TOPIC 9A | BUSINESS NEGOTIATIONS

Part 1 — Preparation, Offers & Discussion
Move from positions to interests and communicate proposals with confidence.

1 | When is a conversation a negotiation?

A student team needs an external designer to produce an event poster. The deadline is Friday, but the designer is fully booked until Monday. Both sides want to work together.

A. Make a first move

What should the student team ask before offering more money? Write two questions.

B. Choose a response

Which opening is most likely to start a productive negotiation? Explain why.

OPTION	RESPONSE
A	“Your deadline is unacceptable. You must change it.”
B	“Could we explore a smaller first version by Friday?”
C	“Fine. Do whatever you can.”

2 | Key vocabulary for negotiations

TERM	УКРАЇНСЬКОЮ	COMMON BUSINESS USE
negotiation	переговори	enter / conduct negotiations
offer	пропозиція	make / accept an offer
counteroffer	зустрічна пропозиція	put forward a counteroffer
concession	поступка	make a concession
trade-off	компроміс між умовами	consider a trade-off
priority	пріоритет	agree on priorities
constraint	обмеження	explain budget constraints
mutual benefit	взаємна вигода	find a mutually beneficial solution
terms	умови домовленості	agree on contract terms

Vocabulary check: Complete the three collocations: make a _____; put forward a _____; agree on _____.

Negotiation principle: A successful agreement does not mean that one side wins everything. It means both sides understand the commitments they are making.

3 | The four stages of a negotiation

STAGE	WHAT YOU DO	USEFUL QUESTION
1. Preparation	Decide on goals, limits, priorities and alternatives.	What must we achieve?
2. Discussion	Explore the other side's needs; ask and clarify.	What matters most to you?
3. Bargaining	Exchange proposals and conditional concessions.	If we change X, could you change Y?
4. Agreement	Confirm scope, timing, price, owners and next steps.	Have we agreed on the same terms?

4 | Prepare before you speak

A strong preparation note distinguishes your **ideal outcome**, your **minimum acceptable outcome** and what you can change.

PLANNING QUESTION	YOUR ANSWER
What is my main objective?	_____
What are my top two priorities?	_____
What is flexible?	_____
What can I offer in return?	_____
What will I do if we cannot agree?	_____

A. Identify the real interests

A company says, "The training must take place on Thursday." Its supplier says, "We cannot deliver it until Friday." Which interests could be behind these positions?

SIDE	POSSIBLE UNDERLYING INTEREST
Company	_____
Supplier	_____

B. Prepare two options

Offer two alternatives which protect the company's training needs without requiring the supplier to make an impossible promise.

Notice: "We need Thursday" is a position. "We need trained staff before Monday" may be the underlying interest.

5 | Language bank: proposals and polite disagreement

FUNCTION	USEFUL EXPRESSION	УКРАЇНСЬКОЮ
Open	We would like to discuss the proposed terms.	Хотіли б обговорити запропоновані умови.
Ask	What would be your preferred solution?	Яке рішення було б для вас найкращим?
Offer	We could offer a longer contract.	Ми могли б запропонувати довший контракт.
Counteroffer	Would you consider a smaller initial order?	Чи розглянули б ви менше перше замовлення?
Condition	If you can reduce the price, we could increase the quantity.	Якщо знизите ціну, ми могли б збільшити обсяг.
Disagree	I see your point, but that would exceed our budget.	Розумію, але це перевищить наш бюджет.
Clarify	Could you explain what the fee includes?	Чи могли б уточнити, що входить у вартість?
Check	Are you suggesting delivery in two stages?	Ви пропонуєте доставку у два етапи?
Agree	That sounds workable from our side.	З нашого боку такий варіант підходить.
Confirm	So, we have agreed on the price and date.	Отже, ми погодили ціну й дату.

A. Fill the gaps

Use *consider* • *explain* • *if* • *point* • *agreed* • *offer*.

1. I see your _____, but we need more time.

2. Could you _____ what the package includes?

3. Would you _____ a shorter pilot contract?

4. _____ you confirm the figures, we can approve the proposal.

