

For successful negotiations you need to consider the personalities of the people involved, their culture, and their level of English. Using diplomatic language to build a relationship and reach a compromise is **vital**. Here are expressions you can use during each stage of the process:

## 1. Starting the negotiation

- Let's get down to business, shall we?
- Shall we get started?
- Let's make a start, shall we?

## 2. Stating your position/ purpose

- What we are looking for is...
- Our main **concern** is...
- There are two main areas that we would like to discuss...
- We have little/ no room for **movement** on price...

## 3. Finding out what the other side is looking for/ wants

- Would your team consider...
- Can I clarify your position on...?
- Would you consider/ be willing to...
- How feasible is it for you to...?
- What are your views on...?
- Would you be able to...?

## 4. Offering a compromise

The use of modal auxiliary verbs and conditional clauses will help you set out what you are willing to accept as a compromise.

- We can accept that *if* you...
- We might/ may be able to...
- We would be able to...
- Would you be willing to...?
- We may accept your offer on condition that...
- We could offer you ... *if* you can agree on...

## 5. Checking understanding

- When you say, 'improve on the offer', what do you mean?
- Have I got this right? You said you could finalise that by December?
- If I understand you correctly, you said you could finalise that by December.

## 6. Clarifying

- Could you clarify your last point for me?

- Does anything I have suggested/ proposed seem unclear to you?

## 7. Rejecting an offer

To soften bad news use these expressions before you give the bad news:

- Unfortunately...
- I am afraid...
- Sorry...

For example:

- I am afraid (your proposal) is out of the question.
- I am sorry, but we cannot accept that.
- That's really not an option I am afraid.

## 8. Asking for a reaction to the offer

- How does that sound to you?
- Would that be **acceptable**?

## 9. Nearing settlement

- The last sticking point is...
- There are just a few loose ends to tie up...

## 10. Agreeing and closing the deal

- That seems acceptable/ **reasonable** to us.
- I think we have a deal.
- I think we can agree to that.
- I think we have covered everything, that's a deal.

## 11. A final point on being polite

There are several techniques in English to sound more polite; moving away from the focus of 'you' can make you sound less direct and therefore polite. Here is an example:

- Perhaps I am not making myself clear.

The use of 'perhaps' helps to soften the sentence.

Good luck!