

IELTS General Reading Sample Paper 9

You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 15-27, which are based on Reading Passages below.

Write answers to questions in boxes 15-27 on your answer sheet.

GT Reading Sample - "Negotiating a better salary package for your new job" & "How to run a successful project"

Read the text below and answer Questions 15-20.

Negotiating a better salary package for your new job

If you make it through the recruitment interview, a job offer may be just around the corner and you face having to talk about the nitty-gritty: your financial value.

Although many graduate training schemes have set starting salaries, there are loads of other jobs where you'll need to exercise your negotiating skills. If you're offered a job, it's because the organisation sees you as a valuable asset and you should try to set your level of remuneration accordingly.

There are no general rules about how and when to conduct your negotiation but being sensitive to the culture of the organisation is essential. There are also some practical steps you can take to position yourself sensibly. Familiarise yourself with the company itself, as well as the range of salaries on offer. Doing careful research in this way prior to starting negotiations is very valuable. You can look at the range of packages offered for comparable jobs in adverts on the internet, or ask for advice from people you know professionally or personally. You could also approach a local Training and Enterprise Council. Finally, if you're a member of a union, they will have information on acceptable salary ranges for your profession.

If the salary offered is less than you'd hoped for, you could negotiate an early pay review instead, say after the first six months. Ensure that the criteria are clearly set out though, and that they're included in your contract.

Make sure you check out the salary package, not just the number of zeroes on your payslip. You may find that the total package of pay and benefits raises the worth of the salary to an acceptable level. For instance, you may be offered private health cover, a non-contributory pension, a car to use for work purposes and/or significant bonuses. When bonuses are mentioned, you may want to discuss the basis on which they're paid, so that you're absolutely clear about the terms and conditions attached. When negotiating, be persuasive and consistent in your arguments but be prepared to agree to a compromise if you really want the job.

If your negotiations are successful, ask for the agreed terms and conditions to be confirmed in writing ASAP.

Questions 15-20

Complete the sentences below.

Choose ONE WORD ONLY from the text for each answer.

Write your answers in boxes 15-20 on your answer sheet.

15. When negotiating a salary, potential employees should take advantage of the company's view of them as a useful

16. When negotiating a salary it is important to be aware of the company's particular

17. Some people use the to monitor salaries offered for similar positions.

18. People who belong to a can ask for recommendations on what is the norm for payment in their field.

19. Some people try to arrange for a of their salary to be carried out after an initial period.

20. It is important to be willing to accept a if the negotiations are getting nowhere.

Read the text below and answer Questions 21-27.

How to run a successful project

A project manager's main task is to bring a particular project to completion, both on time and within budget. There are many factors that can cause a project to veer off its tracks, but steps can be taken to ensure that your project experiences as little disruption as possible.

1. Prepare the framework

If you get everything down in writing at the beginning of the project, you have an excellent foundation to build upon. Change is inevitable, but you have to maintain control. This is critical to avoid problems of 'scope creep', which is when the company paying for the project asks for 'just one more little thing' repeatedly, until the project becomes unmanageable.

2. Select the team

Gather your human resources, and make sure that their skills align with their roles. This is an important first step: if you assign the wrong person to a task, you are reducing your chances of success.

Make sure each team member is clear on what is expected from them and when. Encourage them to ask questions to clarify anything that may be uncertain, and to always come to you whenever something seems to be out of place or going wrong. Clear communication is critical.

Make sure the whole team and the client company grasp the project's limitations in terms of its achievable outcomes. You can finish a task successfully and on time as long as expectations are reasonable.

3. Staying on track

How can you know if your project is going to be successful if you don't have any way of measuring success? You will need interim milestones, especially for a long-term project, so that you can determine if you are staying on track or straying from the project's goals.

4. Manage project risks

Hopefully you have defined the more likely risks up front during the project preparation, so you should now put contingency plans in place for certain occurrences. If you can see when a risk is imminent, you can take preventive action to avoid it, but be ready to halt a project if the risk becomes unacceptable.

5. Evaluate the project

Once a project has been completed, it's important to write a report, even if it is only for internal purposes. You can pinpoint what went right or wrong, determine what could have been done differently, and establish the best practices for use in future undertakings.

Questions 21-27

Complete the flow-chart below.

Choose **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS** from the text for each answer.

Write your answers in boxes 21-27 on your answer sheet.

How to run a successful project

Bear in mind that your aim should be to keep to both the agreed deadline and the 21 for the project



Fix the details at the start to prevent what is called 22 - the client asking for more and more.



Choose the team members wisely so that their 23 match the duties you want them to take on.



Promote good 24 at all times so everyone knows what you require of them.



Make sure 25 are set so you can check whether the project is running to schedule.



Prepare 26 which can be activated if things go wrong on the project.



Once the project is over, produce a 27 outlining its strengths and weaknesses for future reference.