



ESL Podcast 1128 – Store Promotions and Giveaways

GLOSSARY

entry form – a piece of paper that requests written responses and, when filled out, makes the person who completed it eligible to participate in something

* You can submit one entry form per day, up to the date of the drawing.

promotion – an action that increases buyer interest in a product or service and/or offers a lower price

* The grocery store has a buy-one-get-one-free promotion on candy bars.

giveaway – something that is given to people for free, especially a low-value item that is intended to encourage future purchases

* The store is offering free pens and notepads as giveaways to the first 300 customers.

prize – something that one wins, especially through a game of chance

* If you can guess how many jelly beans are in this jar, you will win a prize.

to win – to receive something through a contest; to receive an award in a competition

* The first time Hilaria bought a lottery ticket, she won \$2,000.

scratch-off – with a top surface that can be scraped off with a coin or fingernail to reveal text below

* This gift card has a scratch-off code on the back, and you have to enter that number before you can use the gift card to buy anything online.

instant – immediate; right away; without waiting; without a delay

* The customer service representatives can't send instant replies. You'll probably need to wait two to three days before you get a response to your email.

collect-and-win – a promotion in which people gather codes or numbers from multiple packages and, once they have a certain number of them, can submit them for a prize

* These soda bottles have a collect-and-win program. If you send in 50 caps, you can get a free t-shirt.

to collect codes – to gather printed letters and numbers from specially-marked packages and submit them to a company or enter them on a website in order to win prizes

* Parents can collect codes from packages of diapers and exchange them for diaper coupons.



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gift certificate – a piece of paper that allows a person to spend a particular amount of money at a particular store in the future

* For Mother's Day, they gave their Mom a gift certificate for a spa to get a massage and facial.

sweepstake – a drawing; a promotion in which people place their name or completed entry into a container and one or more names/entries are selected at random to determine who will receive free items

* The winner of the sweepstake will win a one-week vacation in Maui.

grand prize – the biggest and most valuable of all the prizes being offered in a particular contest

* The grand prize is a new car, but other winners will receive bicycles and concert tickets.

rule – a regulation; something that states how something will be done and who can participate

* Their parents have a lot of rules about how people should behave during meals.

eligible – meeting the minimum qualifications to do something; allowed to participate in something, or allowed to apply to participate in something

* Eligible job candidates must have at least seven years of experience in project management.

to find a way around (something) – to find a way to avoid doing something; to manage to not have to follow the rules, or to not have the rules apply to oneself

* How do corporations find a way around paying taxes?

to divorce – to end a marriage

* They divorced three years ago, and now they share custody of the kids.

to disown – to refuse to have a relationship with someone, especially to act as if one is no longer related to one's own children

* I can't imagine being so angry with my son that I would want to disown him.



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COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What are entry forms?
 - a) Tickets that must be shown to enter the building
 - b) Papers that are filled out to participate in a contest.
 - c) Instructions about how to position one's body for the race.

2. What is a scratch-off card?
 - a) A card that can be mailed to a friend.
 - b) A card with a scented area.
 - c) A card with a hidden code that can be revealed.

WHAT ELSE DOES IT MEAN?

instant

The word “instant,” in this podcast, means immediate, right away, and without a delay: “When we pay bills online, we receive instant confirmation that the funds have been transferred.” When talking about food, “instant” describes something that can be made very quickly: “This is instant oatmeal, so you just need to add hot water and then it’s ready to eat.” The word “instant” sometimes means a moment, or a very short period of time: “Never turn your back on a toddler near a swimming pool. They can drown in just an instant.” Finally, the phrase “instant replay” describes the use of video to see a sports play again immediately after it was performed: “It looked like the player just fell, but with instant replay, we could see that she had been pushed.”

to find a way around

In this podcast, the phrase “to find a way around” means to find a way to avoid doing something: “How did you find a way around the zoning laws and open your business in a residential neighborhood?” The phrase “to find (one’s) way around” can be used in navigation, referring to the ability to follow directions, read a map, or go where one wants to go: “Taxi drivers are very good at finding their way around New York City.” The phrase “around the clock” means all the time: “The store is open around the clock, so you can go grocery shopping at 3:00 a.m. if you want to.” Finally, the phrase “all-around” describes someone who is good at many different things: “He was named the best all-around athlete of the year.”



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CULTURE NOTE

Types of Store Promotions

Stores offer many types of promotions to “attract” (bring in) and “retain” (encourage people to keep coming back) customers, even beyond the ones mentioned in this episode.

