

3

Offers

STARTER

Look at these comments made by people in sales and purchasing about dealing with offers. Which sentences can you most identify with? Discuss with a partner.

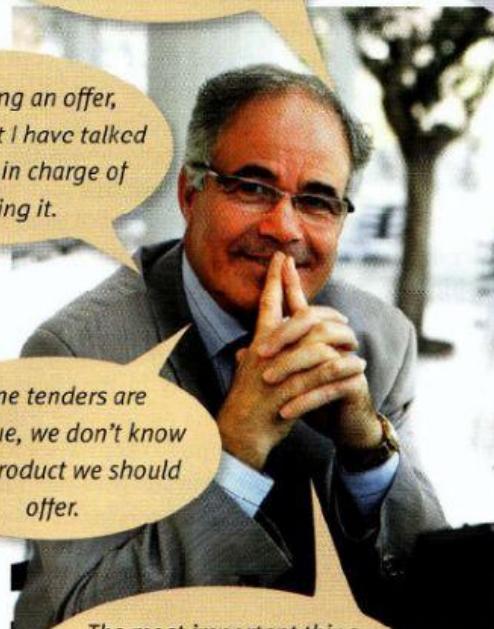
Sales

I have learned not to offer a price tag too early because when the other side then offers their price, I would have to meet in the middle – their 'middle'.

Before sending an offer, I make sure that I have talked to the person in charge of approving it.

Some tenders are so vague, we don't know what product we should offer.

The most important thing is to make it clear when writing up the offer that the customer can't do without our product.



Purchasing

I wish salespeople would listen to my needs before trying to convince me of their products.

It seems from some of the offers we get that they haven't even read our specifications.

Sometimes I receive offers although I don't even need the product.



We often have to postpone sending out invitations to tender because of last-minute changes requested by other departments in the company.

Now discuss these questions with your partner.

- 1 What are the procedures for dealing with offers in your company? How much of your sales or purchasing is done through open or invited tenders?
- 2 What sort of problems have you had when dealing with offers?
- 3 How often do you make or receive offers in English? Are there any differences in terms of content or format from those in your language?

OFFERS, TENDERS, AND BIDS

Offer is the general term used to describe what the salesperson is willing to give, and at what price.

Salesperson *We have sent our offer in the post.*

Purchaser *We have received four offers from different suppliers.*

The terms *tender* and *bid* can often be used interchangeably. Purchasers send out *an invitation to tender* (often shortened to *a tender*) when they want to receive offers from different suppliers. This can also be called *a request for proposal*. Salespeople file or submit a tender, often in competition with other suppliers, when they make their formal written offer to supply goods or services at a specific price and under specific conditions.

Salesperson *We have sent in our tender/bid.*

Salesperson *We have been invited to tender/bid.*

Purchaser *We should make a call for tenders/bids for this product.*

Purchaser *We have already put out a tender/bid for this product.*

Purchaser *We would like to invite you to make a tender/bid.*

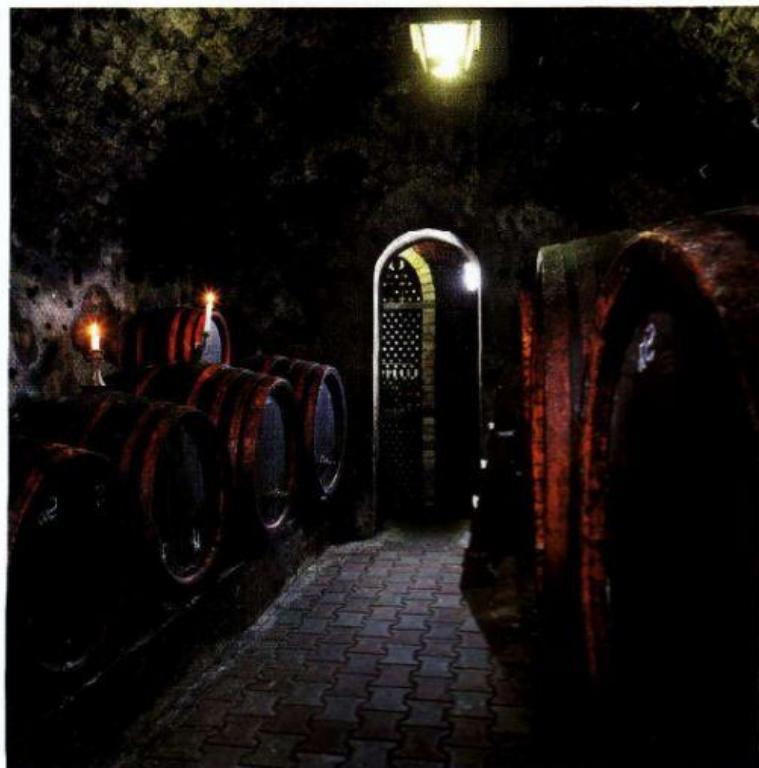
1 Match the two parts to make sentences about offers, tenders, and bids.

