

Good and Bad Responses to Negotiating Phrases

Choose the best response on each line below. One should clearly be best each time, even when more than one is possible.

If I order 30,000 silk scarves, what discount will you offer us? – 30,000 isn't that large, actually, but if you buy 50,000 scarves.../ 30,000? Wow! That's great! Thank you so much. How about fifty percent?/ Only 30,000? In that case, I can't offer you any discount at all.

I take it your price includes insurance? – Actually, no./ I'm afraid you'd usually be responsible for that. However, if the order was really large,.../ Insurance? No, you have to pay for that.

How would you feel about \$500 a ton? – Hmm, I was hoping for something quite a lot better./ I wouldn't feel very good about that./ That is completely unacceptable. You'll have to do better than that.

Could you move a little more on the delivery date? – Even more? Seriously? Are you kidding?/ Of course. How many more days would you like us to change it by?/ I think we've already been quite flexible on that. However, we could look at...

What about the same price but a smaller initial order? – I'd be willing to consider that./ Really? You are too kind!/ Thank you for your cooperation.

That's okay as long as you get the first part of the order to us by the end of June. That's absolutely vital. – How about August?/ That's no problem. I can definitely guarantee that. In return, can you make sure that...?/ Yeah, I guess that might be okay.

Okay. That's no problem. I'll make sure it arrives within five days this time, as you asked. – Actually, can we make it four days then?/ Okay. I'm happy with that./ Thanks. That would be a great help.

I can pay that price as long as you get it to me by the end of the month. – I would do that if we had the stock, but unfortunately we are waiting on our own suppliers./ The end of the month? Ha! I wish I could!/ That's impossible.

We don't seem to be getting anywhere. Maybe we should just call it a day for now. – Maybe you're right. Never mind, I'm sure we'll have a more productive meeting next time. / Okay. Bye./ Really? I'm so sorry. Please reconsider!

Can I have all that in writing by the end of the week? – Do you really need it in writing?/ How about the middle of next week?/ Of course.

Thanks, that was a very productive meeting. – No no no, thank YOU. I look forward to doing business with you again soon./ Not at all./ You're welcome.

Compare your answers to those in bold on the next page. Note that some are debatable, so please ask if you disagreed on any.

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Suggested answers

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Thanks, that was a very productive meeting. – **No no no, thank YOU. I look forward to doing business with you again soon.** / Not at all. / You're welcome.

Conditionals in negotiations language presentation

What two grammatical structures can go with "if/ as long as/ providing/ as soon as" in negotiations? What are the differences in meaning between those two forms.