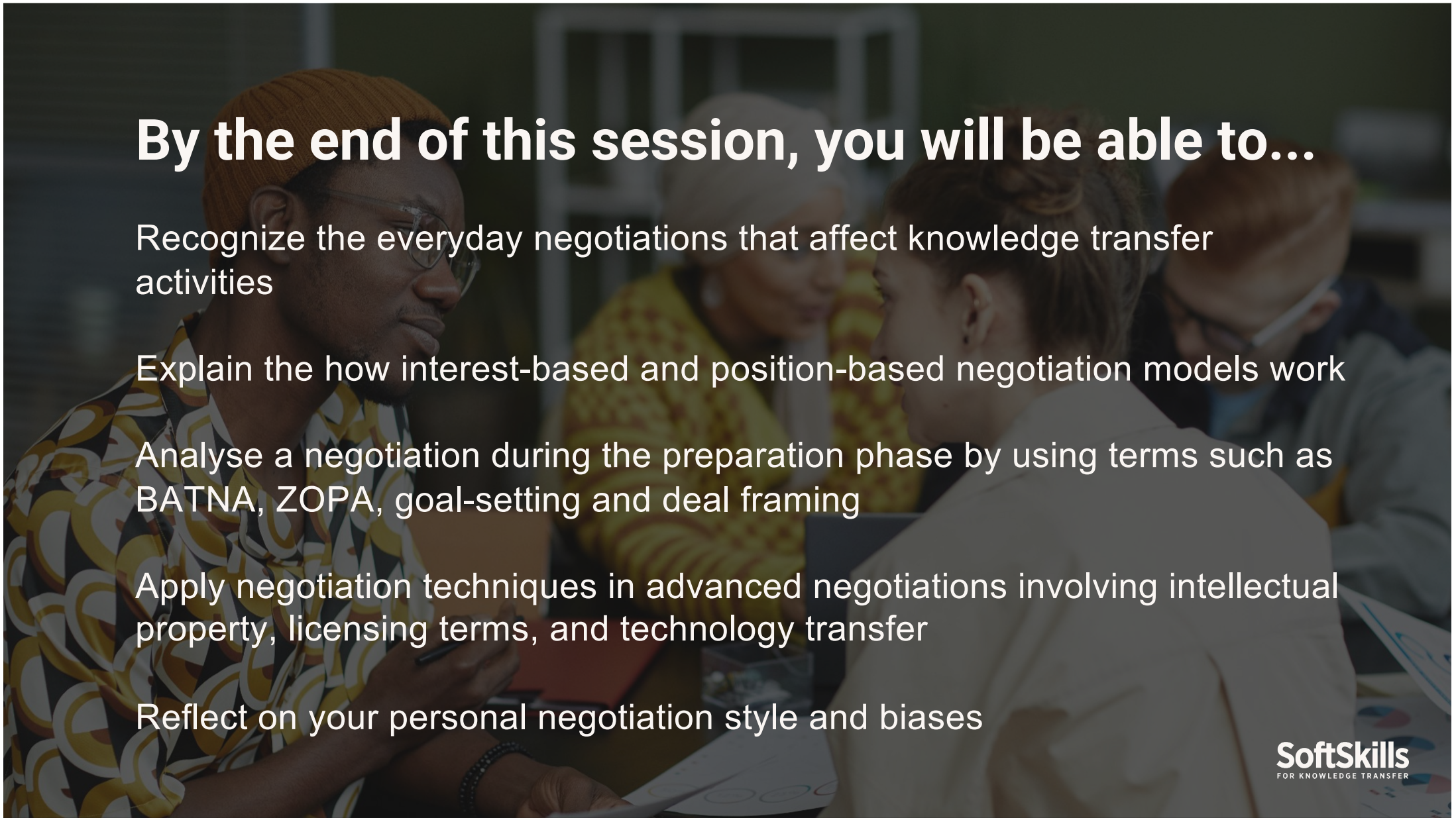
Welcome: Negotiating Knowledge Transfer

KTSoftSkills - Soft Skills for Knowledge Transfer
Project n. 2022-1-IT02-KA220-HED-000089663



By the end of this session, you will be able to...

Recognize the everyday negotiations that affect knowledge transfer activities

Explain the how interest-based and position-based negotiation models work

Analyse a negotiation during the preparation phase by using terms such as BATNA, ZOPA, goal-setting and deal framing

Apply negotiation techniques in advanced negotiations involving intellectual property, licensing terms, and technology transfer

Reflect on your personal negotiation style and biases

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Agenda

Time	Topic	
20 min	Introduction & Icebreaker Game	Group Exercise
50 min	Mock Negotiation Exercise	Role-play Activity
20 min	Break	
30 min	Key Negotiation Concepts & Techniques	Mini Lecture
75 min	Negotiation Simulation	Role-Play Activity
30 min	Debriefing	Group Discussion
15 min	Wrap up	Group Discussion

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Which photo describes your mood right now?

