

## **Business English- Starting and ending negotiations simplest responses game and key words**

*Without looking below for now, listen to your teacher and raise the “Starting” or “Ending” cards depending on when you think that thing is probably said in a negotiation.*

*Label the sections below with S for Starting and E for Ending. They are arranged by sections, so if you don't know one phrase just look at the ones next to it.*

According to our previous discussion,...  
Can I begin by explaining our position?  
I have considered the proposal in your email and...  
The reason why we invited you here today is...

Although I'll have to check with my boss,...  
I'll put that in writing and email you by the middle of next week.  
This is just a formality, but I'll need to talk to my boss first.

Are we (all) agreed?  
Do we have a deal?

Can I just go over what we've discussed again?  
Can I just summarize what we have talked about so far?  
To sum up, what we've discussed so far,...

Can we start by hearing your initial offer?  
Can you clarify the situation for us?  
Can you outline the issues for us?  
Can I suggest we start by clarifying the situation?

Did you get up to anything at the weekend?  
Did you have a good summer?

Did you have a good journey?  
Did you have any problems finding us?  
How was your flight?  
Is it your first time here in...?

Do we need to discuss anything else?  
Do you have anything to add?  
Have I missed anything out?  
Have we covered everything?  
I think we've covered everything.  
Is there anything we still need to discuss?

Do you think we could have that in writing by the end of the week?  
I look forward to doing business with you again soon.  
Looking forward to hearing from you soon.

We can follow this up by email.  
Does everyone have a copy of the agenda?  
There are four points on the agenda.  
We can hopefully be finished by...

Due to unforeseen circumstances,...  
I know this is not ideal, but...  
I know this is rather short notice, but...  
I know we agreed... but...

Have you been busy?  
How have you been?  
How long has it been?  
How's business?  
Long time no see.

Hopefully our next meeting will be more productive.  
I hope we can still do business in the future.  
We can continue this conversation when...

I guess it's time to begin, don't you think?  
It's about time to discuss the point at hand, if that's okay.  
We've got a lot to get through so...

I can shake on that.  
I think we have a deal.  
It's a deal.  
Where should I sign?  
You have a deal.

I can't see any way round this.  
There doesn't seem to be much point in discussing this further.  
We seem to have come to some kind of a stalemate.

I feel we are making some progress.  
I think we've found some common ground.

I hope you can reconsider.  
Let me know if you change your mind.  
You have my email if the situation changes.

I will confirm that later.  
I'd need to see all that written down.  
Let's draw up a draft contract with those terms and then...

It was lovely to meet you.  
It was really nice to see you again.

It's been great to chat but...  
It's been nice to catch up but...  
We must carry on talking after the meeting but...  
You must tell me more about that later but...

It's a pleasure to meet you (name).  
Pleased to meet you (name).

It's a shame we couldn't...  
Sorry that we weren't able to...

It's been a pleasure doing business with you.  
Thank you for your understanding.  
Thanks, that was very productive.  
We really appreciate your help with this.

Let's get down to business shall we?  
Perhaps we should get started, if that's okay with you.  
Shall we make a start?

Let's go over what we agreed.  
Shall we go through the agreement one more time?  
To recap what we have agreed,...  
To summarise our agreement,...

Our goal is...  
Our main aim today is...  
Our main concern is...  
Our main objective is...

Thank you for coming all this way on such a cold morning.  
Welcome to...  
Would anyone like a drink before we begin?

That brings me onto why we are here today.  
That's connected to what I wanted to talk about today, which is...

This might be a good time to have a look at the agenda.  
To get down to the point at hand,...  
We really should make a start if you don't mind.

... sends his apologies.  
On our side we have...  
... will take minutes.  
*Check your answers as a class.*

*Test each other in small groups in the same way.*

*Without looking above for now, try to think of or remember phrases with these functions.*

**Starting**

**Small talk/ Social language**

**Getting down to business**

**The practicalities of the meeting**

**Setting out the situation/ initial positions**

**Ending  
Summarising**

**Coming to an agreement**

**Ending with no (clear) agreement**

**Checking that you've finished**

**Social language at the end**

**Talking about the next contact**

*Use the key words below to help you with the task above.*

**Starting**

**Small talk/ Social language**

weekend  
summer

journey  
finding  
flight  
here

busy  
been  
long  
business  
no

pleasure  
pleased

coming  
welcome  
drink

**Getting down to business**

time  
point  
through

chat  
catch  
after  
later

down  
started  
start

why  
connected

agenda  
down  
make



**The practicalities of the meeting**

copy  
points  
finished

apologies  
side  
minutes

**Setting out the situation/ initial positions**

according  
position  
considered  
reason

initial  
clarify  
outline  
situation

circumstances  
ideal  
short  
agreed

goal  
aim  
concern  
objective

**Ending**  
**Summarising**

over  
summarize  
sum

over  
through  
recap  
agreement



**Coming to an agreement**

check  
writing  
boss

agreed  
have

shake  
think  
deal  
sign  
you

**Ending with no (clear) agreement**

can't  
further  
stalemate

progress  
common

confirm  
written  
draft

**Checking that you've finished**

else  
add  
missed  
covered  
everything  
still



**Social language at the end**

lovely  
nice

shame  
sorry

pleasure  
understanding  
productive  
appreciate

**Talking about the next contact**

writing  
business  
hearing  
follow

hopefully  
hope  
continue

reconsider  
change  
changes

## Answer key

### Small talk/ Social language

Did you get up to anything at the **weekend**?  
Did you have a good **summer**?

