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MASTER THE ART OF NEGOTIATION



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The Black Belt Leader

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INTRODUCTION

The Art of Negotiation

What Is Negotiation?

In ancient Japan, the Samurai lived as the protectors of the Shogun. During this feudal period of Japan's history, the difference between life and death was often the result of a successful or a failed negotiation.

Successful negotiators were valued as keepers of the peace. Throughout history, the ability to negotiate successfully has been one of the most valued attributes sought in government, business, and our personal interactions with others.

I define negotiation as the Art of the Mutual Win. By definition, negotiation is a discussion between two or more parties to reach an agreement. It is often referred to as bargaining, consensus building, or collective problem-solving. Negotiating entails a strategic conversation to resolve an issue in a manner both parties find mutually acceptable.

Negotiation entails compromise as each party defines their wants and needs to achieve some desired outcome that is agreeable to all concerned. While they may agree as to the preferred outcome, they may differ as to how that occurs. The conversation that ensues gives each party a chance to persuade or convince the other to their point of view.

Through give-and-take, an agreement is formed. If the parties cannot agree, the negotiations end without an agreement. That's the nature of negotiation.

When we hear the word *negotiation*, we often think of boardroom takeovers, or the impassioned pleas of a negotiator trying to free hostages like we see in the movies. For others, the word negotiation brings to mind an attempt to get a raise at work or buy a new automobile.

Benefits of Negotiation

Negotiation is used in business and places of employment, for sure. But we negotiate in a lot of

different ways that we may not think about. We negotiate with our spouse, our children, friends, neighbors, co-workers, or trying to get a better rate on our cell phone service.

Negotiation is a big part of our lives, no matter who we are or where we live. Humans have negotiated for centuries as a means of mutual cooperation and problem-solving.

Life is a series of negotiations. Why? Because we can't do everything ourselves and finding ways to work together to solve problems and get things done is integral in getting what we want in life. But most of us would likely admit we could do better at negotiating.

The good news is negotiation is a skill set that can be learned and improved upon. You may already be a persuasive person, but even if you are not, you can learn to MASTER the Art of Negotiation. You can become an effective negotiator.

Negotiation skills help us in all types of ways:

- Improve our Personal and Business Relationships

- Save, Spend, or Invest Wisely
- Conflict Resolution
- Problem-Solving
- Career Advancement
- Start or Expand a Business

Zig Ziglar said that you can get anything you want in life if you will help enough other people get what they want. He understood that negotiation, the Art of the WIN-WIN, is key to your success in life. This is how you get everything you want in life while helping those around you do likewise.

So if you would like to learn how to improve your odds and get a YES more often in your negotiations with others, you're in the right place.

This book will introduce you to the skills you need to get what you want in every situation and provide you with tips to become an amazing negotiator, no matter what you are bargaining for.

What will you learn?

In the first section, you will discover the qualities necessary to become a skilled, successful negotiator. I will highlight six of the essential life

skills that are foundational to becoming an effective negotiator. These are qualities we all possess to some degree, but skilled negotiators focus on continually improving in these areas to keep getting better at the bargaining table.

In the second section, you will learn the strategies and tactics used by successful negotiators to get more of what they want for themselves and the organizations they represent. As we look at strategies, I'll highlight what you should do to improve your odds at the negotiating table. When we turn to tactics, we will shift to how you actually implement the strategies to gain a negotiating advantage.

No one can **MASTER the Art of Negotiation**™ overnight. Negotiation is a skill set that can be learned, but to become world-class it will require that you become a lifelong student.

Like a professional athlete continues to fine-tune their skills to shave 1/10th of a second to cross the finish line first, make one more 3-point shot at the buzzer to turn defeat into victory, or sink a 30-foot

putt to win the championship, you will need to keep honing your negotiation skills every day.

The good news is with every negotiation, you get better. Sometimes you win big, sometimes you win small, and sometimes you walk away empty-handed. And there are times you will lose in a negotiation. Experienced negotiators see every negotiation as a learning experience, an opportunity to improve and get better.

