

# Advanced Level

## A Stick in the Mud

### WARM-UPS

1. Can you remember the first time you went to school? Or the first day of work on your first job?
2. What about your schoolmates or your officemates, can you describe how you felt about them? Were you shy?
3. Did someone befriend you? Is he/she still your friend until today?
4. If you see someone new in your school/office what do you do? Do you talk to him/her? Or do you wait for him/her to talk to you first?
5. What's the best approach you know to become a friend to someone who's new in school or in the office?

### CONVERSATION

Note the underlined phrases; they're called business idioms.

A: So, what do you think of the new guy? He seems a bit of a stiff, don't you think?

B: Well, yes. He does seem a bit formal, but of course, he's the new kid on the block. That's to be expected.

A: I just hope it doesn't turn out to be a stick in the mud. I think we've got some pretty good office camaraderie going on here. I like getting out of bed and coming to work. And I don't want anything to spoil that.

B: Well, perhaps you should take the initiative and bring the new guy into the fold. He just need a little bit of friendliness extended to him. What's his name, anyway?

A: I'm not sure, actually.

B: Well, there you have it! Why don't you talk to him and invite him out to the Friday evening get together at the pub? That way, we'll be sure to get a read on what he's about and he'll feel more comfortable.

A: Good idea. I'll do that right away.

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## VOCABULARY

Choose the correct meaning from the choices below:

- |                  |                            |
|------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. stiff(adj.)   | a bar                      |
| 2. formal(adj.)  | a group of people          |
| 3. block(n)      | tight / rigid              |
| 4. spoil(v)      | courtly                    |
| 5. initiative(n) | destroy                    |
| 6. fold(n)       | a section of a city / town |
| 7. extended(v)   | drive / push               |
| 8. pub           | given                      |

| Business Idioms             | Meaning   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| A bit of a stiff            | a little formal; not really energetic or fun                        |
| A new kid on the block      | a new guy; a new employee   |
| A stick in the mud          | a boring person; someone who seems not interested or old-fashioned  |
| Camaraderie                 | a feeling between people; the spirit or the attitude between people |
| To spoil something          | to ruin something   |
| Bring someone into the fold | to introduce someone to other people                                |
| Take the initiative         | do it yourself; be the first one to do                              |
| To get a read on something  | to start understanding something                                    |