

business, *n.*

Pronunciation: [ⓘ] Brit. /ˈbɪznɪs/, U.S. /ˈbɪznɪs/, /ˈbɪznɪz/

Forms:

α. Old English **bisignisse** (*Northumbrian*, accusative), Middle English **bessynes**, Middle English **besynese**, Middle English **beysones**, Middle English **bisenes**, Middle English **bisenesse**, Middle English **bissinesse**, Middle English **bissinusse**, Middle English **bisynesse**, Middle English **bysenesse**, Middle English **bysynesse**, Middle English–1500s **business**, Middle English–1500s **besyness**, Middle English–1500s **bissynes**, Middle English–1500s **bisynes**, Middle English–1500s **bisynesse**, Middle English–1500s **bysynes**, Middle English–1500s **bysynesse**, Middle English–1600s **besenes**, Middle English–1600s **besines**, Middle English–1600s **bisenesse**, Middle English–1600s **besynes**, Middle English–1600s **besynesse**, Middle English–1600s **bisines**, Middle English–1600s **business**, Middle English–1600s **bisenesse**, Middle English–1600s **business**, Middle English–1600s **besynesse**, Middle English–1600s **bisynes**, Middle English–1600s **business**, Middle English–1600s **bisynesse**, Middle English–1600s **bysines**, Middle English–1600s **business**, 1500s **bessyness**, 1500s **besunys**, 1500s **business**, 1500s **businis**, 1500s **busynez**, 1500s **busyenes**, 1500s **busynes**, 1500s–1600s **bissines**, 1500s–1600s **bisines**, 1500s–1600s **bisynesse**, 1500s–1600s **busenes**, 1500s–1600s **bussines**, 1500s–1600s **bussinesse**, 1500s–1700s **buysines**, 1600s **bessines**, 1600s **beusenes**, 1600s **bissens**, 1600s **bissiness**, 1600s **biusines**, 1600s **buisness**, 1600s **buissines**, 1600s **busienes**, 1600s **busieness**, 1600s **bussiness**, 1600s **busynese**, 1600s (1700s–1800s *regional* and *nonstandard*) **buzziness**; *Scottish* pre-1700 **beisines**, pre-1700 **beseynes**, pre-1700 **besienes**, pre-1700 **besinace**, pre-1700 **besinas**, pre-1700 **besines**, pre-1700 **bessines**, pre-1700 **besynes**, pre-1700 **besynesse**, pre-1700 **bisines**, pre-1700 **business**, pre-1700 **bisenes**, pre-1700 **bissienes**, pre-1700 **bissines**, pre-1700 **bissynes**, pre-1700 **byssenes**, pre-1700 **byssynes**, pre-1700 **bysynes**.

β. 1500s–1600s **buisnes**, 1500s–1600s **busnes**, 1500s–1600s **busnesse**, 1600s **besnes**, 1600s **beysnes**, 1600s **bisnies**, 1600s **bisnis**, 1600s **biusnes**, 1600s **buishnesse**, 1600s **busnis**, 1600s **buysnes**, 1600s–1700s **bisnes**, 1600s–1700s **buis'ness**, 1600s–1700s **buisness**, 1600s–1700s **bus'ness**, 1700s–1800s **buisness**; *Scottish* pre-1700 **bissnes**, pre-1700 **bissness**, pre-1700 **byssnes**.

Frequency (in current use):

Origin: Formed within English, by derivation. **Etymons:** *BUSY* *adj.*, *-NESS* *suffix*.

Etymology: < *BUSY* *adj.* + *-NESS* *suffix*. Compare *BUSYING* *n.* and *BUSY* *n.*¹

Disyllabic pronunciation, reflecting syncope of the unstressed second syllable of trisyllabic forms, is indicated by spellings without a medial vowel (β. forms) from the 16th cent. and is noted by orthoepists from the early 17th cent. (see further E. J. Dobson *Eng. Pronunc. 1500–1700* (ed. 2, 1968) II. §306).

For the pronunciation and spelling variation in the first syllable see discussion at *BUSY* *adj.*

It is unlikely that there is any connection between this word and Anglo-Norman *bosognes*, *besognes*, *busuines*, etc. (plural) in the sense ‘affairs, business’, although it is possible that the two words were occasionally associated with one another.

With *to give business to* at Phrases 3 compare classical Latin *operam dare*.

†I. The quality or state of being busy. *Obsolete.*

Used from Middle English down to the 18th cent., but now differentiated as *BUSINESS* *n.* (with trisyllabic pronunciation). Later examples with spelling *business* which approximate to senses in this branch are usually extended from or influenced by branch II., and hence belong there.

1. Anxiety, solicitude, care; distress, uneasiness. *Obsolete.*

OE (Northumbrian) *Lindisf. Gospels: Matt.* (*headings to readings*) xx *Nec sollicitudinem escæ et uestis habendam sed regnum dei omnibus præferendum docet* : ne bisignisse mettes & woedes hæbende ah ric godes allum fore læras.

a1400 (▶ a1325) *Cursor Mundi* (Vesp.) l. 14105 ‘Martha, Martha’..‘In mikel bisenes ert þou’.

a1425 (▶ c1384) *Bible* (Wycliffite, E.V.) (Corpus Oxf.) (1850) Ezek. xii. 19 Thei shulen eete her breed in bisynes [L. *solicitudine*].

c1475 (▶ ?c1451) *Bk. Noblesse* (Royal) (1860) 3 Put away thoughte and gret pensifnes..and besinesse.

1526 *Bible* (Tyndale) Gal. v. 17 From hence forth, let no man put me to busynes.

1574 *St. Austens Manuell* in *Certaine Prayers S. Augustines Medit.* sig. Rvij^v Leauē of thyne owne businesses..and with draw thy selfe from thy trouble some thoughtes.

1611 *Second Maiden's Trag.* (1909) i. ii. 9 My thinckes the deposde kinge yo^r brothers sorrowe Should finde yo^u busines ynoughe.

2. Diligent labour, exertion, effort. *Obsolete.*

Earliest in *to do* (*one's*) *business* at Phrases 3; see also *to give business to* at Phrases 3.

1340 *Ayenbite* (1866) 56 Huyche bysinesse hi doþ to þan þet hare metes by wel agrayþed.

c1350 (▶ a1333) WILLIAM OF SHOREHAM *Poems* (1902) 88 Þat he healde hy [sc. the commandments] Wyþ al hys bysynysse.

c1450 (▶ a1400) *Orologium Sapientiaē in Anglia* (1888) 10 329 (MED) Þis hit is þat I haue longe-tyme..with alle myne bisynesse sowht.

1509 S. HAWES *Pastime of Pleasure* xiv. xiv In wayne they spende their besynes.

?1515 W. HARRINGTON *Commendations of Matrimony* sig. D.iiij The wyues..duty is to haue all the labour..and busynes aboutes theyr chyldren as longe as they ben of tendre age.

3. Application or commitment to a task or purpose; industry, diligence. *Obsolete.*

- ▶ a1387 J. TREVISA tr. R. Higden *Polychron.* (St. John's Cambr.) (1865) I. 5 By grete besynesse of þe writers of cronicles.
a1425 (▶ a1325) *Cursor Mundi* (Galba) l. 28748 (*MED*) Fasting and gude bisines Gers a man fle lustes of fless.
?c1430 (▶ c1400) J. WYCLIF *Eng. Wks.* (1880) 60 Cristis bysynesse in prechyng.
c1500 (▶ a1449) J. LYDGATE *Isopes Fabules* (Trin. Cambr.) l. 137 in *Minor Poems* (1934) II. 571 (*MED*) Thryft commeþ of vertuous besynesse.
c1550 *Complaynt Scotl.* (1979) 1 Distitute of..al verteus bysynes of body ande saul.
1611 *Bible* (King James) Rom. xii. 11 Not slouthfull in busines [1881 *Rev. Vers.* in diligence not slothful] .
1696 E. STILLINGFLEET *12 Serm.* VIII. 349 Apprehensive..not so much from the business of our enemies.
1713 T. PARNELL in *Guardian* 21 Apr. 2/1 Behold the Raptures which a Writer knows..Behold his Business while he works the Mine.

4. Eagerness, earnestness, importunity. *Obsolete.*

- ▶ a1387 J. TREVISA tr. R. Higden *Polychron.* (St. John's Cambr.) (1869) II. 159 (*MED*) Vplondisshe men..fondeþ wiþ greet besynesse for to speke Frenscē, for to be i-tolde of.
c1390 *Cato's Distichs* (Vernon) 333 in F. J. Furnivall *Minor Poems Vernon MS* (1901) II. 580 Envyē, wiþ gret businessse Beo-þenk þe forte fleo.
c1400 in T. F. Simmons *Lay Folks Mass Bk.* (1879) 122 Þorouȝ besynesse of preyers.
c1450 J. CAPGRAVE *Life St. Augustine* (1910) 16 Than sent sche praieres on-to heuene with gretter businessse.
1538 *Prymer in Eng. after Vse of Sarum* sig. Ivij Make me, accordyng to my busynes Partener of thy..glory endles.

5. Fuss, ado.

Cf. sense 12b at branch II.

a. Trouble, difficulty. *Obsolete.*

- ▶ a1387 J. TREVISA tr. R. Higden *Polychron.* (St. John's Cambr.) (1871) III. 449 (*MED*) [He] aleyde þis sorwe unneþe wiþ grete besynesse.
c1450 (▶ c1375) G. CHAUCER *Anelida & Arcite* (Fairf. 16) (1878) l. 99 Ful mykel besynesse Had he er that he myght his lady wynne.
1528 W. TYNDALE *Obed. Christen Man* f. xxxv^v What busynes had he to pacyfie his childerne?
1599 R. BODENHAM in R. Hakluyt *Princ. Navigations* (new ed.) II. I. 100 I had no small businessse to cause my mariners to venture.
1693 J. LOCKE *Some Thoughts conc. Educ.* §157 His learning to read should be made as little Trouble or Business to him as might be.

b. Disturbance, commotion; (also) an instance of this. *Obsolete.*

- 1514 LD. MOUNTJOY in J. Strype *Eccl. Memorials* (1721) I. I. 9 He feared that if they had not their pardons in likewise, they would either make business or they would avoid.
1526 *Bible* (Tyndale) Matt. xxvii. f. xlj When Pilate sawe..that moare busenes [1611 a tumult] was made.
1533 *Fabyans Cronycle* (new ed.) II. f. ccxxx For whose goodes was besynesse bytween the kynges amner and the sheryffe.
1560 J. DAUS tr. J. Sleidane *Commentaries* f. ccxxlii^v One of the Sergeaunts..made a busines with him as though he would haue caried him to pryson.
1577 R. HOLINSHED *Hist. Scotl.* 65/2 in *Chron.* I Herevpon was Argadus sent forth..with a power to appease that businessse.

6. Care, attention, observance. *Obsolete.*

- ▶ a1398 J. TREVISA tr. Bartholomaeus Anglicus *De Proprietatibus Rerum* (BL Add. 27944) (1975) I. v. xxxvi. 237 The herte hatte *cor.*..of *cura* 'besines', for þerin [is] al besines and cause of wit and of konnyng.
a1425 (▶ c1395) *Bible* (Wycliffite, L.V.) (Royal) (1850) Ecclus. xli. 15 Haue thou bisynesse [L. *curam habe*] of a good name.
a1475 *Bk. Curtasye* (Sloane 1986) l. 331 in *Babees Bk.* (2002) I. 309 Whil any man spekes with grete besenes, Herken his wordis.
1504 *Rolls of Parl.: Henry VII* (Electronic ed.) Parl. Jan. 1504 §11. m. 9 Takyng uppon theym the charge and besynes for the assessyng of the seid somme.
?1529 R. HYRDE tr. J. L. Vives *Instr. Christen Woman* III. ii. sig. q.iii^v All these busynes, as keypyng of the corce.

7. Activity, briskness, motion; = BUSYNESS *n.* *Obsolete.*

- a1398 (▶ a1349) R. ROLLE *Commandm. of Love* (Rawl.) in C. Horstmann *Yorkshire Writers* (1895) I. 66 For to trauaile þare-aboutē, is outrageous besenesse, þat he [sc. Jesus] forbedeth.
c1500 (▶ ?a1437) *Kingis Quair* (1939) clv (*MED*) The lytill squerell, full of besyness.
1616 G. MARKHAM tr. C. Estienne et al. *Maison Rustique* (rev. ed.) VII. xxii. 681 The businessse of his [sc. a dog's] taile.
1674 N. FAIRFAX *Treat. Bulk & Selvedge* 11 The bulkiness of the world, the business of motion.

8. Mischievous or interfering activity; prying, officiousness. *Obsolete* (but cf. sense 16b).

a1466 in *Paston Lett. & Papers* (2004) II. 320 Al by her awne bessynes of her tung.
1528 T. MORE *Dialogue Heresydes* III, in *Wks.* 212/1 Faccious wayes full of busynes.
a1586 SIR P. SIDNEY *Arcadia* (1590) III. xxiii. sig. XX1^v O noble Sisters..now you be gone..what is left in that sex, but babling, and businesse?

II. Something with which a person is busy or occupied.

9.

†a. A pursuit or occupation demanding time and attention; a serious employment as distinguished from a pastime. *Obsolete.*

Later merging into specific sense at 13b.

► a1382 *Bible* (Wycliffite, E.V.) (Douce 369(1)) (1850) Eccles. iv. 4 Eft I beheeld alle the trauailis of men, and the besynesses [a1425 *L.V.* bisynesses].
c1475 (► ?c1400) *Apol. Lollard Doctr.* (1842) 77 (*MED*) Now al most is no worldly bysines þat ministres of þe auter are not implied in.
?a1500 (► ?1458) in J. H. Parker *Some Acct. Domest. Archit.* (1859) III. ii. 41 (*MED*) Another blisshed besines is brigges to make.
1535 *Bible* (Coverdale) 2 Tim. ii. 4 No man that warreth tangleth him selfe with worldly busynesses.
1659 S. CRADOCK *Knowl. & Pract.* 171 Removing our hearts from our prayers to our worldly businesses and occasions.
1725 D. DEFOE *Compl. Eng. Tradesman* I. v. 57 Trade..ought to be follow'd as one of the great businesses of life.
1780 W. COWPER *Poems* 338 The world, with all its..customs and its businesses Are no concern at all of his.
1853 A. J. MORRIS *Relig. & Business* (title page) Wherever religion is a business, there will business be a religion.
1899 *Catholic University Bull.* Oct. 482 We..are thrown into the cares, distractions and businesses of the world.

b. As a mass noun: action which occupies time and demands attention and effort; *esp.* serious occupation or work, as opposed to pleasure or recreation (cf. *PLEASURE n.* 1c).

c1405 (► c1390) G. CHAUCER *Melibeus* (Hengwrt) (2003) §621 He þ^t..casteth hym to no bisynesse ne ocupacioun shal falle in to pouerte.
?a1425 *Chron. Papacy* l. 13 in *Jrnl. Eng. & Germanic Philol.* (1942) 41 175 Þe chirche of Rome bigan to..gate more of seculer bisenesse..þan of gostly deuocion.
1532 T. MORE *Confut. Tyndale* in *Wks.* 826/1 Occupied in honorable businesse.
1600 C. PERCY in C. M. Ingleby & L. T. Smith *Shakespeare's Cent. Prayse* (1879) 38 Pestred with contrie businesse.
1653 I. WALTON *Compl. Angler* Ep. Ded. 3 To give rest to your mind, and deuest your self of your more serious business .
1748 LD. CHESTERFIELD *Let.* 16 Feb. (1932) (modernized text) III. 1102 I, who have been behind the scenes, both of pleasure and business.
1772 F. BURNEY *Early Jrnls. & Lett.* (1988) I. 205 All Day I (a)m fagging at business—then in the evening I begin to live.
1836 H. TAYLOR *Statesman* xi. 79 It were to be wished that he should set apart from business..a sabbatical hour in each day.
1857 C. HEAVYSEGE *Saul* (1869) 141 Business still should alternate with pleasure.
1918 H. HAYENS *Lords of Air* 41 I was not joy-riding, but bent on serious business.
2000 L. BAGSHAWE *For all Wrong Reasons* (2003) xxxix. 339 Michael looked at her with his dark eyes... 'This is business, not personal. I don't mix the two.'

†c. Work done by an animal. *Obsolete.*

1707 J. MORTIMER *Whole Art Husbandry* 153 Let them [sc. horses] be well kept, and then you may expect business from them.
1740 H. BRACKEN *Ferriery Improv'd* (ed. 2) II. v. 104 A Horse which eats only a moderate Quantity of Food, will do as much Business..[as] one that eats continually.
1809 W. PITT *Gen. View Agric. Leics.* 267 The old Leicestershire rams..will..continue to perform an almost unlimited quantity of business, to nine, ten, even twelve years old.
1825 J. C. LOUDON *Encycl. Agric.* 961 The bulls..if good stock-getters are kept on as long as they will do business.
1836 *Mechanics' Mag.* Dec. 316/2 Four horses will thresh three hundred bushels... One horse will do good business with the \$25 machine.

10.

a. With possessive adjective or genitive: a task appointed or undertaken; a person's duty, part, or role (frequently *to do something*); function, occupation.

See also *to make it one's business* at Phrases 9.

c1400 J. GOWER *Eng. Wks.* (1901) II. 226 Thogh the heved of holy chirche..Ne do noght al his hole businesse..to sette pes and love.
c1405 (► c1395) G. CHAUCER *Clerk's Tale* (Hengwrt) (2003) l. 1015 To the yate is she went..to greette the Markysesse And after that dooth forth hir bisynesse.
c1430 (► c1386) G. CHAUCER *Legend Good Women* (Cambr. Gg.4.27) (1879) l. 1719 Bad hire seruauntis don hire besynesse.
c1515 LD. BERNERS tr. *Bk. Duke Huon of Burdeux* (1882–7) lviii. 199 It behoueth vs shortely to determyne oure besynes..I shall shew you what is best for vs ii to do.
1611 *Bible* (King James) Gen. xxxix. 11 Ioseph went in to the house, to doe his busines .

