

4.3 Negotiate better

READING Business and life lessons

- 1 Work in pairs. Discuss when you last negotiated with the following people. What did you negotiate and was the outcome successful? Why? / Why not?
 - a your employer (e.g. salary, time off, etc.) or tutor (e.g. essay deadline extension)
 - b a service provider (e.g. bank charges, cost of insurance, mobile phone package)
 - c a shop or a private seller (e.g. a discount on a product, a second-hand car)
 - d a friend or a loved one (e.g. where to eat out, where to go on holiday)
- 2 Look at the six frequently asked questions in the blog about negotiating, but don't read the answers yet. Discuss your answers to each question.
- 3 Read the blog and compare the answers in the blog with your answers from Exercise 2. Did you mention any of the same things? Did you think your answers or the ones in the blog were more helpful?
- 4 Read the sentences (1–6). Write A, B or C according to the following criteria:
 - A the author would probably agree
 - B the author would probably disagree
 - C there's not enough information to say what the author would think
 - 1 If you really want something badly, just accept that you are going to have to pay a lot for it.
 - 2 A person who just keeps repeating their position has not thought enough about potential options.
 - 3 Silence is a useful tool because it forces the other person to expand on the reasons for their decision.
 - 4 Asking 'What if' is a way to find out how serious the other person is about making a deal.
 - 5 Personal negotiations are more gentle and unselfish than business negotiations, which can be tough and unprincipled.
 - 6 Staying fairly still and expressionless will prevent the other person from reading your thoughts and feelings.
- 5 Find words or phrases in the blog with the following meanings.
 - 1 ultimately (question 1)
 - 2 not moving at all (question 2)
 - 3 very confidently (question 2)
 - 4 angry at being treated unfairly (question 3)
 - 5 cause someone to speak freely (question 3)
 - 6 essential (question 4)
 - 7 provoke a reaction (question 5)
 - 8 fail or begin to collapse (question 5)
 - 9 lacking in morals or principles (question 5)
 - 10 revealing (question 6)

VOCABULARY Body language

- 6 Complete the phrases (1–3) with an appropriate part of the body. Then perform each action.
 - 1 to cross your _____ (or arms)
 - 2 to fold your _____
 - 3 to raise your _____
- 7 Work in pairs. Look at six more phrases to do with body language. Perform each action. In what situation would you do these things?

clench your fists	drum your fingers	roll your eyes
shake your head	shrug your shoulders	tap your feet
- 8 Match the facial expression in bold (1–6) with these emotions (a–f). Then take turns to show your partner what you think each facial expression looks like.

a pleasure	d pain
b displeasure	e amazement
c contempt	f boredom

 - 1 He **winc**ed when his friend trod on his injured foot.
 - 2 She **scow**led at him from across the table. How could he be so rude?
 - 3 As she **yawn**ed for the third time in twenty minutes, he realized it was going to be a long evening.
 - 4 'No, thank you,' he said, **sneer**ing at the offer of advice from someone he clearly thought was stupid.
 - 5 'I think we have a deal,' Jackson said. Sarah couldn't help **grin**ning.
 - 6 He stood there **gap**ing. 'How did you get here so quickly?'
- 9 Think of two different gestures or postures and two facial expressions that are a response to the question below. Then work in pairs and act out the gestures and facial expressions. Tell each other what you think they mean.

'So what do you think about our proposal? Are you happy to go ahead?'
- 10 **21st CENTURY OUTCOMES**

Work in groups of three. You are going to do a negotiation. Students A and B: You are the negotiators
Student C: You are the observer

 - Read the scenario on page 47 and decide on your roles.
 - The negotiators have four minutes to try to find a solution.
 - After four minutes, the observer can intervene. You then have another three minutes to find a solution.
- 11 Work with another group and compare results. Did you reach a solution? Did you invent extra or new options to find a solution?

BUSINESS AND LIFE LESSONS

NEGOTIATION – FAQs

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Regardless of what some people might have you think, there's no single right way to negotiate, because each situation is unique. But there are a few basic principles you can follow, as you will see from my answers to the following FAQs.

#1 I see a second-hand car that I really want to buy. What's the best way to get a good deal on it and not risk letting it get away?

The trick, as one famous negotiator put it is to 'Care, really care, but not that much.' In other words, imagine you are playing a game. You want to win but at the end of the day, it's just a game. Never get too emotionally attached to something you want. If you do, you're sure to overpay for it.

#2 I'm trying to negotiate with someone, but they just keep repeating their position without budging an inch. What should I do?

At the beginning of a negotiation, you should always outline your general position – what your global interests are – and get your negotiating partner to do the same. Within this framework you can both then explore the options. So if your partner keeps bullishly asserting a specific position, gently remind them of the general goals of the negotiation, so that you can move forward on the specifics in a more principled way.

#3 I always feel uncomfortable when someone makes an offer I can't agree to. I feel like I'm either going to make them resentful of me by saying 'no' or compromise myself by half-agreeing to it. How can I respond in a way that avoids these things?

The writer, Jack Chapman, says that silence is often the best strategy in this situation. Even if the other party makes a pretty reasonable offer, say, in a salary negotiation, staying quiet can help to draw them out further, prompting them to offer more or at least to justify their position. It also gives you an appearance of being cool and calm.

#4 Is there one killer question you can use in any negotiation?

There are two, actually. One is 'What are you really hoping to get out of this?' In a formal business negotiation, you may not actually ask this one directly, but you can ask indirectly, through a series of other questions. The other indispensable question is 'What if?' as in 'What if we doubled our order?' 'What if I took the washing machine now, rather than getting you to deliver it?' 'What if we went there next summer instead?' 'What if' forces the other person to really consider and perhaps re-evaluate their position.

#5 Is there any difference between negotiating with loved ones and business partners?

The big difference is that your nearest and dearest know how to push your buttons – what you really care about, what will make you angry and so on – and vice versa. The key thing is not to let either side use this knowledge to manipulate the other, because the relationship and the future of it are what are important here, not the immediate object of negotiation. A business relationship is unlikely to flounder over a single negotiation, as long as neither side resorts to unscrupulous tactics.

#6 I've read about people having certain body language signals that can give away their real feelings. Is this true?

It is true, but it works both ways. People send all sorts of signals with their bodies. If they fold their arms or cross their legs, for example, they could just be getting themselves more comfortable, but in a negotiation, more likely it's a sign that they are closing off – in other words that they didn't like something you suggested. Look out for inconsistencies in expression which betray someone's true feelings – a smiling mouth but unsmiling eyes – and certain micro-expressions – a momentary wince or a raised eyebrow. And try to avoid giving off any of these tell-tale signs yourself (easier said than done!).



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SCENARIO

X bought a home cinema system (large screen, multiple speakers, controls, etc.) from a private seller, Y, for \$2,000. It was six months old but new and unused and the retail price was \$3,600. When X got the system home, he / she found the screen was too big for the room.

In the meantime, X has found a more suitable one on sale in a shop for \$1,800. So X goes back to Y to return the system and get his / her money back. Y spent three weeks and \$50 advertising the system and does not want to take it back. As it was a private sale, Y is under no legal obligation to take it back. Negotiate a solution.