job qualifications for working at this firm is being able to **think on your feet**. Do you think this is something you can handle?

I) Juggle Projects: This means to handle multiple projects at the same time.

1) I would love to help you but I'm currently **juggling three projects**. There is just no way I could take on anything else right now. I might be able to help you out in a month or so.

2) I need to talk to the boss and tell him that I just can't **juggle all these projects**. I can handle three, but I can't manage four.