

NEGOTIATING & DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS

© talkmor.com

Negotiation Language & Strategies

Focus: Reaching agreements, making proposals, handling objections and finding compromises.

A. Warm-Up – Are You a Good Negotiator?

Discuss with a partner.

1. Are you comfortable negotiating, or do you prefer to accept the first offer?
2. Is it better to be persuasive or cooperative during a negotiation?
3. When should someone walk away from a deal?
4. Can a compromise sometimes be worse than no agreement?
5. What makes someone difficult to negotiate with?

C. Negotiation Strategies

Match the strategy to its purpose.

1. Finding common ground _____
2. Making a concession _____
3. Setting a deadline _____
4. Offering an alternative _____
5. Asking open-ended questions _____
6. Summarising an agreement _____

A. Giving something up to reach an agreement.
B. Identifying shared interests.
C. Presenting another possible solution.
D. Clarifying what has been agreed.
E. Encouraging the other person to explain their position.
F. Establishing when a decision must be made.

Follow-up: Which two strategies do you think are most effective?
Explain why.

B. Negotiation Phrase Bank

Making proposals

- I'd like to propose an alternative.
- What if we approached this differently?
- Would you consider extending the deadline?
- Perhaps we could meet halfway.

Expressing reservations

- I'm not entirely convinced that's workable.
- My main concern is the cost involved.
- I see your point, but there's another issue.
- That might be difficult from our perspective.

Making concessions

- We could be flexible on that point.
- I'd be willing to compromise if...
- Provided that you can agree to...
- I think we could accommodate that request.

Seeking agreement

- Are we both comfortable with that arrangement?
- It sounds as though we're getting somewhere.
- Can we agree on those terms?
- Let's see if we can find some common ground.

Rejecting politely

- I'm afraid we couldn't accept those conditions.
- Unfortunately, that wouldn't be feasible.
- I don't think we can commit to that.
- We'd need something more realistic.

Permission granted to reproduce for classroom use. © talkmor.com 2026

D. Negotiation Challenge – Three Realistic Situations

Work in pairs. One student takes Role A and the other Role B. You must reach an agreement, but neither person should simply accept the other's first proposal.

Situation 1: The Salary Negotiation

- **Student A**: You have been offered a new position. You are happy with the job but believe the salary is too low. You want at least 12% more.
- **Student B**: You are the employer. The company has a limited salary budget, but you can offer additional benefits, flexible hours or a performance review after six months.

Goal: Agree on a salary package.

Situation 2: The Business Deal

- **Student A**: Your company wants to purchase 500 units from a supplier. You want a lower price and free delivery.
- **Student B**: You represent the supplier. Your prices are already competitive. You could offer a discount for a larger order or faster payment.

Goal: Agree on price, quantity and delivery terms.

Situation 3: The Weekend Problem

- **Student A**: You have been asked to work every second weekend. This interferes with your family commitments.
- **Student B**: You manage the department. Weekend staffing is essential, and everyone needs to contribute fairly.

Goal: Find a workable compromise.

E. The Negotiator's Reflection

After each role-play, discuss:

1. Which argument was most persuasive?
2. Did either person make a useful concession?
3. Was the final agreement fair to both parties?
4. What could have been handled differently?

Challenge: Repeat one negotiation, but this time you must reach an agreement in three minutes.

Permission granted to reproduce for classroom use. © talkmor.com 2026