



## TIPS for Better Negotiations

BY HELEN ROBERTS

Your working life is full of negotiations. You don't just **negotiate** with other companies. You negotiate whenever there are two **parties** with different needs. And even though everyone involved wants to find a **compromise** that is **mutually acceptable**, many people dislike negotiating because of the **conflicting interests**.

But negotiations need not be **confrontational**. Don't try to win a negotiation. If you treat it as a contest, you will create a **hostile** atmosphere. Respect the other person and try to understand his or her needs. This way, you can create a spirit of cooperation.

Sometimes, the other party may reject your suggestions, and you need to **anticipate** this. A negotiation is a **trade-off**, and sometimes you will need to **back down**. So prepare alternative options in case your preferred solution is unacceptable. Finally, don't negotiate if you are tired or stressed. You will never **close the deal** when negotiations are too **intense**. Reschedule to another time.

### Get ready!

1 Before you read the passage, talk about these questions.

- How can negotiations help or harm a business?
- What are some qualities of a good negotiator?

### Reading

2 Listen and read the article in the business magazine. Then, mark the following statements as true (T) or false (F). When should you not negotiate?

- \_\_\_ A good negotiator wins each part of a negotiation.
- \_\_\_ Successful negotiations do not always end with ideal outcomes.
- \_\_\_ Changing negotiation times can help people compromise.

### Vocabulary

3 Choose the word that is closest in meaning to the underlined part.

- Just stop demanding what you want.  
A anticipate      B back down      C close the deal
- The parties are very eager to argue with each other.  
A intense      B mutually acceptable  
C confrontational
- Mr. Brown will offer a deal, so try to think about it beforehand.  
A anticipate it      B close the deal      C negotiate
- Try to discuss and change the contract terms.  
A close the deal      B anticipate      C negotiate
- Give up something in order to get something more important if you have to.  
A trade-off      B party      C interest



**4 Match the words (1-7) with the definitions (A-G).**

- |                            |                  |
|----------------------------|------------------|
| 1 ___ hostile              | 5 ___ deal       |
| 2 ___ intense              | 6 ___ compromise |
| 3 ___ conflicting interest | 7 ___ party      |
| 4 ___ mutually acceptable  |                  |
- A an agreement  
 B being competitive and eager to argue  
 C a person or group in a negotiation  
 D being satisfactory to both sides of a negotiation  
 E a solution in which both sides of a negotiation give up something  
 F a point of a negotiation which both sides consider very important  
 G being extremely stressful

**Listening**

**5 Listen to a conversation between two employees. Then answer the questions.**

- 1 What can you infer about the woman?  
 A She has not negotiated before.  
 B She will not accept the current prices.  
 C She has offered several trade-offs.  
 D She did not anticipate higher prices.
- 2 What compromise does the man suggest?  
 A purchasing the paper at full price  
 B allowing the suppliers to delay delivery  
 C buying a large amount of paper at once  
 D paying a portion of the transportation costs

**6 Listen again and complete the conversation.**

M: How is the negotiation with the paper suppliers going?  
 W: It's intense. They won't drop their prices.  
 M: Well, we **1** \_\_\_\_\_ that. Their transportation costs are much higher these days.  
 W: But if they don't **2** \_\_\_\_\_, we'll never close the deal.  
 M: Have you offered a **3** \_\_\_\_\_?  
 W: Not yet. I can't think of anything that we can give up.  
 M: Think of it from their point of view. They can't lower their prices because of transportation costs.  
 W: Exactly.  
 M: So what if we offer to **4** \_\_\_\_\_ of paper at once?  
 W: How would that help us?  
 M: They'll only have to deliver it once, which will **5** \_\_\_\_\_ on their transportation costs.

**Speaking**

**7 With a partner, act out the roles below, based on the dialogue from Task 6. Then switch roles.**

**USE LANGUAGE SUCH AS:**

*How is the negotiation with ... going?*  
*Think of it from their point of view.*  
*How would that help us?*

**Student A:** Student B is having problems with a negotiation. Give advice about:

- anticipating problems
- offering compromise
- how to lower prices

Make up a type of supplier.

**Student B:** You are having trouble negotiating with suppliers. Ask Student A for advice.

**Writing**

**8 You are a manager. Use the conversation from Task 7 and the article to write advice for a co-worker who is leading a negotiation for the first time. Talk about:**

- How to treat the people in the other party
- What to do before the negotiation
- What to do in order to close the deal

---



---



---



---



---