

Business Conversation 13: Being Fired

Practice 1 | Useful Expressions

Directions: Listen and repeat.

- **summon** - to order someone to come to you; to request to appear in front of you (formal)
- **unsatisfactory** - not good enough
- **crisis** - a time of great danger, difficulty, or confusion when problems must be solved or important decisions must be made
- **You're fired!**
- **cleaning out your desk**
- **get canned** - be fired (informal)
- **be let go** - to be fired (informal)
- **be laid off** - to be stopped employing by the company because there is not enough work for them to do (noun: layoff)
- **severance package**
- **severance** - the act of ending someone's work contract
- **go in the red, be in the red** - to be at a loss [deficit]
- **make ends meet** - to have enough money to cover living expenses.

Practice 2 | Dialogue

Directions: Read the dialogue aloud with your teacher.

Due to the economic crisis the company has had to do some firings to reduce costs.

Ross is one of the people being fired.

Ross : Hello sir. I heard I was **summoned**?

Boss : Yes, have a seat. I have some **unsatisfactory** news for you.

Ross : What happened?

Boss : You know the economic **crisis** has hit us very hard and we're finding it quite troublesome to keep from **going in the red**.

Ross : Yes, we have been working really hard **to make ends meet**.

Boss : Unfortunately it hasn't been enough. We are forced to **fire** some employees.

Ross : Am I **being fired**?

Boss : Yes Ross, we have **to let you go**. We also have a **severance package** that includes the current month's pay and the next month's.

Ross : This is terrible, what am I going to do?

Boss : We can also help you find a job in the field, write letters of recommendation for you.

Ross : Thank you. I could really use that.

Boss : I'm sorry Ross. Good luck.

Check your understanding: Answer the following questions.

1. Why was Ross called to the boss' office?
2. Why was Ross fired?
3. What did the company do to compensate for firing Ross?

Practice 3 | Role-Play

Directions: Have a role-play with your teacher in the following situation.

Situation

You have to fire an employee because he has consistently been having bad results for the past six months.

Expressions:

- You are fired.
- considering your performance
- Clean out your desk/workspace.
- Severance package
- I have summoned you here...
- Unsatisfactory results

Practice 4 | Discussion

Directions: Discuss these topics and exchange thoughts with your teacher.

1. Have you ever been fired?
2. Have you ever fired someone?
3. How would being fired make you feel?
4. What do you think you could do to prevent yourself from being fired?
5. Do you think being fired is the end of the road or the opening of a new range of possibilities?