

Diplomatic Language: Nuancing

In order respectfully give your point of view on sensitive topic or when in a delicate negotiation, you need to be able to express yourself diplomatically, to make your point firmly but politely.

Match what you think with what you could say below. Underline the useful phrases.

WHAT YOU THINK	WHAT YOU SAY
1. We are unhappy with your offer. i	a. Isn't that just a bit much?
2. That's wrong. h	b. I'm afraid that wouldn't be logical.
3. Don't forget your obligations. j	c. I'm afraid you don't seem to understand.
4. I don't agree. d	d. I'm afraid I find that somewhat difficult to agree with.
5. I'm shocked by what you said. g	e. I'm afraid I don't quite see the value of that idea.
6. You obviously don't understand. c	f. I don't know if I should believe you there.
7. It's a useless idea. e	g. I'm rather surprised by that.
8. You're lying! f	h. With respect, that's not quite correct.
9. It's much too expensive! a	i. We were rather hoping for something slightly more substantial.
10. That's crazy! b	j. I'm sure we don't need to remind you of your contractual obligations.

PRACTICE: How would you reformulate the following in a more nuanced way?

1. I have had problems getting the information. *I'm afraid there have been some issues getting the information.*
2. That suggestion is useless! *Perhaps there might be a better idea. / Might I suggest we find another way?*
3. Next Tuesday is inconvenient. *I'm afraid next Tuesday won't be convenient.*
4. That leaves me with a problem. *Unfortunately, that might complicate things for me.*
5. It's dangerous to delay the decision too long. *I'm afraid it wouldn't be judicious to delay the decision.*