- α1680 S. BUTLER *Genuine Remains* (1759) I. 95 Love's Business is to love, and to enjoy.
- 1709 R. STEELE *Tatler* No. 18. ¶1 Because a Thing is every Body's Business, it is no Body's Business.
- 1711 C. LOCKYER *Acct. Trade India* 108 Every Factory had formerly a Compradore, whose Business it was to buy in Provisions.
- 1801 M. EDGEWORTH *Forester in Moral Tales* I. 173 It is our business to keep the room aired and swept.
- 1878 T. H. HUXLEY *Physiography* (ed. 2) 183 The great business of the sea is..eating away the margin of the coast.
- 1921 *Domest. Engin.* 8 Jan. 66/1 These men [sc. druggists] said that their business was to fill prescriptions and nothing else.
- 2001 J. S. SHIVERS *Leadership & Groups in Recreational Service* xx. 257 The supervisor need not have..experience of all the difficulties... His or her business is to consult, analyze, explain.

b. An activity or matter that someone is engaged in, or with which he or she is concerned at a particular time; (often) *spec.* the errand or matter on which a person comes.

- α1413 (▶ c1385) G. CHAUCER *Troilus & Criseyde* (Pierpont Morgan) (1881) II. I. 1174 Of hire bysynesse þis was on..Ful preuyly þis lettre for to rede.
- 1462 *Extracts Rec.* in W. Chambers *Charters Burgh Peebles* (1872) 145 Ales than he be..in a neidful erand or besynes.
- 1534 N. UDALL *Floures for Latine Spekyng gathered oute of Terence* f. 28^v What busynes hast thou there? or, what makest thou there?
- α1616 W. SHAKESPEARE *Taming of Shrew* (1623) III. iii. 64 If you knew my businesse, You would intreat me rather goe then stay.
- 1684 J. BUNYAN *Pilgrim's Progress 2nd Pt.* II. 72 What is your business here so late to Night?
- 1720 J. CLARKE *Ess. Educ. Youth* 18 His Business will have no Difficulty in it.
- 1797 M. ROBINSON *Walsingham* III. 260 What business have you in this lady's chamber?
- 1833 *Christian Advocate* Jan. 10/1 As you walk to the house of God,..ask yourselves what is your business there.
- 1988 C. LANE *Scheme of Driftless Shifter* 17 What business brings you out on such a night?
- 2002 V. FLYNN *Separation of Power* 125 A woman's voice came over the intercom and asked him his business. Rapp told her he had a flower delivery.

†11. The object of anxiety or serious effort; a serious purpose or aim. *Obsolete.*

- c1405 (▶ c1387–95) G. CHAUCER *Canterbury Tales Prol.* (Hengwrt) (2003) l. 522 To drawn folk to heuene..this was his bisynesse.
- c1450 (▶ c1390) G. CHAUCER *Complaint of Venus* (Fairf. 16) (1879) l. 20 Me to serue is al his besynesse.
- 1483 (▶ 1413) tr. G. Deguileville *Pilgrimage of Soul* (Caxton) iii. iii. f. lj^v Alle youre study & businesse hath ben to defame tho that were better than ye.
- ?c1530 in F. J. Furnivall *Polit., Relig., & Love Poems* (1903) 57 Peyse wisely the besynes & the purpose of them wich ammynyster thy goodes.

12.

a. Work that has to be done; matters demanding attention. Formerly also as a count noun: a particular matter requiring attention; a piece of work, a job (now *rare*).

Cf. *a person's business* at Phrases 27, *to get (also settle) down to business* at Phrases 13.

admiralty, faculty, parliament business, etc.: see the first element.

- 1476 in C. L. Kingsford *Stonor Lett. & Papers* (1919) II. 16 Cosyn, I longe..to se you her in London, whanne you have done your besenes.
- 1553 BP. J. PILKINGTON in J. Strype *Eccl. Memorials* (1721) III. I. xii. 114 Who is meeter for any of these businesses than Sir Iohn Lack-latin?
- 1557 T. NORTH tr. A. de Guevara *Diall Princes* (1582) 424 b The continuall buysines they haue do vex them.
- 1600 W. SHAKESPEARE *Midsummer Night's Dream* III. ii. 396 We may effect this businesse, yet ere day.
- 1611 M. SMITH in *Bible (King James)* Transl. Pref. 11 In a businesse of moment a man feareth not the blame of conuenient slacknesse.
- 1720 A. POPE tr. Homer *Iliad* V. XIX. 152 What I act, survey, And learn from thence the Business of the Day.
- 1791 T. JEFFERSON *Public Papers* (1990) x. 420 That [bank] of Philadelphia..now does this business, by their post-note.
- 1851 T. CARLYLE *Life J. Sterling* II. vi. 207 On these..businesses..he was often running up to London.
- 1881 *Daily Tel.* 27 Dec. Attention was paid to the business of the evening.
- 1921 H. WALPOLE *Young Enchanted* III. iii. 215 I'm off on some business of my own for an hour or two.
- 1976 *Daily Tel.* 22 June 1/3 The Conservatives snarled up Government business by ceasing the pairing of MPs.
- 2007 *Canberra Times* (Nexis) 28 Apr. B5 Official business was conducted in Czech or Hungarian.

b. *colloquial.* A difficult matter, a bother; (as a mass noun) difficulty, bother, fuss. Frequently with indefinite article.

- 1827 A. WOODROOFFE *Michael Married Man* 42 Didn't you know that the dress-making was quite a business of itself?
- 1843 T. CARLYLE *Past & Present* II. xii. 140 If he had known what a business it was to govern the Abbey.
- 1889 *Gardening Illustr.* 5 Jan. 583/3 If those roots are in a well..it will be quite a business to attend to them.
- 1919 E. HOLDSWORTH *Taming of Nan* 296 What a business it was.
- 1920 D. H. LAWRENCE *Women in Love* xii. 149 She hated the palaver Hermione made..She wanted anything but this fuss and business.
- 1995 C. TOYNBEE *Her Work & His* 65 Making beds, dusting and keeping the floors was quite a business.

13.

a. With possessive adjective or genitive: a person's official or professional duties as a whole; one's regular, habitual, or stated profession, trade, or occupation. Now frequently *colloquial*: 'line of work'.

- 1477 EARL RIVERS tr. *Dictes or Sayengis Philosophres* (Caxton) (1877) lf. 53^v He that wele & dyligently vnderstondith to his bysenesse.
- 1548 H. LATIMER *Notable Serm.* sig. C.ii^v Lette eury man do his owne busynes, and folow his callyng.
- 1694 R. L'ESTRANGE *Fables* (ed. 6) cclcxv. 385 They make Fooling their Business and their Livelihood.
- 1729 W. LAW *Serious Call* ii. 19 His every-day business will be a course of wise and reasonable actions.
- 1746 LD. CHESTERFIELD *Let.* 25 Jan. (1932) (modernized text) III. 724 To apply yourself seriously to your business.
- 1747 *Gen. Descr. All Trades* 181 Their Business is not only Saddle-making,..but to..sell all other Necessaries for the..Horseman.
- 1840 *Evid. Hull Docks Comm.* 69 What is the nature of your business as a sloop-broker?
- 1882 BEECHER in *Homiletic Monthly* (N.Y.) Apr. 381 One whose business it is to preach.
- 1949 *Pop. Mech.* Aug. 125 My business is lecturing on wildlife.
- 1977 W. MCILVANNEY *Laidlaw* xl. 186 'What's his business?' 'Same as any tout's. Other people's.'
- 2001 *Kindred Spirit* Summer 27/1 I have listened to many top-quality bullshitters in my business.

b. An instance of this; a particular occupation or means of earning a living; a trade, profession, or pursuit.

- 1724 J. C. F. DE HATZFELD *Case of Learned* XXI. 163 Their Parents are obliged to put them to inferior Trades or Businesses, instead of giving them an Education.
- 1827 T. CARLYLE tr. J. L. Tieck in *German Romance* II. 89 I wished to be a fisherman, and tried that business for a time.
- 1845 J. R. McCULLOCH *Treat. Taxation* I. ii. 74 Taxes on the profits of particular businesses.
- 1856 J. A. FROUDE *Hist. Eng.* (1858) I. i. 51 Not allowing any man to work at a business for which he was unfit.
- 1878 W. S. JEVONS *Polit. Econ.* 58 A good butcher makes high wages, because his business is a greasy one, besides being thought to be cruel.
- 1906 *Yale Courant* 43 808 There is an old saying among railroad men..that 'accidents are part of the business'.
- 2007 P. GREEN *Pete Duel* xiii. 267 Acting is a business that attracts neurotics and feeds their neuroses.

14.

a. Trade and all activity relating to it, esp. considered in terms of volume or profitability; commercial transactions, engagements, and undertakings regarded collectively; an instance of this. Hence more generally: the world of trade and commerce. Also *figurative*. Cf. COMMERCE *n.* 1.

Now the most common sense. Frequently with modifying word denoting a particular area of commercial activity, or the product it relates to. *big, music, newspaper, show business*, etc.: see the first element.

Cf. *in business* at Phrases 2, *on business* at Phrases 1, *to do business* at Phrases 11a.

- 1478 R. CELY *Let.* 28 Oct. in *Cely Lett.* (1975) 33 I wyll ye com home,..for there schall be no besynese at Caley's thys marte tyme.
- 1599 J. MINSHEU *Percyvall's Dict. Spanish & Eng.* at *Negociar* To deale in busynesse, to follow a trade.
- 1637 *News-lett. C. Rossingham* in S. Gardiner *Documents Proc. against W. Prynne* (1877) 84 The maunting business goes on, but with some restrictions.
- 1698 C. DAVENANT *Disc. Public Revenues* I. 12 The years 1686, 1687, and 1688, when our foreign business was at its height.
- 1725 D. DEFOE *Compl. Eng. Tradesman* I. iv. 56 If they do not get money, they gain knowledge in business.
- 1779 H. ARNOT *Hist. Edinb.* iv. iv. 532 Those abuses which had crept into the banking business.
- 1823 C. LAMB *South-sea House* in *Elia* 4 To open a book of business, or bill of lading.
- 1878 *Scribner's Monthly* Dec. 309/1 The rapid increase of the laundry business has led to the invention of a number of appliances for ironing.
- 1884 *Times* (Weekly ed.) 12 Sept. 7/3 They are evidently doing a very brisk business.
- 1897 'M. TWAIN' *Following Equator* iii. 53 When he destroyed the Church and burned the idols he did a mighty thing for civilization..but it was not 'business.'
- 1935 *Law & Contemp. Probl.* 2 1 A great expansion of the life insurance business.
- 1948 'N. SHUTE' *No Highway* iv. 92 The synthetic, phoney film business.
- 1952 S. MEAD (*title*) How to succeed in business without really trying.
- 1966 *Economist* 12 Nov. 682/3 A growing use of economists in business and government.
- 2008 *Vanity Fair* (N.Y.) July 114/2 With more and more business coming online, the Internet underwent an enormous build-out.

b. A commercial company, firm, or enterprise conducting such activity.

Usually taken to include its premises, staff, trade, profit, liabilities, etc.

dry-goods, lumber, malting business, etc.: see the first element.

- 1728 *Stamford Mercury* 4 Jan. 8/2 A Book of Accounts relating to the Business of..Anthony Nicholes, Cheese-Factor.

- 1787 *Times* 8 Jan. 4/4 (*adv.*) Shop and business to dispose of..together with a small low-rented house.
- 1788 *Eng. Described* 223 The brazery, pewtery, brass-foundry, iron-foundry and iron-forgery businesses [of Wigan], find employment for a great number of hands.
- 1800 P. HOARE *Indiscretion* v. iii. 71 A newspaper business, eh?
- 1819 *Times* 8 Mar. 1/1 A Medical Practitioner wishes to purchase a small business.
- 1856 J. KAVANAGH *Rachel Gray* viii. 142 I've got capital now, you see, and so I am going to set up a grocery business.
- 1878 *Spirit of Times* 19 Jan. 659/2 It takes five or six years to establish any good business on a firm basis.
- 1937 *Ann. Reg. 1936* II. 63 Owners of one-man businesses.
- 1988 *Oxf. Today* 1 37/1 Getting a small business started wasn't easy.
- 2002 *New Yorker* 22 Apr. 194/3 I try to imagine myself as..a savvy entrepreneur with her own catering business.

c. Theatre. The audience or attendance at a theatre; a 'house'; (also) the takings from this, the total of box-office receipts.

- 1755 C. CHARKE *Narr. Life* 130 Business continuing very shocking.
- 1811 C. MATHEWS *Let.* 5 Dec. in A. Mathews *Mem. C. Mathews* (1838) II. viii. 173 They may promise a salary, and I am sure they would pay it; but can they promise business?
- 1837 in W. R. Alger *Life E. Forrest* (1877) I. 324 Will conclude with her benefit on Friday evening when she will probably have between \$900 and \$1,000... This is considered a very handsome business.
- 1895 *N.Y. Dramatic News* 12 Oct. 5/2 Hanlon brothers' Superba has played to 'banner' business.
- 1995 P. HOARE *Noël Coward* 158 The *Vortex* tour finished in Cleveland..to good business.

d. Trade and all related activity as a subject of academic study or examination.

Recorded earliest in *business school* (see Compounds 3b).

- 1859 *Tyrone (Pa.) Daily Herald* 8 Mar. 4 Three hundred and fifty-seven students are in attendance at this time, making it the largest and most popular business School ever organized in the United States.
- 1868 J. HINTON *Let.* Sept. in E. Hopkins *Life & Lett. J. Hinton* (1878) xi. 247 I saw, with the greatest interest, a little of the higher schools at Dresden and Breslau... It is very striking to see how the Swiss and German boys are taught business as well as other things.
- 1889 *Publishers' Weekly* 26 Jan. 66/1 The author has for years been advocating the teaching of 'business' at school to English youths.
- 1922 *System* Apr. 467/2 If you studied business in school or college, you probably studied rules and principles.
- 1975 *Accounting Rev.* 50 234/2 Background on both management accounting and decision models for students who do not have the undergraduate degree in business.
- 2000 R. LEWIS & R. TREVITT *Business for Adv. GNVQ* (ed. 3) Introd. p. ix Welcome to your new course, the Vocational A level in Business.

e. Bridge. The transaction of points; the exaction of penalties. **for business:** to gain a penalty. Cf. Compounds 4.

- 1913 E. V. SHEPARD *Sci. Auction Bridge* 119 Bids of 1-Heart cannot be purely informatory, and it is unsafe to reckon them as meaning less than business.
- 1929 E. V. SHEPARD *Correct Contract Bridge* (1930) 67 All other doubles mean 'business', and are intended to collect a penalty.
- 1959 *Listener* 23 July 154/3 It is standard practice to regard a double as primarily for business.
- 2005 M. HORTON *Hands of Time* 108 When East redoubled for business, North-South's system dictated that a pass would convey the message that South had no long suit to run to.

15.

a. A situation or series of events; an affair, concern, matter, now often one regarded as curious or discreditable. Sometimes with modifying word, as *bad, odd, strange, etc.*

- 1524 tr. J. de Bourbon *Begynnyng & Foundacyon Holy Hospytall* sig. E.ii [It would have] ben ouer longe besynesse & in the meane tyme the turke myght haue chaunged his mynde.
- 1615 *State Papers Earl of Melrose* (1837) I. 201 Our greatest..impedimentis..[in the] fashious besines of Eglintoun.
- a1616 W. SHAKESPEARE *Macbeth* (1623) II. i. 22 We would spend it [sc. an houre] in some words vpon that Businesse .
- a1674 T. TRAHERNE *Christian Ethicks* (1675) 433 It is a poor business for a man to be secure, that has nothing to lose.
- 1706 *London Gaz.* No. 4012/1 A Business has lately happened which may..engage us in new Disputes.
- 1774 *Trinket* 172 *Une affaire de cœur*, is at best a silly business, yet mighty necessary to trifle off that trifle, life.
- 1805 *Med. & Physical Jrnl.* 14 354 The vaccinator should..see his patient at least four times during the progress of the business.
- 1813 R. SOUTHEY *Life Nelson* II. 177 This boat business..might be part of a great plan of invasion.
- 1867 M. A. MACKARNES *Example Better than Precept* 51 This is a bad business, Bob: if that 'ere doctor ain't here pretty quick-sticks,..it's all over with this chap.

- 1915 A. HUXLEY *Let. Nov.* (1969) 85 What an odd business it was about the suppression of Lawrence's book, *The Rainbow*.
 1939 'G. ORWELL' *Coming up for Air* IV. vii. 283 Listen, Hilda. You've got hold of the wrong end of the stick about this business.
 2003 S. BRETT *Murder in Museum* xi. 87 'The police haven't made an announcement to the press yet?' 'No... The whole business is still under wraps.'

†**b.** An 'affair of honour'; a duel. Chiefly in **to carry a business**. *Obsolete*.

- 1612 B. JONSON *Alchemist* III. iv. sig. G4 *Kas*. Where is this Doctor?.. Has he any skill? *Fac*. Wherein, Sir? *Kas*. To cary a busines, manage a Quarrell, fayrely, Vpon fit termes.
 1616 B. JONSON *Mercurie Vindicated* 154 in *Wks.* I For that's the word of tincture, the businesse. Let me alone with the businesse, I will carrie the businesse. I doe vnderstand the businesse. I doe finde an affront i' the businesse.
 1640 tr. G. S. du Verdier *Love & Armes Greeke Princes* I. xv. 62 Don Florisel..knowing full well how to carry a businesse..avoided half of his blows.

c. colloquial. A material object or contrivance, esp. one of indeterminate character, or one regarded as complex or cumbersome. Cf. AFFAIR *n.* 7b, CONCERN *n.* 10a.

