

B2

NEGOTIATIONS

MONOLOG · 4 MIN.

Explaining Why "Provision" Is Not the English Word for Sales Commission · *Podcast*

A sales manager offers an eight per cent "provision" — and the American lawyer starts looking for the contract clause. Why the English word is "commission".

Listen to the episode +
comprehension test:

<https://www.englisch-lehrer.com/podcasts/explaining-why-provision-is-not-the-english-word-for-sales-commission>

NAME

DATE

BRICK 1 · LEARN THE KEY PHRASES



Read the eight phrases with meaning and example. You will hear all of them in the episode.

ENGLISH	DEUTSCH	EXAMPLE
commission	Provision (das Geld!)	<i>She earns a ten per cent commission on every new contract.</i>
commission rate	Provisionssatz	<i>The commission rate for new partners is eight per cent.</i>
on a commission basis	auf Provisionsbasis	<i>Our sales agents work on a commission basis.</i>
provision	Vertragsbestimmung, Klausel (nicht das Geld!)	<i>The confidentiality provision applies for five years after termination.</i>
clause	Klausel, Vertragsabschnitt	<i>Please review the termination clause before you sign.</i>
to make provision for	Vorkehrungen treffen für	<i>The budget makes provision for unexpected travel costs.</i>
distributor	Vertriebspartner, Händler	<i>We signed a new distributor for the North American market.</i>
quarterly	vierteljährlich, pro Quartal	<i>Commission payments are made quarterly, at the end of March, June, September and December.</i>

BRICK 2 · FILL THE GAPS



Complete the missing word from the conversation.

provision

commission

percentage

premium

clause

payment

signature

discount

- 01 Once Julia wrote 'a _____ of eight percent on every sale', the negotiation moved fast.
- 02 A provision, in English business language, is something completely different: a _____ in a contract.

BRICK 3 · TRUE OR FALSE?



Tick one. T = true, F = false.

- 01 In English, a salesperson earns a provision on every sale. T ☐ F ☐
- 02 An English contract contains provisions. T ☐ F ☐

BRICK 4 · ORDER



Number the steps of the conversation (1–5).

- 01 ☐ The negotiation moves forward quickly
- 02 ☐ The lawyer asks which section of the agreement she means
- 03 ☐ She rewrites the sentence with "commission"
- 04 ☐ Julia offers the distributor a "provision" of eight percent
- 05 ☐ Julia realises that Provision and provision are false friends

BRICK 5 · YOUR VERSION



Write two sentences of your own using phrases from Brick 1.

MINI-CHECK – CAN I DO THIS YET?

- ☐ I can announce a delay politely.
- ☐ I can propose an alternative.
- ☐ I can promise written confirmation.

Listened twice and ticked everything? Then you are ready for the real conversation.

Cut-out flashcards

× Cut out, fold on the line – English in front, German on the back. Or practise digitally:

<https://www.englisch-lehrer.com/podcasts/explaining-why-provision-is-not-the-english-word-for-sales-commission>

commission

She earns a ten per cent commission on every new contract.

Provision (das Geld)

commission rate

The commission rate for new partners is eight per cent.

Provisionsatz

on a commission basis

Our sales agents work on a commission basis.

auf Provisionsbasis

provision

The confidentiality provision applies for five years after termination.

Vertragsbestimmung, Klausel (nicht das Geld)

clause

Please review the termination clause before you sign.

Klausel, Vertragsabschnitt

to make provision for

The budget makes provision for unexpected travel costs.

Vorkehrungen treffen für

distributor

We signed a new distributor for the North American market.

Vertriebspartner, Händler

quarterly

Commission payments are made quarterly, at the end of March, June, September and December.

vierteljährlich, pro Quartal

Answer key

Check only when you have finished. Every answer comes with the **why**.

BRICK 2 · FILL THE GAPS

01 **commission**

False friend: German "Provision" is "commission" in English. A "provision" would be a contract clause.

02 **clause**

An English "provision" is a clause or condition in a contract.

BRICK 3 · TRUE OR FALSE?

01 **False**

False — a salesperson earns a commission. A provision is a contract clause.

02 **True**

True — "an English contract has provisions". That is exactly what the English word means.

BRICK 4 · ORDER

- 01 **1.** Julia offers the distributor a "provision" of eight percent
- 02 **2.** The lawyer asks which section of the agreement she means
- 03 **3.** Julia realises that Provision and provision are false friends
- 04 **4.** She rewrites the sentence with "commission"
- 05 **5.** The negotiation moves forward quickly

KEEP PRACTISING LIVE

Want to practise these phrases in a real conversation?

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