1 Have we received	a our bid has been accepted?
2 We have already put out a	b for tender a week ago.
3 Before we draw up the invitation to bid,	c ABC Supply's offer yet?
4 The deadline for filing	d tenders is 30 March.
5 One of our clients is interested in the new product range and	e we need to talk to the project manager again.
6 We put the job out	f has asked us to make an offer.
7 When will they let us know if	g tender for this project.



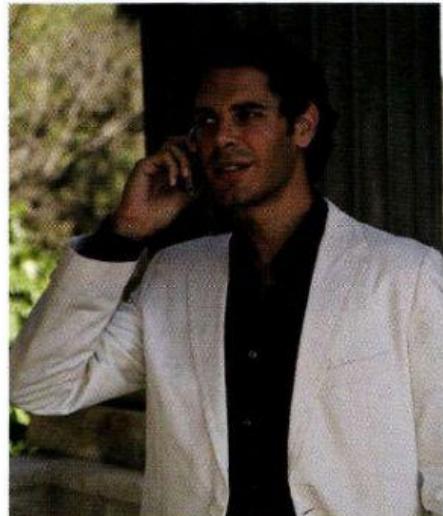
2 Marco Falcone is a sales rep for Vino Rubinetto, a wine distributor located in Milan. He is calling one of his regular customers, Ines Stoll, a purchaser at Clever Catering in Copenhagen, to tell her about a new product. Listen and answer these questions.

- What new product is Marco trying to sell?
- How does Ines indicate that she may be interested in a possible offer from Marco?
- What will happen after the phone call?

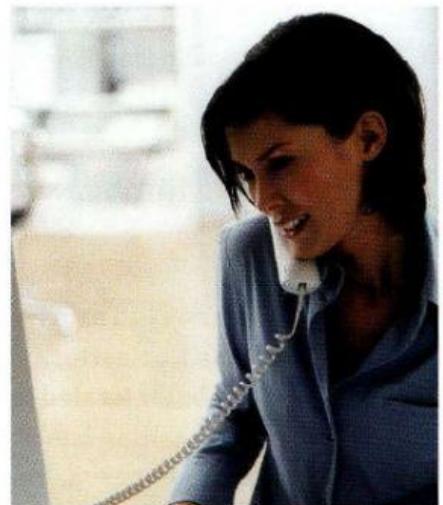


Listen again to the dialogue and complete these sentences.

- 1 Well, this month we _____ some of our new products in Europe, and we thought Clever Catering _____.
- 2 We're always interested _____ what's new.
- 3 ... we _____ of the quality of our products, of course, but it's quite nice to receive _____.
- 4 Yes, I saw it mentioned _____ and I read something _____.
- 5 Do you think this wine _____ to you and your clients?
- 6 ... I can tell you now that we are _____ you special rates for your first order ...
- 7 And I'm sure _____ with this wine, Ines.

**3 Match the two parts to make phrases.**

1 to put out	a quality
2 to promote	b of interest
3 special	c a tender
4 to be	d our new product
5 to place	e an order
6 high	f rates

**Now use the phrases to complete the sentences below.**

- 1 As you have been a client of ours for a long time, we are able to offer you _____ for the first twelve months.
- 2 We will be looking _____, as we need to increase sales.
- 3 It is our policy to accept only _____ products.
- 4 We are hoping this new product of ours will _____ to you.
- 5 Our production department has installed the necessary equipment, and we will therefore be ready _____ next week.
- 6 This will be our largest purchase of the year, and we need to compare as many offers as possible, so we think we should _____.

