

Good and bad responses to negotiating phrases

Without looking below, listen to someone say something in a negotiation and three or four different possible responses and decide which response is best each time. Your teacher will tell you if you should write your choice down and/ or if you should shout it out.

Choose the best response on each line below. One should clearly be best, even when more than one is possible.

If we order 30,000 silk scarves, what discount will you offer us?

- A) 30,000 isn't that large, actually, but if you buy 50,000 scarves...
- B) 30,000? Wow! That's great! Thank you so much. How about fifty percent?
- C) Only 30,000? In that case, I can't offer you any discount at all.

I take it your price includes insurance?

- A) No.
- B) Actually, no.
- C) I'm afraid you'd usually be responsible for that. However, if the order was really large,...
- D) Insurance? No, you have to pay for that.

How would you feel about \$500 a ton?

- A) Hmm, I was hoping for something quite a lot better.
- B) I wouldn't feel very good about that.
- C) That is completely unacceptable. You'll have to do better than that.

Could you move a little more on the delivery date?

- A) Even more? Seriously? Are you kidding?
- B) Of course. How many more days would you like us to change it by?
- C) I think we've already been quite flexible on that. However, we could look at...

What about the same price but a smaller initial order?

- A) I'd be willing to consider that.
- B) Really? You are too kind!
- C) Thank you for your cooperation.

That's okay as long as you get the first part of the order to us by the end of June. That's absolutely vital.

- A) How about August?
- B) That's no problem. I can definitely guarantee that. In return, can you make sure that...?
- C) Yeah, I guess that might be okay.

Okay. That's no problem. I'll make sure it arrives within five days this time, as you asked.

- A) Actually, can we make it four days, then?
- B) Okay. I'm happy with that.
- C) Thanks. That would be a great help.

I can pay that price as long as you get it to me by the end of the month.

- A) I'd do that if we had the stock, but unfortunately we are waiting on our own suppliers.
- B) The end of the month? Ha! I wish I could!
- C) That's impossible.

We don't seem to be getting anywhere. Maybe we should just call it a day for now.

- A) Maybe you're right. Never mind, I'm sure we'll have a more productive meeting next time.
- B) Okay. Bye.
- C) Okay. Thanks for coming.
- D) Really? I'm so sorry. Please reconsider!

Can I have all that in writing by the end of the week?

- A) Do you really need it in writing?
- B) What about the middle of next week?
- C) Of course.

Thanks, that was a very productive meeting.

- A) Please don't thank me.
- B) No no no, thank YOU. I look forward to doing business with you again soon.
- C) Not at all.
- D) You're welcome.

*Compare your answers to those in **bold** on the next page. Some are debatable, so please ask if you chose different options.*

Suggested answers

The best responses are in **bold**, but some are debateable so please check if you choose a different option.

If we order 30,000 silk scarves, what discount will you offer us?

- **30,000 isn't that large, actually, but if you buy 50,000 scarves...**
- 30,000? Wow! That's great! Thank you so much. How about fifty percent?
- Only 30,000? In that case, I can't offer you any discount at all.

I take it your price includes insurance?

- No.
- Actually, no.
- **I'm afraid you'd usually be responsible for that. However, if the order was really large,...**
- Insurance? No, you have to pay for that.

How would you feel about \$500 a ton?

- **Hmm, I was hoping for something quite a lot better.**
- I wouldn't feel very good about that.
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Could you move a little more on the delivery date?

- Even more? Seriously? Are you kidding?
- Of course. How many more days would you like us to change it by?
- **I think we've already been quite flexible on that. However, we could look at...**

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- **I'd be willing to consider that.**
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- **Thanks. That would be a great help.**

I can pay that price as long as you get it to me by the end of the month.

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- **Maybe you're right. Never mind, I'm sure we'll have a more productive meeting next time.**
- Okay. Bye.
- Okay. Thanks for coming.
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Can I have all that in writing by the end of the week?

- Do you really need it in writing?
- What about the middle of next week?
- **Of course.**

Thanks, that was a very productive meeting.

- Please don't thank me.
- **No no no, thank YOU. I look forward to doing business with you again soon.**
- Not at all.
- You're welcome.

Test each other on the same phrases:

- Do the same listening to different responses and choosing the best activity
- Read out the prompt phrase and just one option for a response and see if your partner can say if it is good or what is wrong with it
- Read out the prompt phrase and a bad option and see if your partner can make a better one
- Read out the prompt phrase and the good option and see if your partner can make another response which is different (at least slightly) but also good
- Read out just the prompt phrase and see if your partner can respond in a suitable way (with good responses which are not above also fine)
- Read out a prompt phrase, listen to your partner's response, respond to that, then together continue until the end of the negotiation

Conditionals in negotiations language presentation

What two grammatical structures can go with "if/ as long as/ providing/ as soon as" in negotiations? What are the differences in meaning between those two forms?

Brainstorming stage 1

Without looking above, write at least one good response for each phrase. Many other phrases not above are also possible.

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I take it your price includes insurance?

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Compare your phrases with the good ones above, brainstorm more, then compare your other ideas with other students.

Brainstorming stage 2

Without looking above for now, write at least two suitable phrases in each of the spaces below. Note that some of the phrases which are not best choices above also have some useful language in them that could go in below. Phrases not above are also okay as long as they match the functions given.

Asking questions/ Finding out about the other side's position

Positive answers

Negative answers

Counteroffers

Insisting

Giving up/ Continuing the negotiation another time

Mentioning the next contact between you

Look at the previous worksheet with your pens down to try to find more suitable phrases to put above, then hide that worksheet and try again.

Compare as a class.