Business English role-plays Meetings and negotiations

B1–B2 · Adults · 25–30 minutes per scenario

Prepare the room

For the meeting, give everyone page 2 and each group of three a cut set from page 3. For the negotiation, give each pair page 4 and one cut set from page 5. Share private cards separately in online classes. Give learners two minutes to read and underline one priority and one limit.

Run and replay

Model one phrase, allow two minutes to prepare, then give groups 7–8 minutes to talk and two minutes to write their outcome. Monitor for an invitation to speak, a reason for a proposal, a conditional offer or a check of the final details. Debrief for five minutes. Replay for three minutes with one changed condition.

Meeting debrief

Which option met all three constraints? What information changed your choice? Whose view did the chair bring in? Read the decision and check that it names the option, cost, owner and deadline. Option B (£900, 24 live places) and C with an extra clinic (£770, 20 live places) both work. A breaches the cover limit. C alone has too few live places. For the replay, cut the budget to £800.

Negotiation debrief

Which question revealed a priority? What concession did each side make? Read back the whole agreement and check it against both cards. Possible deals include £900 with a 30% deposit, or £870 with a 50% deposit, both with 09:30 access. For the replay, give the buyer a firm £860 limit. Have pairs state which condition needs review and who will check it.

Feedback

Quote one effective phrase you heard. Put one vague line on the board and ask learners to make it specific. For example, change “That should be fine” to “We can agree to £870 if we can get in at 09:30.”

Choose a training plan

Groups of three · Make one decision and record the next action.

The situation

Your company is launching a new booking system. All 24 staff need training by Friday. At least 16 need live training. You have up to £950 and can release no more than 12 people from work at once.

Compare the options

A. One workshop · £720. All 24 attend live at the same time.

B. Two workshops · £900. Two separate live sessions with 12 staff in each.

C. Video and one live clinic · £650. All staff watch the video. Ten can attend the clinic. Add a second clinic for £120 and offer ten more live places.

Useful phrases

Open the meeting · “By the end, we need to agree on …”

Invite a view · “What would work for your team?”

Raise a concern · “My concern is that …”

Compare · “Compared with option B, we’d save …”

Confirm the decision · “So we’ve agreed to … Who can do that by …?”

Write the decision

Plan and total cost _____

Reason it works _____

Next action _____

Owner and deadline _____

Choose a training plan

Cut on the dashed lines. Give each person only their own card.

A / CHAIR

Nadia · Operations lead

Your priority · Keep shifts covered. No more than 12 people can leave work at once.

Your starting position · You are open to any workable plan. Ask both colleagues for their view before you put a decision to the group.

Before you finish · Confirm the cost, owner and deadline aloud.

B / LEARNING TEAM

Ravi · Training lead

Your priority · Give as many people as possible live practice with the system.

Your starting position · Support option B. If the team chooses C, insist on a second clinic and ask who will allocate the live places.

What you can offer · If the decision is made today, you can reserve the trainer by 15:00.

C / FINANCE

Jo · Finance partner

Your priority · Keep the training bill below £800 if you can.

Your starting position · Support C if the second clinic keeps the plan under £800.

What you can offer · You can approve £900 if the group explains why extra live places justify the cost.

Book a training venue

Pairs · Agree a package or record what still needs to change.

The situation

A company wants to hire a room for 18 people next Thursday. The session runs from 10:00 to 16:00. The venue’s standard rate is £840, with room access from 09:50. Both sides need to agree the price, access time and deposit before they confirm.

Useful phrases

Find the priority · “Which matters most, the price or early access?”

Explain a limit · “We need access by … at the latest.”

Make a conditional offer · “If you can …, we could …”

Counter an offer · “That would work for us if …”

Confirm the terms · “Can I check that includes the screen and …?”

Pause a deal · “We can’t confirm today. I’ll check … and get back to you by …”

Record the outcome

Hire price _____

Access time and facilities _____

Deposit and due date _____

Next step, owner and deadline _____

If there is no agreement, say which condition is unresolved and who will check it.

Book a training venue

Cut on the dashed line. Give each partner only their own card.

A / BUYER

Aisha · Training coordinator

You need · A room for 18, a screen and access by 09:30 so you can test your laptop before the 10:00 start.

Price · Aim for £880 or less. Your absolute limit is £930.

Deposit · You would prefer 30%. You can pay up to 50% by the end of tomorrow if that makes the deal better.

Your move · Find out what early access costs. Offer something in return before accepting a higher price.

B / SUPPLIER

Mateo · Venue bookings manager

You can offer · The room fits 18, and the screen is included. The standard £840 package opens the room at 09:50.

Early access · For 09:30 access, open with £950 and a 30% deposit. You can go down to £900 at 30%, or £870 if the buyer pays a 50% deposit.

Your limit · Staff can open the room at 09:30 at the earliest. You need the deposit by the end of tomorrow.

Your move · Ask why the client needs early access. Trade a lower price for a larger deposit if needed.