

Speaker 6: A couple of years ago there was an HR Director who managed to hire and promote several of her brothers and sisters to important positions in the same multinational. That's what you call keeping it in the family!

Speaker 7: I heard about these marketing executives who were so desperate to succeed that they planted bombs in their competitors' factories. Fortunately, they were caught before they went off.

Speaker 8: Of course, everybody's heard about the offshore banks which process large cash transactions for drug dealers. I just don't understand why governments seem to wash their hands of the matter!

3.3 Grammar: Obligation and permission, inversion

2:49

Oksana: Right, Eddie, if you go through the main issues in this outsourcing agreement, then I'll get Jan to draft the guidelines tomorrow morning, OK?

Eddie: Sounds good to me, Oksana. It's a question of giving ourselves the right image. Basically, we can't afford the sort of bad publicity we had last year, when the media suggested our suppliers were treating staff badly. We need to look at everything to do with working conditions, minimum age, working hours, safety, that sort of stuff.

O: Yes, well let's start with minimum age. I guess that'll be the usual over sixteen the day they join the company.

E: Yeah, nobody under sixteen. And I mean nobody!

O: OK, agreed.

E: Regarding working hours, our suppliers need some flexibility, but we need to stick to a maximum of twelve hours in any one shift. And at least a half-hour break every four hours.

O: OK, so that's no more than twelve hours at a stretch and a half-hour break every four hours. Now, what about safety?

E: Well, in fact I'm gonna have to get back to you on that, because I don't have details of all the machines they use. But basically, it's a question of ensuring that all the machines have the necessary guards and that the operators use them. The other thing is that they must give all employees protective gloves, of course. Still, you can ask Jan to draft the basic clause and I'll get back to you with the details.

O: Great! Now, let's see ... accommodation? Company dormitories and so on ...

E: Well, things are generally improving. But I think we should insist on a minimum personal space of six square metres and ...

3.4 Speaking: Negotiating a compromise

2:50

Leah: I'm sorry, Alfredo, but we can't go as high as \$160. Our normal fair trade premium for top grade cocoa beans is world market price plus \$140 per ton. I can't go higher than \$150.

Alfredo: ... We need \$160.

L: Yes, I know that, Alfredo, but ... What about prefinancing?

A: We need advance payments of 60 per cent.

L: 60 per cent?... Only if at least half of the crop is grown under shade trees.

A: No. Shade trees mean extra cost. And if you won't let children help on the farms, that means even more cost.

L: Alfredo, you know our customers won't accept child labour!

A: It's not labour, they just help out. Anyway, it's traditional, and I don't think your customers have any right to criticize our culture.

L: Look, Alfredo, they're not criti ... Oh, forget it!

2:51

Leah: I'm sorry, Alfredo, but we can't go as high as \$160. Our normal fair trade premium for top grade cocoa beans is world market price plus \$140 per ton. But look, I know how important this is to your cooperative: assuming we can reach a compromise on the question of prefinancing, I'm prepared to meet you half way - \$150. Is that acceptable?

Alfredo: All right; that seems fair.

L: Good. So what about prefinancing?

A: We would like to be able to ask for advance payments of up to 60% of the value of the contract.

L: Well, OK, we are willing to agree to 60%, provided that at least half of the crop is grown under shade trees.

A: Leah, as you know, shade trees mean extra cost. I'd be reluctant to make that sort of commitment unless you can review your position on children under fifteen. You see, it's a tradition in our country that children help their parents on the farms.

L: Alfredo, I think we'll have to agree to disagree on that. Child labour is something that fair trade customers feel very strongly about.

A: Hm. All right, I understand that. So, at least half the crop under shade trees and up to 60% of payment in advance.

L: OK. And no more children working on the farms?

A: All right. I can live with that.

3.6 Case study: Green Hills Coffee

2:52

Magda: Fabio, stop talking about Gordon Hills as if he was some kind of saint! *Gordon always said this, Gordon always did that!*

Fabio: Listen, Magda. Gordon was my father's best friend. He was a good and generous man and, if it wasn't for him, Granos Cabrera wouldn't be where it is today.

M: A good and generous man? No, he was just a clever businessman. He knew your father grew good coffee and he knew he could make a good profit on it. And unlike his daughter, he wasn't worried about details like pesticides or children working on the farms.

F: Fiona is very fair. She has strong ideas about ecology and human rights, and she wants a fair deal for everyone.

M: Fabio, Fiona doesn't really care about pesticides or child labour. For her, it's just a good excuse to negotiate even lower prices! She's only interested in the bottom line. Why do you think Green Hills is so profitable?

F: That's not fair! Green Hills is profitable because Fiona is a good manager.

M: Well, she's certainly a good negotiator. She always gets the lowest possible prices. She's the reason for all our problems - Green Hills pay us less every year! It's no wonder we're not making any money!

F: Magda, it's not Fiona's fault. Granos Cabrera's problems are due to world market prices - they keep going down. It's very technical.

M: Well, I know I'm only from Germany and we Germans know nothing about the 'very technical' international coffee market; but I do know that if Green Hills paid a fair price - the organic price - the farmers would be able to send their kids to school instead of sending them out to work!

F: Well, sure, fair trade is the future. That and going organic probably would be the solution to our problems. But Magda, we can't afford fair trade certification. It's just too expensive.

M: Well, then, the solution is very simple. Green Hills should pay for fair trade certification and lend us some money to invest in new equipment to go organic! It's in everybody's interests.

F: I don't know. It's very difficult. If Dad was still alive, he'd just have a friendly chat with Gordon and everything would be OK.

M: Yes, but he's not, is he, Fabio? Now that your dad and Gordon Hills are no longer with us, you'd better start getting tough with Fiona. Otherwise, we're beaten.