
BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

The English We Speak

Sticking point



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This is not a word-for-word transcript

Feifei

Hello and welcome to The English We Speak with me, Feifei...

Roy

...and me, Roy.

Feifei

Roy, please will you sit down! It's really annoying with you always just standing there!

Roy

No, I refuse to sit down! I haven't sat down for the whole week. I heard you talking about 'a sticking point' the other day, and after you played a joke on me and glued me to the chair – I will not sit down ever again!

Feifei

No, Roy! 'A sticking point' refers to a problem or issue that prevents progress towards a goal or an agreement. I was talking about negotiating my new work contract – I think I should be given 'unicorn truffles' everyday as part of the job.

Roy

Wait, so a sticking point in your new contract is that you want unicorn truffles?

Feifei

Yes! I also asked for an eagle called Clive. But I want unicorn truffles.

Roy

That's a great idea – I might ask for free unicorn truffles too.

Feifei

Sorry, Roy. That's only for amazing people like me – now sit down and let's listen to these examples.

Examples

Trade tariffs were a sticking point in the negotiations.

Bob and Ahmed could not agree on the budget. The amount spent on stationery was a real sticking point.

The amount of time it would take to build the railway was a sticking point when it came to signing the final agreement.

Feifei

This is The English We Speak from BBC Learning English and we're talking about the expression 'sticking point', which refers to an issue or problem that blocks a negotiation or agreement.

Roy

I'm glad I could sit down – I was getting really tired! So, have you finally stopped playing your jokes around the office? Am I safe again?

Feifei

Yes, I've stopped! You're safe!

Roy

That's good – your jokes were a real sticking point in our friendship!

Feifei

Well, talking of sticking points, I'm off to negotiate my new contract and get some of those unicorn truffles! And my eagle!

Roy

I love unicorn truffles!

Feifei

Well, there are some on that table over there. You could have all of them, but sadly you're stuck to a chair – again!! I got you again with my prank!! Bye Roy!

Roy

Nooo!!!! Don't leave me stuck to a chair again!!! Feifei!? Ohh, bye.