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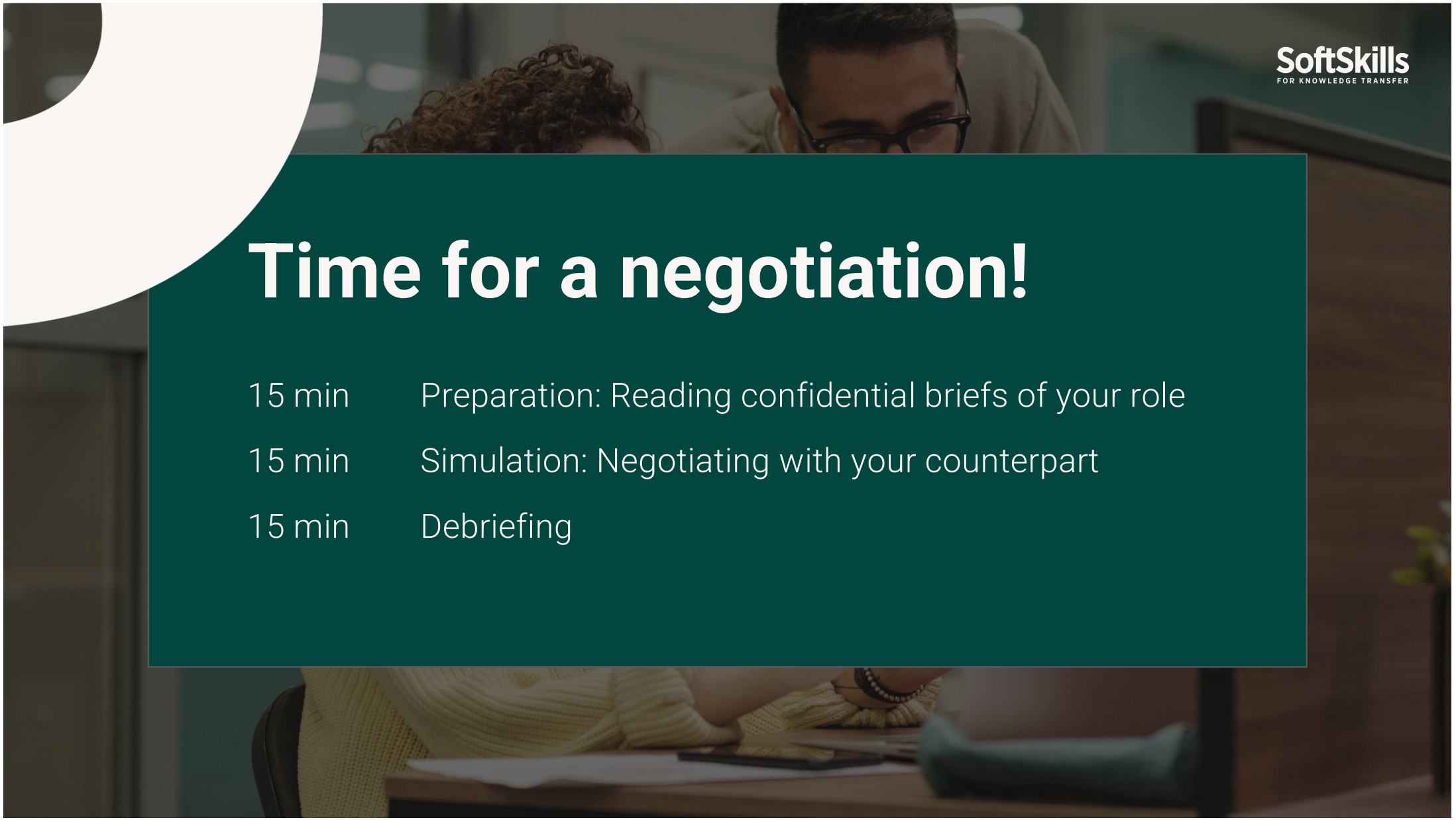
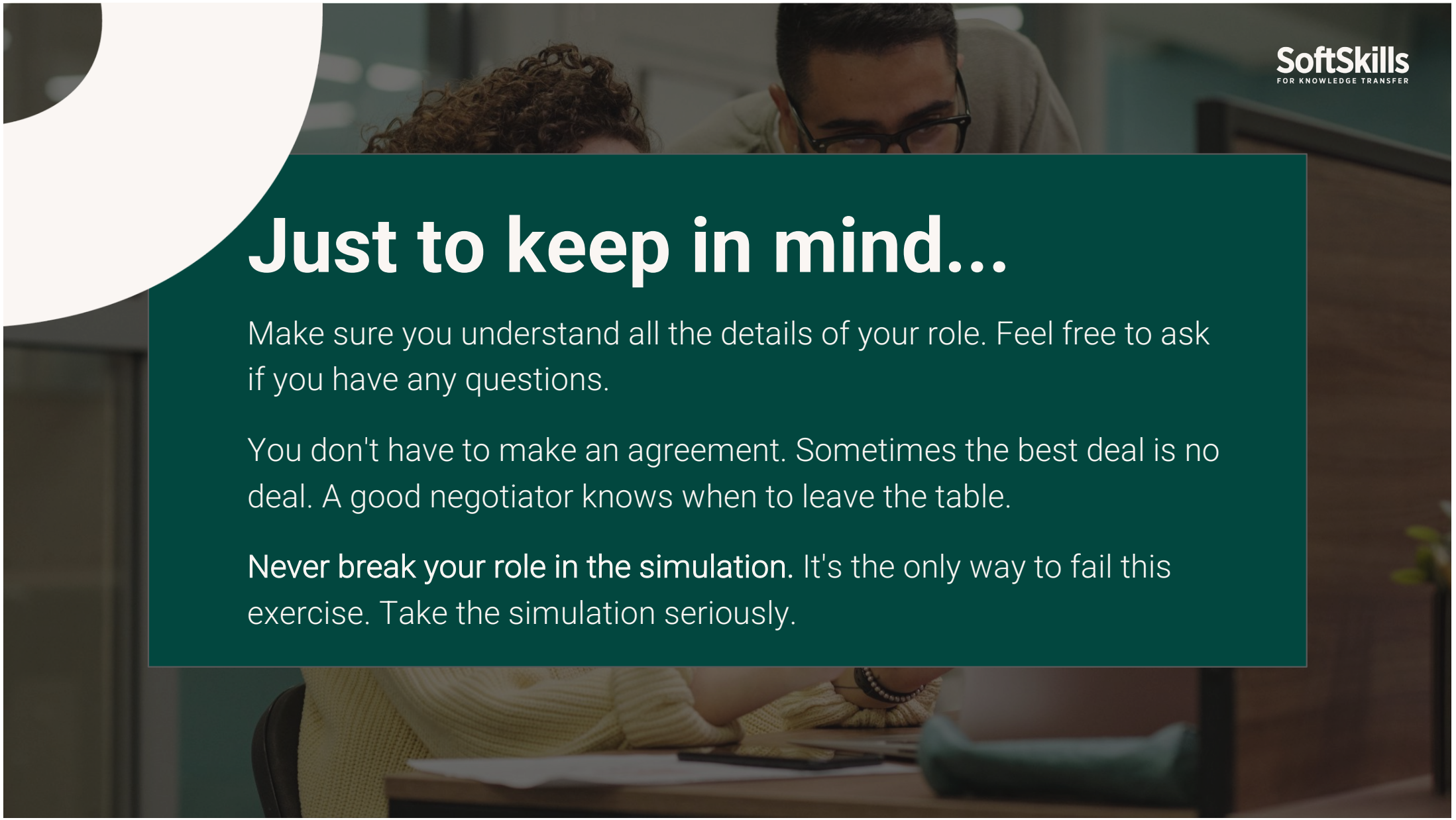


Time for a negotiation!

15 min	Preparation: Reading confidential briefs of your role
15 min	Simulation: Negotiating with your counterpart
15 min	Debriefing



Just to keep in mind...

Make sure you understand all the details of your role. Feel free to ask if you have any questions.

You don't have to make an agreement. Sometimes the best deal is no deal. A good negotiator knows when to leave the table.

Never break your role in the simulation. It's the only way to fail this exercise. Take the simulation seriously.

Debriefing

- How did it go?
- Did you make an agreement?
- Are you happy with the results?
- Any challenges or difficulties?
- How about emotions?
- Do you do similar negotiations?

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Knowledge Transfer Is a Negotiation-Driven Process

Bridging Different Worlds (Academia ↔️ Industry)

Balancing Competing Interests (Research freedom, IP protection, Timelines, Funding expectations)

Enabling Sustainable Partnerships (Built on trust, transparency, and fairness)

Navigating Complex Deals (Joint ventures, licensing, spin-outs, NDAs)

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Negotiation in knowledge transfer is the process of reaching agreement between academic, industrial, legal, and administrative stakeholders to enable the responsible and effective use of knowledge assets.

- **Multi-Stakeholder:** Researchers, tech transfer offices, lawyers, companies, funders.
- **Multi-Dimensional:** IP, revenue sharing, confidentiality, timelines, recognition, ethics, etc.
- **Context-Sensitive:** Influenced by institutional goals, public impact, funding rules, and cultural norms.
- **Outcome-Oriented:** Aims to unlock value from research while protecting interests and ensuring ethical use.

