

C1

NEGOTIATIONS

MONOLOG · 5 MIN.

Separating Must-Haves from Nice-to-Haves in a Contract · Podcast

Before any contract negotiation: which terms are essential, which are trading material? The exercise that decides the outcome.

Listen to the episode +
comprehension test:

<https://www.englisch-lehrer.com/podcasts/separating-must-haves-from-nice-to-haves-in-a-contract>

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
must-have	unverzichtbare Bedingung, K.o.-Kriterium	<i>The liability cap is a must-have for our legal team.</i>
nice-to-have	wünschenswerter, aber verzichtbarer Punkt	<i>The reporting portal is a nice-to-have, not a condition.</i>
walk-away point	Schmerzgrenze, Ausstiegspunkt	<i>Define your walk-away point before you enter the room.</i>
bargaining chip	Verhandlungsmasse, Tauschobjekt	<i>Free shipping became our strongest bargaining chip.</i>
non-negotiable	nicht verhandelbar	<i>The delivery guarantee is non-negotiable for us.</i>
to concede	zugestehen, nachgeben	<i>They conceded the training day within five minutes.</i>
liability cap	Haftungsobergrenze	<i>The contract includes a liability cap of one million euros.</i>
framework agreement	Rahmenvertrag	<i>The framework agreement covers all orders until 2028.</i>



BRICK 2 · FILL THE GAPS



Complete the missing word from the conversation.

non-negotiable

unnegotiable

not negotiated

non-negotiating

must not

don't have to

need not

may not

01 The liability cap is _____ for us.

02 Many German speakers translate 'wir müssen das nicht bekommen' as 'we _____ get it'.

BRICK 3 · TRUE OR FALSE?



Tick one. T = true, F = false.

01 Katrin says you should concede nice-to-haves for free early in the meeting.

T ☐ F ☐

02 A quick concession from the other side suggests the point was a nice-to-have for them.

T ☐ F ☐

BRICK 4 · ORDER



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

01 ☐ Keep a written record of what the other side concedes

02 ☐ Attach a walk-away point to every must-have

03 ☐ State each must-have once, calmly, as non-negotiable

04 ☐ Sort every contract term into must-haves and nice-to-haves

05 ☐ Trade nice-to-haves — give one, name one

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/separating-must-haves-from-nice-to-haves-in-a-contract>

must-have

The liability cap is a must-have for our legal team.

unverzichtbare Bedingung, K.o.-Kriterium

nice-to-have

The reporting portal is a nice-to-have, not a condition.

wünschenswerter, aber verzichtbarer Punkt

walk-away point

Define your walk-away point before you enter the room.

Schmerzgrenze, Ausstiegspunkt

bargaining chip

Free shipping became our strongest bargaining chip.

Verhandlungsmasse, Tauschobjekt

non-negotiable

The delivery guarantee is non-negotiable for us.

nicht verhandelbar

to concede

They conceded the training day within five minutes.

zugestehen, nachgeben

liability cap

The contract includes a liability cap of one million euros.

Haftungsobergrenze

framework agreement

The framework agreement covers all orders until 2028.

Rahmenvertrag

Answer key

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

BRICK 2 · FILL THE GAPS

01 **non-negotiable**

"Non-negotiable" is the correct adjective — state it calmly and only once.

02 **must not**

The trap: German "müssen nicht" = "don't have to" (no obligation). "Must not" = prohibition — mixing them up turns options into bans.

BRICK 3 · TRUE OR FALSE?

01 **False**

False — never concede a nice-to-have for free; each is a bargaining chip: give one, name one.

02 **True**

True — whatever they concede quickly was a nice-to-have; where they slow down, you have touched a must-have.

BRICK 4 · ORDER

01 **1.** Sort every contract term into must-haves and nice-to-haves

02 **2.** Attach a walk-away point to every must-have

03 **3.** Trade nice-to-haves — give one, name one

04 **4.** State each must-have once, calmly, as non-negotiable

05 **5.** Keep a written record of what the other side concedes

KEEP PRACTISING LIVE

Want to practise these phrases in a real conversation?

Online lessons with real teachers — English training since 2004 · Berlin · Hanover
· Online.

CALL US

+49 511 95733819