For example, many stores have “loyalty programs” that reward customers for their “repeat business” (making purchases at a store many times). A coffee shop might stamp a card each time the customer buys a drink, and when the card is “full” (with all spaces marked with a stamp), the customer receives a free drink. Grocery stores take a “slightly” (a little bit) different approach, giving people a “loyalty card” to “swipe” (move quickly through a machine) to receive lower prices. Sometimes the loyalty cards provide points that can be used to purchase gasoline at a lower price.

Some “big box stores” (large stores that sell many types of items) offer “price matching.” This means that if a customer brings in another store’s advertisement for the same item at a lower price, the store will “match” (sell at the same price) or “beat” (sell at a lower price) that price. Some stores even offer to price match for several days after the purchase, so if a customer buys something at the store, but then finds it “elsewhere” (at another place) offered at a lower price, the store will give that customer “the difference” (the amount of money that results from subtracting the lower price from the price that was already paid).

Finally, a “flash sale” is a sale that lasts for a very short period of time, typically one day but sometimes only a few hours. This is very popular among “online retailers” (stores that sell online), because flash sales can encourage customers to make “impulse purchases” (the act of buying things quickly, without having planned to do so).

Comprehension Questions Correct Answers: 1 – b; 2 – c



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COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 1,128 – Store Promotions and Giveaways.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast episode 1,128. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California.

Our website is ESLPod.com. Go there and become a member of ESL Podcast – and if you do, you can download a Learning Guide for this episode that contains a complete transcript of everything we say.

This episode is a dialogue between Sonia and Paul about store promotions – things that stores give away in order to get customers. Let's get started.

[start of dialogue]

Sonia: What is all this?

Paul: These are entry forms and materials for our new store promotions and giveaways.

Sonia: What prizes can people win?

Paul: There are different kinds, because we're running several promotions at once. We have scratch-off cards to win instant prizes, including t-shirts.

Sonia: Those t-shirts are really nice. I'd like one of those.

Paul: We also have a collect-and-win game. People collect codes printed on our products. When they've collected a certain number, they win gift certificates to spend in our store.

Sonia: Wow, that's great. I'd like a gift certificate.

Paul: We also have a sweepstake. Enter to win one of three grand prizes: a TV, a Hawaiian vacation, and a brand new car!

Sonia: Wow, I definitely want one of those.

Paul: Do you know what you can do to win?



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Sonia: No, what?

Paul: Quit your job. The rules say that employees and their families are not eligible.

Sonia: I don't suppose I can find a way around that.

Paul: Not unless you're considering divorcing your husband or disowning your children.

[end of dialogue]

Sonia begins our dialogue by asking Paul, "What is all this?" Notice, she says "all this" instead of just "this." We would use that word "all" when someone has a lot of things and you are referring to a group of items, a group of things. Paul answers, "These are entry forms and the materials for our new store promotions and giveaways." Paul has more than one thing. He has several items.

He has "entry forms." An "entry (entry) form" is a piece of paper, usually, that you put your name and address on in order to participate in some sort of contest or competition.

Stores sometimes will have a contest in which they will "give away" – that is, they will give as a gift for free – something for people who give the store their names and addresses. We have a very similar concept on the Internet. Companies will give you something for free in exchange for your email address.

Well, Paul is getting some entry forms and materials for their new store promotions and giveaways. A "giveaway" is when you give something to people for free, usually something that isn't very expensive. It doesn't cost a lot of money. A "promotion" is when you lower the price of something you are selling in order to get more people to buy it. It's basically a sale where you cut or lower the price of something so more people will buy it.

Sonia says, "What prizes can people win?" A "prize" (prize) is something that you win, usually in some contest or competition. Many states in the United States, including California, have what's called a "lottery." You buy a ticket, a piece of paper, for a dollar or two dollars, and you have a chance to win millions of dollars. The money that you win would be called the "prize money."

Sonia wants to know what prizes people can win. Paul says, "There are different kinds," meaning there are different kinds of prizes, "because we're running



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several promotions at once.” Notice he uses the verb “to run” – “We’re running many,” or several, “promotions at once,” at the same time. You could say, “We are having different promotions,” but the verb “to run” is more often the case the one that we would use with this noun “promotions.”

Paul then explains the games, the contests they’re going to have. He says, “We have scratch-off cards to win instant prizes, including t-shirts.” A “scratch (scratch) – off (off) card” is a piece of paper that has numbers on it usually, but the numbers are covered, and in order to find out what the numbers are, you have to use your finger or a small coin to rub off – or “scratch off” – the material that is covering the number. This is how you find out if you have won a prize – if you have the right numbers.