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Negotiation isn’t a side task — it’s a core skill for enabling knowledge to move from lab to society

- Licensing university patents
- Setting terms for joint publications
- Negotiating student involvement in spin-outs
- Agreeing on IP ownership in collaborative research

Position-based vs Interest-based negotiations

Positions are about "what" we want in a negotiation.

Interests are about "why" we want what we want. It is about underlying concerns, needs and motivations.

Focusing on interests, instead of positions, enable negotiators to produce win-win solutions.

The Orange Story

Two siblings argue over **one orange**. Both say:
"**I want the whole orange!**" (Position)
A typical **position-based negotiation** leads to splitting it:

Each gets half — but neither is fully satisfied.

What happens when we asked **why** they want it:

- **Sibling A:** *"I need the peel for a cake recipe."*
- **Sibling B:** *"I want the juice to drink."*

Interests are different and compatible! One gets **all the peel**, the other gets **all the juice**. **Both win. Nothing wasted.**

Position-based negotiations

It is a negotiation style where each party starts with a **clear position or demand** (e.g., “We need 150.000 EUR”) and negotiates from there.

This negotiation approach rarely provide a space for win-win outcomes.

Position-based negotiation can become **rigid** and lead to **conflict or deadlock**. Balance it with **interest-based dialogue** to uncover shared goals.

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Interest-based negotiations

A collaborative approach that focuses on the **underlying needs, concerns, and motivations** (interests) of all parties — not just their positions or demands.

- **Uncovers Hidden Opportunities:** Goes beyond "what each party wants" to explore why they want it, enabling creative solutions.
- **Balances Diverse Objectives:** Helps reconcile differences between academic values (e.g. openness, knowledge sharing) and commercial goals (e.g. speed, IP protection).
- **Strengthens Relationships:** Fosters trust and long-term partnerships by demonstrating empathy and mutual respect.
- **Leads to Sustainable Agreements:** Agreements based on real interests are more durable and less likely to break down.

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How to prepare for a negotiation?
Setting Your Goals

Reservation point: The minimum target that a negotiator plans to agree.
E.g. the minimum price a seller is willing to accept.

Aspiration (Target) Point: The ideal outcome that a negotiator hopes to achieve.

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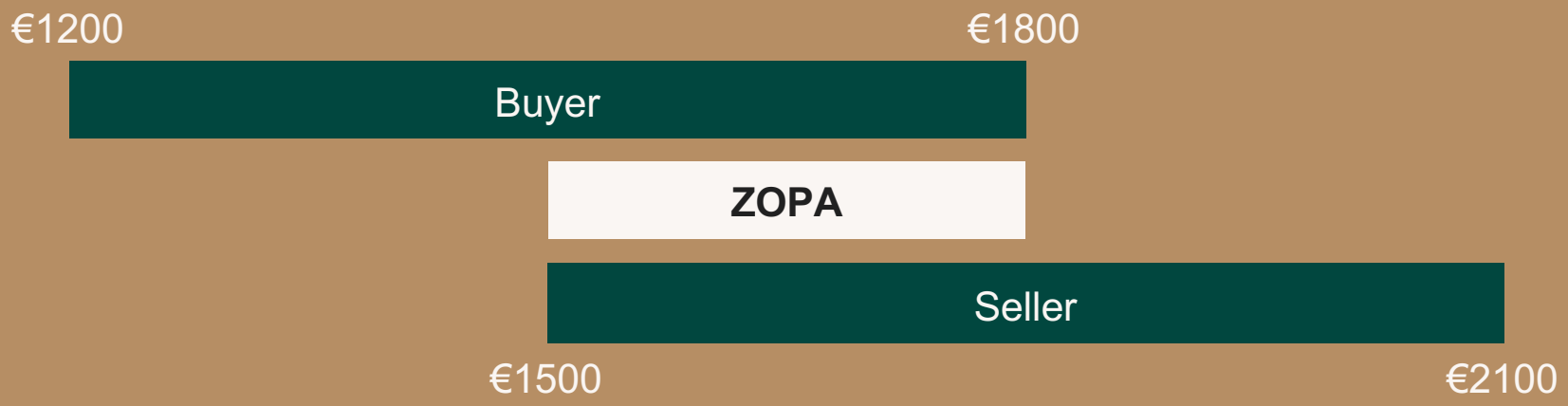
Explore ZOPA

Zone of Possible Agreement (ZOPA) is defined as the overlap between each side's reservation points. Larger ZOPA can create more possibilities for an agreement.



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Why ZOPA matters?

Understanding the concept of ZOPA in a negotiation;

- Helps avoid deadlocks by identifying **mutual benefit zones** (e.g., IP rights, publication timelines, licensing terms).
- Focuses discussions on **realistic options**, minimizing unproductive bargaining. It saves time and resources.

Always **map both sides' interests early** to identify if a ZOPA exists. If there's no ZOPA, explore if one can be **created** through creative options or reframing the problem.

Understand the power dynamics

BATNA (Best Alternative To a Negotiated Agreement) is your plan B if the negotiation fails. A strong BATNA gives negotiator power. A weak BATNA limits the options.

For example, if you negotiate with your friend to sell your car, your BATNA might be trading it in at a dealership or at an online marketplace.

Good negotiators identify and try to improve their own BATNA. In addition to that, they analyze the other side’s BATNA to understand their fallback option.

Why BATNA is important?

Empowers Your Decision-Making: Knowing your BATNA helps you walk away with confidence if the deal doesn't meet your minimum needs.

Prevents Bad Deals: Without a strong BATNA, you risk accepting unfair or unfavorable terms (e.g., giving away too much IP, losing publication rights).

Strengthens Your Bargaining Power: The better your BATNA, the more leverage you have at the table.

Clarifies What's at Stake: Helps you assess "Is this deal better than our alternatives?" or "Should we continue negotiating?"

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Always **develop your BATNA before entering negotiations** — and try to estimate the **other side's BATNA** too

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Using fair standards in negotiations

Objective criteria are **independent, fair, and verifiable standards** used to guide decisions in a negotiation — instead of relying on **power, pressure, or emotions**.

E.g. Industry benchmarks, licensing databases (e.g., AUTM, LES), funding agreements, university policy

Why They Matter in Knowledge Transfer

Promote transparency and fairness

Help manage power imbalance (e.g., university vs. corporation)

Prevent deadlocks and emotional escalation

Increase legitimacy and durability of the agreement

How to use objective criteria in negotiations?

Propose a Standard Early: “Let’s base this on comparable licensing deals.”

Explain Its Legitimacy: “These benchmarks are from recognized tech transfer reports.

Invite Joint Exploration: “Can we agree on what’s fair for both sides?”

Don’t Yield to Pressure — Yield to Principle: “We’re not rejecting your proposal — we’re just asking to align it with fair precedent.”

