Harvard Business School Online

# Negotiation Simulations

Negotiation Mastery

## Contents

Harvard Business School Online

## Overview

The Negotiation Simulations are a key component of Negotiation Mastery, as they provide the opportunity to practice the skills you are learning within the course. As noted on the course calendar, there are 4 Negotiation Simulations throughout the program, each of which will require coordination with a different randomly-assigned student partner. There are three standard text-based negotiations conducted via the chat tool in the course and one face-to-face negotiation conducted via Skype or a similar platform.

These instructions and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) will walk you through how these simulations will work. There is also a section that provides specific details for each individual simulation.

We strongly suggest that you save and/or print this document and refer to it as you proceed through the Negotiation Mastery program.

Because these simulations are so critical to the course, all deadlines must be strictly followed. Each of the four Negotiation Simulations must be initiated by the deadline indicated on your course calendar. This is a requirement for earning a Certificate of Completion.

---

# Negotiation Simulation Instructions

## Roles, Pairing, and Scheduling

When you begin a module in Negotiation Mastery, the course will assign you a role for the module's Negotiation Simulation. In order to play this role, you will complete preparation materials provided within the module. Once you have completed the preparation materials for your role, you will click to start the simulation. At that point, you will be asked to introduce yourself to your negotiation partner who may or may not have already introduced themselves within the simulation portion of the module.

**IMPORTANT: Y**ou must introduce yourself in the provided text box by each of the Negotiation Simulation deadlines to receive credit for that simulation and remain eligible for the course certificate. These deadlines correspond to the Negotiation Simulation deadlines on your course calendar. You may continue to negotiate even after the deadline has passed, so long as you and your partner have both introduced yourselves by the deadline.

- If you are the first partner to arrive at the Negotiation Simulation, you should introduce yourself and offer some times you are available to negotiate in the upcoming days. We suggest reserving a block of 45-60 minutes to complete the simulation with your counterpart. Although you will be using the chat tool in the course to negotiate for most of the simulations, you might also want to include a means of contact, such as an email, phone number, Facebook username, etc., to make scheduling easier.

  - The first participant to arrive to the Negotiation Simulation will be notified via email and the course's Activity Feed when their partner has arrived. While awaiting a partner, we recommend logging into the course and checking at least once a day in case the email notification went to your spam folder or if the email address you used to register for the course is not your typical email address.

- If you are the second participant to arrive at the Negotiation Simulation, you will be able to see your partner's introduction. You should introduce yourself immediately and respond to your partner with your own availability and other means of contact.
- Most participants will be paired with their counterpart within 8 hours, though please keep in mind that it may take up to 24 hours to be paired, or possibly more if you are one of the first or last in your cohort to arrive at the simulation.
- Before you click to start the simulation, you should be prepared to negotiate within the next 1-3 days. Be sure to plan accordingly such that you are able to introduce yourself to your partner prior to each simulation's deadline.
  - If you know that you will be traveling or otherwise unavailable, it might be best to wait until you return to start the simulation. However, please remember that you must introduce yourself before the deadline. Additionally, please be considerate of your classmates' time when making these arrangements, as both you and your partner will still need to complete the remainder of the module in a timely manner after completing your negotiation. Please plan your time wisely.

## Negotiating and Offers

Once you and your partner have set a time to negotiate, either partner can start the conversation. Assuming your assigned role, use the provided text box in the chat tool to interact with your partner. The chat tool works much like any standard chat platform, but also features the ability to make formal negotiation offers and agree to those offers. Your goal in every Negotiation Simulation is to achieve the best possible outcome for your assigned role.

- You can make an offer at any time during the simulation. Just be sure to check off the box saying "Includes offer" along with your text response. You can also withdraw your most recent offer at any time.
- When you make a new offer, any offers you have made previously will be withdrawn automatically.
- If your partner accepts your offer, you will be asked to confirm that the offer you made is still acceptable. If you confirm, the negotiation will end with that offer as the result.
- Completely unreasonable offers (e.g., $0 or $500,000,000,000) may not process.

## Ending a Negotiation Simulation

To complete the simulation and move on to the remainder of the module, you must come to an agreement with your partner: you can either agree to a set of terms (an offer), or you can agree that you are at an impasse (a walk-away situation). After the stated Negotiation Simulation deadline has passed, there is also the option to “Leave” the simulation, which is explained below.