- 1684 J. EVELYN *Diary* anno 1654 (1955) III. 96 Sir T. Fowlers Aviariie..is a poore buisnesse.
 1697 tr. *Countess D'Aunoy's Trav.* (1706) 231 Some Pastry business, which burns the Mouth, it is so excessively peppered.
 1825 *Examiner* 3 Jan. 3/2 A business of screws and iron wheels.
 1884 S. BECKETT *His Wedded Wife* xiv. 79 A French coffeepot,..[with] some complicated business of a sieve-like nature at the top.
 1954 M. M. KEEHN *Let.* 13 June in *India Ink* (2000) 41 Rehka showed me how to fix my hair Indian style, in a bun business at the back.
 1989 P. ACKROYD *First Light* 144 'What's that business over there?' He pointed towards the tumulus.

16.

a. A matter, activity, etc., that concerns or relates to a particular person or thing. Usually with *of* or genitive.

- 1525 LD. BERNERS tr. J. Froissart *Cronycles* II. xxi. 43 It is longe now sith I made any mencion of the busynesses of farre countreis.
 1526 *Bible* (Tyndale) Phil. 12 That my busynes [τα`κατ'εμε`] is happened unto the gretter furtherynge off the gspell.
 1682 T. D'URFEY *Royalist* I. i. 1 Stealing, why that's the business of the nation.
 1714 D. MANLEY *Adventures of Rivella* 117 She now agrees with me, that Politicks is not the Business of a Woman.
 1809 DUKE OF WELLINGTON *Dispatches* (1838) V. 198 The care of the Camp Kettles is..the business..of all the Bâtmén of the regiment.
 1871 B. JOWETT in tr. Plato *Dialogues* IV. 24 Virtue is the business of the legislator.
 1991 *Past & Present* Aug. 48 It is too easy to assume that, such is the fallen nature of mankind, reformation is the business of the next world.

b. colloquial. Chiefly in negative constructions: a matter or thing which one has the right to meddle with, involve oneself in, express an opinion on, etc.

See also *to be none of a person's business* at NONE *pron.* 4b; *to mind one's own business* at Phrases 5a.

- 1692 R. L'ESTRANGE *Fables* ccxx. 193 What business has a tortoise among the clouds?
 1727 tr. *Amusing Instructor* 17 We have no business to intermeddle in other people's affairs.
 1761 F. SHERIDAN *Mem. Miss Sidney Bidulph* II. 308 She has no business to go into her own lonely house again; it would be enough to kill her.
 1859 C. KINGSLEY *Misc.* (1863) II. 311 That is no business of ours.
 1878 H. SMART *Play or Pay* (ed. 3) ix. 177 A Captain of Dragoons has no business with a wife; but then we're always doing what we've no business to do.
 1937 A. CHRISTIE *Dumb Witness* viii. 88 Neither Annie nor I could see that it was any business of Miss Lawson's.
 1982 R. HALL *Just Relations* II. i. 116 That's what travel does for you,..gadding about where civilized people have no business poking their noses.
 2001 A. MARSHALL *Court of Common Pleas* (2003) 171 'It's none of your business..'.'Since it's about me..I'd say it is my business.'

c. Concern, the fact of being concerned *with*. Now somewhat *archaic*.

- 1759 S. JOHNSON *Prince of Abissinia* II. xxix. 33 My business is with man.
 1837 T. CARLYLE *French Revol.* II. I. i. 8 Madame, your business is with the children.
 1872 *Harper's Mag.* Oct. 673/2 Our business is with those smaller, but terribly annoying vermin, the 'dock rats'.
 1921 *Bull. John Rylands Libr.* 6 237 Our business is with opinion rather than with events, with generalities rather than with details.
 1998 A. WATSON *Anc. Law & Mod. Understanding* vi. 72 Our business is with acorns that fall from trees.

17.

a. Chiefly in negative constructions: dealings, intercourse, communication *with*. Now *rare* (in later use merging with sense 14a).

Sometimes with reference to Biblical usage (quot. 1611).

1611 *Bible* (King James) Judges xviii. 7 They..had no businesse with any man.

1731 *Gentleman's Mag.* Feb. 53 An island has no business with the affairs of the continent, only as a friendly neighbour.

1843 T. CARLYLE *Past & Present* iv. vi. 382 What a shallow delusion is this..That any man..can keep himself apart from men, have 'no business' with them, except a cash-account 'business'!

1903 *Bankers' Mag.* Jan. 75 It seems hardly necessary to say anything about honesty; few will have any business with other than honest men.

2000 S. NEWMAN *To wear White Cloak* 325 Do you know him? I understood that he had no business with your people.

b. *euphemistic*. Sexual intercourse, sex. Now usually with *the*.

01612 J. HARINGTON *Epigrams* (1618) 280 [The proctor] doth her [sc. his wife's] busines with great satisfaction.

1641 *Wits Recreations* (new ed.) sig. N8^v He does no businesse of thy wives, not hee: He does thy businesse (Coracine) for thee.

01687 P. HUGHES in T. BROWN et al. *Let. from Dead to Living* (1707) II. 98 Us Ladies, who like the Industrious Beaver, do our business with our tails.

1724 *Laugh & be Fat* (ed. 9) 79 The Wife consented, and the Business being done with a Jirk, he gave her Directions how she should manage the Matter.

1762 T. BRIDGES *Homer Travestie* I. i. 123 Shall whoring, lying Paris do Nell's business, and her husband go?

1884 J. SMITHSON tr. F. C. Forberg *Man. Classical Erotol.* I. 21 Face downwards to her the man may do the woman's business, while she is half reclining.

1922 J. JOYCE *Ulysses* 508 There was a priest down here two nights ago to do his bit of business with his coat buttoned up. You needn't try to hide, I says to him. I know you've a Roman collar.

1955 W. GADDIS *Recognitions* vii. 633 I gave her a three-and-a-half grain shot of sodium amytal and then I climbed on and gave her the business.

2006 J. BUCKLEY *Celebrate Myself* 39 Smart move not even bothering to undress before doing the business.

18. *Theatre*. Action on stage (as distinguished from dialogue), esp. that intended to forward the progress of the plot, pass time, or aid characterization.

funny, leading-, leg-business, etc.: see the first element.

Cf. *stage business n.* at *STAGE n.* Compounds 1a(a), *business of the stage n.* at *Phrases* 29.

1637 J. RUTTER tr. P. Corneille *Cid* To Rdr. sig. A4 Two Scenes I have left out, as being soliloquies and little pertinent to the business.

1672 DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM *Rehearsal* III. 28 I see here is a great deal of Plot, Mr. Bayes. *Bayes*. Yes,..but we shall have a world of more business anon.

1781 R. B. SHERIDAN *Critic* II. ii The carpenters say, that unless there is some business put in here..they shan't have time to clear away the fort.

1860 *Cornhill Mag.* Dec. 749 They give the literary composition the almost contemptuous title of 'words', while they dignify the movements of the characters with the name of 'business'.

1893 I. ZANGWILL *Children of Ghetto* (ed. 3) xiii. 123 An actor who knows all the 'business' elaborated by his predecessors.

1923 P. G. WODEHOUSE *Adventures of Sally* vi. 78 'Bit o' business,' she announced, at length... 'Character stuff... Maids chew gum, you know.'

2009 *Washington Post* (Nexis) 11 Jan. m1 Bits of what actors call 'business'—lighting a cigarette, picking up a drink.

19. A subject or topic of consideration or discussion; the subject of a book, communication, etc. Now *archaic*.

Common esp. in the 17th cent.

1655 A. SPARROW *Rationale Bk. Common Prayer* 44 This Sunday..the Epistle and Gospel treat about the same businesse, the birth of Christ.

1660 T. STANLEY *Hist. Philos.* III. I. 56 The Pythagoreans.., were studiously addicted to the businesse of Numbers.

01690 J. RUSHWORTH *Hist. Coll.: Third Pt.* (1692) I. 42 When a Business was begun and in debate.

1756 J. TOWNE *Free & Candid Exam. Princ. Bishop of London's Sermon*. iii. 162 Now, the theme and business of the book must have been poorly executed indeed, if Moses, [etc.].

1844 W. RAMSAY in W. Smith *Dict. Greek & Rom. Biogr. & Mythol.* I. 729/1 After a digression on the..worthlessness of physical pursuits, the real business of the piece is opened.

1912 A. RANSOME *Oscar Wilde* 25 Before proceeding to the main business of the book,..I wish to set before myself and my readers a summary biography.

1997 *Muqarnas* 14 101/1 The commencement of the stated business of the letter.

†**20.** Official or public engagements collectively; active or public life. Frequently in *man of business n.* (b) at *Phrases* 28b. *Obsolete*.

1715 A. POPE tr. Homer *Iliad* I. Pref. My Lord Bolingbroke, not more distinguish'd in the great scenes of business, than in all the useful and entertaining parts of learning.

1781 S. JOHNSON *Pope* in *Pref. Wks. Eng. Poets* VII. 14 Sir William Trumbal, who had been...secretary of state, when he retired from business, fixed his residence in the neighbourhood of Binfield.

21. colloquial. Something very good or impressive; the best. Now usually with *the*, esp. in **to be the business, to look the business.**

1868 *Fortn. Rev.* Jan. 54 'Speak, Madame, I am all attention.' 'Now that's business,' said the lady approvingly.

1904 *Motor Age* 27 Oct. 23/3 They know how to make a car look the business. See that hood. No one ever saw a hood like that on anything but a foreign car.

1908 *Amer. Aeronaut.* Jan. 19/1 It looks like business,—that rakish, elongated hull, so pretty in its symmetrical simplicity.

1946 *Pop. Mech.* Nov. 177 Not much to look at, maybe, but for making blocks it's the business.

1984 *Guardian* 19 July 21/7 Dressed in their swanky black kits, Fulham looked the business when they walloped Wigan in their inaugural game.

1998 *Melody Maker* 14 Mar. 47/6 [The guitars] doubtless sound the business too.

2007 C. HUNTER *Eight Lives Down* (2009) vii. 66 I'm really proud of these guys. I've only known them for a few days, but they really are the business.

III. As a collective noun.

22. A swarm of flies, a group of ferrets.

Apparently reintroduced in the 20th cent. by dictionaries, and popularized as a literary device.

a1450 *Terms Assoc.* in *PMLA* (1936) 51 603 (*MED*) A besynes of feryttes.

?1478 *Lydgate's Horse, Goose & Sheep* (Caxton) (1822) 31 A besynes of flies.

1486 *Bk. St. Albans* sig. fvi A Besynes of ferettis.

1950 F. D. SMITH & B. WILCOX *Country Compan.* 161 A drove of asses; cete of badgers;..kennel of dogs; business of ferrets.

2004 D. DUNCAN *Jaguar Knights* vi. 252 I'm sure his goons will go through the ship like a business of ferrets, and they'll want to look in our baggage.

PHRASES

P1. on business: with an errand or purpose relating to business, now esp. to commercial business or one's trade or profession.

1670 tr. A. de Brunel *Journey into Spain* 150 Don Lewis was no sooner infavour, and entred on business.

1770 *Trial W. Wemms* 100 I saw several men pass... They walked faster than people generally do on business.

1800 in *Spirit of Public Jrnls.* (1801) 4 160 You step to a friend's house on business, near his dinner-hour.

1934 'L. G. GIBBON' *Grey Granite* i. 23 Sergeant Sim Leslie had been in Duncairn, on business, like, that very forenoon.

2008 D. LODGE *Deaf Sentence* (2009) xi. 140 Gone are the days when I would travel down on business..to meet a publisher, paying my own fare but getting a bibulous free lunch.

P2. in business: operating or habitually occupied in trade or commerce; running or managing a business; (in extended use) able to begin operations, operational. Cf. *to start in business* at *START v.* 21b.

1756 *London Mag.* May 226/1 While they [sc. tradesmen] remain in business, they ought not to assume that exterior pomp and shew which is only becoming in men of fashion.

1842 F. MARRYAT *Percival Keene* I. ii. 22 My mother..before she had been a year in business, found that she was making money very fast.

1891 *Arthur's Home Mag.* 61 875/1 I will recommend you to my scholars, and all you will have to do is..arrange your hours, and you are in business.

1933 S. WALKER *Night Club Era* 81 Most of them were staid men, had been in business for years.

2008 *Independent* 12 Mar. (Property section) 7/3 'We're in business!' he trumpeted, striding into the office and waking up the rest of us.

†**P3. to do (one's) business:** to take pains, try one's hardest, do one's best. **to give business to:** to pay attention to, attend to diligently. *Obsolete.*

1340 To do business [see sense 2].

► a1393 J. GOWER *Confessio Amantis* (Fairf.) Prol. l. 63 Yit woll I fonde To wryte and do my bisnesse.

1422 in F. J. Furnivall *Fifty Earliest Eng. Wills* (1882) 51 They will do her besynesse to fulfill goddes will.

?a1425 (► c1400) *Mandeville's Trav.* (Titus C.xvi) (1919) 166 Pei werren full wisely & allweys don here besynes to destroyen hire enemyes.

?c1450 (► ?a1400) J. WYCLIF *Eng. Wks.* (1880) 373 He wol þat þai ȝeue bissynes to þe londe & not to þe lawe.

1582 S. BATMAN *Vppon Bartholome, De Proprietatibus Rerum* xv. ix. 214 In Greece was nothing more noble..then that Citye [sc. Athens], while it gaue businesse to study of..wisdom.

P4.

a. to go about one's business and variants: to occupy oneself with one's normal activities or routine; (also) to go off and attend to one's own affairs, to go away; hence in imperative use, as a formula of impatient dismissal (now *rare*).

- ?1483 W. CAXTON tr. *Caton* iv. sig. i.vii I shal retorne to my hows for to doo and go aboute my besynesse.
- 1577 B. GOOGE tr. C. Heresbach *Foure Bks. Husbandry* iv. f. 187 Yf they [sc. bees] goe about their businesse cheerefully.
- 1687 in J. R. Bloxham *Magdalen Coll. & James II* (1886) (modernized text) 210 He was a pert..man..and..might go about his business.
- 1749 H. FIELDING *Tom Jones* VI. xvi. v. 47 Go about your Business; I hate the Sight of you.
- 1878 W. S. JEVONS *Polit. Econ.* 62 He would..be told to go about his business.
- 1930 *Times* 17 Apr. 10/5 Good Friday..ought never to have been made a mere public holiday. At such a time far better go about our business..and attend an evening sermon in our place of worship.
- 2003 G. BURN *North of Eng. Home Service* (2004) v. 170 People..went about their business every day trying not to breathe in the foul stench from the unburied..carcasses.

b. to send about one's business: to dismiss unceremoniously, to send packing (now somewhat *archaic*).

- 1728 C. CIBBER *Vanbrugh's Provok'd Husband* I. i. 13 Sir John will certainly have it heard at the Bar of the House, and send him about his Business again.
- 1822 T. L. PEACOCK *Maid Marian* ix. 125 He had..sent all King Henry's saints about their business, or rather about their no-business.
- 1918 W. LEWIS *Tarr* IV. vii. 179 He had the incredible impudence to wish to make up to me. I sent him about his business.
- 1999 E. PETERS *Falcon at Portal* (2000) x. 10 I'd have sent him about his business, sir, only..he said you'd be sorry if you didn't see him.

P5.

a. to mind one's own business: to refrain from interfering in another's affairs; also as imperative (cf. *to mind one's business* at MIND v. 4a). Now *colloquial*.

- 1610 J. HEALEY tr. St. Augustine *Citie of God* IV. xiv. 174 If Victory..be but propitious, let Ioue mind his own businesse, the nations shall come vnder.
- 1749 H. FIELDING *Tom Jones* I. I. ii. 9 I must desire all those Critics to mind their own Business .
- 1814 M. LEADBEATER & E. SHACKLETON *Tales for Cottagers* 199 Let every one mind their own business.
- 1882 W. BESANT *All Sorts of Men* I. iv. 109 'Mind your own business,' growled his uncle.
- 1994 *Denver Post* 6 Feb. B1/1 When his mother got in his face about it, the boy told her to mind her own business.

b. colloquial. to be minding one's own business: to be doing something that is not disturbing anyone (usually before some subsequent interference, event, etc.).

- 1882 H. B. HASTINGS *Pebbles from Path of Pilgrim* 16 I walked along, minding my own business, when, to my astonishment, Mr. C. drove past me, on his way to the next village.
- 1917 B. HECHT in P. Glassgold *Anarchy!* (2001) 222 I was walking along peaceably minding my own business, and he came up and soaked me.
- 1975 M. H. WOLF *I'll take Back Road* III. 72 I was minding my own business..when this chicken-sized..bird ran right up to me and slammed into my head.
- 2007 A. ENRIGHT *Gathering* (2008) xxv. 162 He was sitting in the seat in front of us, minding his own business until Mossie pointed him out.

P6. to know one's business: to be experienced or knowledgeable in one's subject, profession, etc. Cf. *to know one's stuff* at STUFF n.¹ 7g.

- 1611 T. MIDDLETON & T. DEKKER *Roaring Girle* sig. E3^v Nay then they know their businesse, they neede no more instructions.
- 1693 H. HIGDEN *Wary Widdow* IV. 37 But Drunk or sober Mate, I know my business.
- 1779 *Mirror* No. 2. ¶6 Mr. Creech..knew his business better than to satisfy their curiosity.
- 1841 *Punch* 6 Nov. 203/1 Let every amateur, professor, and enthusiastic raver concerning 'native talent' go down on his knees..for..a singer who knows her business.
- 1907 J. CONRAD *Secret Agent* i. 3 But Mr. Verloc knew his business, and remained undisturbed.
- 1995 A. HARDY *Where to eat in Canada* 410 The sausages come from a butcher who knows his business.