Come prepared with **data and standards** — but stay open to **joint fact-finding**

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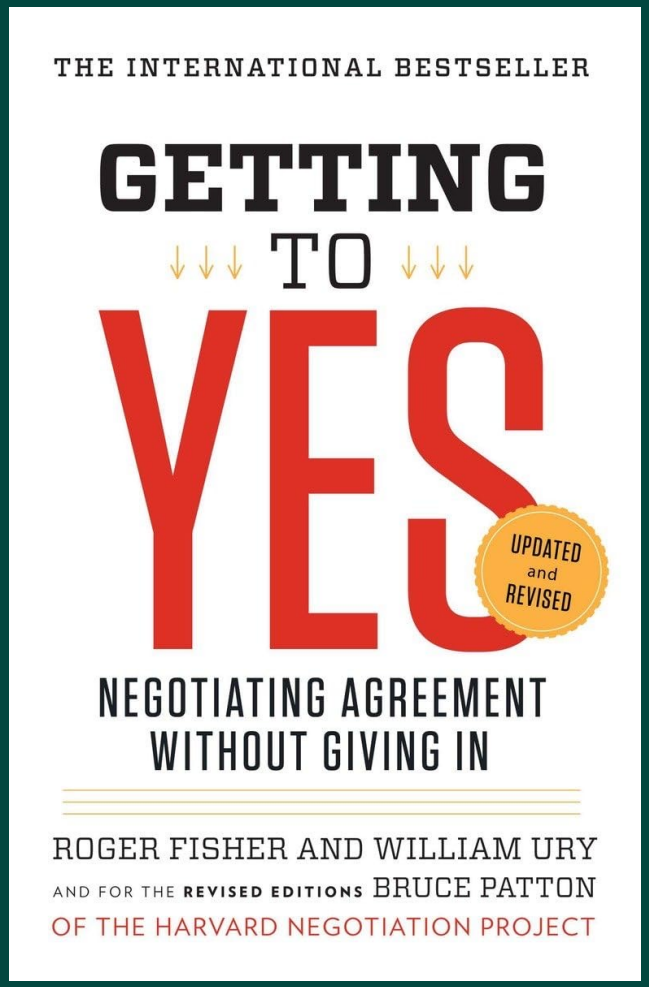
Principled Negotiations

Developed by Fisher, Ury, and Patton (Harvard Negotiation Project)

A method of negotiation that focuses on merits and mutual interests, not on pressure or positions.



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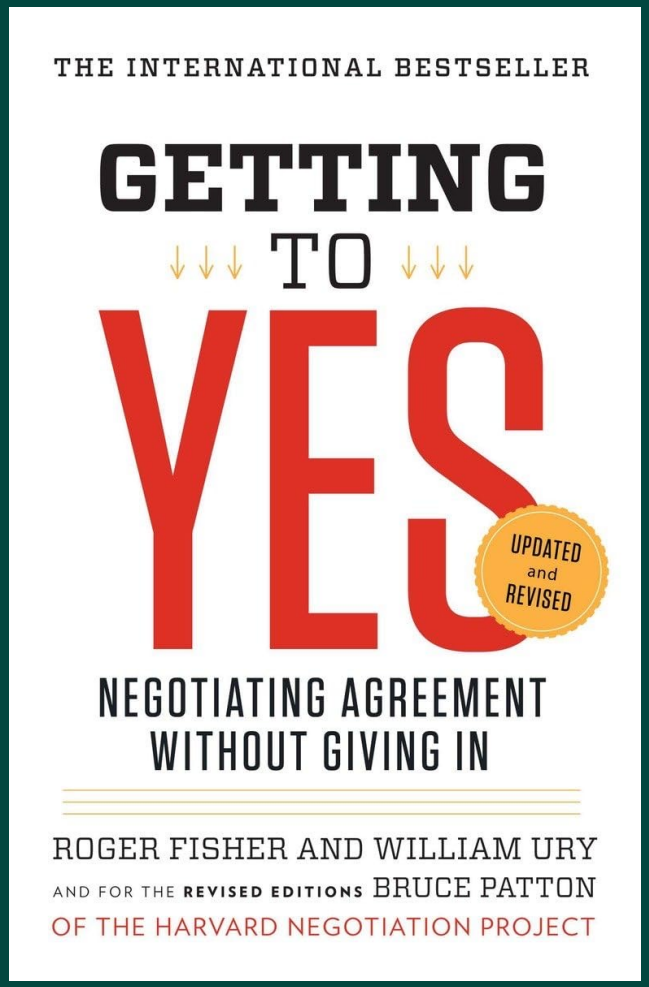
Four Core Principles:

- **Separate the People from the Problem:** Address issues objectively, without personal conflict.
- **Focus on Interests, Not Positions:** Discover why parties want something, not just what they demand.
- **Invent Options for Mutual Gain:** Create solutions that satisfy both parties' core needs.
- **Insist on Using Objective Criteria:** Base the agreement on fair standards, not pressure or power.



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Why Principled Negotiation Matters for Knowledge Transfer?

- Reduces tension in university-industry collaboration
- Encourages creative, ethical, and legally sound solutions
- Protects long-term relationships and reputation

Aim for a deal that supports academic goals **and** business success — not a compromise, but a **mutual gain solution**.

Another Negotiation!

This time, we will have group negotiation with a scoring system.

There will be 4 issues that parties needs to agree.

15 min Preparation Pt.1 (Reading confidential briefs)

25 min Preparation Pt.2 (Groups plan their strategies)

30 min Negotiation

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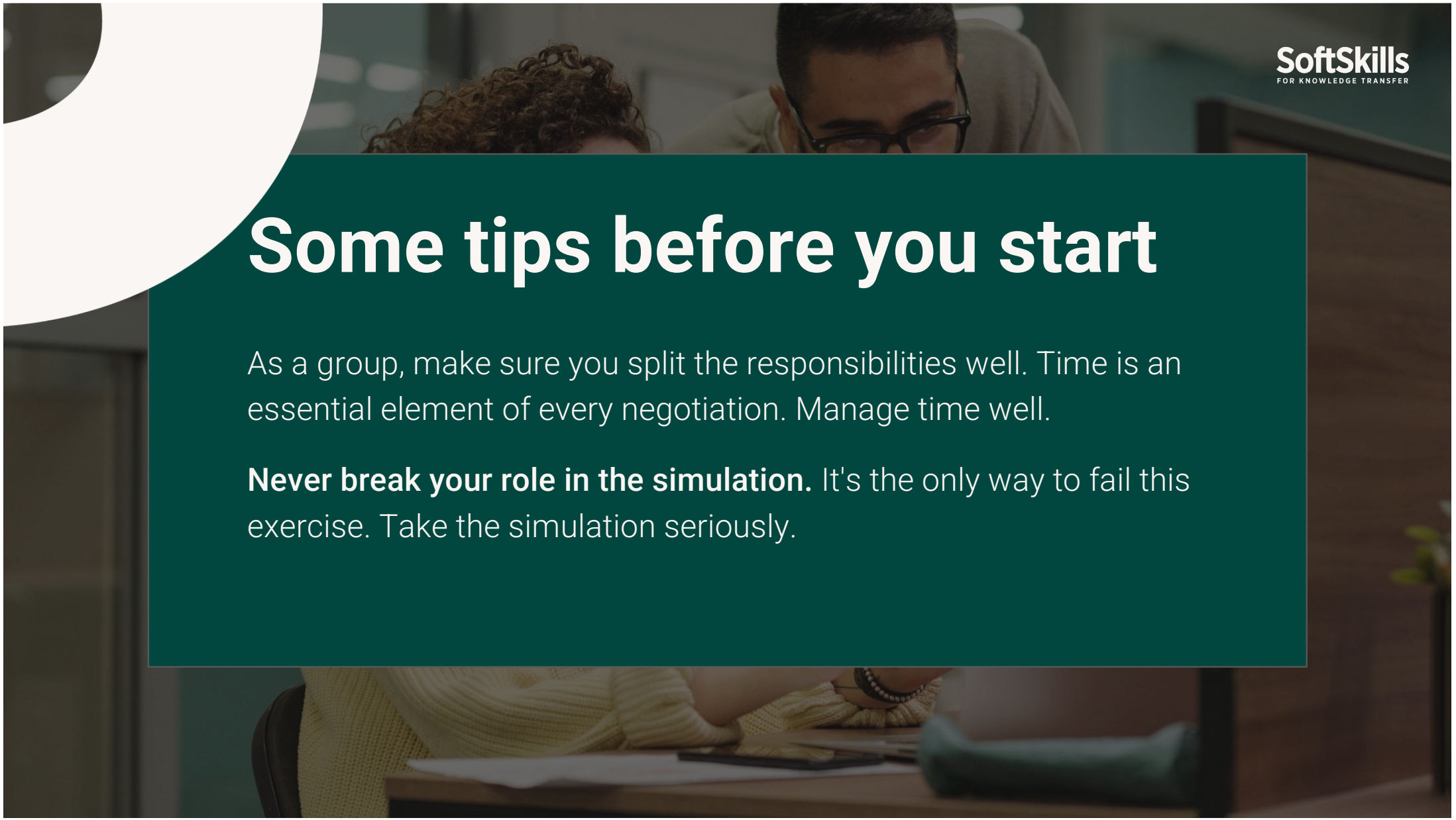

