



Lesson 08: Negotiating

Before you start

- 1** Look at the dictionary definitions. What kind of things do you have to negotiate, e.g. with your parents (the amount of pocket money you get or when you have to be home in the evening) or with your teacher (homework schedules)?

negotiate /nɪ'gəʊʃieɪt/ verb 1 [I] **negotiate (with sb) (for/about sth)** to talk to sb in order to decide or agree about sth

negotiation /nɪ'gəʊʃi'eɪʃn/ noun [C, often pl, U] a formal discussion at which people try to decide or agree sth

(Entries taken from the Oxford Wordpower Dictionary)

Reading

- 2** Read this introduction to negotiating and answer the questions.
- 1 What makes a good negotiation?
 - 2 What makes a good negotiator?

A successful negotiation is when two people (or teams) reach agreement on something which they are both happy with. There should not be a winner and a loser. The negotiation should end with both people getting what they want (win-win). For example, if workers negotiate with the company's management, the workers may get more pay and the management may get better productivity.

To be a good negotiator takes a lot of skill and preparation. You need to:

- understand what is a good result for the other team as well as yourself
- have a clear idea of your objectives
- be willing to compromise on your objectives
- be sure what your priorities are – what is most important to you
- have a strategy – a plan of what you are going to do and say
- listen carefully to the other people – what they say, and how they say it
- be well-prepared.

Vocabulary

- 3** Underline the words in the text that mean:
- 1 accept less than you want in order to reach agreement
 - 2 the final situation at the end of the discussion
 - 3 a plan that you use to achieve something
 - 4 the most important things you want to do

- 4** Look at these stages in a negotiation. Number them in the order that seems most logical to you.
- Bargaining – discussing the terms – a process of 'give and take'
- Preparation – thinking about what both sides want
- Concluding – agreeing, making sure everyone is happy
- Proposals – each side makes and responds to suggestions
- Stating positions – both sides explain what they want from the negotiation

Reading

- 5** Some students are organizing a charity concert. Read the three extracts on page 33 from a negotiation between the students and the manager of the local community centre. Match the extracts with *three* of the stages in Exercise 4. (S = student representative, M = community centre manager)

Vocabulary

- 6** Put the phrases in italics from the dialogue under the correct headings.
- Stating your position

Showing you understand the other person's position

Making proposals

Responding to proposals

Bargaining

The situation

The students are organizing the concert to support Greenpeace, a charity for the environment. They want to use the hall at the centre for free. The community centre has financial problems and the manager needs to make money out of every event.



Extract 1 _____

S ... OK, our position is this. We want to make as much money as possible for Greenpeace. We're charging six euros a ticket. All the people taking part in the concert are performing for free. The problem is, if we have to pay you to use the hall, we'll have less money for Greenpeace.

M Yes, I see your point. But my situation is this. A concert in the hall will use electricity, and one of my staff will need to be there. I have to pay for these. I need to make sure that I cover my costs. Also, the community centre needs to make money too.

S OK, I understand that, but ...

Extract 2 _____

M ... What I'd like to suggest is that we discuss the possibility of you paying us something towards the cost of using the hall, but not the entire cost.

S OK, that seems reasonable. Why don't you work out exactly how much you think it will cost? Then we can discuss it.

M Yes, that's a good idea. And maybe we could discuss a donation to the community centre as well?

S Hmm ... I'm not sure about that ...

Extract 3 _____

M ... If you pay us 20 per cent of the money you take, we'll let you use the hall.

S That seems rather high. I'm not sure I can agree to that.

M If you agree, we'll let you use the café to sell coffee and soft drinks.

S That sounds possible. How about if we pay you 15 per cent of the money for the tickets? And we'll also pay you 25 per cent of the profits from the coffee and soft drinks ...

Speaking

7 Work in groups of four. Divide into pairs, Team A and Team B. Negotiate to find a solution to the problem below. Remember, you want a win-win result.

Team A: It is the basketball season. You belong to the school basketball club. You practise three afternoons a week in the school gym between 4.00 and 5.30 p.m. The gym is locked at 5.30 and closed on Fridays. But the head teacher has told the school drama society that it can use the gym after school as well. Your training sessions are very important. You have a big competition coming up in two weeks' time and the gym is the only place you can train.

Team B: You belong to the school drama society. You are putting on a musical in three weeks' time. You need somewhere to rehearse after school for the next three weeks and the head teacher has told you can use the school gym. Unfortunately, the basketball club uses the gym three afternoons a week between the end of school and 5.30. You don't have anywhere else to rehearse and you need to rehearse every day from now until you put the musical on.

▶ Get real

Work as a class. Use business books or magazines to find out about negotiating styles in your country. Do people look for a win-win result or do they prefer win-lose? Can you think of a recent situation where there have been negotiations in your country, e.g. public service salary reviews? What was the result? Report back to the class.