

Business English- Making proposals/ suggestions in negotiations game

Put one of your cards face down on the table and try to get that response from your partner with your proposal. If you don't initially get that response, continue conceding points, adding caveats, etc until you do.

Useful language for making suggestions/ proposals

The first suggestion/ proposal

Explaining the background

- 1 Although our (initial) agreement was.....
- 2 Although you rejected,...
- 3 Can I begin by explaining our position?
- 4 Can I suggest we start by clarifying the situation?
- 5 Having given... some thought...
- 6 I know we agreed... but...
- 7 I know you already dismissed..., but...
- 8 Our present circumstances mean...
- 9 So, the reason why we invited you here today is...

Making proposals

- 10 For the sake of discussion,...
- 11 I know this is not ideal, but...
- 12 I know this is rather short notice, but...
- 13 I propose...
- 14 Is... at all possible?
- 15 I'd like to propose...
- 16 What we'd like to propose is...
- 17 Would it be possible to...?
- 18 Would you consider...?
- 19 Would... be possible?

Making conditional proposals

- 20 As long as/ providing/ if (but only if)/ unless..., we would be able to offer you...
- 21 We'd like to offer you... as long as/ providing/ if (but only if)/ unless...

Checking their reaction

- 22 Do you think that you will be able to...?
- 23 Does that suit you?
- 24 How would you feel about...?
- 25 How would you react to...?
- 26 I hope that meets with your approval.
- 27 Is... okay with you?
- 28 What would be your response to...?

Responding to positive answers

Positive expressions

- 29 (That's) (absolutely) great!/ perfect!/ wonderful!
- 30 I was hoping you might say that.
- 31 I'm very glad to hear that.
- 32 Thank you for your understanding.
- 33 You've (really) made my day!

Warning them about possible issues/ Pushing further

- 34 As part of that, we have to insist on...

- 35 Before you sign off on that, I should mention that...
- 36 However, one condition of that proposal is...
- 37 I should probably also mention that...
- 38 Moving onto the small print,...
- 39 One clause which I should probably explain is...
- 40 In that case, could you also...?

Responding to negative answers

Showing understanding

- 41 Although if I were in your position I would also.....
- 42 That's a pity/ shame.
- 43 I'm sorry to hear that.
- 44 I understand how you feel, but...
- 45 I understand your position. However,...
- 46 I wasn't aware of that. In that case,...
- 47 So, the main sticking point is...? If that is the case,...
- 48 Taking what you said into account,...
- 49 While I understand your position,...
- 50 You have a point. Taking that into account,...

Giving other options

- 51 Alternatively,...
- 52 Another option is...
- 53 Instead of that,...
- 54 How about...?
- 55 Do you feel you can accept...?
- 56 Could you accept...?
- 57 Could you see your way to...?
- 58 I think I can suggest a win-win solution.
- 59 I think I can see a way out of this.
- 60 If that's not acceptable,...
- 61 If, theoretically,...
- 62 Let's try to find a way round this.

Giving ground

- 63 As it's you,...
- 64 Because of our close relationship,...
- 65 Given our long relationship,...
- 66 I can be flexible on...
- 67 I can compromise on...
- 68 If we take... into account, then perhaps...
- 69 If you don't like our original position, then perhaps...
- 70 I'm willing to be flexible. What about...?
- 71 Just this once,...
- 72 To break the deadlock, might I suggest...
- 73 Well, that was just a ballpark figure...
- 74 We'd be willing to meet you halfway on that.

Persuading further

- 75 Are you sure I can't persuade you to...?
- 76 I can assure you that/ guarantee that...

Cards to photocopy and cut up

Deal out seven cards per student.

Y	N	Maybe	Y	N	Maybe
Y	N	Maybe	Y	N	Maybe
Y	N	Maybe	Y	N	Maybe
Y	N	Maybe	Y	N	Maybe
Y	N	Maybe	Y	N	Maybe
Y	N	Maybe	Y	N	Maybe
Y	N	Maybe	Y	N	Maybe
Y	N	Maybe	Y	N	Maybe
Y	N	Maybe	Y	N	Maybe
Y	N	Maybe	Y	N	Maybe

Useful language for making suggestions/ proposals

Try to remember or think of as many phrases with these functions as you can.

The first suggestion/ proposal

Explaining the background

Making proposals

Making conditional proposals

Checking their reaction

Responding to positive answers

Positive expressions

Warning them about possible issues/ Pushing further

Responding to negative answers
Showing understanding

Giving other options

Giving ground

Persuading further

Look at the first worksheet one more time with your pens down for two minutes, then put that worksheet away again.

Add to and correct your list above from memory.

Do the same thing, but this time only one minute looking with your pens down.