We have all been in a position where we have negotiated or compromised. It could have been a situation where we decided where to eat lunch or the hours we were available to work. As a student, you may be navigating a group project or seeking support for an assignment deadline. We negotiate and compromise all the time without realizing we are doing it.

Some things cannot be negotiated or compromised, they are fixed and cannot change. These may be test/exam dates, assignment outlines/rubrics, or class time and location.

For those things you can have influence over, your approach matters. It is not about following a process or steps to get what you want, but finding a way to have a win-win situation.

If you consider your interactions and approach to be one of respect and listening and not adversarial, you will better positioned to advocate for what you are seeking.
Don’t Seek Perfection

If you are seeking to resolve your conflict by getting exactly what you want, the way you want it, you are not starting on a path to negotiation, compromise or understanding and have limited yourself from the outset of a conflict.

By limiting yourself in this capacity you are closing the door on options and solutions for yourself. In some cases it may also harm relationships and future interactions. Seeking perfection will not help you achieve what you are trying to achieve and will limit what may be possible.

CONSIDER YOUR APPROACH...

• Take the time to reflect and consider your role in a conflict - consider not only the part you played in the situation but also what you can do to contribute to the resolution
• Listen to understand rather than listening to reply
• Look for options and solutions instead of focusing only on one outcome
• Don’t hold on too tightly to past wrongs or experiences, start new
• Understand what you want and need so you can understand the motivations of other parties
• Stay calm and keep your emotions in check
• Keep an open mind not only for the current situation but all future situations
• Be willing to change
• Rethink/Reconsider your expectations on what should happen
• Its not about getting all that you want but finding compromise and a win-win result
• Use email to communicate booking a time to meet, but meeting in-person can allow you to convey your concerns and build understanding better
• Don’t send communications when you are mad or upset - give yourself space and seek advice
• Be curious - seek clarification when you do not understand and ask questions
• Seek support and advice - If you feel you would benefit from the support of another include them in meetings and conversations