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# Business Language

Faculty of Business and Economics

## Chapter 2 – Section 3

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# Chapter-2



# Negotiations in English

Here are some preparatory questions to ask yourself before beginning talks with the other party:

- What is my main objective?
- What are all of the alternatives I can think of?
- Why do I deserve to have my goals met?
- What will my opponent's counter proposal likely consist of?
- How can I respond to this counter proposal?
- When would I like to have this issue resolved?
- What is my bottom-line?
- What market research/homework do I need to do to back up my cause?
- What is my bargaining power compared to my opponent's?
- What do I know about the principles of negotiating?

### **Markus Prepares to Negotiate with Louis**

Markus approaches Louis after his shift on Friday afternoon and asks if he can arrange a meeting to discuss a potential promotion. Louis sighs and reminds Markus that they already had this discussion last year. Markus agrees, but reminds Louis of his loyalty to the company and insists that they speak again on the subject next week. Eventually Louis, who is afraid that Markus might quit on the spot, agrees to meet on Monday during the crew's lunchhour.

Over the weekend, Markus thinks about Monday's meeting. Last year, he was unprepared to negotiate and ended up only getting a 50 cent/hour pay raise. This did not satisfy him, and he has continued to feel undervalued ever since. Many times, after a hard day at work, Markus has considered quitting. However, it is difficult to find work in the middle of winter. Markus has a family to support and he can't afford to lose his job.

Markus decides to do some research on negotiating. He learns the principles behind **collaborative negotiating**, and decides that this is the approach he will take this time. After he has understood the concept he can ask himself the preparatory questions above. Finally, he can apply the rules of collaborative negotiating to his own case.

## Markus Answers the Preparatory Questions

- My main objective is to be named crew foreman and to earn a salary that is competitive with other foremen in the area.
- Alternatives include looking for work elsewhere, asking for a dollar more an hour, suggesting that Louis hire someone else to take on extra duties.
- I deserve this promotion because I have worked with Landscape Labourers for five consecutive years, and have received many compliments from satisfied clients. I am the team member who reports early every morning and leaves last. If we are under a deadline, I work through my lunchhour. All of the other team members come to me with their questions.
- Louis will likely say that he can't afford to pay me more because business is slow in the winter. He will say that there are plenty of qualified labourers who will do the work for less money.
- Both of these arguments are probably true. Landscape Labourers lost a lot of money last year due to poor weather. There were a few weeks that we couldn't work, but Louis had to pay us anyway because of our contracts. And, unemployment is at an all time high in our region. However, Louis just signed a contract with a new company that will mean regular work for at least the next two years. Also, the other team members rely on me, and none of them have the experience to take over my position if I quit. It will cost Louis a lot of money to train a new landscaper to do everything that I do.
- I understand that winter is tough on this business, so I would like to have this issue resolved by spring.
- I will look into three other local landscaping businesses and inquire about the salary and benefits of its employees. I will also review the classified ads to see if any other companies are hiring or looking for a foreman.
- My bottom-line is to receive an extra dollar an hour and to be named team manager.

- I think Louis and I have equal bargaining power right now. None of the other current members of our team are as committed to the job as I am. However, unemployment is high and there are other people he could hire.
- I have never been a strong negotiator. I need to learn more about negotiating strategies and tactics.