For instructions on how to end the face-to-face simulation in Module 3, please see the section on page 6 titled “Specific Details on Each Negotiation Simulation.”

### *Agree on an Offer*

- Regardless of who made the offer originally, both partners must agree to and confirm the final offer to end the negotiation. If you make an offer and your partner accepts it, please remember to confirm the offer so that both of you can move on in the module.

### *Walk Away*

- If you and your partner cannot come to an agreement, then both partners must agree that you are at an impasse (known in our course as a “Walk Away” situation).
- Either partner can start the walk-away process by clicking the “Walk Away” button. This will send a message to the second partner, asking them if they agree to the walk-away. If the second partner agrees, the negotiation will end.
- If the second partner does not agree, the first partner will receive a message indicating that the second partner wishes to continue the negotiation.
- Either way – whether you choose to continue negotiating or not – the “Walk Away” option requires the cooperation of both partners. If you are the recipient of a “Walk Away” request, please respond promptly.

### *Leave the Negotiation*

Before the stated Negotiation Simulation deadline has passed, the only way to move forward in the course is to complete the negotiation (either by coming to an agreement or by agreeing to a walk-away). After the deadline has passed, however, both you and your partner will have the option to use “Leave Negotiation.” The “Leave” feature is intended to be used when you are no longer able to continue negotiating for whatever reason, or if your partner is not being responsive and you need to move on in the module.

Please remember that the only requirement to meet the simulation deadline is to introduce yourself to your partner, not to complete the negotiation itself. You must, however, complete the negotiation in order to continue in the module.

- You can use the “Leave Negotiation” feature at any time after the deadline has passed. Unlike the “Walk Away” option, it does not require your partner to respond.
- We recommend doing everything within your power to complete the negotiation. However, if your partner truly is not responsive or something comes up in your life that prohibits you from completing the simulation, then you should use the “Leave Negotiation” functionality so that you do not fall behind in the course.
- While you will not be penalized for leaving the negotiation, you will need to complete an alternative Solo Experience in lieu of completing the negotiation, detailed below.

## The Alternative Solo Negotiation Simulation Experience

The Solo Experience is an alternative experience to the live Negotiation Simulation. In the Solo Experience, you will read a transcript of a negotiation and answer questions about it.

- If you are the last person in the course to arrive at a simulation before the deadline and there are no partners available, you will complete the Solo Experience instead. Note that you will not be penalized for this, as you still reached the simulation by the deadline.
- If you or your partner use the “Leave Negotiation” feature, both you and your partner will be sent to the Solo Experience. As long as you introduced yourself to your partner prior to the simulation deadline, you will not be penalized for moving on to the Solo Experience.
- If you fail to reach the simulation and introduce yourself to your partner before the deadline, you will no longer be eligible for the Negotiation Mastery Certificate of Completion. You will, however, continue to have access to the course, and will be prompted to complete the Solo Experience for this simulation in order to continue to move through to the rest of the course materials at your own pace. Please note that you must meet all simulation deadlines in order to be eligible for a Certificate of Completion.
- If you or your partner use the “Leave Negotiation” feature, both you and your partner will be sent to the Solo Experience. The Solo Experience is meant to work as a last resort. The HBS Online team highly discourages voluntarily completing the course via the Solo Experience as working with others towards a resolution is an essential aspect of any negotiation. Opting for the Solo Experience diminishes the learning experience for you and your assigned partner. Please make every effort to communicate effectively with your partner to complete the simulation together. This ensures the best Negotiation Simulation Experience.

# Specific Details on Each Negotiation Simulation

## Module 1 Simulation

In Module 1 on page 1.1.3, you will use the chat tool, located within your HBS Online course, to conduct a single issue negotiation about the price of a parcel of land.

Please remember that the contact information that you exchange with your partner is for scheduling purposes only.

## Module 2 Simulation

In Module 2 on page 2.1.4, you will conduct a multi-issue simulation about an environmental clean-up contract. This negotiation is also completed with the chat tool.

This simulation involves understanding the time value of money. To aid you in your negotiation, we will provide you with a Microsoft Excel (or Google Sheets) download to help you calculate the value of any offer package.

