

SECTION 5

Agreeing or not

1 NOT GIVING IN

Here are phrases we use to show we are unwilling to make concessions. There are many others:

*standing firm not taking no for an answer
holding out for all you can get remaining adamant
rejecting compromise staying put*

1 Fill the gaps with one of these words.

- guns ground blank inch foot heels
- a sticking to your e digging in your
b not giving an f putting your
c standing your down
d refusing point to
budge

2 WEIGHING THINGS UP

Phrases we use to show we are undecided and are considering issues include:

*I'm sitting on the fence.
I must weigh things up / weigh up the arguments / see both sides of the issue / get an overview.
We must bear in mind his lack of qualifications, but we should take his experience into account / consideration.
We should also make allowances for his youth.
Considering his age, he's done remarkably well.
He's suitable, albeit rather young, for the job. (formal)
For a young salesman his track-record is good.
We can't ignore the specific requirements of the job, and certainly not rule out the need for computer skills.
Perhaps we need to compromise.
We need to balance the pros and cons.
Let's sleep on it / ponder a while.
Eventually we'll reach / make a decision, and I'm sure we'll arrive at a mutually satisfactory solution.*

2 Fill the gaps with one of these words.

- in up between at
- a I can't make e I'm torn staying
my mind. until midnight and
b I'm two minds. going now.
c I'm a loss. f I'm a quandary
d I'm a dilemma. as to what to do.

3 GIVING IN

Here are some phrases we use when we decide to agree. There are many more:

I'll allow you that. Just this once we'll make an exception for you. You're being treated as a special case. Well, have it your way. I give in. You win. I admit defeat. She's thrown in the towel. I suppose you want me to write you a blank cheque.

3 Which one verb do we use in all of these expressions?

- him your blessing up
..... the green light the go-ahead
..... clearance for something I'll you that
..... ground and take
..... them an inch and way
they'll take a mile

4 Fill each gap with one of these words.

- let leave allow issue concede
- a someone a free hand d ground
b a blank cheque e the door
c someone off the hook open

Practice

① Rewrite each of the following sentences using both prompt words so that it is as close as possible in meaning to the sentence printed before it.

Example: I don't want to be dogmatic, but I don't think we can give way on this point.

wishing / stand

Without wishing to be dogmatic, I think we have to stand firm on this point.

- a When you're judging him, you have to remember he's only fourteen.
assessment / allowances
- b Everyone is welcome, no matter what nationality.
irrespective / where
- c All sorts come to these evening classes, from pupils to graduates.
regardless / educational
- d We'll treat your child as a special case as he already has a sister in our school.
exception / grounds
- e I must have an en suite bedroom, in this hotel or any other you can find me.
insist / whether
- f I'm undecided as to whether I should stand firm on this matter or not.
make / guns
- g Be aware at all times of everyone's need for occasional privacy.
require / borne

- h You have to remember that not everyone is a football fanatic.
account / mad
- i We mustn't forget the bad experiences he had as a child.
What / overlooked
- j Believe it or not, we still like each other in a way.
Strange / affection

2 Fill each of the numbered blanks with one suitable word.

As you can imagine, my first day in my first full-time job ever was somewhat less than idyllic. (1) all the preparatory mental work I had done, I arrived at the office so nervous I was almost speechless. For the first few hours I remained totally at (2). I had (3) a mind to run out there and then. By lunchtime I was absolutely shaking with nerves, but I refused to (4) in the towel. I had studied hard for this career; I just couldn't bring myself to (5) up quite yet, (6) unlikely my prospects of survival appeared. Three days later things were still at a low (7) but I refused point (8) to admit defeat. It was clear my new colleagues were (9) allowances for me and giving me the benefit of the (10). They probably thought I was on my last (11) anyway. The second week passed quite uneventfully and (12) it or not, at the end of it I was actually beginning to relax. Looking back after seventeen years, I'm glad I (13) it out and didn't buckle (14). I'm pleased and proud to hold the position of Director General in this multi-national company, (15) only the third biggest in the world.

3 Finish each of the following sentences in such a way that it is as similar in meaning as possible to the sentence printed before it.

Example: We can't be totally confident that we won't be defeated.

The possibility of our being defeated cannot be discounted.

- a I can't decide whether to splash out on a holiday abroad or not.
I'm in
- b The part she has played in this project mustn't be overlooked.
We must bear

- c I've always thought it's best to stand your ground when there's a dispute.
I've never believed
- d To everyone's amazement, both teams won places in the Champion's League.
Totally against
- e She's only twelve, but she's remarkably mature.
For a

4 Fill each of the numbered blanks in this short piece with one suitable word.

Ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls, friends – If we can stand (1) and not give (2) to pressure, if we can keep standing up (3) what we believe in and not cave (4) to their demands, if we can hold (5) to our beliefs and not (6) like trees in the wind, if we can stand our (7) and not give an (8) to those oppressors down below, we will save this tree, believe me.

5 Underline the option, a, b, c or d, that best completes each sentence.

- No matter how much pressure you put on Simon, he won't budge a(n)
a mile b inch c foot d metre
- We can't possibly make any for her, however sweetly she asks.
a allowances b licence c permissions d liberties
- Absolutely anyone is welcome here, of their age, sex or creed.
a mindful b considering c regardless d devoid
- The university might accept you, of your disappointing exam results.
a irrespective b pending c expectant d dependent
- He was reluctant to meet her parents after all this time for of saying something stupid.
a fear b chance c feeling d risk
- I'm in a as to how to use this CD Rom.
a loss b difficulty c quandary d mind-game
- There are still, however, rather a lot of obstacles to
a overcome b come over c solve d resolve
- Don't you feel the problem needs to be head-on?
a solved b worked out c ironed out d tackled
- It seems to me that such radical proposals should be out from the beginning.
a wiped b ruled c removed d underlined
- I'm not going to make an just because you are much younger than the others.
a impression b exception c upset d argument