Did you have a good **journey**?  
Did you have any problems **finding** us?  
How was your **flight**?  
Is it your first time **here** in...?

Have you been **busy**?  
How have you **been**?  
How **long** has it been?  
How's **business**?  
Long time **no** see.

It's a **pleasure** to meet you (name).  
**Pleased** to meet you (name).

Thank you for **coming** all this way on such a cold morning.  
**Welcome** to...  
Would anyone like a **drink** before we begin?

### Getting down to business

I guess it's **time** to begin, don't you think?  
It's about time to discuss the **point** at hand, if that's okay.  
We've got a lot to get **through** so...

It's been great to **chat** but...  
It's been nice to **catch** up but...  
We must carry on talking **after** the meeting but...  
You must tell me more about that **later** but...

Let's get **down** to business, shall we?  
Perhaps we should get **started**, if that's okay with you.  
Shall we make a **start**?

That brings me onto **why** we are here today.  
That's **connected** to what I wanted to talk about today, which is...

This might be a good time to have a look at the **agenda**.  
To get **down** to the point at hand, ...  
We really should **make** a start if you don't mind.

### The practicalities of the meeting

Does everyone have a **copy** of the agenda?  
There are four **points** on the agenda.  
We can hopefully be **finished** by...

... sends his **apologies**.  
On our **side** we have...  
... will take **minutes**.

### Setting out the situation/ initial positions

**According** to our previous discussion,...  
Can I begin by explaining our **position**?  
I have **considered** the proposal in your email and...  
The **reason** why we invited you here today is...

Can we start by hearing your **initial** offer?  
Can you **clarify** the situation for us?  
Can you **outline** the issues for us?  
Can I suggest we start by clarifying the **situation**?

Due to unforeseen **circumstances**,...  
I know this is not **ideal**, but...  
I know this is rather **short** notice, but...  
I know we **agreed**... but...

Our **goal** is...  
Our main **aim** today is...  
Our main **concern** is...  
Our main **objective** is...

### Ending

#### Summarising

Can I just go **over** what we've discussed again?  
Can I just **summarize** what we have talked about so far?  
To **sum** up what we've discussed so far,...

Let's go **over** what we agreed.  
Shall we go **through** the agreement one more time?  
To **recap** what we have agreed, ...  
To summarise our **agreement**,...

### **Coming to an agreement**

Although I'll have to **check** with my boss, ...  
I'll put that in **writing** and email you by the middle of next week.  
This is just a formality, but I'll need to talk to my **boss** first.

Are we (all) **agreed**?  
Do we **have** a deal?

I can **shake** on that.  
I **think** we have a deal.  
It's a **deal**.  
Where should I **sign**?  
**You** have a deal.

### **Ending with no (clear) agreement**

I **can't** see any way round this.  
There doesn't seem to be much point in discussing this **further**.  
We seem to have come to some kind of a **stalemate**.

I feel we are making some **progress**.  
I think we've found some **common** ground.

I will **confirm** that later.  
I'd need to see all that **written** down.  
Let's draw up a **draft** contract with those terms and then...

### **Checking that you've finished**

Do we need to discuss anything **else**?  
Do you have anything to **add**?  
Have I **missed** anything out?  
Have we **covered** everything?  
I think we've covered **everything**.  
Is there anything we **still** need to discuss?

### **Social language at the end**

It was **lovely** to meet you.  
It was really **nice** to see you again.

It's a **shame** we couldn't...  
**Sorry** that we weren't able to...

It's been a **pleasure** doing business with you.  
Thank you for your **understanding**.  
Thanks, that was very **productive**.  
We really **appreciate** your help with this.

### **Talking about the next contact**

Do you think we could have that in **writing** by the end of the week?

I look forward to doing **business** with you again soon.

Looking forward to **hearing** from you soon.

We can **follow** this up by email.

**Hopefully** our next meeting will be more productive.

I **hope** we can still do business in the future.

We can **continue** this conversation when...

I hope you can **reconsider**.

Let me know if you **change** your mind.

You have my email if the situation **changes**.

*Test each other in pairs:*

- Play the same Starting/ Ending game as before, this time in pairs or groups
- Test your partner on what category of language the phrases you give are
- Help your partner come up with as many phrases with one of the categories above as possible, giving them hints such as key words if they get stuck
- Read out sentences with one function with the key words missing and see if your partner can fill the gaps

*Use those kinds of phrases in roleplay negotiations. Your teacher will tell you how long each negotiation will last and/ or shout out when you should switch between stages of the negotiation (e.g. "Come to an agreement!"). The negotiations will get shorter each time and have a mix of positive and negative outcomes.*

*What language did you use to do these things? What other phrases could you use?*

### **Making proposals/ suggestions**

#### **Rejecting proposals**

#### **Accepting proposals**

#### **Reacting to acceptance**

#### **Reacting to rejection**

#### **Moving the meeting on/ Not getting stuck on a point**

#### **Trading/ linking offers and conditions**

#### **Giving reasons**

**Teacher's instructions**

*You can photocopy and cut out the cards below for students to raise to indicate which meaning they think each sentence above has as you read them out.*

<b>Starting</b>	<b>Ending</b>
<b>Starting</b>	<b>Ending</b>