Some tips before you start

As a group, make sure you split the responsibilities well. Time is an essential element of every negotiation. Manage time well.

Never break your role in the simulation. It's the only way to fail this exercise. Take the simulation seriously.

Debriefing

How did the negotiation go?

Were there "win-win" possibilities?

How did you deal with BATNA & ZOPA?

How did you implement interest-based negotiation strategies?

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Issue	Options	University Points	Company Points
Investment	€ 200 000 University, € 1 800 000 Company covers	85	5
	€ 500 000 University, € 1 500 000 Company covers	75	10
	€ 700 000 University, € 1 300 000 Company covers	45	15
	€ 1 000 000 University, € 1 000 000 Company covers	20	20
	€ 1 300 000 University, € 700 000 Company covers	15	45
	€ 1 500 000 University, € 500 000 Company covers	10	75
	€ 1 800 000 University, € 200 000 Company covers	5	85
Equipment & Software	Company software & hardware	15	75
	University software & company hardware	20	65
	3rd party software & hardware	25	25
	Company software & university hardware	55	20
	University software & hardware	65	15
Location of the R&D Centre	University Campus	75	15
	Close to university	65	20
	In the middle	25	25
	Close to company	20	55
	Company Campus	15	65
Student Engagement	Paid Internships within the Venture	10	10
	Thesis Collaborations	15	15
	Startup Fellowship or Entrepreneur-in-Training Programs	25	25
	Research Assistant Roles on Joint Projects	10	10
	Joint Skills Academy or Certificate Programs	5	5

Different nature of the issues in a negotiation

Distributive
Integrative
Compatible

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Distributive Issues

These are **zero-sum issues** where **one party's gain is the other's loss**

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Integrative Issues

Issues where parties have **different priorities** and can create **mutual value** through trade-offs

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Compatible Issues

Both parties **want the same outcome** — but may not realize it initially

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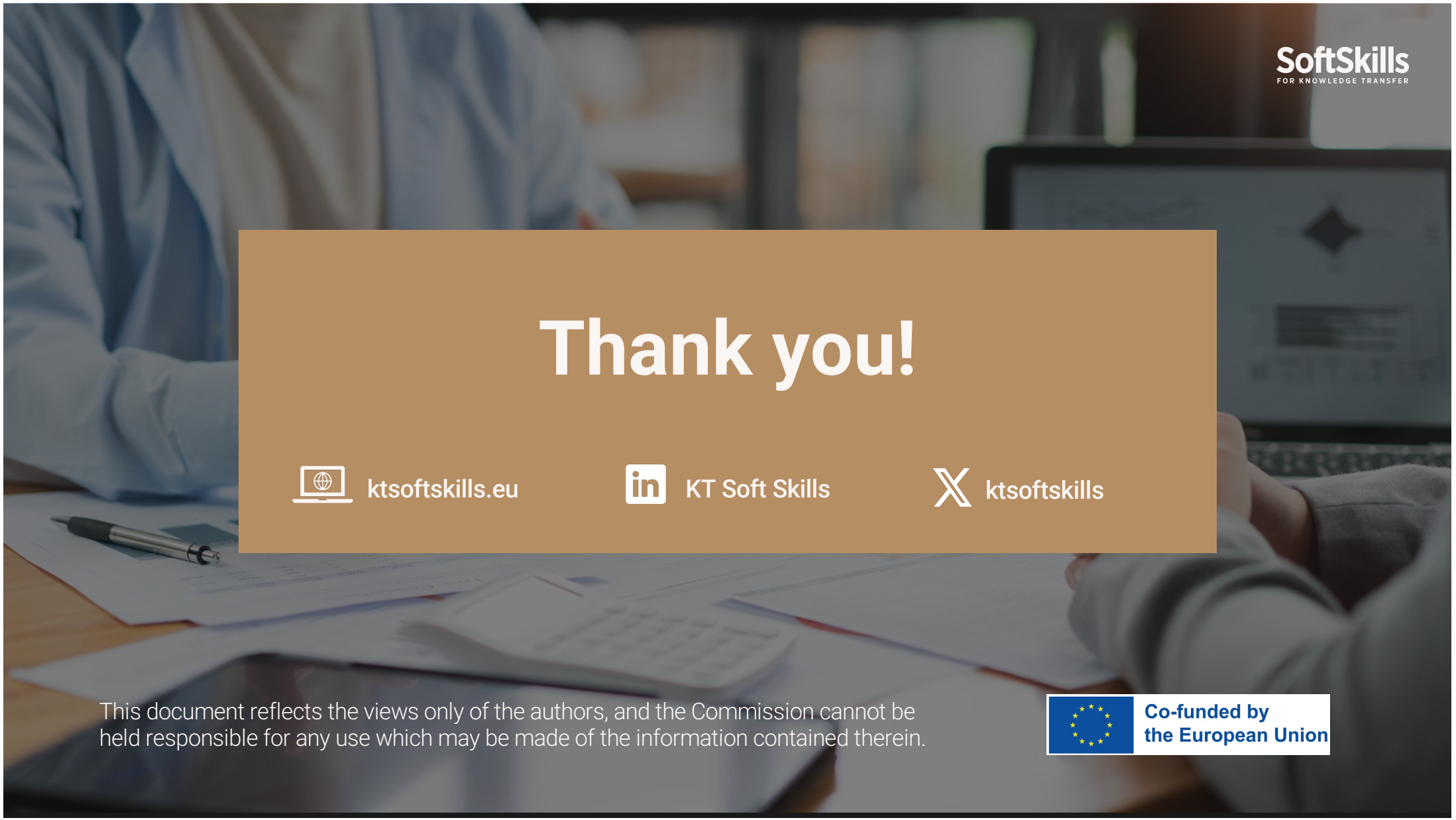

