



# Discussions

Business > Intermediate 6



## Exercise 1 – Reading

*Read the dialogue aloud with your tutor and check your understanding.*

**Matt:** So, James, what do you think? Any ideas on how we could improve our marketing?

**James:** Well... At first, I thought focusing on newspaper advertisements would be a good idea. But now I'm not so sure about that, to be honest... I guess that's not very popular these days.

**Matt:** Well, I beg to differ. I mean, I understand what you are saying, but, a lot of older people might be interested in some of our products, and they don't really use computers. So, perhaps, we could use newspaper advertisements for products aimed at the elderly.

**James:** Yes, that makes sense.

**Matt:** However, I think you also have a point: many young people don't read newspapers.



**James:** Yes. I believe social media marketing might be the best way to reach younger generations. Also, I was thinking, we could perhaps make discounts for the first, let's say, fifty customers who buy our new product online.

**Matt:** That is a great idea! What about the number, how much of a discount do you think we should offer?

**James:** Maybe around 25%. What do you say?

**Matt:** Hmm, I'm not sure we can offer that much. Maybe 15 to 20% would be better. But we can discuss this later. Anyway, great idea, James!



### **Check your understanding:**

1. What is James's opinion about newspaper advertisements?
2. What was James's suggestion about targeting young generations?
3. What did Matt think about James's idea?



## Exercise 2 – Learning

### How to Agree and Disagree in Business Situations

**Be polite:** The most important thing in business discussions is to stay polite and show respect for the opinions of others.

**Be considerate when disagreeing:** When you disagree with someone, you need to mention that their opinion is interesting, but you think in a different way. You can use some of the following expressions: “In my opinion”, “If you ask me”, “To my mind”, “Personally I believe that”, “As far as I’m concerned”, etc.

**Ask for opinion of others:** After expressing your opinion, it would be good to ask what the other person thinks: “Do you like this idea?”, “What do you think about it?”, “What are your thoughts on that?”, etc.

**Be an active listener:** Listen carefully to what the other person is saying and show that you are paying attention by using brief verbal affirmations, such as: "I see", "Uh-huh", "Yes", "That's interesting", etc.



## **Useful Expressions**

- What is your opinion?
- What do you say?
- Do you have any ideas on...?
- In my opinion...
- I'm not so sure about that, to be honest.
- I beg to differ.
- That is an interesting point, but...
- Hmm, I'm not sure whether that's possible.
- I understand what you are saying, but...
- You have a point there.
- That is a great idea!



## Exercise 3 – Role Play

*Take turns with your tutor and act out the scene described below.*

**Scene:** The sales in your company have dropped rapidly in the past few months. Talk with your co-worker John and discuss about possible ways on how to increase the sales. The teacher can be John.



## Exercise 4 – Discussion

*Discuss the following questions with your tutor.*

1. How do you feel when someone disagrees with you in a business meeting?
2. How do you feel about disagreeing with your boss?
3. What do you think about people who constantly interrupt others when they are speaking?