So, let's get started learning how to **MASTER the Art of Negotiation**™

SECTION ONE

The Qualities of a Skilled Negotiator

Key Negotiation Skills

Being a good negotiator is about using your interpersonal skills, the behaviors and tactics you use to effectively interact with others. As you hone your interpersonal skills, you become more successful in your interactions with others, including time spent at the bargaining table.

Remember, negotiation is the Art of the Mutual Win, regardless of what you're negotiating for. As with any learned behavior, there are specific negotiation skills you must learn and develop. Even if you lack confidence in your persuasive abilities, you can train yourself to become an effective negotiator.

With practice, you can get a YES to whatever it is that you want.

(Q) So what are some of the key negotiation skills you need to learn and master?

Advance Preparation

To be prepared means to be ready. This term is often associated with military readiness.

The ancient Samurai honed their craft daily so they would be ready at a moment's notice to defend their Shogun, his family, and the Kingdom he governed. It was the countless hours of preparation that made the Samurai one of the most feared fighting forces of its era.

When it comes to negotiation, preparation is doing the work to be ready for the task at hand. Much of the work of negotiating occurs before you engage the other party in the transaction. It is essentially doing your homework.

You need to identify what you want to accomplish, what you want or need from the other party to make that happen, and what you're willing to contribute or agree to for consensus to be achieved. You need to identify your non-negotiables, the things that are either a "must-

have” or a “deal-killer” that would cause you to walk away from the negotiations.

Further research into understanding the other party’s position, as well as their wants and needs, in advance of the negotiations, is a plus. Determining your options and understanding your Plan B, what professional negotiators refer to as your BATNA (Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement), is important should negotiations stall or go sideways on you.

Doing your homework in advance allows you to gather the essential facts, statistics, tools, and resources necessary for clearly presenting your position and negotiating for what you want to achieve. This puts you in a better position to make a good WIN-WIN decision.

For example, if you want to ask for a raise at work, you should research what other firms in your city are paying their employees in a similar job role, as well as any fringe benefits they offer. You should also review the state, regional, and national average for your job description, as well as factor

in how experience, tenure, or ancillary training or skills warrant increased compensation.

As previously discussed, you will also want to consider your negotiables, the things you're willing to compromise on. Do you sacrifice some perks, such as additional time off, to get the raise you want? Do you agree to be more flexible in your availability, including nights and weekends, in exchange for higher pay?

And don't forget to be clear on your non-negotiables, the things you won't compromise on. If family time is important, additional travel or nights and weekends may not be an option. You need to be clear on what you will say NO to and be willing to walk away from the negotiations.

There's no right or wrong answer - it just depends on what is important to you. Having this knowledge, doing your homework, and gaining clarity regarding your priorities will make you come across more confident and empowered.

Analysis and Problem-Solving

Just as doing your homework is essential to a successful negotiation, a good negotiator takes the time to analyze the intended outcome and the problems that need to be solved for this to happen.

This allows you to bring clarity to the conversation for all involved in the negotiations. It also highlights issues the other parties may not have considered, allowing for a more robust discussion.

Analysis like this is invaluable in helping identify and bring understanding to the challenges yet to be solved. This makes a WIN-WIN more possible, as it identifies the obstacles each party will need to overcome to achieve the desired outcome.

It is hard to achieve a WIN-WIN when both parties don't understand the problems facing each other, and how they can solve them together. Analysis and problem-solving skills make it possible for both parties to achieve their goals and objectives in the negotiation.

After the problems are identified, analyzed, and understood, the negotiators can now consider a variety of solutions for the mutual benefit of everyone. This may entail thinking “outside the box” to find an innovative way to solve the problem. Good analysis on the front-end allows the negotiators to be solutions-focused in their discussions as the problems have already been pinpointed.

Remember, the goal of negotiation is to gain consensus or reach an agreement on how to solve a problem or accomplish a goal or objective. Analysis and problem-solving are essential tools for an effective negotiator to possess.