5. We can _____ free training for your staff.

6. Have we _____ on the revised deadline?

B. Turn blunt language into professional English

Rewrite: “No chance. Too expensive.” / “We want the discount now.” / “Your plan is wrong.”

C. Make the offer conditional

Complete: “If you could _____, we would be willing to _____.”

Language focus: *Could / would / might* make an offer less direct; *if + present, could / would + verb* links a concession to a condition.

CASE 1 | The careers fair venue

An international university expects 90 attendees. The event is in three weeks. The organiser and venue manager must agree on the room, technology and total price.

ROLE A — UNIVERSITY ORGANISER	ROLE B — VENUE MANAGER
Your goal: Hold the event within **UAH 16,000**. **Essential:** accessible venue, seating for 90, projector, reliable Wi-Fi. **Your preference:** a 30-minute set-up rehearsal the day before. **Flexible:** your team can handle registration and cleaning. **Private information:** you can display the venue's logo in communications, but you cannot increase the approved budget.	**Standard offer:** room UAH 13,000; AV equipment UAH 4,500; cleaning UAH 1,000. **Your limits:** room cannot be below **UAH 11,500**; AV cannot be below **UAH 3,500**. **Flexible:** cleaning may be removed if the organiser handles it. A rehearsal is possible on Thursday afternoon. **Private information:** publicity matters because this is a new venue.

Negotiation challenge

Agree on **three issues**: total price, included services and access time. Each person should ask at least two questions, make an offer and respond to a counteroffer.

ISSUE	INITIAL POSITION	FINAL AGREEMENT
Price	_____	_____
Services	_____	_____
Rehearsal / access	_____	_____

After the negotiation

What did you exchange rather than simply discount? Write one conditional sentence used in the discussion.

CASE 2 | A website redesign with a fixed launch date

A university department needs an online registration page in three weeks, but also wants a complete redesign. The client and digital agency have different definitions of “finished”.

ROLE A — CLIENT / PROJECT OWNER	ROLE B — DIGITAL AGENCY
Budget ceiling: UAH 45,000 for the project. **Non-negotiable:** students must be able to register online in **three weeks**. **Desired extras:** attractive home page, analytics dashboard and staff training. **Can change:** you can introduce extra functions later if registration works on time. **Private information:** you have a staff member who can produce the text and images.	**Original quote:** UAH 42,000, full delivery in **five weeks**. **Rush quote:** UAH 60,000 for full delivery in three weeks. **Alternative:** registration system and basic pages in three weeks for UAH 26,000; remaining redesign three weeks later for UAH 17,000. **Flexible:** one staff training session included if the client supplies all content. **Private information:** your team cannot safely shorten testing.

A. Prepare and negotiate

Find a solution that protects the launch date. Define the **minimum viable deliverable**, the second-phase scope and who supplies content.

DECISION	YOUR AGREEMENT
What is delivered in week 3?	_____
What follows later?	_____
Price, tests and training	_____
Who supplies text and images?	_____

B. Challenge statement

Client: “But we asked for the whole website in three weeks.” Agency: respond with a polite acknowledgement, one factual constraint and a concrete alternative.

Useful phrase: “I understand that the launch date is fixed. Could we agree on a phased delivery instead?”

CASE 3 | Sustainable packaging: price or reliability?

A small food brand needs recyclable packaging for a monthly subscription product. The supplier wants predictable orders; the buyer needs to protect its margin.

OPTION	PRICE PER UNIT	ORDER / DELIVERY
Standard recyclable pack	UAH 3.35	From 4,000 units; 12-day lead time
Contract pack	UAH 3.05	At least 8,000 units per month; 12-month contract
Rush production	+ UAH 0.30	7-day lead time; subject to capacity

ROLE A — FOOD BRAND BUYER	ROLE B — PACKAGING SUPPLIER
Expected demand: 10,000 packs a month; it can change by season. **Ideal unit cost:** UAH 3.00; **absolute ceiling:** UAH 3.15. **Important:** recyclable material and delivery before the 20th each month. **Flexible:** quarterly forecasts and a commitment to a minimum of 8,000 packs. **Risk:** a year-long commitment may leave excess stock.	**Your aim:** win a stable annual contract. **Minimum workable price:** UAH 3.05 only with a monthly commitment of at least 8,000 units. **Can offer:** a 10-day delivery window for a forecast sent one month ahead. **Cannot offer:** free rush production every month. **Other value:** a quarterly quality review and a small sample batch.

