Signing with the Bakery (B2 · English B2)

Tekst / Transcript

Marcus had run his small coffee roastery for six years without ever signing anything longer than one page. That changed when a well-known bakery chain offered to buy his beans for all fourteen of its shops. The offer arrived by email on a Tuesday morning, and he read it four times before telling anyone. His first reaction was excitement; his second was quiet panic.

He decided to consult his sister, who had worked in retail management for a decade. She warned him that a deal of this size would change the character of his business forever. Then she suggested he pay for a few hours with a professional consultant rather than rely on family opinions alone. Marcus resisted the expense at first, but eventually he agreed. The woman he hired spent an afternoon reading the documents and asked him questions he had never considered.

The first draft of the contract was eleven pages long and full of language he did not understand. One clause required him to supply a fixed quantity every single week, whatever happened to the harvest. Another forbade him from selling to any other business in the same city. His adviser explained that the risks associated with such exclusivity could be serious for a small producer. Marcus began to see that saying yes too quickly might destroy him.

So he went back and started to negotiate the terms, politely but firmly. The talks lasted three weeks, and at times he was sure the whole thing would collapse. During one long negotiation he almost lost his temper when the buyer's associate described his roastery as a hobby. Marcus stayed calm, thanked him for his honesty, and repeated his conditions. In the end the bakery accepted a smaller weekly quantity and dropped the exclusivity clause entirely.

What he signed felt less like a sale and more like a genuine partnership. Both sides had given something up, and both had reasons to want it to work. Marcus knew the commitment was enormous: new equipment, two extra staff, and early mornings for years to come. He also joined a small association of independent roasters who shared advice and occasionally shared deliveries. Whenever younger owners asked him for advice, he told them the same thing. Never sign on a Tuesday morning, and never be afraid to ask an expert what the words actually mean.

Woordenlijst

Word	Meaning
calculate	
chart	
classify	
complex	
component	
compound	
comprise	
conduct	
agenda	
agency	
contract	
negotiate	
negotiation	

consult
consultant
commitment
partnership
associate
associated
association

Try our 6-step method for free and make these words stick.

Listen to this episode online: https://course.interactivelessons.nl/local/podcast/episode.php?id=26033

Start this course for free: https://course.interactivelessons.nl/mod/quiz/view.php?id=1762