P7. colloquial. to do (also +be at) one's business: to defecate or (occasionally) to urinate .

- 1596 J. HARRINGTON *Apol.* sig. P ij He loues an easie cleanly laxe maruellous wel,..[and] if one be his deare friend, he will let him tarrie with him, while he is at his businesse.
- 1630 in *Minutes Norwich Court of Mayoralty 1630-1* (1942) 86 He..turned downe his hose & did his busyness.

- ?1704 MRS. WORTHINGTON *Let.* in E. Hamilton *Mordaunts* (1965) vi. 123 Cate hath bene verey ill she cept up a day or 2 she canot due har bisnes.
- 1866 *Secret Hist. Volary of Pleasure* 18 One day, when I was 'doing my business', behind the barn, I heard the footsteps of a horse.
- 1993 *Garden Answers* May 56/2 Cats rarely do their business in their owners' gardens.

P8. to do the business: to accomplish a task; (in later use) to be successful or effective, to do well. Cf. *to do the trick* at TRICK *n.* Phrases 2.

- 1603 P. HOLLAND tr. Plutarch *Morals* 299 She bringeth sharpe edged swords to do the businesse.
- 1751 LD. CHESTERFIELD *Let.* 6 May in *Let. to Son* (1774) II. 143 An air, a tone of voice, a composure of countenance to mildness and softness, which are all easily acquired, do the business.
- 1864 'M. TWAIN' *Early Tales & Sketches* (1981) II. 29 That coffee did the business for us.
- 1904 *St. Nicholas* May 588/1 We will now describe the 'sure enough' engine—the part that Tom said really 'did the business'.
- 1954 *Pop. Mech.* Aug. 6/2 With the motor turning at 1725 r.p.m., the jug flew to pieces... The third did the business. It was wrapped from top to bottom with the wire and, being perfectly balanced, lasted throughout my tests.
- 2005 C. NEWBROOK *Ducks in Row* 15 He did the business, all right. He *came of age* with that project, he did.

P9. to make it one's business: to undertake as a self-appointed task (*to do something*).

- 1628 J. PRESTON *Foure Serm.* iii. 78 in *New Covenant* (1629) Let vs labour..to make it our whole busines to feare God and keepe his Commandements.
- 1642 T. FULLER *Holy State* I. x. 25 Though going abroad sometimes about her businesse, she never makes it her businesse to go abroad.
- 1735 G. BERKELEY *Def. Free-thinking in Math.* 54 I have myself freely conversed with Mathematicians of all ranks,..as well as made it my business to be informed of the Opinions of others.
- 1888 J. BRYCE *Amer. Commonw.* I. xiv. 213 The class of professional 'lobbyists',..who make it their business to 'see' members.
- 1946 'P. WENTWORTH' *Clock strikes Twelve* ix. 43 'I don't know how she knew.' 'She's the sort of woman who makes it her business to know.'
- 2006 *New Yorker* 29 May 28/2 Katz..has made it her business to upset that monopoly.

P10. colloquial. to do a person's business (also to do the business for a person): to 'do for', ruin, or kill a person. Also *figurative*.

- 1667 S. PEPYS *Diary* 16 Nov. (1974) VIII. 533 Lord Vaughan, that is so great against the Chancellor..was heard to swear..he would do my Lord Clarendon's business.
- 1759 S. GARDNER *Jrnl.* 10 Dec. in *Essex Inst. Hist. Coll.* (1860) II. 287/1 They did the business for him with an Iron Crow.
- 1773 O. GOLDSMITH *She stoops to Conquer* v. 94 Oh, Tony, I'm killed... That last jolt that laid us against the quickset hedge has done my business.
- 1816 J. AUSTEN *Emma* I. viii. 122 Her visit to Abbey-Mill..seems to have done his business. He is desperately in love.
- 1891 J. M. DIXON *Dict. Idiomatic Eng. Phrases* 47 His last imprudent exposure of himself to the night air did the business for him.
- 1995 A. NORTON *Mirror of Destiny* (2001) 348 Flyin' things..did the business for the Captain's squad.

P11.

a. to do business: to engage in commercial transactions; also *figurative*.

- 1674 N. FAIRFAX *Treat. Bulk & Selvedge* i. 5 A Jews naked not doing business on his Rest-day.
- 1764 T. LEGG *Low-life* (ed. 3) 70 Tallow-Chandlers who do Business privately in Back Cellars..to evade the King's Duty.
- 1858 T. DE QUINCEY *Secret Societies* (rev. ed.) in *Select. Grave & Gay* VII. 256 It has done business as a swindle through thirty generations.
- 1890 G. N. MCLEAN (*title*) How to do business.
- 1980 *Business Week* (Industr. ed.) 11 Aug. 44/2 It will be at least two years before the new holding company..is ready to do business.
- 2005 *Computer Weekly* 19 Apr. 43/3 Cybercrime threatens to undermine the confidence of consumers doing business online.

b. to do business with (a person): to engage in commercial transactions with (someone); (in extended use) to have successful dealings or negotiations with (someone).

- 1749 W. HALFPENNY *New Syst. Archit. Delineated* 24 Master's closet or counting house to do business with workmen.
- 1869 *Ann. Rep. Commissioner Agric.* 1868 340 in *U.S. Congress. Serial Set* (40th Congr., 3rd Sess.: House of Representatives Executive Doc.) XV An oyster merchant of Rochelle, doing business with the growers of the adjacent islands.
- 1986 *New Yorker* 10 Feb. 89/2 Mrs. Thatcher had described Gorbachev..as someone she could do business with.
- 2008 *N.Y. Times* (National ed.) 4 May (Business section) 9/6 Others who do business with him say..he is..a superb 'relationship manager'.

P12. colloquial. to mean business: to be serious about something.

- 1841 C. H. KNOX *Hardness* I. xi. 186 Harry struck up a great friendship with her for a time, and I think meant business.
- 1897 *Daily News* 26 Oct. 5/2 'We mean business', said one of her Majesty's ministers.
- 1988 D. CARPENTER *God's Bedfellows* iv. 80 Sometimes you gotta let them know you mean business, otherwise they'll treat you like dirt.
- 2004 H. STRACHAN *Make a Skyf, Man!* v. 48 Industrial sabotage to show the big industrialists of the régime that we mean business.

P13. to get (also settle) down to business: to begin serious work, to begin matters in earnest.

- 1868 *Minutes Gen. Council First Internat.* (Internat. Workingmen's Assoc.) 394 To get down to business! It is high time that the workmen of all lands should unite.
- 1916 *Indianapolis Sunday Star* 19 Nov. 45/5 With the.. 'I told-you-so-ing' out of our systems we can settle down to business.
- 1933 S. WALKER *Night Club Era* 36 Jim met them, treated them courteously, gave them each a drink, and got down to business.
- 2005 A. OHLIN *Missing Person* (2006) xii. 159 I suggested, politely, that we just get down to business.

P14. colloquial. to be in the business of: to be engaged or involved in, to be concerned with.

Frequently in negative contexts.

- 1873 *Chicago Tribune* 3 Sept. 4/4 The National Administration is not in the business of either making or unmaking the Governors of Massachusetts or of any other State.
- 1882 *Puck* (N.Y.) 10 May 153/3 We are not in the business of insulting good and true women such as the Sisters of Charity.
- 1909 W. C. SHEPPARD *Rambler Club Afloat* 356 Do you think I'm in the business of blowing up boats?.. Of course not! I had nothing to do with it.
- 1981 *Observer* 1 Mar. 13/6 Journalists..are in the business, after all, of making a fuss.
- 2000 R. W. HOLDER *Taunton Cider & Langdons* iv. 20 The Great Western Railway was not in the business of eating humble pie.

P15. to be none of a person's business: see NONE *pron.* 4b.

P16. to do a rushing business: see RUSHING *adj.* 2.

P17. slang (chiefly U.S.). to give (a person) the business.

a. Originally Criminals' slang. To kill; (also) to beat up, assault. Cf. *to give (a person) the works* at WORK

n. Phrases 2c.

- 1919 *Recruiters' Bull.* (U.S. Marine Corps) July 16/1 Now that we have just got all through moppin' up Germany, along comes Mexico tryin' to give us the business.
- 1931 *Chicago Tribune* 8 May 15/3 Three men trained their weapons on him. 'Keep your trap shut or we'll give you the business,' said one of them.
- c1950 R. MCLEISH *Gorbals Story* III, in *Sc. People's Theatre* (Assoc. Sc. Lit. Stud.) (2008) 41 I'm goin to do him—I'm gonny give him the business.
- 1981 J. HIGGINS *Luciano's Luck* xii. 154 When they heard Luciano was coming, they didn't like it. They tried to give him the business.
- 2007 T. N. BAKER *Dice* 208 I seen that somebody must've given him the business, with that nice-size, buck-fifty slash running from his temple to his jawbone.

b. To abuse verbally, harangue; (in weakened sense) to tease, mock.

- 1936 *Spectator* (Chilton Publishing Co.) 8 Oct. 16/2 When I put the proposition to him he cut me off with a curt, 'Can it.' Mr. Traynor explained to me later that Willie wasn't giving me the business after all.
- 1940 *Los Angeles Times* 5 Feb. II. 9/1 Then Miss Mead, apparently informed of my woeful inability on the tennis courts, really gave me the business.
- 1957 J. LAKE & H. GIBLO *Footlights, Fistfights & Femmes* 108 My troupe was anything but elderly. They were all young and snippy, so I gave them the business. 'Button your lips when you get there.'
- 1968 *Ebony* Jan. 49/1 Inmates gave him the business about having picked up a little weight, and the graying hair.
- 2005 *N.Y. Times* 17 July IV. 14/2 In Boston, politicians are more likely to 'give you the business', needling you in some personal way.

P18. slang (chiefly U.S.). to get the business: to be killed or beaten up; (also) to abused or teased. Cf.

to give (a person) the business at Phrases 17.

- 1936 *Boston Sunday Globe* 11 Oct. (Editorial & News Feature section) 2/6 By the way, Inspector, about what time do you think Singer got the business, to be colloquial?
- 1952 *Hartford (Connecticut) Courant* 24 Oct. 18/1 A distinguished Senator who had good reason to think he might be the Democratic presidential nominee until he got the business from Mr. Truman and his friends at the Democratic convention.
- 1952 'H. GREY' *Hoods* xix. 153 According to all the..stories of hoodlums breaking away from the mob, he invariably gets the 'business' if he quits.
- 2009 V. MAZZARELLA *Atsa Mi Paese* xviii. 337 I'm sorry that the smell bothers you... I've already got the business from Geri, so you're not alone with your beef.

P19. Originally *U.S. slang* (originally in African-American usage). **to take care of business:** to do something in an effective or energetic manner; to take action to good effect. Cf. *TCB vb.* at *T n.* Initialisms 1a.

1952 'H. GREY' *Hoods* xxi. 162 The Boss is up early in the morning taking care of business.

1967 *Chicago Daily Defender* 7 Aug. 8/3 The slogan for this year's drive, 'T C B—take care of business, go back to school'.

1977 M. TORRES in R. P. Rettig et al. *Manny* ii. 36/2 I am in the neighborhood maybe ten minutes and I get down with heroin. It was no problem to find the ounce man, look [*sic*] up one of my kits, and take care of business.

1994 Q. TARANTINO & R. AVARY *Pulp Fiction* iii. 128 Holding the sword pointed downward, Takakura Ken-style, he disappears through the red curtains to take care of business.

2008 C. BLATCHFORD *Black Hand* xxv. 163 Take my word for it, the motherfucker's down. I'm not talking just about violence either. He takes care of business real good, and he has downed a whole lot of motherfuckers in the last year.

P20. business is business: used to indicate that in financial and commercial matters one must not be influenced by friendship, sentiment, etc.

1797 G. COLMAN *Heir at Law* III. ii. 44 Business is business; and words you know butter no parsnips.

1858 W. M. THACKERAY *Virginians* I. i. 4 Business is business, my dear young sir.

1890 G. N. MCLEAN *How to do Business* 152 It is a common saying in mercantile life that 'Business is business'. This means that everything must turn upon the practical fact of dollars and cents.

1917 B. BRALEY *Business is Business* in *Rotarian* Apr. 320 For Business is Business a fight for gold Where all that you do is fair.

2000 J. J. CONNOLLY *Layer Cake* (2004) 3 We always make a..fuss but we always do it. Business is business.

P21. business as usual: used to indicate things will proceed normally despite difficulties or disturbances.

1884 *Punch* 12 Apr. 178/2 The true way she could show respect to Her Majesty was by letting her shopmen carry on 'business as usual' for the benefit of Her Majesty's subjects.

1914 H. W. WILSON *Great War* I. 84 'Business as usual' was the motto of London.

2007 *Daily Tel.* 13 Nov. (Business section) B6/1 He attempted to convince shareholders and analysts it was business as usual.

P22.

a. everybody's business is nobody's business: see *NOBODY pron.* and *n.* Phrases 2.

b. (to be) nobody's business: see *NOBODY pron.* and *n.* Phrases 3a.

c. like nobody's business: see *NOBODY pron.* and *n.* Phrases 3b.

P23. Originally *U.S. business before pleasure:* work must be dealt with or duty attended to before a person can enjoy himself or herself.

[1816 W. WIRT *Let.* 24 Sept. in J. P. Kennedy *Mem. W. Wirt* (1849) I. 415 Business first, and then pleasure, is my maxim.]

1831 *Ladies' Mag.* 4 346 They plod on, anxious to reach their destination, with an air that seems to say, 'Business before pleasure',—'A penny saved is a penny earned', [etc.]

1876 H. ALGER *Shifting for Himself* ii. 21 I must bid you good-night, John. Business before pleasure, you know.

1918 *Atlantic Monthly* Nov. 668/1 'Very often we cannot even dine together, he is always in such a hurry!' Business before pleasure.

1976 'R. HOOKER' & W. E. BUTTERWORTH *MASH goes to San Francisco* (1977) xiii. 170 Oh, how nice! And I think about *you*, too. But business before pleasure, as I always say.

2002 V. McDERMID *Last Temptation* xxx. 360 'OK, business before pleasure,' he said. 'Let's go back to Berlin and make some plans.'

P24. In phrases indicating the use of terminology or jargon associated with a particular trade or line of work, as **as they say in the business, known in the business as**, etc.

1885–6 *Origin, Growth, & Usefulness Chicago Board of Trade* 261/1 They make a specialty of funeral work, as it is called in the business.

1929 *Washington Post* 1 Sept. A3/1 An actor..naturally supposes that his accoutrement, as they say in the business, will be found in his dressing room.

1960 *Sunday Times* 11 Sept. 37/4 At large jazz festivals the incursion of a minority of moronic roughnecks (known in the business as Herberts) is ruining the pleasure of the great majority.

- 1982 B. SHELDON *Behaviour Modification* iii. 60 Residential and hospital social work, where in the past, 'train and hope' programmes, as they are called in the business, have produced high levels of relapse.
- 1998 S. FRIED *Bitter Pills* i. i. 26 At least 60 percent of all doctor visits end with a prescription—or a 'script', as they say in the business.
- 2008 *Independent* 10 Jan. 36/1 Drama-docs, as they are known in the business, are a grey area when it comes to revealing the truth.

P25. any other business: matters not listed individually on the agenda of a meeting, and which are raised after the main business has been discussed; the heading on an agenda under which such matters are raised; abbreviated *AOB*.

- 1910 *Trans. Worcester County (Mass.) Hort. Soc.* 7 Under any other business J. K. Greene, reported for Committee on resolution on retirement of Secretary Adin A. Hixon.
- 1935 G. K. BUCKNALL *Oldham's Guide to Company Secretarial Work* (ed. 7) xix. 152 Agenda..1. Minutes of last meeting..4. Overdue accounts..9. Any other business. 10. Next meeting.
- 1968 H. M. TAYLOR & A. G. M. MEARS *Right Way to conduct Meetings* (ed. 7) xiv. 94 No major matter should ever be put to the vote under 'Any other Business'.
- 2000 *Keyways* (Master Locksmiths' Assoc.) Feb. 37 Any member wishing to raise any items under any other business are required to register their questions with the Senior Executive.

P26. there's no business like show business: see *SHOW BUSINESS n. 1.*

P27. a person's business: work to be done or matters to be attended to in a person's service, or on his or her behalf. Now chiefly *archaic* and *historical*.

- 1503 in N. H. Nicolas *Privy Purse Expenses Elizabeth of York* (1830) 101 For his costes lyeng in London aboutes the Quenes matiers and busynesses.
- 1611 *Bible* (King James) Luke ii. 49 Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business ?
- 1757 W. THOMPSON *Royal Navy-men's Advocate* 13 (*note*) To preside..over that consequential Branch of the King's Business.
- 1801 tr. 'C. F. Damberger' *Trav. through Interior Afr.* xii. 433 Some Moors, who, supposing me to be upon the king's business, made no attempt to detain me.
- 1919 G. R. BROWN *Beyond Sunset* x. 190 His Majesty's business, methinks, rests more seriously upon his courtiers than upon himself.
- 2002 K. WHITAKER *Mad Madge* (2003) ix. 168 The marquess of Ormonde—a courtier close to Charles II who often passed through Antwerp on his master's business.

P28. Noun phrases with *of business* as a postmodifier.

a.

letter of business *n.* (*a*) a letter communicating information of some importance; (in later use) = *business letter n.* at Compounds 5; (*b*) *Anglican Church* (in *plural*, usually with capital initials) a document formerly issued by the Crown to the English Convocations permitting them to prepare canons on a prescribed subject (now *historical*).

