

Improve and test your English

Lingua Nova



In January and February editions of our lesson we were discussing the problem of wages and general wage level. For sure you have come across the term of minimum wage.

What is minimum wage?

It is the rate of pay fixed either by a collective bargaining agreement or by governmental enactment as the lowest wage payable to specified categories of employees. In general, the setting of a minimum wage does not preclude the right of employees to demand wages above the established minimum. The method of establishing a minimum wage by collective bargaining suffers from a serious limitation, however, because collective bargaining agreements cover only the workers in a specific plant, craft, industry, or local area, and hence are inadequate in situations in which wage rates prevailing throughout an entire nation have fallen to excessively low levels. The realization of this shortcoming led trade unions to demand government minimum wage programmes in several countries as early as the 1890s, and resulted in the enactment of legislation setting minimum wages. The first minimum wage law was enacted by the government of New Zealand in 1894. A subsequent law enacted by Victoria State, Australia, in 1896 established wage boards on which workers and employers were represented in equal numbers, with power to fix minimum wages enforceable on the employer. This innovative law served as the model for the British Trade Boards Act of 1909. In the United States, Massachusetts enacted minimum wage law in 1912, and eight other states followed suit the next year. Whereas the laws passed in Australia and Great Britain applied to all workers, the US laws at

first were applicable only to women and children.

Many countries today have national minimum wages, and more still have minimum wages for certain occupations. Great Britain is one of the few countries to have resisted the minimum wage. The main concern with minimum wage legislation is that it will hurt those it is designed to protect, by reducing the number of low-skilled jobs. Critics point to the plentiful labour force in the developing world and fear that minimum wage legislation will result in further increases in unemployment in developed countries. In the text above the word bargaining was used several times. This is another word for 'negotiation' and it is used to talk specifically about discussing and agreeing the price of something. Here are some phrases worth remembering:

- collective bargaining,
- pay bargaining,
- wage bargaining (discussions between groups of employees and their employers about pay and conditions).

„Bargaining” is often used in these combinations:

1 Bargaining ploy or tactic - a particular technique used by a negotiator.

2

3 Bargaining chip or tool - an issue that a negotiator uses in order to gain an advantage.

4 Bargaining point - a particular issue that a negotiator discusses.

5 Bargaining power - the degree to which one side is strong enough to obtain what it wants.

Bargaining process - the way the negotiations develop.

Negotiating scenario

Before a negotiation there are certain steps to follow:

- Meet and greet representatives of the other company and introduce your colleagues.
- Offer coffee and small talk. Try to create a relaxed atmosphere.
- Go to the meeting room and suggest that you get down to business.
- Have a clear agenda and a timetable.
- First give the background to the negotiations. Talking about a situation is a good way of reminding people of key



All the words in this crossword puzzle are adjectives and all of them were used in the text above.

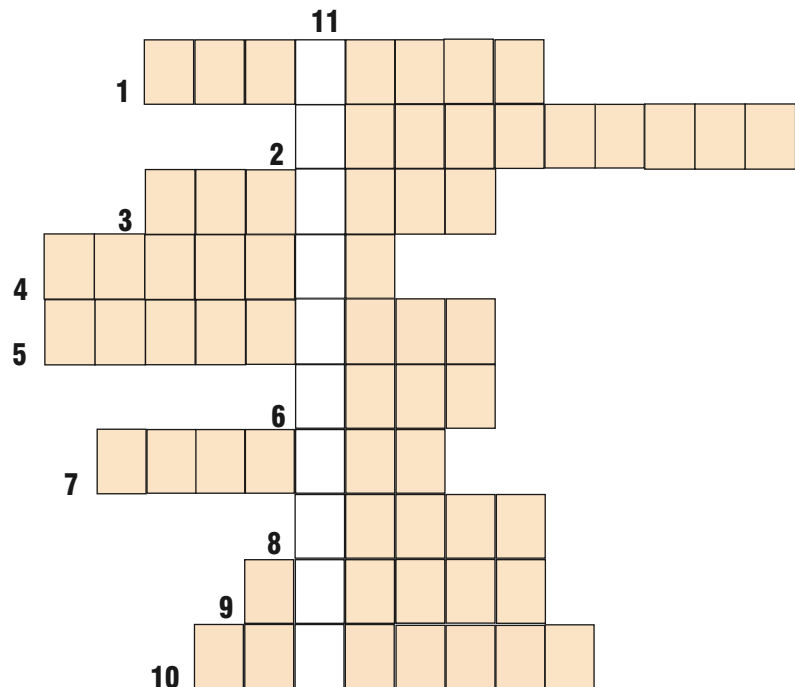
CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Across:

1. The most important objectives
2. Negotiating or.....
3. Matters that are to be touched during negotiations - the..... of the negotiations
4. From the opposite number in the negotiations you can get.....-proposal or.....- offer.
5. Problems that are causing negotiations to become difficult.
6. A group of people negotiating.
7. Clinching a deal means the same as..... a deal.
8. The place where you are going to meet during the negotiations is a.....
9. A contract which is not written down is called oral or.....
10. Negotiations also take place to settle.....

Down:

11. The things that you want to achieve in negotiations.




Answers

1. priority, 2. bargaining, 3. subject, 4. counter, 5. obstacles, 6. team, 7. closing, 8. venue, 9. verbal, 10. disputes, 11. objectives.



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