



American Expression E0296 From the horse's mouth

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The phrase "from the horse's mouth" is an idiomatic expression that is commonly used to indicate that information or news is coming directly from a reliable or authoritative source. It implies that the information is firsthand, credible, and trustworthy because it originates directly from the most reliable and knowledgeable individual or entity involved.

The origin of the phrase can be traced back to horse racing, where bettors would gather information and tips from various sources to make informed decisions. The most reliable source of information was believed to be from someone close to the horse itself, such as the trainer, jockey, or stablehand. Getting information "from the horse's mouth" was considered highly valuable and accurate.

In a broader sense, "from the horse's mouth" has come to signify information that is obtained directly from the primary source or an authoritative figure involved in a particular situation. It emphasizes the notion that obtaining information firsthand is the most reliable way to gain accurate insights and details.

Using the phrase "from the horse's mouth" implies a level of trust and reliability in the information being shared. It suggests that the source has intimate knowledge, expertise, or direct involvement in the subject matter, making their information highly credible and accurate. By attributing information to the horse's mouth, it adds an element of authenticity and eliminates potential distortions or biases that may occur through secondhand accounts.

The phrase is often used in various contexts, such as journalism, business, legal matters, or personal conversations, to emphasize the importance of reliable and firsthand information. For example, in journalism, a reporter may state that they received information "from the horse's mouth" to highlight that they obtained it directly from a key source involved in the story.

While "from the horse's mouth" generally signifies reliable information, it is still essential to critically evaluate and verify the information received, even if it comes from a reputable source. Misunderstandings, misinterpretations, or deliberate misinformation can occur, even when the source is considered reliable. Therefore, it is important to exercise discernment and cross-reference information with other sources whenever possible.

In conclusion, "from the horse's mouth" is an idiomatic expression that signifies information obtained directly from a reliable or authoritative source. It conveys the notion that firsthand information is the most accurate and trustworthy. The phrase emphasizes the importance of obtaining information directly from primary sources and highlights the credibility and authenticity associated with such information.

Questions for Discussion

1. Why is it important to seek information "from the horse's mouth" rather than relying solely on secondhand accounts or hearsay? How does firsthand information contribute to a more accurate understanding of a situation?
 2. In what situations or fields do you believe obtaining information "from the horse's mouth" is particularly crucial? Are there certain contexts where firsthand information is more valuable than others?
 3. What challenges or barriers might arise when attempting to obtain information directly from authoritative sources? How can individuals or organizations overcome these challenges to ensure they have reliable and credible information?
 4. How has the advent of digital media and social networking platforms influenced the concept of obtaining information "from the horse's mouth"? Do you think these platforms have made it easier or more difficult to discern reliable sources of information?
 5. Are there any potential drawbacks or limitations to relying solely on firsthand information? What are some situations where seeking diverse perspectives or corroborating evidence might be necessary, even when information is obtained directly from the primary source?
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