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Negotiating Knowledge Transfer Teaching Toolkit

Additional Print Out Materials (Not in this document)

- 🔒 Confidential Briefs for Role-Play – Joint Venture
- 🔒 Confidential Briefs for Patent Licensing Negotiation Role-Play
- Negotiation Module - Slides

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Negotiating Knowledge Transfer Syllabus

Duration: Approx. 4 hours

In today's dynamic innovation landscape, successful knowledge transfer depends not only on technical expertise, but also on the ability to navigate complex stakeholder interests, build lasting partnerships, and create win-win outcomes. This course is designed to equip knowledge transfer professionals — whether in academia, research, or industry — with essential negotiation skills that drive impactful collaborations.

Through a blend of real-world case studies, interactive exercises, and role-play simulations, participants will learn how to prepare strategically for negotiations, manage power dynamics, handle conflicts constructively, and influence effectively across sectors. Whether you are negotiating licensing agreements, research partnerships, or internal alignment, this course will help you build confidence, clarity, and control at the negotiation table.

Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

General objective

This course aims to equip knowledge transfer professionals with essential negotiation frameworks, tools, and strategies to navigate complex deals in research, licensing, and technology transfer contexts. Participants will enhance their ability to prepare effectively, negotiate confidently, and grow their personal negotiation style through reflection and practice.

Specific ILOs

- ILO–1: Understand the everyday negotiations that affect knowledge transfer activities

- ILO–2: Understand core negotiation principles and frameworks, including interest-based and integrative negotiation models relevant to knowledge transfer settings.
- ILO-3: Develop structured negotiation preparation techniques, including goal setting, BATNA, ZOPA, and deal framing.
- ILO-4: Conduct negotiations involving intellectual property, licensing terms, and technology transfer with greater clarity and confidence.
- ILO-5: Reflect on personal negotiation style and biases by developing a professional growth plan.

Methods & Materials

Teaching Method(s)

- Group discussions & peer feedback
- Role-playing simulations
- Frontal Lecture

Required Learning Materials (during-course)

- Course slides
- Confidential Briefs for the Role-play exercise

Additional Learning Materials

- “Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In”, by Roger Fisher, William L. Ury and Bruce Patton
- “Never Split the Difference: Negotiating As If Your Life Depended on It” by Christopher Voss
- “Give and Take: Why Helping Others Drives Our Success” by Adam Grant

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Lesson Plan

20 min	**Introduction** - Trainer introduces the session objectives and participants play a quick icebreaker game. **Icebreaking Game: "How do you feel?"** The trainer shows a slide with various photos and asks each participant to pick one that reflects how they feel and explain why.	Group discussion
30 min	**Mock Negotiation Exercise** - Participants engage in a role-play negotiation scenario with minimal instructions. 1-dimentional negotiation case that looks like a fixed-pie problem (the more one side gets, the less the other one has). This could be a monetary issue, share split, etc. This simulation aims to introduce the competitive nature of negotiations. 🔒 Confidential Briefs for Patent Licensing Negotiation Role-Play	Role-play activity
20 min	**Debrief & Reflection** - Discussion on negotiation strategies used, challenges faced, and emotions experienced.	Group debrief
20 min	**Break**	-
30 min	**Key Negotiation Concepts & Techniques** - Trainer introduces • What is a good outcome? • BATNA, ZOPA, and negotiation tactics • Position-based vs interest-based negotiation • [Optional] Use objective criteria to separate issues and people	Mini-lecture & Q&A

75 min	**Guided Role-Play** - Participants do another negotiation exercise, applying learned concepts. This negotiation is more complicated with 4 issues. It is aimed to be a group negotiation (2 vs 2). Each party should have clear alternatives to introduce BATNAs. Also, priorities should be clarified for an interest-based negotiation strategy. 45 min preparation 30 min negotiation	Structured role-play
30 min	**Debriefing** - Trainer and peers provide feedback on negotiation effectiveness. The trainer explains the differing nature of the issues and potential pathways for a win-win solution.	Guided group discussions
15 min	**Action Planning & Closing** - Participants create action plans to apply negotiation skills in real-life situations.	Personal reflection

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Trainer Instructions: How to run the “Joint Venture” roleplaying exercise

Before the Session

- ☐ Read all the materials
  - ☐ Confidential Briefs (2 Roles)
  - ☐ Trainer Introduction to Role-Play Exercise (below in this document)
  - ☐ Slides
- ☐ Print out confidential briefs for the class
- ☐ Set up the room
  - Ideally, arrange separate spaces for each group
  - Make sure participants keep track of time

During the Session

Introduction (5 minutes)
Explain the purpose of the simulation (e.g., applying communication strategies, managing tension).

Preparation - Phase 1 (15 minutes)

Give confidential briefs to each participant. If the number of participants is different than 6 people you can organise people in “2 vs 2” instead of “3 vs 3”. You can also suggest 1 or 2 people participate as observers. Observers aren’t actively involved in the negotiation phase but closely follow and take notes to discuss further at the end.

Emphasize the importance of active engagement, confidentiality, and staying in role. Participants should not disclose their confidential briefs to others. They can ask you questions if needed.

In this phase the group is separated into two: (1) University and (2) Company. They handle confidential briefs. As an instructor, your role is to make sure every participant understands the role and the simulation rules clearly.

Preparation - Phase 2 (25 minutes)

This phase is required only if there is more than one negotiation table. If that is the case, participants are asked to go into separate groups to decide their strategy as a negotiation team.

Simulation (30 minutes)

- Clarify the simulation time.
- Let participants engage freely without interruption.
- Walk around, observe dynamics, but avoid intervening unless needed.
- If necessary, give a 5-minute warning before time is up.

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Debriefing

Introduction (5 minutes)

- Show the summary table
- Give participants feedback
- Show the debriefing questions to initiate further discussions

Potential Solutions

Highlight the fact that this is an integrative bargaining. When parties understand the potential trade-offs between different issues, the possibility of expanding the pie increases. There are 2 alternative paths that create more value than meeting in the middle for each issue separately.

Option 1: Trade-off between Investment Contribution and the combination of equipment and location.

Option 2: Trade-off between Equipment and Location. Location is more important for the university while equipment is more important for the company. Discovering this asymmetry can create more value for both parties.

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Trainer Introduction to Role-Play Exercise: From Lab to Market Alignment Meeting

The University of Novaris is home to a leading-edge research lab in quantum materials. Over the last four years, a research team at the **Advanced Materials Lab** has developed **QuantumX,** a novel material that enables ultra-low energy data storage at room temperature. This breakthrough has the potential to revolutionize data centers, computing, and mobile technologies, reducing energy consumption by over 70%.

