

Sound Like a Great Negotiator - Talking about Your Negotiation

Negotiating is a really tough skill. Some would even define it as an art. The main aim of a negotiation is to get the best deal for yourself or your company. A win-win deal for both sides is also a good outcome

The negotiation will take place between yourself and your **counterpart**. After some small-talk, you will get down to business and make an offer. Your counterpart will either accept the offer, or they will come up with a **counter-proposal** or **counter-offer**.

How can you win a negotiation? Some might say that you should show confidence as soon as you walk into the negotiation. Your counterpart might assume that you **have the upper hand** or **bargaining power**.

Some believe that the only way to win a negotiation is to show your counterpart that you are willing to **walk away** from a potential deal if they don't offer you what you want.

If you want to **drive a hard bargain** in a negotiation, it means that you will **hold your position** and refuse to change your initial offer. You can **leverage something** in order to **push them** to accept the terms that you want. For example, you might leverage your skills, knowledge, expertise or resources to get a better price in a negotiation.

If you don't need to drive a hard bargain in a deal, you can offer some **room for manoeuvre**, meaning that you are open to different offers from your counterpart. According to your aims in the negotiation, you might offer no room for manoeuvre or a lot of room for manoeuvre. If you are willing to change your offer, then you might **make some concessions**, or maybe you will **meet halfway** in order to close a deal.

Some negotiations may take place over email or over a series of meetings. Sometimes you can find yourself in a position whereby you are waiting for an answer on your offer. In this case, it is better to simply wait when **the ball is in their court**.



A) Match the phrases to the definitions

Based on the context of the article, can you match the words in the box to the definitions listed below? Then add the word into the example sentence. You may need to change the form of the word to fit the meaning of the sentence.

Counterpart	counter-proposal	to have the upper hand
to walk away	to drive a hard bargain	to hold your position
To make concessions	to meet halfway	the ball is in their court
to leverage something	to push someone to	room for manoeuvre

- We are waiting for them to make the next move: _____
"All we can do now is wait. _____."
- To withdraw from a negotiation: _____
"We have to show them early on that we are willing to _____ from this deal."
- To let someone have something in a negotiation: _____
"We can offer them a lower price if they don't want to pay that much, but don't _____ too many _____, because we simply can't afford it."
- A person or group who has the same function as you but in a different organisation: _____
"Make sure to build some rapport with our _____ at the beginning of the meeting. It will give us a better change of closing a favourable deal"
- To have an advantage over someone: _____
"As the bigger company, we _____ in this negotiation, so let's make sure that they know it."
- To use something that you already have to get something better: _____
"We can _____ our expertise in order to get a better price on the deal."
- To argue with determination in order to get a favourable deal: _____
"We know that they are going to _____, so we need to explain the benefits of our offer very clearly."
- An alternative proposal made in response to an original proposal which was unsatisfactory: _____

"We would be very interested to hear your _____."

9. The opportunity to make changes to some aspects of the deal: _____

"We can offer them some _____ on the price, but we have to make it very clear that there is no _____ on the deadline."

10. To not move in the negotiation: _____

"Even if they threaten to walk away from the deal, you must _____."

11. To persuade somebody forcefully: _____

"We can't afford the price that they are offering. We must _____ to lower it by at least \$10 000."

12. To compromise with someone. To do part of what they want and part of what you want: _____

"At first we need to hold our position, but we really need this deal, so we can _____ if we have to."

B) Key Words in a New Context

Below you can find a paragraph. Can you fill in the gaps in the paragraph with the words from the box below? One of the phrases is used twice. You may need to change the form of some of the verbs in order for them to fit into the sentence.

to walk away	counterpart	counter-proposal	the upper hand
room for manoeuvre	to drive a hard bargain	to hold your position	
to make a concession (x2)	to leverage	the ball is in their court	

Negotiation: The Art of Getting What You Want

Negotiation is an art, a game, and a dance. To succeed in it, you need to be patient, strategic, and know how to read your _____. Negotiation is not just about getting what you want, it's about getting the best possible outcome for all parties involved. Here are our top tips for boosting your negotiating skills.

Prepare, prepare, prepare

The most important step in winning a negotiation is preparation. This includes researching the other party thoroughly, understanding their needs and goals and how they correspond to yours. If you have carried out more research than your counterpart, then you will go into the negotiation with _____. Make sure you know your bottom line and have a range of options that you can _____ to get a

better deal. For example, if you know that they are in need of expertise, maybe you can offer expertise as an exchange for a lower price. If you are trying to sell something for a high price, then you can maybe offer some extra services that they need in order to _____ on the price.

