

First and Second Conditional Negotiating Practice

Work in groups of 2 or 3. Choose one of the proposals below. Think about how you could complete that proposal with a request for your partner to do something. Think very carefully about which tense is needed:

- First conditional for real, possible or likely proposals
- Second conditional for imaginary, impossible or unlikely proposals

Which tense you need might depend on you, the person who you are speaking to, and your relationship, so bear in mind that this is a real communication between the two of you, not a roleplay.

When you have decided on a full sentence (in the right tense), try to guess what your partner's reaction would be to that proposal. If you think that your partner will accept your proposal, (secretly) put a tick in the "Yes" column next to that proposal. If you think they will reject what you say, write a cross (X) in the "No" column. If you think they won't give a clear yes or no answer, put a question mark (?) in the "Maybe/ It depends" column. Then say the whole sentence to see if you correctly guessed your partner's reaction.

Useful phrases for saying it depends/ maybe

I might be able to accept that if/ as long as/ providing... I can accept that unless...

Proposal	Predicted reaction by your partner		
	Yes	No	Maybe/ It depends
bring you some lunch next week			
cook some traditional food for you			
double your budget			
give you a free gift with my company's name on it			
give you a free... worth 10 dollars			
give you a lift to the supermarket			
give you a million pounds			
give you a promotion			
give you a superpower			
give you a very good evaluation			
give you extra paid leave next year			
give you some good investment advice			
give you two weeks to finish it			
lend you a book written in my language			
lend you my car			
let you finish early today			
pay for your coffee			
pay for your petrol and parking			
promise you a 5% ROI (= return on investment)			
recommend a good baker's to you			
recommend a good place to go on holiday			
say it can save your company millions of dollars			
threaten to sue your company			

Which of the two conditional forms is correct for each proposal above? Discuss with a partner, but note that the correct tense could be different for each person, e.g. if one person has a car and the other person doesn't.

Do the same thing the other way round, thinking of a proposal ("If I..." etc) that could go together with the request below, predicting your partner's response, then saying the whole sentence.

Request/ Desire	Predicted reaction		
	Yes	No	?
allow me to employ ten (more) people			
arrange three English classes a week			
cancel next week's lesson(s)			
come in to work at 7 a.m. on Monday			
do extra preparation before the next lesson			
give me a budget of 7 million dollars for a project			
give me a full refund			
give me a pay rise of ten times the rate of inflation			
give me a perfect evaluation			
give me a permanent job			
give me one year's unpaid leave (= a sabbatical)			
give me ten weeks' paid holiday next year			
give me two more weeks to finish something			
invest in my start-up			
join me in a new business venture			
lend me five dollars			
let me use your credit card			
let me use your house			
let me work from home (= telecommute)			
move abroad			
move departments			
move this lesson to Saturdays			
offer a discount of 40%			
pay for me to take some training			
pay for me to travel to...			
proofread a report for me			
put me in charge of a large(r) project			
put me in charge of your personal finances			
relocate to Siberia			
share an office			
sign a five-year contract for English lessons			
take charge of relocating the call centre to India			
tell me every detail of your company's next product			
tell me some famous jokes from your country			

Play the same game with your own ideas, trying to use a mix of 1st and 2nd conditional. Write down a tick, cross or question mark before you make each proposal.