

5 Work with a partner to practise the dialogue. Swap roles when you have finished and repeat the exercise. Use the expressions from Exercise 4.

Partner A

Make your offer: 50 mobile phones for €6000

Revise your offer: offer a 12% discount.

Revise your offer further: offer an 18% discount.

Offer a full-service after-sales package as well.

Partner B

Reject the offer: it's too expensive!

Reject the revised offer: it's still too expensive.

You find this more interesting: buy some time to think about it.

Accept the offer.



WORKING TOGETHER TO REACH AGREEMENT

It can be frustrating when some participants put off a decision and a meeting ends without agreement.

In an international context, it's important to understand the reasons for this. For instance, in southeast Asian cultures it's the group that's important in decision-making. An individual will seldom agree to something until a consensus has been reached among colleagues.

Other business cultures (such as those of southern Europe) tend to be quite hierarchical. Executives may postpone reaching an agreement until they have discussed the issue with their boss.

So don't push for agreement right away: You may be pushing a potential business partner away. Instead, research how the decision-making process works within the business culture you're dealing with before a meeting.

6 There are a number of phrases which are often used during a negotiation. Use the phrases below to complete the mini-dialogues.

room for manoeuvre • get back to you • draw up a quotation • a range of possibilities • it's hard to say • that depends on • to follow up on our conversation

Simon We don't have a lot of time. Can you deliver the machine parts by next Friday at the latest?

Andrew _____¹ how many other orders we're working on right now. I'll check and
 ... _____² early tomorrow.

Simon What sort of after-sales service can you offer us?

Elizabeth There are _____³. I'll email you details of our different service packages and you can choose which one you want.
 ...

Simon Can you give me a rough idea of how much this will cost?

Elizabeth No, sorry. At the moment _____⁴ how expensive it will be. I'll let you know as soon as I can.
 ...

Vilém Will you have a problem finishing the report by Thursday?

John Yes, I will. Is there _____⁵ on when I can finish it? Can I give it to you a week later than planned?
 ...

Michael Thanks for taking the time to talk to me today. Now, what's the next step?

Karolína Well, I'll _____⁶ and send it to you. Then you can see in detail what we can offer you.
 ...

Frank Nice to see you again, Sue.

Sue Nice to see you too. I wanted to meet you today _____⁷ from last week.

TALKING ABOUT POSSIBILITIES

We often show that we are talking about possibilities in a negotiation by using conditional forms.

Conditional 1 (to show that something is likely to happen)

*If the price **is** right, we'll **be able to buy** more.*

*If you **prepare** some different options for me, I'll **compare** the prices and specifications, then make a choice.*

Conditional 2 (to talk about things that are not certain)

***Could** you **deliver** the system quickly **if** we **gave** you the order?*

*We **would be prepared to pay** more **if** we **received** a good level of service back-up.*

Note that in conditional 2, the simple past form of the verb is used in the 'if' part of the sentence.

*If you **prepared** some different options for me, I **could** compare the prices and specifications, then make a choice.* NOT: ~~If you would prepare...~~