

## Business Colours

**blue-collar** [countable noun or before another noun: *blue-collar workers/voters/votes*] HUMAN RESOURCES  
HUMAN RESOURCES blue-collar work is unskilled work that may be hard and dirty:

- *the loss of a lot of **blue-collar jobs** in the docks*
- *a strike by **blue-collar workers***

**white-collar** [countable noun or before another noun: *white-collar workers/job/crime*] HUMAN RESOURCES  
white-collar workers work in offices, banks etc, rather than in factories, mines etc:

- *The redundancies have devastated **white-collar workers**.*
- *The car maker will cut 9,000 **white-collar jobs**.*

**pink-collar** [countable noun or before another noun: *pink-collar workers/jobs*] AmE

HUMAN RESOURCES relating to or involving women in low-paid office jobs:

- *women in **pink-collar**, undervalued jobs*

Last month, the government promised £150m of support for manufacturing in a bid to create hundreds of thousands of “**green-collar jobs**” in the renewable sector. (*Financial Times*, October 9, 2008)

**Big Blue** *noun* COMPUTING ORGANIZATIONS

a popular name for the computer company, IBM:

- ***Big Blue** grew into the world's biggest computer company.*

**blue chip** [countable noun, usually plural] FINANCE

a share in a well-managed, successful company with a long record of paying profits to shareholders during good and bad economic times:

- *Wall Street closed Thursday with **blue chips** falling and technology stocks managing a slight gain.*

**blue book** [countable noun]

1 (US English) a book with a blue cover used by students for writing the answers to examination questions in.

2 (North American English) a book, online guide, etc. listing market values of used goods, collectibles, etc., esp. one listing such values of used vehicles.

3 *the Blue Book*, the accounts of the UK economy, published every year.

4 (in the US) a book that gives details of people who have an important position in society

5 the official traineeship scheme of the European Commission, named after a blue book in which pre-selected candidates' names were listed in before an online system was put in place.

**blue Monday** [countable noun]

a Monday on which you feel depressed or unhappy, especially because you have to return to work after the weekend. In Britain in particular it is given to the third Monday in January.

**Black Friday** *noun* [uncountable noun]

1 FINANCE Friday September 24, 1869, when a group of investors tried to take control of the US gold market and were considered to have caused a **RECESSION**

**2** any Friday when something bad happens:

- *The latest cuts at the organization were made on what staffers referred to as Black Friday.*

**3** the day after Thanksgiving in the US, the first day of traditional Christmas shopping, when stores have special offers to attract consumers.

**black knight** *noun* [countable noun] FINANCE

a company that tries to take control of another company by offering to buy large numbers of its shares:

- *While not particularly welcome, the black knight is considered more favourably than the hostile bidder.*

— compare **WHITE KNIGHT**

**white knight** *noun* [countable noun] FINANCE

someone who buys shares in a company to prevent another company taking it over completely:

- *The shares rose 6p to 648p, indicating that the market continues to expect the intervention of a white knight, possibly from continental Europe.*

**black 3** *noun*

FINANCE COMMERCE **to be in the black** if a business is in the black, it is making a profit:

- *The group is still in the black but trading in the first two months of the year has been difficult.*

**red** *noun*

**to be in the red** to owe more money than you have, or to make a loss in a particular period of time:

- *The company is some \$6 million in the red.*

**red tape** *noun* [uncountable noun]

official rules that seem complicated and unnecessary and prevent things from being done quickly and easily:

- *The only way to get this project off the ground is to cut through the red tape.*
- *Planning permission is tied up in red tape.*

**white elephant** *noun* [countable noun]

something that is completely useless, even though it cost a lot of money:

- *The hotel is unfinished and structurally unsound - a white elephant of epic proportions.*

**brown goods** COMMERCE

small electrical equipment such as televisions, tape recorders etc:

- *The market for small domestic appliances and brown goods fell by 6% last year.*

**red goods** ECONOMICS

goods, such as food, that consumers use quickly after buying them and that produce a low profit

**white goods** COMMERCE

equipment used in homes that is usually painted white, for example washing machines, refrigerators etc:

- *Consumers are buying more clothes, furniture, white goods and electronic equipment.*

**pink slip** [countable noun] *AmE informal* HUMAN RESOURCES

a piece of paper given to a worker, officially telling them that they no longer have a job:

- *About 700 employees will receive pink slips this week, with another 200 dismissals expected soon.*

**green belt** *noun* [countable, uncountable] PROPERTY

an area of land around a city where building is not allowed

**green-light** *noun* [uncountable], *verb* [transitive]

1. a signal to go, especially a green traffic light
2. permission to proceed with a project

• *A video-call was expected to give the green light for the creation of credit lines from the region's bailout fund to keep borrowing costs low [...].*

to approve a project, plan etc so that it can begin:

- *Columbia green-lighted the film with a budget of \$28 million.*

**greenwash**, also **greenwashing** *noun* [uncountable]

activities by a company or an organization that are intended to make people think that it is concerned about the environment, even if its real business actually harms the environment.

**black market** [countable noun] COMMERCE LAW

- 1 the illegal buying and selling of goods that are usually impossible to get in a particular city or country:

• *A pack of foreign cigarettes on the black market goes for the equivalent of at least \$17.*

- 2 the buying of foreign currency at an unofficial rate:

• *The official exchange rate is about 5.6 kyat to the dollar, or more than 10 times its current value on the black market.*

**grey market** *BrE*, **gray market** *AmE* [countable noun] FINANCE

- 1 the buying and selling of shares just before they are officially **ISSUED** (= made available and sold for the first time):

• *If a grey market price drifts too low, buyers will spring up to correct it.*

- 2 when goods are bought from someone abroad who is not an official supplier and then sold at a price which is lower than that charged for goods from an official supplier:

• *The manufacturer warranty may not be valid on grey market products.*

**black economy** [countable] ECONOMICS COMMERCE

business activities that take place unofficially, especially in order to avoid paying tax:

- *It is impossible to quantify exactly the extent of the black economy.*

[source: *Longman Business English Dictionary*, Pearson Longman, Harlow, 2007]

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In inglese si dice *blue collar [worker]* per indicare un operaio; corrisponde alla "tuta blu" italiana. Un impiegato invece è un *white collar [worker]*, che corrisponde al "colletto bianco". In inglese invece si usa il "colletto" per indicare entrambe le categorie. La

tuta da lavoro si dice *overalls*, mentre quella sportiva si dice *tracksuit*.

Da notare anche che il termine *blue collar* spiegherebbe l'anomalia politica negli Stati Uniti dove il partito di sinistra (*the Democrats, the Dems*) ha il colore blu (perché è il partito degli operai), mentre il partito di destra (*the Republicans; GOP /,dʒi: əv 'pi:/ = Grand Old Party*) ha il colore rosso. Si parla anche di *blue states* (Stati dove c'è una maggioranza democratica) e *red states* (dove c'è una maggioranza repubblicana).

[source: *SpeakUp Blog*, April 8, 2014]

## EXERCISE

✓ Now, using a bilingual dictionary, try to translate into Italian each colour idiom above-mentioned, and listed again below:

- (1) **blue-collar** .....
- (2) **white-collar** .....
- (3) **pink-collar** .....
- (4) **green-collar** .....
- (5) **Big Blue** .....
- (6) **blue chip** .....
- (7) **Black Friday** .....
- (8) **Black Tuesday** .....
- (9) **black knight** .....
- (10) **white knight** .....
- (11) **to be in the black** .....
- (12) **to be in the red** .....
- (13) **red tape** .....
- (14) **white elephant** .....
- (15) **brown goods** .....
- (16) **red goods** .....
- (17) **white goods** .....
- (18) **pink slip** .....
- (19) **green belt** .....
- (20) **green light** .....
- (21) **to green-light** .....
- (22) **green audit** .....
- (23) **Green Paper** .....
- (24) **White Paper** .....
- (25) **black market** .....
- (26) **grey market** .....
- (27) **black economy** .....

(28) **Blue Monday** .....

(29) **greenfield** .....

(30) **brownfield** .....