

# How to negotiate

# 37

In this lesson you will learn language for discussing new conditions in a business agreement.

## Starter

- The Chinese general Sun Tzu in *The Art of War* said that every general needed to know three things before entering into battle:
  - know yourself
  - know your opponent
  - know the terrain

How could this be applied to successful negotiations? Give examples of how you negotiate at home, at work, or with friends.



## Expressions

- Mi Tienda de Golf is a Spanish company that imports and distributes golf equipment and clothing from companies in the USA and the UK. Look at the extract from the email that Ricardo Miner, the owner, has sent to his main supplier in the UK, Tom Willis.
  - What problem does Ricardo mention?
  - When do you think Ricardo will place his next order?



The delay in the shipment of our recent order is unfortunate as we were hoping to receive delivery in time for the International Golf Week in Malaga (24th–28th June). Please do everything you can in future to avoid these delays.

We'll shortly be sending you our order for winter clothing which should be considerably larger than last year's. However, before doing so I'd like to review our present trading agreement. Please confirm when you can visit us in Madrid, preferably within the next four weeks.

Regards,

Ricardo  
Mi Tienda de Golf

## Speaking

- You have been offered a new job with more responsibility. However, you are not satisfied with the conditions offered. Speak with the HR manager (your teacher) and negotiate a better deal.

	They offer	You prefer
1	no salary increase but performance-linked bonus (up to €30,000 euros p.a.)	€15,000 salary increase, rest in incentives
2	generous mileage allowance	company car + expenses
3	flexible working hours + same holidays	guaranteed five more days' holiday

## Language box

In negotiations, the first conditional form (*if + present + future*) is used when we are more certain. The second conditional form (*if + past + would infinitive*) is more tentative:

If you agree to the new working conditions, we'll sign the contract tomorrow.

If you accepted 5%, we'd be prepared to negotiate the second point.

There are several ways to express a condition without using an *if*-clause.

A simple conditional with *Suppose / Supposing* + a verb in the present or past tense:

Suppose they don't accept, what will you do? (= if they don't accept ...)

Supposing we increased our order, what would the new price be? (= if we increased ...)

## Hint

Use the following expressions in a negotiation when a successful outcome is near:

I think we're getting close.

I think we all agree in principle.

What if we meet in the middle? How does that sound?

I think we've got a deal.

## Writing

- 1 You are the HR manager of a large company. You receive this memo from the manager of the after-sales division. Using language from **Expressions** and the **Language box**, and the notes you have made, write a suitable reply.

### Memo

The front office staff have requested the following change to their working hours.

Instead of the 30-minute lunch break they have at present most of them would prefer to have one hour and to make up for the extra 30 minutes by either working late or coming in early.

How does this sound to you?

Changes subject to review in three months

All staff must agree to change. OK but always someone on duty to answer phone  
Fine but must recover time

## Look

Look again at listening script 37.1 on pages 135–136 and find examples of conditional forms.

- 37.1 2 Ricardo and Tom meet in Madrid. Listen to an extract from their meeting and answer the questions by completing the table with the necessary details.

- 1 What two issues do they discuss?
- 2 What is the outcome of their conversation?

Issue

Outcome

1

2

Listen to the dialogue again to check your answers. Imagine you are Tom speaking to someone from his company. Explain the details of the new agreement.

- 37.1 3 Ricardo describes his second proposal as a *win-win situation*. What exactly does this term mean? Why is his proposal a win-win solution for them both?

The following expressions are used to emphasize that a particular condition must be fulfilled:

We'll pay for insurance on condition that you increase the order.

We'd send it express as (so) long as you paid for the extra costs.

Provided (that) everyone accepts the new conditions, we can sign next week.

This would be possible, providing (that) they accepted a two-year agreement.

We're prepared to accept but only if you pay the transportation costs.

Unless there's a change in price, we won't accept.

Without a change in attitude, no further negotiation is possible.

## Lesson record

3 new words

from this lesson

1 .....

2 .....

3 .....

3 useful phrases

from this lesson

1 .....

2 .....

3 .....

Things to remember

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