[In quot. 1617 in Moryson's translation of his own Italian original.]

- 1617 F. MORYSON *Itinerary* II. iii. 160 Now for letters of busines [It. *lettere di facende*], no man is so blockish that cannot easily dispatch them; when he hath told the businesse, and bid farewell, all is done. But if letters of complement bee not beautified with inuention, they are dull.
- 1662 S. PEPYS *Diary* 3 Oct. (1970) III. 212 It is a great folly to send letters of business by any friend that requires haste.
- 1771 *Encycl. Brit.* I. 620/2 Merchants are provided with a large book..into which is copied *verbatim* every letter of business before it be sent off.
- 1862 J. W. JOYCE *Ecclesia Vindicata* v. 211 Royal Letters of Business would be directed from the Crown, requesting the two Convocations to take the necessary measures for the purpose proposed.
- 1908 *Edinb. Rev.* Oct. 407 John Paston was a good deal away, and his wife had to send him frequent reports as to business matters... Her letters were thus necessarily, in the first place, letters of business.
- 2006 *Church Times* 20 Oct. 21/2 The report made the historic recommendation that Letters of Business be issued to Convocations..to form..modifications relating to the conduct of Divine Worship.

b.

man of business *n.* (*a*) a man of businesslike habits, one skilled in business (in various senses) (now *rare*); †(*b*) a man engaged in public affairs (*obsolete*); (*c*) (frequently with possessive adjective) a man who transacts a person's business, a business agent or (*Scottish*) a lawyer; (*d*) a man engaged in commercial or business transactions, a businessman (now somewhat *archaic*).

- 1640 J. WADSWORTH tr. A. Colmenero de Ledesma *Curious Treat. Chocolate* 18 There is another..shorter and quicker way..for men of businesse, who cannot stay long about it.

- 1670 BP. G. BURNET *Let.* in T. E. S. Clarke et al. *Life G. Burnet* (1907) III. v. 192 I am..resolved never to have anything to do more with men of business, particularly with any in opposition to the Court.
- 1712 R. STEELE *Spectator* No. 466. ¶3 I am a Man of Business, and obliged to be much abroad.
- 1753 D. HUME *Ess. & Treat.* (ed. 4) I. xvi. 157 Pericles, a man of business, and a man of sense.
- 1779 *Mirror* No. 32 The remonstrances of his man of business, aided by very urgent requests from me.
- 1857 H. T. BUCKLE *Hist. Civilisation Eng.* I. xi. 629 If we were all men of business our mental pleasures would be abridged.
- 1861 E. B. RAMSAY *Reminisc. Sc. Life* (ed. 18) vi. 232 In Scotland it is usual to term the law-agent or man of business of any party his 'doer'.
- 1902 L. STEPHEN *Stud. of Biographer* IV. v. 188 Many men of business..enjoy in strict privacy a little whimpering over a novel.
- 1916 tr. P. Bourget in E. Wharton *Bk. Homeless* 69 [He] told me that his man of business was at the Dardanelles. 'His wife looks after my property in his place.'
- 2005 D. CRUICKSHANK *Around World in 80 Treasures* 220 An intent man of business scurries by.

c.

woman of business *n.* †(a) a woman engaged in practical matters (*obsolete*); (b) a woman who works in commerce or has a profession; = BUSINESSWOMAN *n.*

- 1677 W. WYCHERLEY *Plain-dealer* I. 11 I am no Visiter, but a Woman of Business.
- 1726 W. R. CHETWOOD *Voy. & Adventures Capt. R. Boyle* 70 I had the Misfortune to be a Woman of Business, tho' young; for my Father had several Vessels at Sea.
- 1816 *La Belle Assemblée* Mar. 117/1 My aunt,..a bustling woman of business, thought all time lost that was not spent behind her counter.
- 1922 L. S. LYONS & J. WILSON *Who's Who among Women of Calif.* I. 175 The evolution of Mother Eve, of Helen,..of Joan of Arc,..finds expression in the modern professional woman, the woman of business.
- 2008 *Telegraph-Jrnl. (New Brunswick)* (Nexis) 16 May B1 [The story] is one that fascinates fellow men and women of business: the story of his ascent from the owner of one obscure gas station to one of the country's..richest men.

d.

place of business *n.* a place where business is conducted, *spec.* a shop, office, or other commercial establishment.

- 1681 T. DE LAUNE *Present State London* v. 355 Letters go..to Inns of Court, and places of business in Town..10 or 12 times of the day.
- 1795 *Universal Mag.* Mar. 201/2 He may open a work-shop, a counting-house, an office, or any other place of business, and pursue his calling.
- 1872 *Gentleman's Mag.* Apr. 458 One whose place of business is situate immediately opposite to a branch of the 'Co-op.' Institution.
- 1942 E. FERBER *Saratoga Trunk* (new ed.) vii. 119 It still closed its places of business at noon for a two-hour siesta.
- 2008 P. HENSHER *Northern Clemency* 569 The fourth floor more resembled the inside of a drinkers' den than a respectable place of business.

e.

hours of business *n.* †(a) the hours during which a person is occupied with business (*obsolete*); (b) the hours in which a person, shop, office, etc., conducts business; = *business hours n.* at Compounds 5.

- 1693 J. LOCKE *Some Thoughts conc. Educ.* §117. 143 In the intervals between his hours of Business..he is not of himself inclin'd to laziness.
- 1739 *Scots Mag.* Dec. 611/1 It would be worth while to read to you there, now and then, in an evening, before the hours of business.
- 1830 *Reg. Pennsylvania* July 55/1 Tables..were spread, under the shade of the same beautiful trees which had protected the company during the hours of business.
- 1858 P. L. SIMMONDS *Dict. Trade Products* 269/2 *Over-time, Over-work*, extra labour done beyond the regular fixed hours of business.
- 1995 D. G. WETHERELL & I. R. A. KMET *Town Life* 140 Hours of business were regulated through bylaws.

f.

house of business *n.* now *archaic* = *business house n.* at Compounds 1b.

- 1704 *Answer of Merchants-petitioners* 44/2 This Sum if entirely lost, could not have Prejudiced the Replicants [sc. those replying to the Trustees] as a House of Business.
- 1799 *Sporting Mag.* June 157/1 He took a grand house in Wimpole-street,..his own house of business being at Lothbury.
- 1836 *Q. Jrnl. Agric.* 7 No. 34. 165 On reference to one of the respectable houses of business in London..they would readily name some trust-worthy person.
- 1900 *Daily News* 17 Oct. 6/2 He was initiated at his father's house of business..into the mysteries of cordwaining.
- 1981 C. NUNN *Marguerite Clark* 135 No storms..had ever disturbed the limestone strength of these houses of business.

g.

stroke of business *n.* now *archaic* a piece, esp. a large or considerable amount, of business or trade; also *figurative*.

- 1712 R. STEELE *Spectator* No. 484. ¶4 The best Consolation that I can administer to those who cannot get into that Stroke of Business (as the Phrase is) which they deserve, is [etc.].
- 1847 T. DE QUINCEY *Secret Societies* in *Tait's Edinb. Mag.* Aug. 520/1 The goddess, and her establishment of hoaxers at Eleusis, did a vast 'stroke of business' for more than six centuries.
- 1862 J. H. BURTON *Book-hunter* 84 [People] who wanted to do a stroke of business with some old volume.
- 1904 J. CONRAD *Let.* 29 May (1988) III. 142 You know how he failed with Falk and yet managed to do a stroke of business afterwards.
- 1939 B. NATARAJAN in *Madras Tercentenary Commem. Vol.* IV. xxxi. 251 A month later, the Council themselves did a stroke of business on their own account.

h. *way of business*: see WAY *n.*¹ 25a.

i. *line of business*: see LINE *n.*² 28c.

j. *order of business*: see ORDER *n.* 12b.

P29.

business of the stage *n.* *Theatre* stage action, esp. as opposed to dialogue; = sense 18.

- 1679 J. DRYDEN *Troilus & Cressida* Pref. sig. a4 Manners never can be evident [in a comedy or tragedy], where the surprises of Fortune take up all the business of the Stage.
- 1763 D. GARRICK *Let.* 10 Aug. (1831) I. 163 If you mean by the *warmth of temper* you have accused me of to Mr. Johnson, a certain anxiety for the business of the stage, your accusation was well founded.
- 1897 G. B. SHAW in *Sat. Rev.* 13 Nov. 514/1 In 'Hamlet' he is quite enthusiastic about naturalness in the business of the stage.
- 1942 *Notes & Queries* 12 Sept. 161/1 'Business of the Stage' denotes the movements, groupings, vocal inflections, etc., of the players, which are settled at rehearsal. The modern term is 'Production'.
- 2002 M. PUCHNER *Stage Fright* III. v. 128 Craig envisions an art of the theater that strategically ignores stage directions and thus prevents the writer from interfering in the business of the stage.

COMPOUNDS

C1.

a. General *attributive* and objective (now chiefly in sense 14a), as ***business approach, business bringer, business customer, business deal, business dealing, business investment, business office, business operation, business strategy***, etc.

- 1816 in *Proc. Mass. Hist. Soc.* (1879) I. 262 The old Corner Store, which, like his father, he had made the centre of all his business operations.
- 1825 *Edinb. Mag. & Literary Misc.* Aug. 221/2 He is fond of an intermixture of sociality with business-dealings.
- 1846 T. B. THORPE *Our Army on Rio Grande* xix. 157 The inhabitants..became to rely upon the spontaneous productions of the soil, rather than upon any business investment, for their support.
- 1885 *Bankers' Mag.* Dec. 1111 We would suggest a greatly extended use of memo. forms for internal use and external communication to business customers.
- 1888 A. MORRISON *New Orleans & New South* 53/2 An accomplished and astute merchant, deservedly enjoying the confidence of the business community.
- 1890 in F. A. SAWARD *Coal Trade* 115 (*adv.*) As indispensable as the financial and credit rating reports, the account books and other necessary paraphernalia of a properly conducted business office.
- 1898 D. OSTRANDER *Social Crisis* iv. 121 It is claimed that this business strategy enabled this great oil company to control ninety-five per cent of the whole refining trade in this country.
- 1907 *Electr. World* 1 June 1113/1 They considered it a decided business bringer.
- 1932 W. CATHER *Obscure Destinies* 23 But his neck, always clean shaved except in the business seasons, was not loose or baggy.
- 1944 J. H. BENNETTS in R. GREENHALGH *Pract. Builder* xiii. 398/1 Costing abstracts are a simple means of classifying and allocating all business expenses to the actual item of work for which they have been incurred.
- 1954 P. G. WODEHOUSE *Jeeves & Feudal Spirit* i. 7 She was in the middle of a very tricky business deal with the male half of the sketch.
- 1959 *Times* 1 June 17/4 Since the war the business aircraft has become as much a part of the American way of life as baseball or Coca-Cola.
- 1971 *Russ. Rev.* 30 49 Highly altruistic in the beginning of his business relationship with Tolstoy.
- 2011 C. MILITELLO *Murder at Transit* ix. 59 It would give an 'in' to a company that was very *ruthless* in their business approach.

b.

business acumen *n.*

- 1846 *Anglo Amer.* 24 Oct. 13/1 His adventures always found a good market, and his consignments safe and energetic factors. All this he attributed to his own business acumen.
- 1968 E. BRILL *Old Cotswold* vi. 89 He had little of the sharp business acumen that goes with the making of money on a big scale, but this is not evidence that he or his family were ever on the poverty line.
- 2005 *Courier-Mail (Brisbane)* 29 Jan. 10/1 Dale's true believers buy his personal-trainer packages for upwards of \$12,000 each to learn his unique brand of business acumen.

business affair *n.*

- 1598 J. FLORIO *World of Wordes* 123/3 *Facendière, Facendaro*, a dealer in business affaires, a negociator, an agent, a dealer.
- 1789 *Lady's Mag.* 20 184 Mr. Leveret had been one of those close men who seldom entrust their family with their business-affairs.
- 1873 F. HUDSON *Journalism in U.S.* xxxviii. 611 These journals, so recalcitrating to each other in their columns, so full of rivalry in their business affairs.
- 1948 E. E. SMITH *Triplanetary* iii. 33 Like two high executives..discussing business affairs during a chance meeting at one of their clubs.
- 2003 F. SHAW *Sweetest Thing* 372 My cousin was indeed sailing very close to the wind in his business affairs.

business agent *n.*

- 1831 *Times* 19 Dec. 6/3 Travelling through the country as a business agent.
- 1901 S. MERWIN & H. K. WEBSTER *Calumet 'K'* i. 15 All that remained was to wait until the business agent made the next move.
- 2002 C. ANZILOTTI *In Affairs of World* vi. 172 'I find it requires great care, attention and activity to attend properly to a Carolina Estate,' she noted to George Morly, her business agent in London.

business associate *n.*

- 1842 *Knickerbocker* July 99 At first his sensitive heart found it a sore task to call upon his old acquaintances and former business-associates, to inform them that their notes were protested.
- 1927 *N.Y. Times* 28 Mar. 1/3 Henry Morgenthau..and a group of business associates announced yesterday that they had purchased the control of the Photomaton.
- 2000 L. CRANE *Ninth Day of Creation* 32 Rosen had gone into his 'sell mode', which he normally reserved for visiting business associates.

business centre *n.*

- 1824 H. G. SPAFFORD *Gazetteer State N.-Y.* (new ed.) 570/2 The important Villages..formed a sort of business-centre for the trade of a vast extent of country.
- 1913 *Sat. Evening Post (Philadelphia)* 22 Feb. 31/3 (*advt.*) In every important business center from Boston to 'Frisco you will find the sturdy Baker proving the supremacy of the electric over every other truck.
- 2003 *UnWired* May 8/2 Serving large populations in concentrated areas, such as downtowns, universities, and business centers.

business committee *n.*

- 1825 R. H. LEE *Mem. Life R. H. Lee* I. 109 He was either chairman, or a member..of every miscellaneous business committee.
- 1945 *Fortune* Mar. 107/1 Carrying the approval of..the Business Committee, the Heller report was released in January.
- 2003 L. FOWLER *Columbia Guide Amer. Indians Great Plains* v. 120 The Cheyenne and Arapaho had a business committee..that incorporated elderly chiefs from all of the communities.

business efficiency *n.*

- 1849 E. G. HOLLAND *Rev. & Ess.* 350 Industry..is the basis of mental vigor and business-efficiency.
- 1926 A. HUXLEY *Jesting Pilate* IV. 316 Reduced to an Indian diet, Americans would be a good deal less interested than they actually are in business efficiency, uplift and the Charleston.
- 2005 *Wired* May 152/3 Networks of suppliers, retailers and customers increased business efficiency.

business executive *n.*

- 1860 J. G. HOLLAND *Miss Gilbert's Career* vi. 106 Mrs. Ruggles, relieved by Arthur from a serious burden of care, was aware of his importance to her husband, not only as nurse, but as business executive.
- 1965 B. PEARCE tr. E. Preobrazhensky *New Econ.* 189 The red managers, proletarian engineers, and business executives have no monopoly of the means of production.

2011 *N.Y. Times Mag.* 2 Jan. 41/2 Today's lesson was SWOT analysis, by which business executives around the world assess a company's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

business getter *n.*

1881 *Cincinnati (Ohio) Daily Gaz.* 1 Nov. 7/1 Gen. Alexander is in no sense a rate cutter, but he is emphatically a business getter, as the increase in the tonnage of the L. & N., under his management, clearly proves.

1886 *Chronicle (N.Y.)* 18 Feb. 72/1 The company's latest statement shows that its officers and agents are industrious business getters.

1925 *Amer. Mercury* Dec. 394/1 The contact man is only indirectly—sometimes not at all—a business-getter.

2008 I. CHAFETZ *Ben's Way Out* xix. 110 Some lawyers are very good business getters while others don't do well with clients.

business habit *n.*

1825 *Italian Legend in Oxf. Q. Mag.* 1 56 Reminiscences of early love, which his business-life and business-habits had all been unable to efface.

1876 *Amer. Agriculturist* 35 14/2 A..few farmers who have been brought up to business habits keep such accounts.

1907 *Pennsylvania Med. Jrnl.* 11 382 The irregularity of the hours of our work tends to break up even the best business habit.

2010 T. ZENDER *God goes to Work* 196 The Newtonian business habits of companies and individuals..destroy the productivity of their businesses.

business house *n.*

1823 *Times* 22 Apr. 1 To let... A commodious business house situate..[in the] best trading part of the town.

1935 *Boys' Life* May 42/4 (advt.) In a recent five months 205 Strayer graduates obtained positions with leading business houses.

1992 B. UNSWORTH *Sacred Hunger* xvii. 128 The taverns and tap-houses frequented by clerks and warehousemen and the small functionaries of business houses.

business interest *n.*

1820 *National Recorder (Philadelphia)* 28 Oct. 230/1 His course appeals so directly to the business interests of all who would be distinguished at the bar or in our deliberative assemblies, that it cannot..fail to be numerously attended.

1922 S. HIGH *China's Place in Sun* ii. 20 Whereas, formerly, the chief concern of American business interest was increased production, in the future it will be necessary to consider of first importance the matter of sale and distribution.

2002 E. BUCHAN *Revenge of Middle-aged Woman* (2003) xiv. 179 When Xavier died two years ago, he had numerous business interests, the bakery, property and everything.

business life *n.*

1825 *Italian Legend in Oxf. Q. Mag.* 1 56 Reminiscences his early love, which his business-life and business-habits had all been unable to efface.

1868 W. COLLINS *Moonstone* II. II. 148 Female Boards..drew the breath of their business-life through the nostrils of Mr. Godfrey.

