## Successful negotiations

Below you can find some tips and phrases to help you with successful negotiations and avoid possible misunderstanding.

**Principles of negotiation:**

* Separate the people from the problem.
* Focus on interests, not positions.
* Devise a variety of options that will benefit everyone concerned.
* Insist that the agreement is based on objective criteria.

**Preparing to negotiate:**

* Get as much information as possible about the situation.
* Work out your initial bargaining position – what are your needs and objectives, decide your priorities.
* Try to estimate the needs and objectives of the other side.
* Prepare conditions that you will accept if your original objectives are not met.
* If you are negotiation as part of a team, consult your colleagues about points and allocate roles and responsibilities.
* Have a clear agenda and a timetable.
* Be careful concerning body language, physical contact, conversational rules, relationship building, hierarchy, attitude to time.

**Probing to further negotiations:**

What is the situation in your company?

What sort of quantities are you looking for?

What are you looking at in the way of discount?

What did you have in mind regarding specifications?

What were you thinking of in terms of delivery dates?

How important to you is the currency for payment?

**Making offers:**

If …

As long as …

On condition that …

Supposing that …

Provided that …

Providing that … you do sth. then we will/can/could/may/might …

…be able to (+ inf.) …

…agree to (+ inf.) …

…consider (+ -ing) …

…offer (+ noun) …

…offer to (+ inf.) …

**Dealing with problems:**

Underline common ground – the areas where agreement has been reached.

Reassure the other side on key points that have been decided – confirm that you have not changed your mind.

Be willing to compromise on your original objectives: be ready to accept less than you wanted in exchange for compromises from the other side.

Identify the exact obstacles or sticking points – the problems that are causing negotiations to become difficult.

Postpone discussions until later so that each side can reconsider its position.

**Checking the deal:**

Let me just go/run over the main points.

On A, we agreed that …

As far as B is concerned, we agreed …

We still have the question of C to settle.

And there is still the outstanding issue of D.

We will send you a written proposal.

We will draw up a contract based on those points.

I think that covers everything.

### Collocations

* Place/ take/fill an order
* Bring down/quote/state a price
* Offer/ask for/grant a discount
* See/sell/explain the benefits
* Sort out/discuss/go over the details
* Make/firm up/reject a proposal
* Subject to/open to/under negotiation
* Pay/require/put down a deposit
* A monthly/an annual/an entrance fee
* Hidden/extra/fixed costs
* Meet/miss/extend a deadline
* Seek/offer/find a compromise

**Intense/intensive**

**Delicate, tense**

**Last-minute**

**Protracted**

**… negotiations.**

**Bargaining …**

**ploy, tactic**

**chip, tool**

**point, power**

**process**

**Examples:**

A supplier is taking an order.

A buyer is trying to bring down the price.

A buyer is asking for a bigger discount

A seller is rejecting a proposal.

A negotiator is saying that availability is open to/subject to negotiation.

A seller is asking the buyer to pay/put down a deposit.

A customer is complaining that a supplier has missed a deadline.

A negotiator is seeking/offering a compromise.

### Diplomatic negotiations

**Checking understanding**

Correct me if I’m wrong, but you seem to be saying that…

Have I got this right?

Would I be right in saying that…?

If I’ve understood correctly…

**Correcting misunderstandings**

I’m afraid there seems to be a slight misunderstanding.

I’m sorry that isn’t quite what I meant.

Perhaps I haven’t made myself clear.

**Reformulating**

Let me put it another way.

What I was trying to say was…

Allow me to rephrase that.

What I meant was…

**Diplomatic language often uses:**

* modal verbs like could, would, might, should
* adverbs like maybe, perhaps
* qualifiers like a bit, rather, a little, quite
* I’m sorry, actually, I’m afraid

**Examples:**

I am writing to enquire whether you would be able to extend credit terms of … days.

I am afraid group policy does not allow us to give more than … days’ credit.

We are pleased to agree to the terms you propose.

May I remind you that the sum of … is still outstanding?

We wrote to you on November 4 regarding the balance of … which is still outstanding.

Would you let us know your decision as soon as possible?

We would appreciate your early settlement of this outstanding balance.

We shall have no alternative but to pass the matter on to our legal department.