

LESSON NOTES

Must-Know Cantonese Slang Words & Phrases S1 #1 Common Slang Expressions Used in the Workplace, Part 1

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VOCABULARY

Traditional	Romanization	English	Class
擦鞋	caat3 haai4	to fawn; to suck up to; to brown-nose	verb
吞樸	tan1 pok1	to slack off (at work)	verb
卸膊	se3 bok3	to deny responsibility; to blame others	verb
鐵飯碗	tit3 faan6 wun2	a very secure job or source of income	phrase

SAMPLE SENTENCES

<p>今時今日，擦鞋先可以上位。 <i>gam1 si4 gam1 jat6, caat3 haai4 sin1 ho2 ji3 soeng5 wai2.</i></p> <p>Nowadays, brown-nosing is the only way to rise up the corporate ladder.</p>	<p>再捉到你吞樸就炒魷魚！ <i>zoi3 zuk1 dou2 nei5 tan1 pok1 zau6 caau2 jau4 jyu2.</i></p> <p>You'll be fired if we catch you slacking off again!</p>
<p>我經理成日卸膊，賴晒落我度。 <i>ngo5 ging1 lei5 sing4 jat6 se3 bok3, laai6 saai3 lok6 ngo5 dou6.</i></p> <p>My manager always denies his responsibilities and blames it on me.</p>	<p>個個都想有個鐵飯碗。 <i>go3 go3 dou1 soeng2 jau5 go3 tit3 faan6 wun2.</i></p> <p>Everybody wants to have a secure source of income.</p>

VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

1. 擦鞋 (*caat3 haai4*)

Literal translation: "to polish shoes"

English meaning: "to fawn; to suck up to; to brown-nose"

Use this slang expression when describing the action of fawning or brown-nosing to impress a

superior.

Sample Sentences:

佢乜都唔識做, 淨係識擦鞋。

keoi5 mat1 dou1 m4 sik1 zou6, zing6 hai6 sik1 caat3 haai4.

"He doesn't know how to do anything but to suck up."

今時今日, 擦鞋先可以上位。

gam1 si4 gam1 jat6, caat3 haai4 sin1 ho2 ji3 soeng5 wai2.

"Nowadays, brown-nosing is the only way to rise up the corporate ladder."

2. 吞樸 (*tan1 pok1*)

Literal translation: "to swallow simple"

English meaning: "to slack off (at work)"

Use this slang expression when referring to someone who disappears while on the job.

Sample Sentences:

條友仔成日吞樸。

tiu4 jau5 zai2 sing4 jat6 tan1 pok1.

"That guy always slacks off at work."

再捉到你吞樸就炒魷魚!

zoi3 zuk1 dou2 nei5 tan1 pok1 zau6 caau2 jau4 jyu2.

"You'll be fired if we catch you slacking off again!"

3. 卸膊 (*se3 bok3*)

Literal translation: "to unload from shoulder"

English meaning: "to deny responsibility; to blame others"

Use this slang expression when referring to someone who always blames others for their own responsibility.

Sample Sentences:

佢最叻卸膊。

keoi5 zeoi3 lek1 se3 bok3.

"He's really good at blaming other people."

我經理成日卸膊，賴晒落我度。

ngo5 ging1 lei5 sing4 jat6 se3 bok3, laai6 saai3 lok6 ngo5 dou6.

"My manager always denies his responsibilities and blames it on me."

4. 鐵飯碗 (*tit3 faan6 wun2*)

Literal translation: "iron rice bowl"

English meaning: "a very secure job or source of income"

Use this slang expression when referring to a job that generates stable income.

Sample Sentences:

公務員有鐵飯碗。

gung1 mou6 jyun4 jau5 tit3 faan6 wun2.

"Civil Servants have a very secure source of income."

個個都想有個鐵飯碗。

go3 go3 dou1 soeng2 jau5 go3 tit3 faan6 wun2.

"Everybody wants to have a secure source of income."