

# 以身試法

*yi3 shen1 shi4 fa3*

ATV boss Ip Ka-po was fined HK\$150,000 after the cash-strapped station failed to pay its workers on time. Ip did not receive a more severe sentence as he did not run away, but had sought funds to pay the workers and managed to help them keep their jobs.

Magistrate Kathie Cheung agreed with the defense that the chance of Ip repeating the offense was low. As it turned out, that chance is nil, as Ip has quit as executive director, a position that had made him liable for ATV's late payment despite the fact that he didn't get paid himself.

Ip explained that he just could not hold the fort any longer, and did not want to “以身試法” (*yi3 shen1 shi4 fa3*). A day later, he returned to the station as senior vice president, presumably having obtained legal advice that this post would not incur the same liability as that of a director of the board.

## Idiom by Lon Yan

“以” (*yi3*) is “to use,” “身” (*shen1*) is “the body,” “試” (*shi4*) is “to try,” “to test,” and “法” (*fa3*) is “the law.” Literally, “以身試法” (*yi3 shen1 shi4 fa3*) is “use body to test the law.” It means “to defy the law,” “to challenge the law personally,” “to dare to violate the law.”

When a friend tells you he is about to do something illegal, you will advise him not to “以身試法” (*yi3 shen1 shi4 fa3*).

The idiom has an undertone similar to the English expression “tempting fate,” which means taking a silly risk doing something that will most likely bring very bad consequences.

**Terms containing the character “試” (*shi4*) include:**

試驗 (*shi4 yan4*) – to make an experiment

試圖 (*shi4 tu2*) – to attempt

考試 (*kao3 shi4*) – an examination

試題 (*shi4 ti2*) – an examination question