

## SUGGESTIONS FOR DIPLOMATIC LANGUAGE – BE POPULAR WITH EVERYONE

*April 19, 2015*

1. Use negative questions to make suggestions:  
*Wouldn't it be better to.....?*  
*Don't you think we could.....?*  
*Couldn't we.....?*
2. Use positive words in a negative form:  
*Not: I think that's a bad idea. Say: I don't think that's such a good idea.*
3. Use modifiers to make things seem smaller:  
*That may cause a slight problem for us*  
*We have a bit of a problem with the accounts.*  
*We might be able to agree to that, provided.....*  
*We may be able to help you there.....*
4. Use the past to sound tentative:  
*We were hoping to hammer out the details today.*  
*We were thinking of offering you a three month trial.*
5. Use positive adjectives with 'not':  
*That might not be possible*  
*That's not as reasonable as we hoped you would be.*
6. Show people that you are listening and understand them  
*Not: "I disagree". Say: Yes, but... or ... I see what you mean, but...*
7. Use the phrase ... I think we should ...  
*I think we should ask for a 20% discount to show we are serious.*
8. Break down negative sentences with softeners:  
*Not: I don't like it. Say: I don't really like it I'm afraid*  
*Not: Can I say something? Say: Can I just say something here?*  
*Not: I didn't catch that. Say: Sorry, I didn't quite catch that*
9. Avoid saying 'you' and focus on 'I' or 'we'.  
*Not: You don't understand me. Say: Not making myself clear?*  
*Not: You didn't explain this point. Say: I didn't understand this point.*  
*Not: You must give us a better price. Say: Hoping for a better price.*
10. Soften all the bad news, with the magic word: Sorry ...  
*I'm sorry but with respect.....*  
*Sorry, but can I just say something here?*  
*Sorry, but I don't really agree*  
*Sorry, but I think that's out of the question*  
*Sorry, but I'm afraid.....*

**NOTE:** Overall, for peace in the family always say "yes" to the ones you love.

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