



American Expression E1517 Across the board

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The phrase "across the board" is an idiomatic expression commonly used in various contexts to convey the idea of applying something universally or uniformly, without exceptions or distinctions. It signifies a broad and comprehensive approach that encompasses all aspects or elements within a particular category or group. This phrase is often employed in discussions related to policies, actions, or decisions that have widespread or all-encompassing implications.

In the realm of government policies, an "across the board" approach implies that a policy change or decision will affect all individuals, sectors, or groups equally or without discrimination. For example, if a government announces an across-the-board tax cut, it means that tax rates will be reduced for everyone, regardless of their income level. This approach is intended to provide benefits or adjustments uniformly across the entire population or sector, ensuring that no one is excluded from the change.

In business and economics, the term is frequently used to describe changes in prices, wages, or rates that apply uniformly to all products, services, or employees within an organization or industry. For instance, a company might announce an across-the-board salary increase of 5% for all its employees, indicating that every worker, from entry-level positions to executives, will receive the same percentage raise.

In the context of performance evaluations or assessments, an across-the-board rating means that all aspects or criteria are considered equally, and no specific factor is given more weight than the others. This ensures a fair and balanced evaluation process.

Furthermore, the phrase can be applied to describe consequences or effects that have a broad impact across various areas. For example, an increase in fuel prices can have an across-the-board effect on the cost of living, affecting transportation, consumer goods, and other sectors of the economy.

In sports, "across the board" may refer to a consistent and impressive performance in all categories or events within a competition. For instance, in track and field, an athlete who excels in sprinting, long jump, and shot put might be said to perform well "across the board."

In summary, "across the board" is a versatile expression used to convey the idea of universality, uniformity, or comprehensiveness. It signifies that a particular action, decision, or consequence applies broadly and equally to all individuals, elements, or sectors within a given category or group. Whether in the context of policies, economics, assessments, or other areas, this phrase underscores the notion of fairness, consistency, and inclusivity in various aspects of life and decision-making.

Questions for Discussion

1. How does an "across the board" approach in government policies impact various income groups, and are there potential drawbacks or advantages to this kind of uniformity?
2. Can you provide examples from the business world where an "across the board" change in pricing or wages has had significant consequences, either positive or negative, for the company and its employees?
3. In what situations might it be more appropriate to tailor policies or decisions to specific groups or circumstances rather than applying an "across the board" approach?
4. How does an "across the board" assessment or evaluation process ensure fairness and objectivity, and are there cases where it may not be the most effective method of evaluation?
5. When considering the impact of rising costs, such as fuel prices, across various sectors, how can businesses and consumers adapt to these "across the board" effects, and what strategies can help mitigate the challenges they pose?