1951 M. McLUHAN *Mech. Bride* 137/2 People..could maintain an intimate link with ordinary social and business life.

2006 *Daily Tel.* 18 Apr. 19/1 [He] was distinctly un-Quakerish in every aspect of his personal and business life.

business management *n.*

1807 *Politics Georgium Sidus* 84 Agents, who, with the address and the plain business management of any money-lender or auctioneer, are ready to find to venal electors the purchaser who will give the highest price.

1924 *Amer. Econ. Rev.* 14 290 The essential theme of this volume is the separation of business management from the technical-industrial management of physical production.

2008 G. MWAKIKAGILE *Afr. Immigrants in S. Afr.* II. 144 After matriculating from Kabulonga High School in Lusaka, Zambia, she went on to study business management at a local college.

business magnate *n.*

1867 *Round Table* 1 June 342/1 It is pleasant to see the grim faces of great professional and business magnates relaxed now and then.

1946 *Chicago Defender* 9 Feb. 5/4 With the assistance of the State Department, the 40-year-old business magnate secured these privileges.

1991 J. KINGDOM *Local Govt. & Politics in Brit.* xii. 207 Those dominating both society and the municipal institutions were the local business magnates.

business meeting *n.*

- 1801 *Monthly Mag.* Dec. 406/1 The Royal Exchange,..which was, about the middle of the last century, erected to favour the business-meetings of the merchants.
- 1950 *Life* 2 Oct. 116/2 He almost never goes out in the evening, even for dinner, unless it is incidental to a business meeting.
- 2008 B. BLANKENSHIP *Daisy on Wheels* xii. 75 While we're in New York, Mom schedules a couple of business meetings with clients. The appointments don't go well, she comes home frowning.

business mogul *n.*

- 1902 *Lippincott's Monthly Mag.* Oct. 445 She had sought the director; the business mogul; the great John Covertton; the machine.
- 1959 *Flying Mag.* Oct. 50/1 Those business moguls who still think private planes are just-so-much-tomfoolery for crazy millionaires and wild-eyed kids.
- 2011 A. LEVINE *King* vi. 192 Many of Canada's most astute business moguls, such as the president of the Canadian Pacific Railway, Edward Beatty, regarded the downturn in the economy as a temporary 'adjustment'.

business morality *n.*

- 1836 C. A. BARTOL *Infl. Ministry at Large in City of Boston* 47 The lax business-morality whose hurtful vapors are breathed in like the surrounding air.
- 1902 *Ann. Amer. Acad. Polit. & Social Sci.* 19 65 To..stop all speculation in railway shares, would seem to be a distinct advance in the direction of business morality.
- 2009 C. LANE & J. PROBERT *National Capitalisms, Global Production Networks* viii. 199 The business morality of their western buyers and the ability to trust them is, for Turkish suppliers, strongly related to their behaviour regarding price negotiation and to their payment methods.

business opportunity *n.*

- 1840 *Bristol Mercury* 17 Oct. 8/2 The sacrifices which an active and intelligent man makes, of time, and business opportunities, in becoming a Town-Councillor.
- 1938 *Far Eastern Surv.* 7 234/2 There is more to this than the mere question of business opportunity.
- 2011 A. F. HYDE *Empires, Nations & Families* ii. 126 This organized, legal, and successful venture represented a true competitor for McLoughlin's ambitions, but also a business opportunity.

business owner *n.*

- 1861 *Brit. Farmer's Mag.* July 27/1 Other owners,..observing what is done by the new and business owners, have arrived at the conclusion that they also can obtain something more for their farms than they have done.
- 1962 *Times* 25 June 16/7 How different is the motivation of an executive, with his long-term interest in salary growth, from that of a business owner on the one hand, or a manual worker on the other.
- 2011 M. DIXON *Triumph Beyond Meas.* xvi. 180 Too often I see business owners who think their company can run itself. This sounds like a rookie mistake, but I see it most often from business owners who have already enjoyed some success.

business partner *n.*

- ?1806 J. T. KEARNEY *Kearney's Cases* 7/1 The secretary of the defendant corporation issued a bogus stock certificate... This certificate he gave to his business partner.
- 1938 *Rotarian* Apr. 55/1 (*caption*) A Rotary father-and-son combination with half a world between it is that of Fred Burley, London, England, and Arthur Burley, Sydney, Australia. They're business partners, too.
- 2006 A. SUMMERS *One Train Later* v. 60 Mr. Smith and Mr. Gardner-Brown, both pushing thirty-five, are two business partners who seem to cradle a fantasy to become real estate barons.

business practice *n.*

- 1823 *Brit. Press* 10 Sept. It has often occurred to me, that men in trade adopt this plan for their business practice.
- 1921 *Jewelers' Circular* 7 Dec. 103/3 There are general merchants who handle jewelry as a side line,..who do not have the high ideals of strict business practice of the average jeweler.
- 2006 P. WILLIAMS-FORSON *Building Houses out of Chicken Legs* i. i. 35 Though we are left devoid of a number of intimate details that would shed more light on their roles as early entrepreneurs, we are made aware of some of the tensions and contestations that surrounded their business practices.

business proposition *n.*

- 1841 *N.-Y. Spectator* 14 July 1/1 This was a simple business proposition.
- 1909 'O. HENRY' *Options* (1916) 11 He had been used to having his business propositions heard of.

2007 *Sharp Edge* June 60/2 Finchatton's business proposition..is diametrically opposed to their rivals.

business reason *n.*

1835 *Chambers's Edinb. Jrnl.* 8 Aug. 217/1 If he can get a real business reason for passing her abode, it is—almost as good as a call.

1856 F. E. SMEDLEY *Harry Coverdale's Courtship* lxv, in *Sharpe's London Mag.* Feb. 122/1 For business reasons, Kate, who is left sole executrix, must immediately return to England.

1929 R. S. LYND & H. M. LYND *Middletown* xix. 307 In the main, business men join lodges today for business reasons.

2006 G. MALKANI *Londonstani* ix. 97 We figure if it were an arranged marriage, the two sides' parents'd probly already be mates or they'd wanna be mates for business reasons.

business style *n.*

1818 *Blackwood's Edinb. Mag.* Feb. 612/2 In the old business style.

1841 T. CARLYLE *On Heroes* i. 37 Snorro..almost in a brief business style, writes down, [etc.].

1997 *N.Y. Times* 25 July c1/5 Mr. Scott's take-no-prisoners business style..has provoked a backlash of opposition.

business transaction *n.*

1806 R. SEMPLE *Charles Ellis* I. i. 4 His father had completely wound up his business transactions.

1920 *Atlantic Reporter* 109 9/1 Plaintiff did not offer an original book of entries of business transactions, regularly kept.

2001 S. HAWKING *Universe in Nutshell* vi. 170 In the near future, most business transactions will probably be made..via the World Wide Web.

business travel *n.*

1833 *Amer. Railroad Jrnl.* 23 Mar. 180/2 (*table*) Business Travel and Transportation of Goods between Philadelphia and Frankford, Holmesburg and other places on the Line.

1922 *Amer. Druggist* June 46/1 Hotel charges, meals and other sundry expenses incident to business travel.

2011 T. RENK *Journey for Revenge* II. 109 We should have no problem getting across the border and I have a number of passport entries to Russia with my business travels.

business traveller *n.*

1814 *Monthly Mag.* July 578/2 An improvement of great importance to the pleasure as well as to the business traveller in that part of Devonshire.

1940 *Life* 23 Dec. 45/2 Business travelers also choose the safety, the comfort and low cost of Greyhound trips.

2008 Y. KING tr. O. Wikström *Icon in my Pocket* i. 16 An experienced business traveller, who has obviously been more or less forced by his wife to go on this trip, complains that people are so 'awkward'.

business trip *n.*

1833 H. MARTINEAU *Parish* x. 159 Ashly came home at dusk one afternoon..from a business trip to the next town.

1961 I. MURDOCH *Severed Head* i. 14 I had in fact very rashly promised to take her with me on a business trip.

2006 *N.Y. Times* (National ed.) 1 Nov. A1/2 No homework to oversee. No bedtimes to bird-dog. For many working mothers, business trips become mini-vacations.

business tycoon *n.*

1934 *Hartford (Connecticut) Courant* 3 June II. 1/4 Ability to enact the role of a business tycoon on the screen doesn't necessarily carry with it the ability to transfer those same talents to real life.

1972 *Jrnl. Contemp. Hist.* 7 92 The tendency to exaggerate the personal responsibility of public personages, politicians, and business tycoons and the like, for major decisions.

2010 D. B. MOON *Mind Sweeper* ii. 14 Everyone who knew him had always thought he'd shake the dust of Pleasant Grove off and move to the big city to become a business tycoon or something.

business venture *n.*

1838 *Let.* 12 Dec. in S. S. Bell *Cases decided House of Lords on Appeal from Courts of Scotl.* (1843) I. 522 In June 1837, you were introduced to us by Mr Robert Watt, as being about to visit Canada..on a business venture.

- 1920 C. H. WARD *Theme-building* xix. 379 *Proposition* ought not to be a substitute for every conceivable sort of business venture or difficulty or undertaking or chance or investment or puzzle.
- 2006 *Wall St. Jrnl.* 5 Sept. A22/1 Her business venture offers a window into what happens when a celebrity opens a..retail business.

business view *n.*

- 1820 *Gentleman's Mag.* June 525/1 In a business view, the Crusades were the means of vastly extending the knowledge which is indicative of civilization.
- 1922 *System* Jan. 15/1 He doubts if then [sc. twenty-one years ago] 'any man would truthfully have given his business views or experience. Business was carried on mysteriously.'
- 2009 P. LORANGE *Shipping Strategy* v. 108 (heading) Juxtaposing traditional and radical business views.

business wit *n.*

- a1861 A. H. CLOUGH *Dipsychus* II. i, in *Lett. & Remains* (1865) 170 Men's business-wits, the only sane things.
- 1920 M. SAMUEL tr. S. Asch *Uncle Moses* III. i. 180 He was employing all his business wits to get a synagogue for his townfolk.
- 2004 G. JONES *Men of Tomorrow* (2005) v. 87 Using his charm and business wits to stitch together connections..to keep the money flowing in.

business world *n.*

- 1816 S. DANA *Disc. Hist. First Christian Church Marblehead* 11 It is a law of providence well accredited in the business world, that ordinary industry should be rewarded with the ordinary fruits of industry.
- 1906 H. RENNOLDS *Out of Ashes* xiv. 201 He has been elected President of the Blanker Banking Co., which means that his rating is first-class in the business world.
- 2009 *N.Y. Times Mag.* 20 Sept. 18/1 In the business world we now find *unconferences* and *unmarketing*.

c. Forming adjectives in combination with a past participle, as **business-based**, **business-oriented**, **business-related**, etc.

- 1940 *Amer. Econ. Rev.* 30 134 It is this common-sense attitude that has made modern politics essentially a business-oriented politics.
- 1965 *Financial Times* 12 Apr. 92/5 The role of advertising in a business-orientated society.
- 1982 *Daily Tel.* 23 Nov. 19 (adv.) Our Computer Centres offer you a full line of TRS-80 peripherals, software, and other business-related accessories, including telephone dialers and answerers.
- 1987 *Jrnl. Palestine Stud.* 16 33 Rule by the military and business-based elements linked to U.S. corporations.
- 1998 *Oxfordshire Bull.* (CPRE) Sept. 3/3 Concerns about the role of non-elected, business-dominated Regional Development Agencies.
- 2003 D. L. SCOTT *Wall St. Words* (ed. 3) 6 The amount of taxable income that remains after certain allowed business-related deductions..are subtracted from an individual's gross income.

C2.

a. *attributive*. Designating an item of clothing or outfit that is designed or suitable for wear in a business environment, now esp. in an office, as **business shirt**, **business shoe**, etc.

- 1827 *Souvenir* 11 July 13/3 Twilled bombazets are much worn for business coats and pantaloons.
- 1856 B. BOUCHIER *My Parish* 70 Tom Ball's anticipations, therefore, of stepping into Mr. Carsdell's business-shoes were unceremoniously frustrated by what he always considered a personal unkindness and spite.
- 1888 *Clothier & Furnisher* (N.Y.) Dec. 53/2 For a business shirt I prefer one that opens at the back. They wear better than the others, and look just as well.
- 1919 I. E. MACKAY *Mist of Morning* xi. 185 Rosme rose, brushing a crumb from her neat business skirt.
- 1953 *Wisconsin State Jrnl.* 2 June I. 3/8 Premier Tamasese of the Pacific Island of Samoa arrived in London wearing a sarong under a business jacket and carrying a smartly-furled umbrella.
- 2003 J. R. LENNON *Mailman* I. iv. 209 A few have 'dressed down' and wear shorts and golf shirts; others are in suit and tie or a business skirt and jacket.

b.

business suit *n.*

- 1854 *Racine* (Wisconsin) *Daily Morning Advocate* 15 Aug. 3 Cadet Business Suits of elegant style and finish... Cadet College Suits [etc.].
- 1904 'A. DALE' *Wanted: Cook* iv. 66 Mr. Tamworth..affected that horrible garb known as a 'business suit', with a rude, short coat.
- 1932 E. WILSON *Devil take Hindmost* iv. 30 A prosaic, gray business suit.
- 2001 *National Geographic* Mar. 84/1 A garrulous man in dark glasses and rumpled business suit.

business wear *n.*

- 1842 *Bristol Mercury* 21 May 4/3 (*adv.*) Second-rate qualities, recommended for business wear.
- 1891 *Pacific Educ. Jrn.* June 205/1 The illustration displays a novel and at the same time suitable garb for business wear.
- 1922 *Amer. Exporter* Dec. 40/1 It [sc. the soft collar] kept on growing, working its way from the country club and outing negligee to business wear.
- 1993 *Canad. Living* Feb. 112 Clothing: casualwear, knitwear, denim and some businesswear; petite to plus sizes.
- 2010 T. O'DELL *Fragile Beasts* xxi. 292 Her business wear was equally colorful but in the form of pencil skirts and fitted suit jackets adorned with some time of beading, embroidery, or lace at the lapels and cuffs.

C3.

a. General *attributive* in sense 14d, as **business course**, **business degree**, **business student**, **business teacher**, etc.

- 1862 I. D. GUYER *Hist. Chicago* 144 It is necessary for our business students to learn in these schools how to carry the theories of business into practical life.
- 1891 *Science* 27 Nov. 305/2 This is not only a text-book for business colleges and the business courses of schools and academies, but it is desirable for the desk of the business man.
- 1936 *Clearing House* 11 117/1 Students who complete a Business Major with a grade of B receive a 'Certificate of Recommendation' in the field in which they have shown marked competency.
- 1951 *N.Y. Times* 29 Apr. E9/4 New York City firms will provide work experience to business teachers enrolled as advanced students in the business education department of Teachers College, Columbia University.
- 1996 C. ANSHAW *Seven Moves* i. 2 She took a business degree and, with money she made waitressing during semester breaks,..she bought a piece of a trendy restaurant on Armitage.
- 2006 K. HART *Butterflies in May* xi. 96 Tom is a business professor at Illinois State University, and Ellen works part-time at a library.

b.

business college *n.*

- 1862 *Janesville (Wisconsin) Daily Gaz.* 11 Sept. Bryant & Stratton's National Chain of Mercantile Colleges. The public will be glad to learn that these business colleges are still in active operation.
- 1903 A. D. McFAUL *Ike Glidden in Maine* xvi. 124 He had just graduated from a business college, and claimed to know how to do business 'in a business-like manner'.
- 1998 *Guardian* 28 Nov. (Weekend Suppl.) 52/4 From the battlements, a young guide proudly pointed out..the new nursing, agricultural and business colleges.

business school *n.*

- 1859 Business School [see sense 14d].
- 1966 'N. BLAKE' *Morning after Death* i. 19 'What do you actually do in the Business School?' 'There are courses in economics, management, salesmanship, commercial history, theory of exchange, the ethical aspect of business—all that kind of thing.'
- 2009 *Atlantic Monthly* Dec. 33/3 In business school, my fellow students and I became fans of the idea of 'consumption smoothing'.

C4. *Bridge. attributive* with sense 'called or made for the purpose of gaining a penalty', 'that gains a penalty' (see sense 14e), as **business double**, **business pass**, **business redouble**, etc.

- 1913 E. V. SHEPARD *Sci. Auction Bridge* 58 Business bids are made with the intention of trying to win a contract.
- 1913 E. V. SHEPARD *Sci. Auction Bridge* 115 The business redouble is made when able to fulfil a doubled contract.
- 1925 A. E. M. FOSTER *Auction Bridge* 46 A double of four or more is always a 'business' double.
- 1927 *Observer* 6 Mar. 25 This Business Pass is one of the most formidable weapons. It converts the Informatory Double into a Business Double.
- 1999 B. SEAGRAM & M. SMITH *25 Bridge Convent.* 21 The traditional 'penalty' or 'business' double is still very handy.

C5.

business administration *n.* the process of running a business, now esp. as the subject of a programme of study at an institution of higher education; cf. *M.B.A. n.* at *M n.* Initialisms 2a.

- 1852 *Daily Picayune* (New Orleans) 14 Nov. While one [literary style] is represented by the giants of pure intellect, the other will be heralded by the masters of the art of business administration and address.
- 1904 *Wisconsin Alumni Mag.* Nov. 71/2 A course in business administration extending throughout the sophomore, junior, and senior years has been added to the course of study.
- 2011 E. M. LOGAN *Dentistry's Business Secrets* i. 5 Investing sufficient time educating ourselves in the fundamentals of business administration is essential.

business angel *n.* a person who supports a business financially; (now) *spec.* a person who invests private capital in a small business, usually in return for a proportion of the company equity; cf. *ANGEL n.* 7b.