A. Decide what to exchange

Discuss volume, price, lead time and flexibility. Use at least one conditional offer, one clarification question and one professional disagreement.

ISSUE	AGREED TERM
Unit price / volume	_____
Delivery schedule	_____
Flexibility / risk	_____

B. Evaluate the deal

What is the main financial risk for each side? Would a six-month pilot be worth proposing?

CASE 4 | University–employer internship partnership

An engineering faculty would like more paid placements. A technology company wants capable interns but has limited supervision capacity.

ROLE A — UNIVERSITY CAREERS OFFICER	ROLE B — COMPANY HR PARTNER
Objective: create **eight placements** for final-year students. **Important:** paid experience, learning goals, fair selection and a clear feedback process. **Preferred start:** February; placement length eight weeks. **Can offer:** pre-selection, an orientation workshop and university support. **Private information:** four students could start later without affecting graduation.	**Current capacity: four interns at a time** because mentors are busy. **Possible:** two consecutive eight-week groups, four students in each. **Important:** practical skills, clear attendance expectations and manageable mentoring costs. **Can offer:** stipends, feedback and an online introduction session. **Concern:** you cannot guarantee jobs after the programme.

A. Identify positions and interests

QUESTION	YOUR NOTES
What do both parties want?	_____
What looks incompatible at first?	_____
Which two terms are flexible?	_____

B. Negotiate a workable partnership

Agree on number of students, start dates, payment principles, selection and evaluation. Neither party may promise guaranteed future employment.

TERMS TO CONFIRM	FINAL DECISION
Placements / schedule	_____
Selection / supervision	_____
Learning outcomes / feedback	_____

C. Reflect

Which creative option expanded the agreement beyond an initial “four versus eight” disagreement?

CASE 5 | A hybrid-working trial

An employee is asking to change their working pattern. The manager needs reliable collaboration and equal treatment across the team.

ROLE A — EMPLOYEE	ROLE B — LINE MANAGER
Request: work remotely three days a week. **Reason:** you do detailed analysis best without interruptions; your commute is long. **Must have:** at least two remote days for the arrangement to be helpful. **Flexible:** fixed office days for meetings and regular progress updates. **Can offer:** a six-week pilot with measurable outputs.	**Current policy:** one remote day per week as standard; two may be tested with approval. **Essential:** in-person team meeting on Tuesdays and customer contact coverage on Thursdays. **Concern:** other colleagues may request similar flexibility. **Can offer:** a **six-week two-day pilot** if response times and teamwork remain strong. **Cannot promise:** a permanent change now.

A. Negotiate a pilot, not a promise

Agree on the two remote days, team coverage, trial duration and how success will be measured. Use positive and specific language.

PART OF THE AGREEMENT	YOUR DECISION
Office / remote days	_____
Trial length	_____
Two measurable indicators	_____
Review meeting	_____

B. Write a diplomatic response

Manager: “I am concerned that the team will become less responsive.” Write a response that acknowledges the risk and proposes evidence.

Remember: Separate a person’s request from the manager’s legitimate operational concerns. A limited pilot can make a difficult decision reversible.

6 | Reading case: The price was not the main issue

A NEW TRAINING CONTRACT

Nadia managed learning programmes for a growing software company. She had been asked to organise communication training for thirty employees within six weeks. Her budget was UAH 65,000. A training provider, GreenBridge Learning, submitted an offer of UAH 72,000 for four live workshops, individual feedback and access to a digital resource library.

At first, Nadia focused on the price. “We need a discount,” she told Daniel, the account manager. Daniel replied that the trainer’s rate and travel costs left little room to reduce the fee. The meeting became uncomfortable because both sides repeated the same positions. Nadia said she could not exceed the budget; Daniel said his company could not sell the complete package for less.

