

Negotiating Business Contracts

Have you ever gotten a contract for something and not really understood what it says? Contracts, whether they are for business or everyday things like phones, are hard to read. But they are important both for business and everyday life. So, it's useful to know how to read them or at least be able to ask questions about them.

Here we'll introduce you to essential phrases that will help you better understand and negotiate contracts. Take a look at the tables below and get ready to negotiate!

Table of Contents

- [Asking About a Contract](#)
- [Talking About a Contract](#)

Asking About a Contract

Below, you'll find different questions that you can use to ask about a contract. Use them when you don't understand, are looking for clarification, or want to ask for someone's opinion about the contract.

Are you satisfied with the compromise?

What are your views on the offer?

Do you have any further suggestions for the contract?

Did you notice if we missed anything in the main articles?

Would you change anything?

Do you understand what the contract is saying?

Did you read the fine print?

Do you have any questions about the contract?

What does section 4 mean?

Can we define the exceptions in section five more clearly?

Can we add an additional clause to make it more clear?

What are your views on the offer?

When talking about contracts, it can be useful to talk about them with others in your company. To ask for someone's opinion about a contract or what is in a contract, use the sentence pattern What are your views on + THING?. In response, the person would give you their opinion. For example like this I think it could be better.

Did you read the fine print?

Fine print is text in a contract that is purposefully written smaller and placed out of the way. This is often done so that it is not noticed. It's very important to read this text because there is a reason the contract writer is trying to hide it from you. Be aware of this when negotiating contracts!

Talking About a Contract

The following phrases are examples of comments that you could make about a contract. Have a look and use them for inspiration the next time you're reading over a contract.

I like your offer.

I'm afraid I can't agree to this.

The most important reason for my refusal is article four.

May I suggest a change to the contract?

I propose we change the contract.

In exchange for increased pay, would you work more hours?

I think we should finalize the contract.

Let me make sure I understood your point.

Unfortunately, my hands are tied in this situation.

If you accept the contract, then please sign on the last page.

What's the catch?

Unfortunately, my hands are tied in this situation

My hands are tied is an English idiom that means you can't do anything about something. It's used frequently in negotiations when one side cannot control something in a contract, offer, etc. A possible response to our example sentence using this idiom is You really can't offer anything new?.

What's the catch?

This is a phrase often used during negotiations when something sounds too good to be true. This phrase signals that you believe there are hidden problems or drawbacks to the thing you are being presented. Someone might respond to this phrase by explaining those possible drawbacks. For example, they might say something like If you accept the contract then you will be transferred to a new city.

Frequently Asked Questions**What are the most essential English phrases for negotiating business contracts?**

What are your views on the offer?

Did you read the fine print?

Do you have any questions about the contract?

What does section 4 mean?

I like your offer.

I'm afraid I can't agree to this.

Let me make sure I understood your point.

If you accept the contract, then please sign on the last page.

What kind of English is used in contracts?

The English used in contracts is usually very technical. It could be business, bureaucratic, or legal English. This means that contracts can be very difficult to read, even for native English speakers. Therefore, it's a good idea to learn some business vocabulary and phrases when working with contracts, as well as to have others look over the contract with you. Two pairs of eyes is better than one!



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