- 1884 *Photographic News* 1 Aug. 493/1 I found afterwards that I had entertained an Angel—a business Angel—unawares, for I have done nearly £300 from that negative since.
- 1925 *Proc. Amer. Soc. Civil Engineers* Oct. 249 As Langley, a great astronomer, had been his scientific inspiration, so William Thaw, a great philanthropist, became his business 'angel' and gave him the much needed financial advice and assistance.
- 1984 *Inc.* (Nexis) Mar. 143 Kramer finds most of his deals through friends and business associates. That, says a study by University of New Hampshire professor William E. Wetzel Jr., is precisely how most business angels operate.
- 2004 P. REIZIN *Fiends Reunited* ii. 75 'Business angels', those speculative investors who, instead of being taxed at forty per cent on the interest their pile of gold was accruing, preferred to take a tax-free punt on a new business if the business plan was 'sweet'.

business card *n.* a small printed card containing the bearer's name, occupation and status, contact details, etc., given or exchanged for the purposes of business.

- 1821 *Louisville (Kentucky) Public Advertiser* 25 Apr. 1/5 Bank Notes, Change Tickets, Business Cards, &c. &c. will be engraved and printed.
- 1864 C. DICKENS *Our Mutual Friend* (1865) I. i. xvii. 158 Bland strangers with business-cards meeting said servants in the streets.
- 1959 T. S. ELIOT *Elder Statesman* III. 102 Here's my business card With the full address.
- 2005 D. COWIE *Owen Noone & Marauder* 90 He gave me a business card and told me to give him a call on Monday.

business casual *adj.* and *n.* originally and chiefly *North American (a) adj.* designating clothing or a style of dress that is less formal than traditional business dress, but is intended still to appear professional and businesslike; (of a workplace) having a relatively relaxed dress code; *(b) n.* this style of dress.

- 1968 *N.Y. Times* 9 Nov. 3 (*advt.*) Business casual or casual business suits... Suits that complement your business acumen and commend your *savoir-faire*.
- 1988 *Toronto Star* (Nexis) 25 June K5 Friedlander's fashion philosophy revolves around 'three styles of dressing': High authority or power dressing... A day-to-day look she has labelled 'business casual'... A day-to-evening concept.
- 1990 *St. Petersburg (Florida) Times* (Nexis) 29 Jan. (Business section) 2 They were told the dress code was 'business casual attire'.
- 1994 *Record (Bergen County, New Jersey)* (Electronic ed.) 2 Oct. We are finding more and more companies that started it on Friday in the summer, then went to Fridays all year long, and then to allowing business casual day in and day out.
- 2009 L. ALEXANDER *Bikini Diaries* 269 Early thirties, she'd bet—no tie, but a nice shirt and jacket that told her he probably worked in a business-casual office nearby.

business correspondent *n.* *(a)* a person with whom one corresponds on matters of business, or with whom one has regular business relations; *(b)* a person employed (typically by a newspaper, television programme, etc.) to report on business-related news.

- 1830 J. F. COOPER *Water Witch* II. xii. 244 The enquiries that appeared so much in character as that of reading the communications of his business correspondents.
- 1846 *Zion's Herald & Wesleyan Jrnl.* 2 Sept. 140/5 The following facts, stated by a business correspondent of the N. E. Puritan, may at least suggest *profitable reflection* to such as, having the Bible in their hands,..still look for pecuniary profit in violating its divine command.
- 1913 *Printers' Ink* 13 Nov. 64/2 In effect, a reporter, specializing on business news for private circulation, the average business correspondent serves several firms in non-conflicting lines.
- 2001 R. GRASSBY *Kinship & Capitalism* vi. 243 Michael Mitford, writing to a business correspondent, signed 'I am with all kind love your real friend'.
- 2004 B. ANDERSON *News Flash* i. 17 On August 20, 2003, while respected CNN business correspondent Rhonda Schaffler was giving a live update from the floor of the New York Stock Exchange, the Atlanta control room added music to her report.

business-critical *adj.* crucial to the operation of a business.

- 1986 *Computerworld* 8 Oct. 19/4 Many in information systems management saw users building business-critical systems on hardware and software acquired, owned and managed by the users themselves.
- 1998 *Times* 25 June (Appointments section) 11/2 (*advt.*) If you want a role where you can make a measurable difference, join a company where your work is acknowledged as business-critical.
- 2009 C. M. PADGETT *Project Success Method* i. 11 The effectiveness of The Project Success Method has been proven by its application to thousands of our clients' complex, business-critical projects since 1983.

business cycle *n.* = *trade cycle n.* at *TRADE n.* and *adv.* Compounds 3.

Cf. *economic cycle n.* at *ECONOMIC n.* and *adj.* Compounds.

- 1858 *Charleston (S. Carolina) Mercury* 15 Feb. There is a sort of business cycle of the same length of time.
- 1909 *Q. Jnl. Econ.* **23** 711 The Canadian ratios, likewise, show certain divergencies..which..seem to be connected with the course of business cycles.
- 2001 B. LIETAER *Future of Money* 252 The fact that the quantity of Terra in circulation would be counter-cyclical to the business cycle would therefore tend to counteract the pro-cyclical nature of the conventional money system.

business day *n.* (a) a day on which business is conducted; (b) chiefly *North American* that part of a day during which business is conducted; = WORKING DAY *n.* 2.

- 1796 J. B. GILCHRIST *Gram. Hindoostanee Lang.* 324 The first day of the Fuslee [*i.e.* business] year there, provided the Astrologers who are consulted, consider it a lucky business day.
- 1843 V. E. HOWARD *Rep. High Court Mississippi* **6** 479 The business day of the bank was between or within the business hours, and unless demand was made within those hours, it was not made on the day.
- 1946 S. J. PERELMAN *Keep it Crisp* 199 They seem to spend the business day mousing around each other.
- 1997 *Calif. Lawyer* July 87/3 (*adv.*) Skips Located within seven business days.
- 2002 *Chicago Daily Herald* (Nexis) 29 Nov. 3 Carpentersville residents have until the end of the business day Tuesday to submit an apply for the village trustee seat.

business district *n.* an area of a city or town containing a significant number of business premises.

- 1832 *Christian Reg. (Boston)* 21 July 115/2 The Journal of Commerce remarks that few of the cases reported are in the business districts of the city.
- 1962 *Life* 23 Feb. 28/2 Chicago was due for a renaissance. From the early '20s until the mid-'50s not one major building went up in the business district.
- 2011 C. BROWN-SYED *Parents of Invention* v. 58 From an expensive suite at the MLC Centre in the heart of Sydney's business district, the company had relocated to the high-tech enclave of St. Leonard's.

business doctor *n.* now *rare* a person who gives business advice professionally.

- 1879 O. H. STRATTAN *That Business of Mine: Amer. Ladies' Industr. Guild* I. 162 Business doctors sufficiently skilled Could bring prosperity.
- 1899 *Drake University Bull.* **3** 93 A lawyer is a business doctor.
- 1901 *Daily Express* 6 Aug. 6/2 A very novel profession has been lately started in the City. It may be called that of the business doctor.
- 1969 *Sunday Mail Mag. (Brisbane)* 4 May 2/7 He's pretty busy as a 'Business Doctor' there—runs a 'think-tank'.
- 2008 P. SMILEY *Cool Cache* 268 I did not know business doctors made house calls.

business edge *n. colloquial* (originally *U.S.*) the sharp or cutting edge of an implement or tool; cf.

BUSINESS END *n.*

- 1884 *Galveston (Texas) Daily News* 3 Jan. The sword was poised with the business edge toward the fence-owners.
- 1935 *Antiquity* **9** 211 The business edge of the chisel-ended arrow.
- 2009 K. YOUNG *Blood Bayou* 389 His thumb stroked across the business edge of the knife blade.

business empire *n.* a collection of businesses with shared high-level management, *esp.* one ultimately under the control of one individual.

- 1878 *Daily Rocky Mountain News (Denver)* 11 Dec. Denver will go on increasing in population, influence and trade, until it holds in its hands the keys to a business empire, greater in extent and richer in resources than Napoleon ever saw.
- 1968 M. DUBOFSKY *When Workers Organize* iii. 46 A trade-union offered no proper prospect for aggressive individuals who dreamed of possessing their own business empires.
- 2010 O. A. TOGUN *All that Glitters* iv. 62 He hoped that one day when he was grown, Francis would take over his vast business empire, so he made efforts to groom him appropriately.

business English *n.* (a) = *pidgin English* *n.* at PIDGIN *n.* Compounds 1; (b) a style of English suited or adapted to use in business; (in later use *esp.*) a form taught to people (usually non-native speakers) who wish to conduct business in English.

- 1855 *Knickerbocker* June 574 A majority of the Chinese who have dealings with us *outsiders*, speak what is called by them 'pigeon or business English'.
- 1864 *Punch* 10 Sept. 111/1 By instantly assigning a good business reason, and in good business English—'she was one of those first-rate customers that settled an account without discount'.
- 1925 *Amer. Mercury* Dec. 451/2 It bears all the earmarks of vague recollections of night-school classes in 'business English'.
- 1951 *Amer. Speech* **26** 25 The pidgin of Hawaii differs markedly from the pidgin English ('business English') of the China coast.

2010 M. CLAYPOLE *Controv. in ELT* 87 If they really needed to make phone calls, present facts and figures and enter into negotiations, they would have signed up for Business English.

business ethic *n.* a moral principle relating to business; (in *plural*) a set of such principles conceived of as forming a code of conduct in business.

1848 *Mechanics' Mag.* 5 Aug. 123/1 Of course we cannot look..for cultivated intellect, nor still less for a high code of business-ethics.

1898 *Speaker* 26 Nov. 645/2 'I have to sell what my customers buy; but I never call margarine butter.' 'I suppose that is the business ethic of it.'

1937 *Times* 23 Mar. 23/5 Its business ethics in the past have been founded upon careful management, combined with the policy of giving the utmost assistance to home-ownership.

2007 C. GREYLING & U. MÜLLER *X-kit Business Stud.* v. 67 Business ethics are established to protect shareholders and owners, employees, suppliers and customers from the unscrupulous behaviour of individuals.

business-friendly *adj.* favouring or conducive to business concerns or interests.

1948 *Boston Daily Globe* 25 Oct. 1/7 (*heading*) Dewey to pledge labor, business friendly term.

1983 *PR Newswire* (Nexis) 21 July There is always a temptation to pull up stakes and move to a more 'business-friendly' state.

2001 M. STEEL *Reasons to be Cheerful* xi. 129 Mellish was ahead of his time as a Labour man, in that he was extremely business-friendly and would have nothing to do with the loony left image of the time.

business girl *n.* (a) a woman or girl who works in business (now somewhat *archaic*); (b) *colloquial* and *euphemistic* (originally *U.S.*) a prostitute; = WORKING GIRL *n.* 2.

1840 *Morning Herald* (N.Y.) 15 Feb. 1/3 She is a smart business girl.

1918 M. ALLERTON *Business Girl* i. 3 She gave a quick glance round the little cubby hole which represented the pride of the business girl—a room of her own.

1964 R. CRANE *Sergeant & Queen* 52 There, she could be artfully blended with 'business girls', with the prostitutes who flourished outside the..command post.

1987 J. STEVENS *Taking Revol. Home* ii. 67 The aims of the [Modern Women's] club were to provide a rest-room and meeting place..for 'business girls'.

2000 W. E. B. GRIFFIN *Secret Honor* iv. 357 'You think they're whores?' 'I would say there is a very strong probability that two young women sitting in a hotel bar smiling at two obvious foreigners are business girls.'

business graphic *n.* originally *U.S.* a graphical representation of data or statistics relating to business; (now chiefly in *plural*) computer-generated graphics of this type, esp. used as a visual aid in a presentation.

1912 *Mag. Wall St.* Sept. 248/1 We find that the Stock Market Graphic falls rapidly before the Business Graphic has attained its greatest height.

1984 *Which Micro?* Dec. 20/2 The four programs..consist of a wordprocessor, a spreadsheet, a data base manager and a business graphics designer.

2007 L. U. FULLER & R. C. FULLER *Photoshop CS3 Bible* i. 9 Business graphics, such as graphs, charts, and diagrams that reflect data or show how things work.

business guru *n.* a person with influential ideas or theories about business.

1969 *Business Week* 20 Dec. 70/2 (*heading*) A critic twits business gurus.

1994 *Wilson Q.* 18 75/1 The nanny corporation is an unfortunate but predictable perversion of the remedies business gurus have prescribed for corporate America since the late 1970s.

2009 R. BLANCHARD *Creating Wealth with Small Business* viii. 449 Business gurus were starting to talk about the emergence of a different kind of economy..based on information handling technologies that would revolutionize business and business models.

business head *n.* (a) = *business leader n.*; (b) an aptitude for business; cf. HEAD *n.*¹ 2b.

1825 *Boston Weekly Rep.* 17 Dec. 1/4 It is just such a *Business Communication*, as is to be expected from the *Business Head* of a *Business Government*.

1832 J. B. FRASER *Highland Smugglers* III. x. 256 What, by Hal's own confession, would you have done without Glenvallich's good business head?

1921 *Pop. Sci.* May 13/2 They have since become court stenographers, reporters, assistants to business heads and in many cases executives of prominent concerns and institutions.

1922 M. WIDDEMER *Winona on her Own* vi. 142 You know the boys don't want to run the store. They haven't business heads; they want to be doctors, both of them.

2004 *Black Belt* Aug. 68/1 Deeply suspicious of businessmen, he is himself the business head of what is one of the biggest and most successful karate systems in Japan.

2010 R. MCCRUM *Globish* (2011) iii. 71 Typically, it was not just a shrewd business head that inspired this move.

business hours *n.* the hours in the day during which commercial or other business is conducted; opening or office hours.

- 1767 *Adventures of Author* I. iii. 21 This constant application to study out of business hours, had given his master the highest opinion of him.
- 1839 C. DICKENS *Nicholas Nickleby* xl. 390 You will be surprised..to witness this in business hours.
- 1906 J. GALSWORTHY *Man of Prop.* 243 Incredible quantities of Forsytes, whose chief recreation out of business hours is the discussion of each other's affairs.
- 2007 *Brit. Archaeol.* Sept. 20/3 One snippy secretary refused admittance..during business hours on a weekday.

business incubator *n.* originally *U.S.* something which facilitates the growth of businesses; (in later use) *spec.* a professional service that facilitates the growth of new businesses by providing resources, support, and advice.

- 1892 *Printers' Ink* 31 Aug. 267 (*advt.*) All read it, and that is why it is the Great Business Incubator. There are other papers, of course, but there is but one Atlanta Journal.
- 1984 *Irish Times* 11 Feb. 8/4 'Business incubator' units where first-time entrepreneurs could work on their ideas..before proceeding to the full production stage.
- 2003 S. D. STRAUSS *Business Start-up Kit* xiv. 174 While all business incubators have the same goal in mind—helping to launch successful businesses—each is unique in its own way because many incubators specialize.

business interruption *n.* *Insurance attributive* designating a type of insurance which covers financial losses incurred by a business during a period in which it is unable to operate normally, as the result of a fire or another insurable risk.

- 1914 *Insurance Monitor* Aug. 353/2 Use and occupancy insurance—or business interruption insurance, as it is sometimes termed—which is designed to provide for maintenance of revenue at a plant where the production has been stopped, either in whole or in part, as the result of fire.
- 1967 *N.Y. Times* 17 Jan. 44/3 The building was insured for \$29,650,000, with a \$3-million business interruption policy.
- 2003 K. N. MYERS *Total Contingency Planning for Disasters* (ed. 3) v. 113 The extent to which your organization is dealing with disaster prevention and disaster recovery issues *will* affect business interruption premium rates.

business jet *n.* a (usually small) jet aircraft used for business travel.

- 1956 *Canad. Aviation* Oct. 86/1 The four-jet plane thus becomes the world's first business jet yet to be ordered.
- 1981 *Science* 27 Feb. 905/1 Most orders for business jets and commuter aircraft (in the short-haul mid-size range) are now held by manufacturers in Europe.
- 2010 D. GOLDSTEIN *Sharing Orion* xxv. 245 We can take my dad's business jet, it's at the airport corporate center, they always keep gas in it in case he needs to leave in a hurry.

business leader *n.* (*a*) a person who manages the business operations of an organization, political party, etc.; (*b*) a person in charge of a business; a prominent or influential person in the field of business.

- 1848 *Leeds Mercury* 23 Sept. 4/2 His melancholy death leaves Mr. Disraeli the oratorical leader of the Opposition, but perhaps Mr. Bankes the business leader.
- 1868 E. BURRITT *Thoughts & Notes at Home & Abroad* 303 So it is with manufacturers, shipowners, and other business leaders of the land.
- 1930 T. PARSONS tr. M. Weber *Protestant Ethic* i. 35 Business leaders and owners of capital,..are overwhelmingly Protestant.
- 2004 R. A. BENDIS *Intentional Entrepreneur* ix. 167 If John Voeller was the technical visionary behind BVSG, Gerald White was to become its business leader and the driver of BVSG's quest for an independent role.
- 2011 *N.Y. Times* 24 Oct. A16 The Treasury secretary..began talks with business leaders in January on a corporate tax overhaul.

business letter *n.* a (usually formal) letter in which business is reported or transacted.

- 1766 J. ROSE *Let.* 8 Apr. in A. Tayler & H. Tayler *Ld. Fife* (1925) ii. 31 I will have business letters also to write.
- 1872 'G. ELIOT' in J. W. Cross *George Eliot's Life* (1886) III. 159 Mr. Lewes makes a martyr of himself in writing all my notes and business letters.
- 1914 W. OWEN *Let.* 6 Mar. (1967) 237 I make money for this by doing a few translations..of business letters.
- 2000 *Jrnl. Econ. Soc. Hist. Orient* 43 36 Valuable evidence..has been furnished by the famous Jewish business letters from the Cairo geniza.

business-looking *adj.* having an appearance suggestive of business; that looks businesslike.

