

NEGOTIATING AND COMPROMISING

B2-C1 | Functional language for reaching a balanced agreement

1 Useful phrase patterns

Use these phrases to recognise different needs and propose a practical compromise.

Would you be open to ...?

Would you be open to a shorter trial period?

Could we meet somewhere in the middle?

Could we meet somewhere in the middle on cost?

One possible compromise would be ...

One possible compromise would be a phased launch.

If we ..., would you be willing to ...?

If we extend the deadline, would you be willing to test it?

How would you feel about ...?

How would you feel about sharing the workload?

Perhaps we could balance this by ...

Perhaps we could balance this by reducing the scope.

That seems reasonable, provided that ...

That seems reasonable, provided that quality is protected.

Could we agree to ...?

Could we agree to review the results next month?

2 Respond to the situations

Write one tactful proposal for a compromise in each situation.

1. A client wants the project finished very quickly, but your team needs more time to test it properly.

2. Your team wants to reduce costs, but a colleague is worried that the quality of service will fall.

3. One department wants a large new project, but another department has limited staff time.

4. A supplier wants a long contract, but your company wants flexibility in case its needs change.

5. Your team wants to launch a campaign nationally, while a manager prefers to try it in one city first.

6. A colleague wants all staff to attend training in one week, but many staff have important work to finish.

7. A client wants frequent progress reports, but your team can't prepare a long report every day.

8. Two teams want to use the same meeting room at the same time every Friday.

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B2-C1 | Suggested answers

3 Possible answers

These are examples only. Other accurate and suitable responses are also correct.

Encourage students to choose a phrase that suits the relationship and situation.

1. Would you be open to a slightly later date if we complete full testing first?

2. That seems reasonable, provided that we protect the quality of service.

3. Perhaps we could balance this by starting with a smaller project that needs fewer staff.

4. Could we agree to a shorter contract with a review point after six months?

5. One possible compromise would be a pilot in one city before a national launch.

6. How would you feel about spreading the training over two weeks?

7. Could we meet somewhere in the middle with a short weekly update and a full monthly report?

8. If one team uses the room in the morning, would the other be willing to use it in the afternoon?