The conversation changed when Nadia asked which elements were most expensive. Daniel explained that individual feedback required several additional hours after each workshop. The digital library was already available and cost very little to provide. He then asked what the company needed most. Nadia admitted that the main objective was to help team leaders handle difficult conversations. Individual feedback was useful, but not essential for all thirty employees.

They considered three options. The first was to reduce the number of workshops, but this would limit practice. The second was to offer detailed feedback only to eight team leaders. The third was to replace one in-person session with an online workshop. Daniel proposed combining the last two ideas. With fewer feedback hours and lower travel costs, he could offer four workshops for UAH 64,000, including a follow-up session for the team leaders.

Nadia was interested but asked about preparation time. Daniel could meet the six-week deadline only if the company confirmed participant numbers and learning objectives by the following Wednesday. Nadia agreed, provided she received a written programme and the proposed feedback arrangements before signing.

The final agreement did not simply split the price difference. Both sides redesigned the service around the training goal. Nadia stayed within budget and protected practical learning. Daniel maintained a viable project and built a relationship with a new client.

A. Check understanding: True, False or Not Given?

1. Nadia’s approved budget was UAH 72,000.

2. The trainer’s international travel was the main cost.

3. Individual feedback was one reason for the original price.

4. The final plan kept four workshops.

5. The contract was signed during the first meeting.

B. Read between the lines

Why did the discussion become more productive? Identify one important question asked by each side.

Key insight: When a negotiation reaches an impasse, explore the design of the offer instead of repeating a single number.

7 | Negotiation clinic: six fast cases

Take turns as A and B. In each situation, ask one question, make one offer, explain one constraint and confirm one possible next step.

SITUATION	ROLE A	ROLE B
1. Meeting time	Your team can meet at 09:00 or 15:00.	You are in another time zone; 09:00 is too early.
2. Training fee	You can pay UAH 8,000.	Your usual fee is UAH 10,000, but online delivery saves costs.
3. Delivery date	You need 200 printed brochures by Tuesday.	You can deliver 100 Tuesday and 100 Thursday.
4. Venue booking	You need the room for 6 hours.	The standard booking is 4 hours; extra hours cost more.
5. Translation brief	You need a full translation this week.	You can supply a summary first and the full version next week.
6. Staff training	You need 12 staff trained together.	You can support two smaller groups on different days.

A. Choose your strongest negotiation

Write an opening question, a conditional counteroffer and a closing confirmation for one case.

FUNCTION	YOUR SENTENCE
Opening question	_____
Conditional offer	_____
Closing confirmation	_____

B. Email follow-up (90–120 words)

Write a brief email after one of the conversations. State the issue, agreed terms (or outstanding questions), responsibilities and next date.

Subject: Negotiation follow-up — proposed next steps

8 | Negotiation skills review

A. Complete the dialogue

Use: *consider* • *if* • *understand* • *alternative* • *confirm* • *include*.

SPEAKER	NEGOTIATION TURN
Buyer	Your price is higher than we expected. Could you _____ a smaller initial order?
Supplier	I _____ your concern. What volume would you need?
Buyer	We need 500 units. Would the price _____ delivery?
Supplier	Yes. _____ you could commit to six monthly orders, we could reduce the price.
Buyer	That might work. Is there an _____ to a six-month commitment?
Supplier	We could agree on a three-month trial. Shall I _____ the details by email?

B. Which stage?

Label each action **P** (preparation), **D** (discussion), **B** (bargaining) or **A** (agreement).

1. Checking a budget ceiling before meeting a supplier: ____

2. Asking why the client needs a shorter delivery period: ____

3. Offering a discount in exchange for higher volume: ____

4. Confirming the unit price and payment date in writing: ____

5. Comparing a backup provider before negotiations: ____

C. Make a professional response

Rewrite each statement using a negotiation phrase.

1. “That is too late.”

2. “No, the price is ridiculous.”

3. “OK, I think that is fine.”

D. Your self-check

I can define my priorities and limits. I can ask about interests. I can make a conditional offer.
I can disagree politely. I can summarise a deal without making unclear promises.

Next step: In Part 2, you will negotiate concessions, defend proposals with evidence, manage pressure and close more complex agreements.