“Instant” means immediately, right away. “Scratch-off cards” (they’re also called “scratchers”) are used for contests in which you win money or you win a prize immediately. You get your prize right after you scratch off what’s covering up the numbers to see if you win. Sonia says, “Those t-shirts are really nice. I’d like one of those.” Paul says, “We also have a collect-and-win game.” A “collect-and-win game” is one in which you go around getting codes or numbers from different packages, and once you have a certain number of them, you can submit them or turn them in for a prize.

The most common collect-and-win promotion that I remember, growing up anyway, was bottle caps. Coca-Cola and other sodas often came in glass bottles, and on the top of the bottle would be a covering – what we would call a “cap” (cap). Sometimes stores would have a promotion in which if you brought in, say, 25 or 50 of these caps, you would get a prize. That’s an example of a “collect-and-win.” You go out and collect something, and then you win a prize for turning in all of those things to the company, to the store.

This of course encourages you to go out and buy more things that would have these numbers. That’s how the company sells more of these things. Paul continues, “People collect codes printed on our products.” A “code” (code) is a series of letters and/or numbers that are used for some specific purpose. In this case, the company puts these codes on things that it sells, and you can collect them in order to get a prize.

I just thought of another collect-and-win promotion that uses codes: Starbucks, the coffee company, sells coffee in the stores. You can buy their coffee to make Starbucks coffee at home. When you buy a package of their coffee, often it has a little sticker on it, a little piece of paper, the back of which has a code on it. And if



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you enter that code into the website, Starbucks will give you a free coffee if you enter enough of the codes into their website. I do this all the time, actually.

Paul continues, “When they,” meaning the customers – “When they’ve collected a certain number, they win gift certificates to spend in our store.” A “gift certificate” is a piece of paper that a company gives you that is worth a certain amount of money. Nowadays you don’t really see gift certificates so often – usually what you get is what’s called a “gift card.” The card has an electronic code on it, sort of like a credit card, that you can then use at a store just as if you were using money. There is “money on the card,” we might say.

Sonia says, “Wow that’s great. I’d like a gift certificate.” Paul continues, “We also have a sweepstake.” A “sweepstake” – more often used in the plural, “sweepstakes” – is a promotion in which people fill out a form and give it to the company and then the company picks a winner. It’s basically what we would call a “lottery” (lottery). Paul says, “Enter to win one of three grand prizes: a TV, a Hawaiian vacation, and a brand new car!” Paul is saying that the prizes for the sweepstake are a television, a vacation in Hawaii, and a new car.

Sonia says, “Wow, I definitely want one of those.” Paul says, “Do you know what you can do to win?” Sonia says, “No, what?” Paul says jokingly, “Quit your job. The rules say that employees and their families are not eligible.” The “rules,” or the regulations, say that “employees” – people who work for the company – “and their families are not eligible.” “To be eligible” (eligible) means that you have the qualifications to do something. You are allowed to participate in something.

Well, Paul is saying that employees and their families are not eligible. In other words, if you work for the company, you can’t enter these games and win prizes. Sonia says, “I don’t suppose I can find a way around that.” The expression “to find a way around” something means to figure out a way of not having to do something, of not having to follow the rules. We sometimes say, “There’s no way around it,” meaning there’s no way to avoid it. For example, paying taxes in the United States if you work at a job – there’s no way around it. The government won’t allow you to do it.

Sonia says, “I don’t suppose,” meaning I don’t think, “I can find a way around that.” Paul says, “Not unless you’re considering divorcing your husband or disowning your children.” We now understand that Paul and Sonia are married. That’s why Paul again says jokingly that the only way Sonia would be eligible would to no longer be his wife, to divorce him. “To divorce” (divorce) in this case means to end a marriage. In order for Sonia not to be a member of Paul’s family, she would have to divorce him.



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She might also have to disown her children.” “To disown” (disown) means to no longer have a relationship with someone, especially your children. If a father disowns his children, he’s saying to his children, “I don’t want anything to do with you anymore.” This is a verb we often use when someone dies – a parent dies and doesn’t leave his or her children any money. If you disown your children, when you die, your “will,” your legal document that says what happens to your things when you die, says that your children won’t get any money.

Fortunately, my parents never disowned me, but since there are ten other siblings in my family – I have ten brothers and sisters – I probably won’t get very much money anyway.

Now let’s listen to the dialogue, this time at a normal speed.

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[end of dialogue]

Each time you listen to ESL Podcast it's like winning a prize, because you get to listen to the wonderful dialogues by our wonderful scriptwriter, Dr. Lucy Tse.

From Los Angeles California, I'm Jeff McQuillan. Thank you for listening. Come back and listen to us again right here on ESL Podcast.

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