

How To Negotiate Anything And Win

Negotiation is a necessary process. It evokes complex feelings that many seek to avoid and yet it is fundamental to how business gets done. To succeed in business you need to become a good negotiator.

There are four main phases of negotiating: planning, debating, proposing and bargaining.

The Planning Phase

Identify the supporting arguments that justify your objectives and the arguments that the other party may use against them. Ask yourself challenging questions:

- How you will counter their arguments?
- What strengths and weaknesses do you take to the negotiating table?
- How can you maximise your strengths and minimise your weaknesses?
- What are the strengths/weaknesses of other party?
- What will be your opening gambit and how will you present it?
- How much time is there to negotiate and how imperative are deadlines?

The Debating Phase

Here you need a positive powerful opening, confident body language and tone to break the ice and discuss neutral topics for building rapport quickly. You also need to cover: Why we are here? What are we going to do and how long will it take?

Emphasise the need for agreement at the outset and listen to what the other party says and how they say it. Observe non-verbal signals and sit where you can see everyone. If you are with one other person sit apart so you are seen as two voices rather than just one.

The Proposing Phase

Put forward your proposal with as little emotion as possible and make sure you leave room for manoeuvre. Avoid phrases like “wish”, “hope” and “would like”—this is not assertive language.

When you make and consider proposals it means you are moving towards a jointly agreed solution. Proposals consist of two elements: the condition plus the offer. Both the condition and the offer can be couched vaguely but it is better to state your condition first. For example: ‘If you change your terms of business, then I could consider some amendments to our payment schedule.’

The Bargaining Phase

At this final stage you need to be prepared to make concessions, offer the smallest

concessions first—you may not need to go any further. Compromise without losing face. If you have had to backtrack on a point you could say “As you have changed your position on... I may be able to change mine on...” Make eye contact to emphasise that each concession is a serious loss for you. Do not ignore issues to speed up negotiations, and record fully all agreements finalized at the close of negotiations.

When it comes to closing there are only three closes you should use:

- The summary close, which basically summarizes the details of the conditions and the offer, followed by the agreement.
- The adjournment close, which can be useful where there remain some small differences as it gives both parties time to consider the final agreement.
- The final offer close, which you can make clear by choosing the right words, tone and body language. Create an atmosphere of decisiveness by gathering your papers together as though getting ready to leave.

Dealing with difficult negotiators

Difficult people behave as such as they believe that the other party will back down and they will get what they want. Do not react to their behaviour or allow it to influence you. Stay focused on the benefits and outcome.

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