

Access English Centre
Immigrant Centre Manitoba
Conversation Skill 4 "Responding to Requests" Workout Activity
 (Adapted from: Lantern Fish)
 45 minutes
 Intermediate / Advanced Level

Facilitator Note: This is a fun and interesting activity which can be used as an energizer to warm up the group and to have fun as well. In groups of two to four, one person must answer all requests negatively in a polite manner, giving a different reason each time. **The aim of this activity is to learn how to give negative answers politely**

Materials: Participants need: pen/pencil, worksheet A and worksheet B Facilitator needs: Whiteboard / a flip chart, and whiteboard markers if you want to write the clients' ideas on how to answer a request politely.	
5 min	Procedure: <i>1. Introduce the Activity :</i>
15 min	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Brainstorm: As the whole group, ask the participants what they would say and do in their country if someone asks them for a favour, but they can't help. 2) Introduce how and what people in Canada would do if they can't offer to fulfill someone's request.
5 min	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) Explain to the participants that this activity will help them learn how to give a negative answer politely. ("When in Rome, do what Romans do") 4) Model how to give a negative answer in a polite way. For example, <i>"May I stay in your apartment for two days?" Your answer can be "I would love to help you out, but my in-laws are visiting us these days."</i> 5) Demonstrate the activity by showing the group using commonly used gambits for when you need to give a negative answer in a polite way. For example, in response to the question, "May I use your car to pick up my girl friend this weekend?" Your answer can be: "Maybe, but I'll need to talk to my wife first." 6) Have one pair of clients volunteer to start the activity, then the rest of the group will comment on the answer either it is polite or not. Examples: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. <i>"I am going to be out of town this weekend. Can you babysit my son?"</i> B. <i>"I would like to, but I am working over time this weekend."</i>
15 min	2. Pair Work: - think of three more reasons why you can't babysit. Write down the reasons on the board.
15 min	3. Pair work: Work in pairs to practice the sentences- Student A is using <i>worksheet A</i> and student B is using <i>worksheet B</i> .

Worksheet A – Requests

Work with your partner and put forward a request

“Do you mind if I close the door?”

“Could you please show me how to get to the Airport?”

“Do you have a minute?”

“Could you spell your name for me, please?”

“Can you hold the line, please?”

“Could you help me to clean this floor, please?”

“Don't leave, she'll be right back.”

“Would you mind giving her a ride home?”

“May I have her address and phone number, please?”

“Could I leave this letter to you?”

“Is it possible to have his cell phone number?”

“Would it be possible for me to get back to you later on that?”

“May I use your calculator?”

“Have you got a computer that I could borrow?”

“Can you offer me some feedback on my report?”

“I'd like to request time off from my friend's wedding.”

“Could you tell me your brother's contact details?”

“Can you put me through to Mr. Williamson?”

Work Sheet B - Negative Answers in a Polite Way

Work with your partner and answer his/her requests

"Maybe, later".

"Okay, but not at this time".

"I'm afraid I can't do so."

"It would probably be better to ask..."

"I'm sorry but I don't know how to..."

"I'm /You're not allowed to." / "It's not permitted."

"That depends on..."

"Maybe, but I'll need my parents' permission."

"Unfortunately, we've run out/ it's out of stock".

"I'd love to but..."

"It sounds so exciting / interesting, but ..."

"I would like to keep the door open, but I..."

"I would be very happy if I could but..."

"I would be very happy to help you if my parents ..."

"I hate to say "No" but..."

"I hope you don't mind if I..."

"I feel so bad for not being able to ..."

"I wish I could..."

3. What other reasons could you use for refusing someone's requests politely? Please make a list with your partner.
