

Material Imprimible

Vocabulario de Reuniones y Negociaciones

Módulo 4

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Clarifying

Clarifying doubts is necessary to offer a proposal that satisfies both parties.

Examples:

- Can you show me how that works at your firm?
- May I ask how you arrived at that conclusion?
- Could you walk me through the complaint process at your company?
- What experience makes you believe that is feasible?
- What leads you to say that the location is not safe?
- Do you have flexibility on the price?
- What would be wrong with those figures?
- What I would like to understand is your priorities.

Proposals - Collocations

Before submitting a proposal, you have to develop, prepare and formulate it. Then you will bring it forward, put it forward or submitted it to the other party. If you say "yes" to a proposal, you accept, back, endorse or support it.

If you have doubts you can ask your counterpart to clarify the proposal the other party has come up with. To come up with an idea, plan or proposal is to think of it.

The party that receives a proposal will consider, review, study or assess it.

If you do not find the proposal acceptable, you will reject it or oppose it.

A proposal can be explored or discussed and if the party that submitted it, changes their mind, they may decide to withdraw or drop it.

To push through a proposal is to get it officially accepted, especially quickly.

Proposals – Useful language

Asking for proposals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “We are now ready to move on to more concrete proposals”. • “We are open to proposals that meet the requirements we talked about”. • “We welcome any proposal you'd like to make”. • “Would you like to suggest a course of action?”
Making proposals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>“We are prepared to extend our shift system”</u>. • “Let me make a proposal”. • <u>“Our proposal is to dispatch partial shipments on a weekly basis”</u>. • <u>“We could offer you a higher discount”</u>. • <u>“Our idea is that we publicize the product at the Berlin exhibition”</u>. • <u>“I'd like to propose that the product is launched in May rather than March”</u>. • <u>“We suggest reducing transportation time by sea freight to 5 weeks”</u>. • <u>“We think that the best way is to hire a local contractor”</u>.

Asking for reactions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “How do you feel about this?” • “How does that sound?” • “Is it acceptable to you?” • “What are your views on this?” • “What do you think of our proposal?”
Stressing benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The most important reason for this is...” • “One key aspect our solution is based on is...” • “Please, take into account that our proposal is founded on...”
Neutral reactions to proposals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “We might be able to do that but let's make a note of it”. • “It's an option”. • “It sounds interesting but let me <u>sleep on it</u>”. (Delay making a decision on something until the following day)
Positive reactions to proposals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “This proposal is acceptable to us”. • “That sounds reasonable”. • “I can agree to that”. • “It seems like a fair suggestion”. • “I believe that satisfies our requirements”. • “I think that should be possible”.
Negative reactions to proposals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I have some reservations about that”. • “I'm not quite sure about that”. • “I'm not pretty convinced by that argument”. • “I think there's a bit of a problem with that”. • “That could be a problem”. • “I'm afraid we can't accept that”.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “We're mindful of the circumstance. However, that proposal is not appealing to us”. • “Sorry but those terms are unacceptable to us”. • “I’m afraid your proposal is far from tempting”. • “That’s not a viable option for us”.
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Selling benefits – Useful Vocabulary

To make the arguments that our proposal is based on more attractive we can use connectors of addition such as: also, apart from, what's more, besides, in addition, additionally, as well as. As an illustration:

- “In addition to a 5% discount, we are also able to expedite production”.

The following positive adjectives can be used to qualify our proposal: advantageous, major, exclusive, special, generous, favourable, cut-price. To illustrate:

- “I’m certain that you will agree this is an exceptional offer”.

Making counterproposals

A counterproposal is an alternative proposal that is submitted when one of the parties refuses the original proposal.

Let’s take a look at some phrases we can use:

Asking for alternatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Could you suggest an alternative?” • “Can you offer us any other possibility?” • “Could you suggest a different approach?”
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<p>Making counterproposals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “What I propose is to pay for that development”. • “May I suggest a different approach?” • “Instead of 100 units, how about 150 units?” • “Rather than three monthly payments, we might be able to make an upfront payment”. • “Another option would be to delay production”. • “Let's see if we can do better”.
<p>Expressing possibility and probability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “It is possible to get it all done by March 3rd”. • “There is a possibility of changing the procedure”. • “<u>In all probability</u>, the shipment will reach you next week”. (Very probably)
<p>Expressing impossibility and improbability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “It is impossible to extend the deadline”. • “We can rule out the possibility of going over the budget”. • “It is doubtful whether we can finish ahead of schedule”. • “It is unlikely that we can roll out the project before Christmas”.
<p>Asking for clarification</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Could you tell me a bit more about?” • “I just need to clarify a couple of things”. • “I'm not sure I've understood you correctly. Could you explain that more fully?” • “Correct me if I miss something but are you saying that...?”