- 1823 *Yorks. Observer* 11 Jan. 83/1 There is your..laudable business-looking horse.
- 1839 C. DICKENS *Nicholas Nickleby* ii. 9 A business-looking table, and several business-looking people.

1922 *Bull. Pharmacy* Feb. 56 All the cards bore his personal signature. He used no typewriting, thus avoiding a business-looking postal.

2010 D. SCHOW *Internecine* 7 They saw a business-looking guy remove a business-looking case.

business lunch *n.* a lunch at which commercial transactions are discussed.

1880 *Freeport (Illinois) Daily Bull.* 10 Apr. 4 (*adv.*) The Arcade... A first class business lunch always on hand.

1926 S. LEWIS *Mantrap* xxv. 289 I don't really know a soul..except for meeting them at business lunches.

1954 L. MACNEICE *Autumn Sequel* xii. 76 The foregone Conclusion of a business lunch.

2004 *Vanity Fair (N.Y.)* Oct. 158/1 One has to skulk into the interior of two vehicles after a business lunch or date.

business luncheon *n.* = *business lunch n.*

1884 *St. Louis Globe-democrat* 05 Oct. 22/5 The business luncheon room down-stairs..and the ladies' parlor up-stairs have all been handsomely refitted.

1919 *Good Housek.* Sept. 221/2 (*adv.*) Coffee..Men like it,—they drink it at breakfast,—at the business luncheon,—at the conference dinner—and at the club banquet.

1963 P. MOYES *Murder à la Mode* v. 83 He knew enough of the protocol of business luncheons..not to be surprised..that Goring studiously avoided all reference to the matter in hand until the coffee arrived.

2010 J. NEUFELD *Lois Marshall* 83 She continued, of course, with the..business luncheons.

business manage *v. transitive* to act as a business manager of; (*intransitive*) to manage business, or a business.

1917 E. POUND *Let.* 28 Dec. in *Pound/Little Rev.* (1988) 171 Do you want to business-manage? It is inconceivable to me that any sane person should want to business manage anything.

1935 R. LORRAINE in W. Lorraine *Robert Lorraine* (1938) iv. 79 Mr. Frohman would finance the enterprise and business manage it entirely.

2010 G. C. SHAFFER in *Oxf. Handbk. Business & Govt.* 73 In-house counsel..helps business manage outside legal counsel.

business manager *n.* a person who manages the business affairs of an individual, institution, organization, or company.

1845 G. P. PUTNAM *Amer. Facts* 98 Fitzgreene Halleck, the business manager of a millionaire, despatches cargoes to the antipodes.

1852 *Chambers's Edinb. Jrnl.* 17 306/2 Clerks, book-keepers, foremen, business-managers.

1904 *System* Jan. 11 The White House has a business manager, although he is not given this title.

2004 *Daily Tel.* 31 May 11/1 He has since been linked to his business manager, the former heptathlete Jane Flemming.

business-minded *adj.* interested in or focused on business; having an aptitude for business.

1840 *Monthly Rev.* Aug. 579 Such social merriment and light-heartedness as are not to be witnessed among the business-minded English.

1912 *Everybody's Mag.* Dec. 817/2 Young Jones yields to the advice of a business-minded friend and resolves to look the factory over before selling out.

1970 *Billboard* 18 July 52/4 A lot of business-minded people are entering the industry who know the value of masses of people working together to fight different laws and taxes that are accessed on jukeboxes.

2009 S. LEE & P. L. SINITIERE *Holy Mavericks* iii. 75 He is business-minded, culture-affirming, and peculiarly American.

business model *n.* (*a*) a plan or scheme relating to or concerning business; (now *esp.*) a plan for the successful operation of a business, typically identifying sources of revenue, intended customer base, products, and details of financing; (*b*) a make or type of product tailored towards business use.

1832 W. CAPERS *Let.* 1 May in W. M. Wightman *Life W. Capers* (1858) 326 As I am not fashioned on a business model, I can, with a good conscience, excuse myself.

1880 *Daily Inter Ocean (Chicago)* 25 Sept. 3/5 With a beautiful business model,..the hull is also most substantially constructed.

1967 *Telegraph (Brisbane)* 17 Apr. 4/1 He was amused at the surprise that greeted his announcement that the hat he was wearing—a snappy, small-brimmed business model—was also a Stetson.

2006 A. STEFFEN et al. *Worldchanging* (2008) 386/1 Environmental and social issues are roiling the world of business, causing companies to rethink their products and services, their operations, even their business models.

business park *n.* originally *U.S.* an area of land devoted to company offices and light industrial premises.

- 1957 *Berkshire Eagle* (Pittsfield, Mass.) 8 June 8/6 Plans for development of seven acres of land on East Street at the intersection of Lyman Street into a business park were announced today.
- 1984 *Orange Coast Mag.* Sept. 70/2 Future south county residential communities will be built around 'urban clusters' containing business parks, shopping malls and high-tech centers.
- 2009 M. GARDINER *Memory Collector* xxxv. 311 Jo..headed through a business park toward the airfield. The buildings, the ubiquitous white concrete and blue glass architecture of Silicon Valley, were shut for the weekend.

business part *n.* the part of something that is concerned with business; (now *esp.*) (*colloquial*) =

BUSINESS END *n.*

- 1778 *Remembrancer* 5 436/2 Mr. Hancock..is very much engaged. The whole business part of the Congress lies upon his shoulders.
- 1838 J. S. MILL in *London & Westm. Rev.* 29 490 He [sc. Bentham] committed the mistake of supposing that the *business* part of human affairs was the whole of them.
- 1910 T. E. LAWRENCE *Let.* 29 Aug. (1938) 86 The business part of the log with which you are going to block your staircase.
- 2004 K. KILBY *Coopers & Coopering* 41 The business part of a cannon was called a barrel.

business plan *n.* a plan relating to or concerning business; (now *esp.*) a document setting out future objectives and strategies for a business.

- 1833 *Hull Packet* 15 Nov. Surveys and Plans of Estates taken, and every facility will be rendered to conduct all Sales entrusted to their Care, on a Business Plan.
- 1917 F. L. WALDO *Good Housing that Pays* ii. 13 'Well, what would you like to be doing?' was Ruskin's reply. 'Something to provide better homes for the poor,' was the girl's answer... 'Have you a business plan?' was his challenge.
- 1990 J. EBERTS & T. ILOTT *My Indecision is Final* xlviii. 514 Put simply, Goldercrest's business plan, which envisaged a doubling of turnover, from £14 million to £30 million, through 1986 and 1987, depended on the outcome of the present negotiations with third-party investors and Credit Lyonnais.
- 2004 *Publican* 8 Mar. 43/3 Working with Wizard, Deborah drew up a fail-safe business plan, which meant targeting the right market and getting the offer right.

business process redesign *n.* a thorough review and restructuring of a company's organization and methods, *esp.* so as to exploit the capabilities of information technology; (also as a mass noun) = *business process re-engineering n.*; abbreviated *BPR*.

- 1988 *CIO* Dec. 44/2 The risk assessment went well, and Gamache used Index for the next phase of the project: the business-process redesign.
- 1989 *Computerworld* (Nexis) 20 Mar. 73 Leader in business process redesign via information technology.
- 2000 S. A. SHULL & M. E. SHARPE *Amer. Civil Rights Policy* vi. 174 In 1995 it embarked on a business process redesign (BPR) to improve on its implementation efforts.
- 2007 N. F. KOCK *Syst. Anal. & Design Fund.* III. 118 The higher that investment, the less likely it is that business process redesign will be considered.

business process re-engineering *n.* the application of a thorough and radical approach to reviewing and restructuring a company's organization and methods, *esp.* so as to exploit the capabilities of information technology; abbreviated *BPR*.

- 1990 *Computerworld* 24 Dec. 15 It should be business process re-engineering so we can streamline our companies to reduce the organizational cost of service.
- 2001 C. COKER *Humane Warfare* v. 100 And it is in Canada that there is an ever-increasing emphasis in the military on business process re-engineering supported by computerised information technology.

business rate *n.* (*a*) a rate applied to businesses or business customers, as opposed to private individuals; (*b*) a tax levied on non-domestic properties (frequently in *plural*); cf. *RATE n.*¹ 6c.

- 1837 J. A. BOLLES *Treat. Usury & Usury Laws* i. 8 Under the dictatorship of Sylla,..the legal rate [sc. of interest] was three per cent. The prevalent business rate was more than four times as high.
- 1922 R. F. YATES & L. G. PACENT *Compl. Radio Bk.* xvi. 281 It must be understood, of course, that the normal business rate is far too high for news despatches, which must be sent as cheaply as possible.
- 1966 *Times* 26 Feb. 9/3 If extra-political justification is sought for that discrimination it may be found in the fact that business rates are chargeable to tax while domestic rates are not.
- 2006 E. WHITMER *Aloha Rainbow* xi. 189 Didn't we get all our new fangled cell phones at the business rate?
- 2010 P. KENDALL *Finance for Dentists* ii. 22 A dental practice, like any other business, will be assessed for business rates, and that assessment will take into account location, property values and local economic conditions.

business reply *n.* (also with capital initials in sense (b)) (a) a reply concerning business, esp. in response to a business letter; (b) *attributive* designating a card, envelope, etc., on which postage to the business to which it is addressed is prepaid; designating a service by which mail of this type may be sent; cf. FREEPOST *n.*

- 1842 *Morning Post* 9 June 4/6 The following business reply has already been received by Mr. Allday.
- 1924 *Lethbridge (Alberta) Herald* 8 May 4/3 (*heading*) Half-cent business reply card now available.
- 1932 *Times* 29 Nov. 16/1 The Business Reply Service, which enables a person who wishes to obtain a reply from a client to do so without putting him to the expense of paying postage.
- 1990 C. V. ALLEN *Painted Lives* (1999) iv. 38 The rest of the sleeve was taken up with more letters, the majority business replies.
- 2010 S. MARTINI *Rule of Nine* xxvii. 302 Pieces of junk mail, one from a furniture company, another from a financial consultant looking for business, and a business reply envelope from the postal service.

business sector *n.* originally *U.S.* (a) = *business district n.*; (b) that part of the economy which is related to (a particular) business.

- 1918 *Atlanta Constit.* 1 Oct. 1/6 heading 1,000 canvassers launch bond drive in business sector.
- 1934 *Syracuse (N.Y.) Herald* 19 Aug. III. 7/3 It is likely that further immediate gains in the farm sector must await gains in the industrial and business sector.
- 1998 *Grocer* 1 Aug. 60/2 (*adv.*) Based in the West Country and working within the following business sectors: groceries, chilled products, meats, and produce, your role will be to develop and maintain the quality of own label products.
- 2011 J. BREGAZZI *Dragons Den & Other Stories* 74 Perrache station with its ramps and escalators that lead directly into the business sector of the city.

business start-up *n.* the action or process of starting up a business; (also as a count noun) a business in the process of starting up; = START-UP *adj.* 1.

- 1966 *N.Y. Times* 18 Dec. 18 F/2 (*adv.*) Will also detail elements for business start up and perform sales development on new products.
- 1989 *Dimensions* Spring 50/1 The Eighties have seen the rekindling of the enterprise culture in Britain, and with it an upsurge in the number of business start-ups.
- 2007 N. ROSEN *How to live Off-grid* vii. 300 As with any business start-up, you can legitimately argue that it will take three years to break even, perhaps more.

business studies *n.* (frequently with *singular* concord) the analysis of the structure and conduct of business, as an academic discipline.

- 1880 *Amer. Jnl. Educ.* 30 797 For natural science,..business studies, and art, the tuition is extra, as is usual in such cases.
- 1962 H. O. BEECHENO *Introd. Business Stud.* p. vii With the introduction of..the Higher National Diploma in Business Studies many students will be studying the subject of the Structure of the Business World.
- 2002 *Independent* 8 May 18/2 The rise to prominence of Fortuyn, a former writer and professor of sociology and business studies.

business-suited *adj.* wearing a business suit; characterized by the wearing of business suits.

- 1871 *Atlantic Monthly* Dec. 721/1 Slowly out of our work-day, business-suited, modern world the vessel steamed up to this city of an olden time and another ideal.
- 1919 S. LEWIS *Free Air* iv. 40 A man, one of the average-sized, average-mustached, average business-suited, average-brown-haired men who can never be remembered.
- 2001 *N.Y. Times Mag.* 25 Nov. 62/1 Twice, as the two business-suited generals huddled over their meal, cellphones trilled..with news that India was firing artillery in the disputed border province of Kashmir.

business tourism *n.* the practice of engaging in recreational tourist activities while on a business trip; (also) the sector of the tourist industry based on this practice.

- 1963 *Tijdschrift voor Econ. & Sociale Geogr.* 54 202/2 The existing tourism in Aruba and Curaçao can be better named as business-tourism in connection with the oil-industries and the function of Willemstad on Curaçao as center of business and airtraffic.
- 1994 *Tourism Managem.* Oct. 345/2 In Shetland..tourism comprised three fairly distinct elements: business tourism, pleasure or vacation tourism, and that relating to visiting friends and relatives.
- 2010 V. CROSSA et al. in S. Mustard & A. Murie *Making Competitive Cities* v. 80 The core of Birmingham's approach was to create the conditions for new economic functions, particularly in business tourism.

business tourist *n.* a person who engages in recreational tourist activities while on a business trip.

- 1863 *Bell's Life in London* 3 Oct. 4/4 The southern division were well represented by a few business tourists who endeavour to amalgamate profit with pleasure, by mixing their 'toddy' and their speculations with a change of scenery.
- 1916 *Motor Age* 14 Sept. 26/3 (*caption*) There are hundreds of miles of similar forest roads in Maine over which the business tourist is compelled to forget the remotest symptom of business.
- 2010 W. S. SHAW in L. Jolliffe *Coffee Culture, Destinations & Tourism* ix. 142 There are also business tourists who engage in tourism during business activities (and 'down' times).

business union *n.* (*a*) a union between businesses; (*b*) originally and chiefly *U.S.* a trade union organized along business lines, *esp.* one seeking material advantages for its members, rather than social reform or change.

- 1845 *Bristol Mercury* 11 Oct. 8/2 We must have a formal business-union, with regular marriage-settlements.
- 1905 *Railway Conductor* July 477/2 Associations like the church, the club and the business union, lay down rules to which each member must conform.
- 1998 B. ROBERTS *Through Keyhole* ii. 56 The business union with his merchant brothers-in-law was profitable especially during the Second Anglo-Dutch War.
- 2010 S. JOHNSTONE *Labour & Managem. Co-operation* v. 93 The union was run by a General Manager, and this was said to be symbolic of the kind of association it was: a business union rather than a campaigning union.

business unionism *n.* originally and chiefly *U.S.* a form of trade unionism that is organized or run on business lines, *esp.* one that seeks material advantages for union members, as opposed to seeking social reform or change.

- 1904 *McClure's Mag.* Feb. 368/1 Such business unionism as that now practised gives rise to new and exceedingly serious problems.
- 1961 *Jrnl. Confl. Resol.* 5 349/1 Struggles engaged in by business unionism, given its limited goals, provide for the contending parties an opportunity for settlement.
- 2011 F. BARCHIESI *Precarious Liberation* vi. 240 Members become cynical and disillusioned toward activism and apathetic toward participation in union activities, preferring instead a 'business unionism' focused on concrete deliverables.

business unionist *n.* originally and chiefly *U.S.* a member of a business union; an advocate or supporter of business unionism.

- 1908 *Jrnl. Polit. Econ.* 16 698 This tendency to class feeling latent among the business unionists.
- 1984 *N.Y. Times* 14 Mar. A20/6 Mr. Mitchell said John L. Lewis was a 'business unionist whose interest was in getting a huge membership that could pay union dues.'
- 2008 S. HAMILTON *Trucking Country* vi. 167 The Teamsters were nothing if not hard-nosed business unionists who would accept such a change only if it came with higher wages and other concessions from management.

business unit *n.* originally *U.S.* (*a*) a business, subdivision of a business, or group of businesses, considered as a discrete entity; *spec.* = *strategic business unit n.* at STRATEGIC *adj.* and *n.* Compounds; (*b*) a building (typically one of a number of similar buildings located together), or a self-contained unit within a larger building, intended for use as business premises.

- 1868 *Daily Milwaukee (Wisconsin) News* 25 Apr. It was asserted that many looked to individual interest more, and less to the interest of the community as a business unit, than is done in other cities that are nameless.
- 1923 *Wisconsin State Jrnl.* 11 Nov. 27/4 There are thirteen business units vacant and sixteen business units now under construction.
- 1958 C. F. CARTER in D. L. BURN *Struct. Brit. Industry* (1961) I. ii. 51 The production of a building is broken down into many processes conducted by different business units.
- 2007 A. M. CRUZ in D. A. McEntire *Disciplines, Disasters & Emergency Managem.* iv. 50/2 Approximately 214,000 residential units and 30,000 business units sustained structural damage in the earthquake.

DERIVATIVES

'business-wise *adv.*

- 1840 *New Monthly Mag.* Feb. 279 The dread of a correspondence with a person sure to address me, business-wise, as H. R. M. Twittington, Esq., kept me from intrusting my belongings to a banker.

1936 *Boston Daily Globe* 9 Apr. 18/2 In her work as a member of the board Mrs Davies will be associated businesswise with her divorced husband.

2006 L. E. BANKS *Shattered Trust* i. 7 I was thinking in terms of some financial attack, something to screw us business-wise, or to shut down our contacts to entrepreneurial ventures back home.

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