PhotonEdge Inc., one of the leading companies in emerging memory technologies. In order to stay on top of a highly competitive and innovative industry, the company is constantly searching for recently emerging technologies that can give a competitive edge. This was the reason why PhotonEdge team approached **the University of Novaris**.

Both parties recognize the high potential of the technology but also acknowledge that significant R&D effort is needed to move QuantumX from a lab prototype to a scalable product. After a series of exploratory meetings and a successful joint pilot project, both parties recognized the value of a Joint Venture (JV) co-founded by two organizations.

Previously, parties have already agreed on several fundamental issues such as share splits, revenue sharing schemes, and IP ownership. In the upcoming meeting, they must now negotiate and finalize four operational aspects of the Joint Venture.

Participants

The University of Novaris	**PhotonEdge Inc.**
Head of Technology Transfer Office	VP of Strategic Innovations
University Legal Counsel	Company Lawyer
Head of Advanced Materials Lab	Unit Head of R&D

Your task is to come up with an agreement on all 4 issues. If you can’t agree on all the issues, the negotiation will not be valid.

Please see the scorecard on the last page. Your main goal is to get as many points as possible. If you get less than 100 points, the deal is not valid.

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Issues to Be Discussed

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🔒 Confidential Brief – University of Novaris Team

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PhotonEdge Inc., one of the leading companies in emerging memory technologies, has approached the university with interest in co-developing and commercializing QuantumX.

Meeting Background

Both parties recognize the high potential of the technology but also acknowledge that significant R&D effort is needed to move QuantumX from a lab prototype to a scalable product. After a series of exploratory meetings and a successful joint pilot project, both parties recognized the value of a Joint Venture (JV) co-founded by two organizations.

Previously, parties have already agreed on several fundamental issues such as share splits, revenue sharing schemes, and IP ownership. In the upcoming meeting, they must now negotiate and finalize four operational aspects of the Joint Venture.

Involved Parties

The University of Novaris	PhotonEdge Inc.
Head of Technology Transfer Office	VP of Strategic Innovations
University Legal Counsel	Company Lawyer
Head of Advanced Materials Lab	Unit Head of R&D

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Detailed Information on Key Issues

Investment Contribution

The QuantumX joint venture requires an initial investment of **€2 million** to fund R&D infrastructure, staffing, and early development activities. Both the University of Novaris and PhotonEdge Inc. must decide how to divide this financial responsibility. In theory, University can financially cover at much as **€1.8 million** including in-kind contributions (e.g., lab space, personnel).

However, the university's core mission is academic and educational, not commercial risk-taking. Therefore, your team prefers not to pay more than **€200.000**. University budgets are often restricted and must prioritize teaching, student services, and basic research. Over-contributing financially may set a risky precedent for future partnerships and can raise ethical and regulatory concerns.

Equipment & Software

One of the critical operational decisions in the QuantumX joint venture is selecting which **equipment and software toolkit** will be used in the joint R&D environment. This includes simulation tools, prototyping systems, testing equipment, and lab infrastructure. The choice directly affects **workflow compatibility, IP protection, data security, training requirements**, and the efficiency of technology transfer between the partners. It also has long-term implications for the ownership and standardization of any processes or innovations that emerge from the joint venture.

Your team prefers your own **university software & hardware kit** because it leverages your existing infrastructure—publicly funded, proven, and aligned with academic research protocols. It also allows university researchers and students to work in a familiar, accessible environment without requiring steep learning curves or license transitions. On the other hand, **PhotonEdge software & hardware kit** is the least favorable to the university, as it may restrict student access, introduce proprietary barriers to publishing or thesis work. A **third-party software and hardware kit** can be a compromising solution.

The Location of the R&D Centre

Another key operational decision in the QuantumX joint venture is determining the **physical location of the joint R&D centre**. This facility will host researchers, equipment, and collaborative development teams from both the University of Novaris and PhotonEdge Inc. The location impacts day-to-day logistics, researcher engagement, student participation, and even long-term governance and visibility of the venture. All five possible locations require approximately the same level of financial resources.

Your team strongly prefers your **University Campus,** as it enables direct involvement of faculty, easy access for students, and seamless integration into further research collaborations. **PhotonEdge Campus** is the least desirable, as it may isolate the QuantumX from students, reduce academic oversight, and discourage participation by researchers concerned with corporate constraints. **A space that is somewhere in the middle** presents a good compromise, offering neutral ground while allowing structured engagement from both sides.

Student engagement

Another major goal of the meeting is to define how **students and emerging talent** will be engaged in the R&D and commercialization process. Both partners recognize that involving students not only builds workforce capacity but also strengthens innovation pipelines and ensures knowledge transfer. The options on the table range from internships and thesis projects to entrepreneurial and training initiatives.

Your team prefers **paid Internships within the Venture** because it offers students hands-on industry experience without compromising academic priorities, while also strengthening employability. These internships can be clearly structured, ethically managed, and are more scalable than academic research positions. **Research Assistant Roles** are less desirable as it may create blurred boundaries around publication rights, IP ownership, and academic supervision responsibilities. **Thesis Collaborations** serves as a reasonable compromise—allowing academic continuity while still aligning student

work with real-world challenges posed by the joint venture.

Issue	Options	University Points
Investment	€ 200 000 University, € 1 800 000 Company covers	85
	€ 500 000 University, € 1 500 000 Company covers	75
	€ 700 000 University, € 1 300 000 Company covers	45
	€ 1 000 000 University, € 1 000 000 Company covers	20
	€ 1 300 000 University, € 700 000 Company covers	15
	€ 1 500 000 University, € 500 000 Company covers	10
	€ 1 800 000 University, € 200 000 Company covers	5
Equipment & Software	PhotonEdge software & hardware kit	15
	3rd party software & PhotonEdge hardware	20
	3rd party software & hardware kit	25
	3rd party software & university hardware	55
	University software & hardware kit	65
Location of the R&D Centre	University Campus	75
	Close to the university	65
	In the middle	25
	Close to PhotonEdge	20
	PhotonEdge Campus	15
Student Engagement	Startup Programs	10
	Thesis Collaborations	15
	Paid Internships within the Venture	25
	Joint Skills Academy or Certificate Programs	15
	Research Assistant Roles in the R&D projects	5

Please don’t share any of the information in this table with anyone.

🔒 Confidential Brief – PhotonEdge Inc.

PhotonEdge Inc., one of the leading companies in emerging memory technologies. In order to stay on top of a highly competitive and innovative industry, the company is constantly searching for recently emerging technologies that can give a competitive edge.

This was the reason why your team has approached **the University of Novaris** which is the home to a leading-edge research lab in quantum materials. Over the last four years, a group of researchers at the **Advanced Materials Lab** has developed **QuantumX.**

QuantumX is a novel material that enables ultra-low energy data storage at room temperature. This breakthrough has the potential to revolutionize data centers, computing, and mobile technologies, reducing energy consumption by over 70%.

Meeting Background

Both parties recognize the high potential of the technology but also acknowledge that significant R&D effort is needed to move QuantumX from a lab prototype to a scalable product. After a series of exploratory meetings and a successful joint pilot project, both parties recognized the value of a Joint Venture (JV) co-founded by two organizations.