Giving opinions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>“From our point of view</u>, an alternative might be to pay within 60 days”. • <u>“The way I see it</u>, introducing changes at this stage will delay the process”. • <u>“My perspective is</u> that the situation might get worse”. • <u>“It seems to me</u> that the existing quality controls suffice”. • <u>“My understanding is</u> that the political situation will remain stable”. • <u>“From where I stand</u>, it appears that the solution is not simple”. • <u>“My take is</u> that those conditions seem reasonable”.
Reviewing alternatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Sorry but I can see no alternative to the 30-day payment term”. • “As I see it, there are two alternatives”. • “I can see no alternative to this course of action”. • “One way to solve this problem is to resort to crowdsourcing”. • “There are a number of ways of handling this”. • “I would like to explore different options with you”.

Concessions and conditions

One golden rule of negotiations indicates that negotiators must never make concessions but trade them. It means that you should always get something in return.

A concession, also called trade-off, is something that the one or more parties yield or concede in a negotiation, usually to get something in exchange from the other party.

A condition is what one of the parties asks for to make a concession.

Conditional sentences

The most commonly used conditional sentences in negotiations are the first and the second ones.

First conditional sentences

The first conditional is divided into two clauses: the condition, "if-clause" or hypotheses, for which simple present is commonly used, and the result or main clause, which is usually made using the future simple tense.

This conditional type is used to refer to real or very probable situations in the present or future. For example:

- If you include insurance, we will sign on the dotted line next week.

Modals such as "may" or "might" can be used in the result clause instead of a future tense to express that the result is possible but not certain.

Second conditional sentences

Second conditional sentences are used to express hypothetical, unlikely or impossible situations. The reference is present or future.

In regard to its form, simple past is usually used in the if-clause and "would" followed by a verb in the infinitive form is the common choice for the result clause. For example:

- If I were you, I wouldn't miss this deal.

"Could" or "might" can also be used in the main clause.

Alternatives to "if"

In addition to "if", we can use other connectors to make conditional sentences, like, provided that, providing, as long as, so long as, only if, on (the) condition (that), imagine, suppose, supposing, say. These alternatives give the condition more emphasis.

"Provided that" and "as long as" mean "if and only if" and they are more formal than providing and so long as. "Even if" is used for unexpected conditions. "Unless" means "if not", expresses a negative condition and is not used in second conditionals.

Connectors of concession and contrast

However, nevertheless and nonetheless

However, nevertheless and nonetheless mean "but". Nevertheless and nonetheless are more formal than however and the latter is more common in speaking. They can go:

- At the beginning of a sentence. In that case a comma is added after it.
- Between two clauses. A semi-colon goes before the connector and a comma is necessary after it.
- After the subject, after the verb "to be", before the main verb or at the end of a sentence. In any case, use commas before and after it.

For example:

- "The order you placed is small. However, we'll give you a discount because you are a valued client".

Although, even though, though

Although and even though are used to introduce contrasting ideas and they mean "in spite of" something. Even though is more emphatic than although They can go:

- At the beginning of a sentence. A comma is necessary to separate the two clauses.
- In the middle of a sentence.

For example:

- "Although we don't have that product in stock, we can offer you a similar model".

Though is a shortened form of although and it is more common than although in speaking. It can go at the end of the second sentence and in that case, it means "however". For example:

- “We are not willing to concede that point. For us, there are other points open for negotiation, though”.

Despite and in spite of

They are used to link contrasting ideas and they can't be followed by a subject and then a verb. However, they can be followed by:

- A noun/noun phrase
- A gerund
- The fact that + subject + verb

For example:

- “In spite of the additional payment into my pension scheme, the remuneration package is still not appealing”.

Diplomatic language

The following words and phrases can be used to make language more diplomatic and respectful.

- Seem, eg. “There seems to be a disagreement with the union”.
- Might, would, could, eg. “This issue could be a source of contention between local residents and the company”.
- Just, eg. “I'll make just a quick comment”.
- Negative questions, eg. “Wouldn't it be more convenient to have an audit?”

Negotiation vocabulary

- At stake: If something is at stake, it is at risk and may be lost or damaged if the negotiation is not fruitful.
- Deal-breaker: An issue that makes a negotiation fail.
- Give ground: Give up one's advantage; concede.
- Hold firm: Continue to believe in or support something.
- Go to bat for someone: Take the side of someone.
- Stumbling block: A circumstance that prevents progress, understanding or agreement.
- Talk someone into something: Persuade someone to do something by talking to them.
- Strike a deal: Make a deal.
- Negotiating table: Place or situation where people discuss to reach an agreement.
- Walk away: Stop being involved in a situation, especially because it is a difficult or disadvantageous one.
- Give and take: An exchange of concessions.
- Lay one's cards on the table: Be open and honest and reveal one's position or intentions.
- The ball is in your court: It's up to you to decide what to do.
- Drive a hard bargain: Be uncompromising in making a deal.
- Call the shots: Be the person who controls a situation and makes the decisions.
- Bring to the table: Make a contribution or an offer in a negotiation.
- Back to square one: Back to where one started because no progress has been made.
- Draw the line: Put a limit on what a person is willing to do or allow to happen.