## Module 3 Simulation

In Module 3 on page 3.1.3, after initiating your simulation with the chat tool, you will conduct your negotiation face-to-face in order to further explore the interpersonal dynamics of negotiating. We recommend that you use a video conferencing tool such as Skype or Google Hangouts. If you are unable to negotiate face-to-face, the next best option is to negotiate via audio (e.g. over the phone). If all of these options fail, you may negotiate via the chat tool as you did with the earlier negotiations. Please note that you can also complete an unfinished face-to-face negotiation using the chat tool if scheduling additional face-to-face time proves impossible.

Although all your offers and conversation will happen off outside of the course's chat tool, you will need to go back into the course to enter your final agreement via the chat tool once you have concluded the negotiation.

At the end of your negotiation, either you or your partner must type the contract you agreed upon into the chat tool text box (where you introduced yourself). The other participant will then need to go in to the chat tool and accept that offer (just like the previous simulations) and the partner who typed the offer will need to confirm the acceptance. After the offer has been submitted, accepted, and confirmed, both participants will be able to proceed in the module.

If the face-to-face negotiation ends in a walk-away situation, refer to the instructions for using the "Walk Away" option in the "Ending a Negotiation Simulation" section.

### Module 4 Simulation

In Module 4 on page 4.1.3, you will conduct your final negotiation with the chat tool regarding a job offer. This simulation is different than the previous three because there are no specified values for the issue options. Instead, you will be asked to assign your own values to various roles based on how important each issue is to you. For example, a package that is worth $100,000 to you might be worth $120,000 to someone else in your role.

Similar to the Excel/Sheets download in Module 2, you will use a downloadable tool, which includes a simplified conjoint calculator, to explore your own preferences and help you make decisions in the negotiation. *Please note that this tool is only used to assist in your own preparation; the numbers that you enter are not automatically drawn into the negotiation, nor revealed to your simulation partner in any way.*

---

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

### How Do I Start the Simulation?

The simulation takes place within your HBS Online course in a specially-designed chat tool. You must complete the role preparation section of the module and answer the *knowledge check* questions in order to start the simulation. You cannot skip ahead. Please leave enough time to complete the role preparation before each simulation deadline. Once you have introduced yourself to your partner in the Negotiation Simulation by providing a means of contact and stating your available times to meet, you have reached the simulation for the purposes of the deadline.

### How Are Partners Assigned?

Once you have completed the role preparation section of each module and click to begin the simulation, the pairing process beings. Rather than assigning partners based on location or time zone, the course pairs participants as they arrive at the simulation. This random pairing process ensures that each participant is paired with an active and prepared counterpart in a timely manner.

### When Will I Be Assigned My Partner? How Will I Know?

If you are the first to arrive for your simulation, you will introduce yourself by providing a means of contact and stating a few times you are available to meet, and then you will wait for a partner of the opposite role to arrive (most partners are assigned within about 8 hours). Once your partner arrives, providing their personal introduction, you will receive an email notification to your HBS Online-registered email address and see a notification on your Activity Feed. Because emails can sometimes get lost, we strongly suggest logging in to the course and checking your Activity Feed every 12-24 hours to see if you have been paired.

If you are the second person in your pairing, you can introduce yourself and start working on scheduling your simulation right away.

If the simulation deadline has passed and you have not received a pairing notification, it's possible that there was not a partner available in the opposite role. As long as you introduced yourself in the simulation prior to the deadline, you will not be penalized. If you are not paired by the deadline, you will need to go back into the course and proceed through the Solo Experience. It is your responsibility to stay aware of the deadlines and complete the remainder of the module, regardless of how you are paired – or whether you are paired – for the simulation.

## Is the Deadline to Start the Negotiation? Or Finish It?

The Negotiation Simulation deadlines on the course calendar are the dates by which you must start the simulation for that module. In order to meet the certificate requirement for the course, you must complete the role preparation, click to start the simulation, and introduce yourself to your partner in the course's negotiation chat tool before the deadline for each simulation.

Once these tasks are complete, you have met the deadline. In many cases, the negotiation between you and your partner may extend beyond the simulation deadline; there is no need to rush through any portion of the negotiation as long as it has been initiated prior to the deadline. Please keep in mind, however, that all negotiations should conclude only a few days after they are initiated; it is important to give yourself enough time to complete the remainder of the module after reaching an agreement in your simulation.