Previously, parties have already agreed on several fundamental issues such as share splits, revenue sharing schemes, and IP ownership. In the upcoming meeting, they must now negotiate and finalize four operational aspects of the Joint Venture.

Involved Parties

The University of Novaris	**PhotonEdge Inc.**
Head of Technology Transfer Office	VP of Strategic Innovations
University Legal Counsel	Company Lawyer
Head of Advanced Materials Lab	Unit Head of R&D

Your task is to come up with an agreement on all 4 issues. If you can't agree on all the issues, the negotiation will not be valid.

Please see the scorecard on the last page. Your main goal is to get as many points as possible. If you get less than 100 points, the deal is not valid.

Detailed Information on Key Issues

Investment Contribution

The QuantumX joint venture requires an initial investment of **€2 million** to fund R&D infrastructure, staffing, and early development activities. Both the University of Novaris and PhotonEdge Inc. must decide how to divide this financial responsibility.

PhotonEdge Inc. wants to minimize its cash or in-kind contribution to reduce financial exposure in an early-stage, high-risk venture where commercial success is still uncertain. Your team anticipates bearing future costs related to product development, scaling, and regulatory compliance, which will far exceed initial R&D spending. Keeping upfront investment low allows the company to preserve capital for later-stage commercialization efforts where its core expertise and resources will be most critical.

Equipment & Software

One of the critical operational decisions in the QuantumX joint venture is selecting which **equipment and software toolkit** will be used in the joint R&D environment. This includes simulation tools, prototyping systems, testing equipment, and lab infrastructure. The choice directly affects **workflow compatibility, IP protection, data security, training requirements**, and the efficiency of technology transfer between the partners. It also has long-term implications for the ownership and standardization of any processes or innovations that emerge from the joint venture.

Your team strongly prefers your existing **company software & hardware** because it ensures full control over the technological environment, protects proprietary data workflows, and guarantees compatibility with your internal manufacturing and commercialization systems. This setup accelerates development by using familiar tools and minimizes integration or retraining costs. Conversely, **university software & hardware** is the least attractive to PhotonEdge, as it risks introducing inefficiencies, lacks standardization with industrial systems, and may jeopardize IP security due to academic tool licensing terms and open science policies. A **third-party software and hardware kit** can be a compromising solution.

The Location of the R&D Centre

Another key operational decision in the QuantumX joint venture is determining the **physical location of the joint R&D centre**. This facility will host researchers, equipment, and collaborative development teams from both the University of Novaris and PhotonEdge Inc. The location impacts day-to-day logistics, researcher engagement, student participation, and even long-term governance and visibility of the venture. All five possible locations require approximately the same level of financial resources.

Your team strongly prefers **PhotonEdge Campus** because it provides full integration with its product development teams, secure data environments, and direct access to proprietary infrastructure and senior engineers. **University Campus** is the least attractive, as it may introduce restrictions around data handling, and limitations on physical access or scheduling. **A space that is somewhere in the middle** is viewed as a fair compromise that provides manageable logistics for both partners.

Student engagement

Another major goal of the meeting is to define how **students and emerging talent** will be engaged in the R&D and commercialization process. Both partners recognize that involving students not only builds workforce capacity but also strengthens innovation pipelines and ensures knowledge transfer. The options on the table range from internships and thesis projects to entrepreneurial and training initiatives.

Your team strongly favors **paid Internships** because it allows the company to evaluate and develop talent directly and manage project scopes effectively. Interns can contribute to defined tasks without the complexity of academic constraints or long-term obligations. **Research Assistant Roles** are the least preferred, as they often involve university-driven timelines, unclear deliverables, and divided accountability. **Joint Skills Academy or Certificate Programs** could be a good compromise — offering broader impact, standardized training, and visibility for both the university and the company, while building a shared innovation culture.

Issue	Options	Pho.Edge Points
Investment	€ 200 000 University, € 1 800 000 Company covers	5
	€ 500 000 University, € 1 500 000 Company covers	10
	€ 700 000 University, € 1 300 000 Company covers	15
	€ 1 000 000 University, € 1 000 000 Company covers	20
	€ 1 300 000 University, € 700 000 Company covers	45
	€ 1 500 000 University, € 500 000 Company covers	75
	€ 1 800 000 University, € 200 000 Company covers	85
Equipment & Software	PhotonEdge software & hardware kit	75
	3rd party software & PhotonEdge hardware	65
	3rd party software & hardware kit	25
	3rd party software & university hardware	20
	University software & hardware kit	15
Location of the R&D Centre	University Campus	15
	Close to the university	20
	In the middle	25
	Close to PhotonEdge	55
	PhotonEdge Campus	65
Student Engagement	Startup Programs	10
	Thesis Collaborations	15
	Paid Internships within the Venture	25
	Joint Skills Academy or Certificate Programs	15
	Research Assistant Roles in the R&D projects	5

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🔒 Confidential Brief – Researcher

You are a KT Professional at the university. You will meet the R&D Manager of the X-Corp to discuss the license of a patent owned by your university, that will also bring a research collaboration contract.

The X-Corp has already accepted the licensing term sheet you proposed via email except for the first downpayment of **150.000 EUR** that you requested to start the operation. The university policy is normally to get an upfront payment for any license besides the future milestones and royalties. Downpayments play an important role in covering the cost of the invention and creating more resources for future research.

The downpayments for similar license agreements with other companies have been historically between **100.000 EUR** to **150.000 EUR**. With that said, there is one exceptional case of **50.000 EUR** agreement.

The X-Corp is a leader in the field and aims to get the technology. You know that the company also is interested in establishing a strong collaboration with your university for further development. This is a niche technology and no other companies have shown interest in it.

As a university representative, your aim is to find a sustainable route to the market for this technology and to cover research costs incurred. You hope to reach an agreement as high as 150.000 EUR, while you know that the university can accept deals above 100.000 EUR. Going below 100.000 EUR will make things very difficult as it becomes as exceptional case.

Prepare to meet with the R&D Manager of the X-Corp.

🔒 Confidential Brief – R&D Manager

You work as a manager in the R&D Department of X-Corp. Today, you will meet the Knowledge Transfer Officer of a leading university to discuss the licensing terms of a patent owned by the university. You hope that this will be the beginning of many fruitful collaborations.

The university has already shared a licensing term sheet via email. After evaluating the offer, you decided that all terms are acceptable to your company except for the upfront payment of **150.000 EUR** requested by the university to start the operation.

X-Corp is a leader in its own field and aims to get this technology. The company also is highly motivated to establish a strong collaboration with this university for further development. With that said, 150.000 upfront payment is not possible for your team's budget at the moment.

After making some research inside and outside of your company, you learned that upfront payments for license agreements with a similar scope varies between **75.000 EUR** to **125.000 EUR**. You also heard some rumors that the same university had a comparable licensing agreement for a different technology with another company for **50.000 EUR**.

The university's particular research team is one of the leading ones globally. There is strong R&D collaboration potential in the critical technologies that X-Corp wants to pursue. While you would like to agree on an upfront payment of 50,000 EUR, you have a budget of 125.000 EUR. Going above 125.000 EUR will make things very difficult as it becomes as exceptional case.

Prepare to meet with the KT Professional.