- Pick holes in something: Find mistakes in something to show that it is not good or correct.

Playing for time

When negotiators want to play for time, in other words, try to make something happen later, they may use the following phrases:

- “I think we have an agreement in principle, but there are many details to work out yet and I need to think this through”.
- “It's an offer nobody can refuse, but I really need time to chew on it”.
- “I think that's as far as we can go at this stage”.

Dealing with obstacles

When negotiators deal with a sticking point, that is, an issue that hinders progress towards an agreement or goal, they can turn to the following strategies:

Identifying obstacles	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Why don't we have a closer look at the situation?”• “What seems to be the underlying causes of the current situation?”• “May I ask you what your objections to this course of action are?”• “Ideally, what would this deal look like to you?”
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<p>Pointing out the progress made</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I feel we should go over what we have achieved up to this point”. • “We still need to discuss working conditions, but this is clearly a step forward”.
<p>Stressing common understanding</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I feel we are on the same wavelength about the crux of the problem”. • “I think we are of one mind when it comes to price spread”.
<p>Reassuring the other party</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Let me reassure you that action has been taken to set details straight”. • “I'd like to set your mind at ease. We've already taken care of that”. • “In relation to safety compliance, there's no cause for concern”. • “We understand your concerns but let me assure that we will do everything in our power to meet the schedule”.
<p>Showing commitment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I'm sure we can find a solution to this problem”. • “We are wholly committed to reaching an agreement”.
<p>Offering a solution</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “From our experience, the best way forward is to take out a loan”. • “Could the problem be solved by calling a mediator?” • “We were thinking that consultant might be necessary”.

Dealing with difficult negotiators

There are different types of negotiators that may be hard to deal with. Below are the most common types and what to tell them in order to keep the negotiation on track.

<p>Chatter boxes (they speak too much)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I need to leave at 3 because I have another appointment in the afternoon, so let's dig right in”. • “You're making some interesting comments, but I'd like to go back to the rent value to see if I've got it right”.
<p>Dominators (they try to dominate the discussion)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I'd like to hear what Joe thinks about this”. • “Does anyone have a different angle or idea we could explore?” • “Here is our proposal. What do you think are its strengths and what objections do you have?” • “You've made your point and as we're running short of time, I think we'd better switch to the next item on the agenda”.
<p>Ramblers (they speak for a long time in a way that is confusing and inconsequential)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Can I stop you for a minute? Are these figures accurate?” • “I want to make sure I didn't miss a thing. Can we go back to the quality process?”
<p>Arguers (they enjoy expressing opposite)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Let me interrupt you for a moment to say that I understand your concerns, and I think it's important to address them. We have a lot to cover

views, usually in a heated way)	<p>today, so why don't we move on to the third item?"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I know your points are valid but they aren't on the agenda. Taking into account that we're pressed for time, let's try to stick to the agenda".
Chronic interrupters (they interrupt a lot making you lose your focus)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I'm looking forward to your viewpoint but let me finish my thoughts. Then, we can discuss those ideas". • "Hold on a sec. I'll be happy to hear all the details when I finish what I was saying". • "I would like to know more about that but please bear with me while I explain the situation first, ok?"

Walking away from a negotiation

If you decide to break off negotiations, you would rather follow these steps:

Summarizing your counterpart's position	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I just want to make sure I understood your priorities. What is most important to you is benefits, travel opportunities and professional development, right?" • "I'm still not sure about your position on exclusivity".
Summarizing your position	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Let me restate our position". • "I'd like to stress how important traceability is for us".
Explaining why a deal is not possible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I'm afraid we won't be able to reach an agreement because..." • "I think we should call it quits because..."

Indicating next move	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “We will be analysing our options in the following days”. • “We'll pitch our idea elsewhere”.
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Closing a negotiation

Eventually negotiators will bring negotiations to a close, whether they were successful or not. Below are some suggested steps to make a proper closing.

Signalling the end	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I think I think that we've covered everything for today”. • “I believe we have made progress, but what if we close out our discussions now?” • “We didn't get as far as we wanted but we've <u>made headway</u>”. (Make progress)
Summarizing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “What if we go over everything one more time?” • “Let's just recap what we've discussed”.
Confirming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Let me just confirm the details”. • “In regard to delivery, we have agreed to...” • “On the design front, we are going to...”
Checking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Have I left out anything?”
Indicating unresolved issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “There's still the question of endorsement to tackle”. • “We still need to iron out the issue of on-site support”.

<p>Mentioning future actions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Kent's been taking notes and he will send you a summary of our discussion”. • “I look forward to speaking to you next week”. • “Could you make it next Friday to draft an agreement?” • “We'll put everything we've agreed <u>in black and white</u>”. (In writing)
<p>Finishing on a high note</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Thank you for a fruitful discussion. It's great doing business with you”. • “We really appreciate all the work you've carried out to reach this agreement”. • “Thank you for your professionalism. We look forward to working with you on this project”.