## My Partner is Not Responding

In order to have a partner assigned, each course participant must reach the Negotiation Simulation in the module, so please rest assured that your partner has been active in the course up until this point.

If your partner does not respond after 24 hours, you may want to post another message that will appear in the "Comments" section of the Activity Feed. You also may try sending a one-to-one message via the Student Directory or via the contact information they have specified in their introduction.

If your partner remains unresponsive, you will be able to move on in the course after the Negotiation Simulation deadline passes. Please remember that prior to that point, you must introduce yourself in the simulation chat feature in order to fulfill the simulation deadline requirement.

As indicated in the "Ending a Negotiation Simulation" section above, please use the "Leave Negotiation" feature after the deadline has passed to leave the simulation and proceed through the Solo Experience.

## My Partner and I Cannot Work Out a Time to Negotiate

Every student in Negotiation Mastery has the responsibility to make an effort to find a mutually agreeable time to negotiate. We understand that sometimes this proves difficult.

Though we always encourage participants to negotiate in real time, it is possible to negotiate at different times: you enter a response via the text-based tool when it is convenient for you, and your counterpart replies when it is convenient for them. This type of negotiation is less focused and will likely take a few days to complete, but it can help overcome significant time zone differences or other issues. If both partners agree to this type of negotiation, it is crucial to check the chat tool regularly to keep the negotiation going.

If, after introducing yourself to your partner and agreeing to a negotiation in which you send messages at individually convenient times, you and your partner are unable to complete the simulation, you will be able to move on in the course after the Negotiation Simulation deadline passes. As indicated in the "Ending a Negotiation Simulation" section above, please use the "Leave Negotiation" feature after the deadline has passed to leave the simulation and proceed through the Solo Experience.

## My Partner is Unresponsive. Should I "Walk Away"?

"Walk Away" is a negotiating tactic. As outlined in the "Ending a Negotiation Simulation" section above, choosing to "Walk Away" still requires the cooperation of your partner to allow you to proceed with the remainder of the module. Keep trying to contact your partner – many students do finally engage.

If, after getting in contact with one another, you and your partner find yourselves at an impasse in your negotiation, you can use "Walk Away" and proceed through the normal post-simulation debrief. If the Negotiation Simulation deadline has passed and your partner is still unresponsive, you can choose to "Leave" the negotiation. This will place both you and your partner in the Solo Experience and allow you to complete the remainder of the module.

## Can I Get a Different Partner?

Unfortunately, we cannot change the pairings. See "My Partner and I Cannot Work Out a Time to Negotiate" to understand your options. Please note that you will have an opportunity to rate the overall professionalism of your counterpart following your negotiation.

## Can I Get Assigned to a Partner in My Time Zone?

The simulation pairings are based on when a participant from each role arrives at the simulation (e.g., participant in Role A arrives at 9:30 AM; participant in Role B arrives at 2:00 PM – these two students will be paired as of 2:00 PM).

Many participants enjoy the experience of negotiating with partners from different countries and cultures. However, if you would like to maximize your chances of being paired with someone in or around your own time zone, we recommend clicking into the simulation portion of the module during normal business hours in your location, as it increases your chances of being paired with a participant in a similar time zone who may click into the simulation at the same time or in the afternoon or early evening.

## How Did My Partner Leave the Negotiation Before We Even Started?

Once the Negotiation Simulation deadline passes, either partner can drop out of the negotiation at any time and choose to continue through the Solo Experience instead. The other partner is automatically directed to the Solo Experience, too.

If both you and your partner introduced yourselves prior to the deadline, neither one of you will be penalized for not going forward with the simulation.

If you would still like to attempt the negotiation, it is likely there are a few other students who were also let go by their partners. If you are part of the course's Facebook group, you may want to see if anyone who was in the opposite role is interested in doing an offline negotiation. Please note, however, that even if you choose to pursue engaging in the simulation with a new partner outside the course chat tool, you will still need to complete the Solo Experience in order to progress through the rest of the course content and module exercises.

If your question is not addressed in this document, contact us at
HBSOnlineSupport@hbs.edu.