Listen actively

When you're in a negotiation, it can be tempting to focus on what you want to say. However, the most successful negotiators are excellent listeners. Pay close attention to what the other party is saying, and try to understand their perspective. This does not mean that you are handing over control of the negotiation to the other party, quite the opposite. If you don't like what they have to say then you will have plenty of opportunity to offer a _____.

Build rapport

Building rapport with your counterpart can go a long way in achieving a successful outcome. Start by finding common ground in shared experiences and mutual interests. Also, take time to show an understanding in their perspective, and demonstrate empathy. It's important to know that negotiation is not a battle, it's a collaboration. You need to make sure that both sides come out feeling like they have won something. The key is to know how to _____ while maintaining a positive and respectful relationship with your counterpart. Such a positive relationship will make your counterpart more willing to _____ and offer you a better deal.

Use the power of silence

Silence can be a powerful tool in negotiation. When you're faced with a difficult question or proposition, take a moment to pause and reflect. This not only gives you time to think, but it also gives them the impression that _____ to fill the silence. Often, they will reveal more information or maybe even _____ to break the silence.

Know when to _____

Finally, knowing when to walk away is an essential skill in negotiation. If the other party is offering no _____ in any aspect of the negotiation, it's best to cut your losses and move on. This doesn't mean you've lost the negotiation, but rather that you've made a strategic decision to focus on other opportunities.

In conclusion, winning at negotiation requires preparation, active listening, rapport building, focusing on interests, using the power of silence, and knowing when to walk away. By mastering these tips, you'll be well on your way to achieving successful outcomes in any negotiation.

C) Comprehension Questions

1. In the section 'Prepare, Prepare, Prepare', what do you think the phrase 'bottom line' means?

2. In the section 'Building Rapport', what do you think the phrase 'find common ground' means here, and how does this phrase differ from the phrase 'meet halfway'?

3. What are the main benefits to remaining silent in a negotiation? To what extent do you agree with this advice?

4. In the final section, what do you think the phrase 'to cut your losses' means?

D) More Uses of Selected Key Words
To have the upper hand

To use this phrase effectively, we usually 'have the upper hand in' something

"We will have the upper hand in the negotiation."

We don't have to use it in negotiations:

"Manchester United had the upper hand throughout the hole game."

We can also 'gain the upper hand' when we didn't have the upper hand at the beginning, but we have the upper hand now:

"With the introduction of the iPhone in 2007, Apple gained the upper hand in the mobile technology race."

To meet halfway

We can also 'meet you/him/her halfway':

"If your offer is \$6000, how about we meet you halfway at \$3000?"

Room for manoeuvre

‘Room for manoeuvre’ can be used in many different ways:

There is room for manoeuvre
We have room for manoeuvre
They have offered us/given us room for manoeuvre

We can use all different levels of ‘room for manoeuvre’

Plenty of room for manoeuvre / a lot of room for manoeuvre / some room for manoeuvre / a bit of room for manoeuvre / not much room for manoeuvre / hardly any room for manoeuvre / no room for manoeuvre

We don’t have to use ‘room for manoeuvre’ only in negotiations. We can use it to talk about plans and regulations as well:

“We don’t have to follow the rules exactly. There is some room for manoeuvre.”

“She refuses to change plans even when they are not working. There is absolutely no room for manoeuvre.”

E) Idioms + ‘regarding’

With all of the idioms in this chapter, we can implement them in a sentence easily followed by the word ‘regarding’

Room for manoeuvre regarding..

“I’m afraid there isn’t much room for manoeuvre regarding the deadline. If the project isn’t completed by the end of March then the launch won’t happen.”

The ball is in their court regarding..

“The ball is in their court regarding my business offer. I just have to wait and see what they say.”

To make a concession regarding..

“We might have to make some concessions regarding the price. Let’s see how it goes.”

To drive a hard bargain regarding..

“They always drive a hard bargain regarding deadlines. They want everything done so quickly.”

F) Glossary of words to talk about negotiations

counterpart
counter-proposal
to have the upper hand
to walk away
to drive a hard bargain
to hold your position
to make concessions

to meet halfway
the ball is in their court
to leverage something
to push someone to
room for manoeuvre
our bottom line
to cut your losses