4 Read this excerpt from an article in the *Successful Selling* magazine. How effective do you think this approach to selling is (from both the seller's and the buyer's point of view)?

AIDA

When salespeople think about a client's reaction to their offers, they often think of these four steps:

A for Attention	They first try to attract their client's attention to their products or services. Here first impressions count so it's important to be natural, honest, and professional.
I for Interest	They then try to spark the client's interest so that he/she wants to find out more about the product or service. The seller needs to convince the client of the advantages of the product or service and its relevance to him/her.
D for Desire	If the client has understood the benefits, and also trusts the seller, he/she will start to develop desire for the product or service.
A for Action	Desire results in action , meaning the client makes the decision to find out more or buy.



Now listen again to the dialogue in exercise 2 (or look at the transcript on page 71). Do you think Marco followed this approach? Why, or why not?

5 Here are some typical sentences from conversations about offers. First, decide who says each of the phrases and write S for seller or P for purchaser in the box.

- 1 I think you'll find that our product meets your specifications precisely.
- 2 Interesting. Could you give me some background information?
- 3 This month we are promoting some of our new products and we thought you might be interested.
- 4 You'll be pleased to hear that our after-sales package is the best in the industry.
- 5 Perhaps you would be interested in looking at our new product.
- 6 So, I've got the go-ahead from my boss and we'd like to place the order ...
- 7 Great, sounds interesting. Can you send us an estimate for the project?
- 8 Once you've examined the sample, I'm sure you'll be impressed with the quality and design.
- 9 That might be exactly what we are looking for.
- 10 OK, I'll send you an offer and we can take it from there.

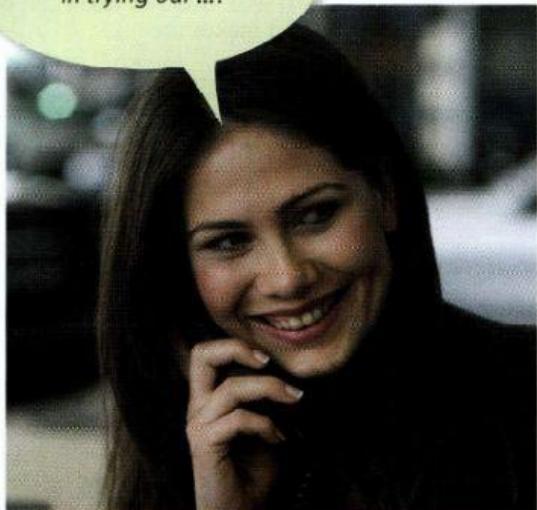
S

Now decide which of the sentences above can be used to:

a get somebody's ATTENTION ? _____	c express INTEREST in or DESIRE for a product? _____
b spark INTEREST in or DESIRE for the product? 1, _____	d show ACTION , i.e. show that the sale could take place? _____

6 Work with a partner to practise a phone call. First agree on a product and write some notes (seller) or questions to ask (purchaser). Then follow the flow chart below.

Would you be interested in trying our ...?



Call P, say hello and make small talk.

Respond.

Introduce your product.

Ask some questions.

Answer the questions. Is P interested?

No. End call (politely).

Yes. Show interest and ask for more information.

Respond. Arrange for a meeting or follow up call, if necessary.

Respond.

S = seller

P = purchaser

TALKING ABOUT A PRODUCT

Asking if your partner is interested

Would you be interested in trying our ...?

Perhaps I can tempt you to sample our ...?

Do you think your company might be interested in ...?

Do you think this may be of interest to you and your clients?

Showing interest

That sounds interesting.

That would certainly be of interest to us.

That might be exactly what we are looking for.

Could you send me a sample/give me some more information?

Being cautious

Well, maybe. But I would need to know more about ...

I'm not so sure.

I don't think that's really what we're looking for. That (really) depends on your conditions/price.

Saying you are not interested

I'm sorry but ...

Unfortunately we're not looking for that at the moment.

Thanks, but we already have a supplier for that product.

No, thanks. We're not interested in that at this stage.