Effective Communication

To communicate means to impart or exchange information or news. It is the sharing of information with another person. Words are our primary mode of communicating with others, and communication only happens when the sender and the receiver understand the message as it was intended.

My mentor, Dr. John C. Maxwell, says that many people communicate, but few truly connect. To MASTER the Art of Negotiation, you must learn to be an effective communicator and connector. That entails not only speaking but also becoming an intentional listener.

To ensure a WIN-WIN outcome in any negotiation, everyone must be able to clearly articulate and understand each person's points of view, as well as their suggestions and recommendations. This is an essential, but often overlooked, part of doing your homework in advance.

Clarity of speech is essential in communicating your needs, goals, and objectives to the other parties in a negotiation so understanding can take place. Avoiding complex terminology and using clear and concise words that are easily understood is invaluable in this part of the negotiation process.

Without strong verbal communication skills, misunderstandings can (and do) occur. This can quickly break down the bargaining process,

leading to distrust. Once trust is broken, both parties in the negotiation may become defensive or walk away from the negotiating table. Good negotiators have learned to **MASTER Their Communication**™ are good communicators, another skill set that can be learned and improved upon.

Intentional Listening

Of all the communication skills a good negotiator can master, the art of effective listening is perhaps the most important. It may sound counter-intuitive, as we think of negotiation as a dialogue or a discussion. We often envision talking the other person into submission.

That's not negotiation.

Listening is a “must-have” skill for a good negotiator. Listening is the ability to both receive and understand a message, and the intent behind it. But listening is a must-have skill when negotiating. Both attentive and active listening are essential tools for a successful negotiation.

For example, we need *attentive listening* to hear what the other person is saying, watching their body language, looking them in the eyes, and being intentional to gain an understanding of the intent and meaning behind the words being spoken. Effective listening is a necessary skill set, but one that can be learned.

Remember, when we are waiting for our turn to talk, thinking only of what we want to say next, or what we mentally disagree with, we miss out on the full context of the other person's conversation. In doing so, we may well miss out on a key bit of information that will help move the negotiations to a successful WIN-WIN conclusion.

When we are being attentive as we are listening, it shows. When the other person can tell that you are really listening, they will react favorably to us when we talk.

Active listening is critical to ensure we've understood the message and the intent behind it. It picks up on the nonverbal cues, such as pitch, tone, and volume, as well as the emotions behind the words. Active listening is an effort to pause

our agenda, as well as our own biases and opinions, to gain insight into another person's experience or point of view. It gives us an inside look at what is really going on in the mind of the other person and what is important to them in the negotiation.

Active listening also involves asking questions for clarity or deeper understanding. It is assuring that the message delivered was received and understood as intended without filtering it through our own beliefs or biases. Good negotiators ask great questions after active listening, as this is how they gain perspective and learn new information beneficial to a WIN-WIN solution.

For more on effective listening, visit my website for a FREE On-Demand Master Class on how to **MASTER the Art of Listening.**™

Decisive Decision-Making

During the negotiation process, there are times when decisions must be made quickly. This is why

advance preparation (doing your homework) is so important, so you're ready to take decisive action. All the negotiating skills we have discussed up to this point are essential in preparing you to make those quick decisions that can move the conversation forward in a positive manner. This is also why having your BATNA (your Plan B) is important, in case you need a fallback position in the negotiations.

Being settled on your non-negotiables in advance also helps in the decision-making process, as you already know what you won't concede or agree to. That is why being prepared, with a full understanding of the other side's position is part of what makes a smart snap decision possible. Knowing your options allows you to take a risk when necessary, but also to pivot quickly if the situation requires.

Emotional Intelligence

Emotions can run high in negotiations. At times, bargaining can be stressful as both parties have wants and needs that may not be in sync with the

other party. The ability to successfully control your emotions can keep the negotiations moving in the right direction.

Emotional intelligence is a growing field of study that successful negotiators study to gain a better understanding of themselves and others. Learning to **MASTER Your Emotions**™ is an invaluable tool that can lead to more successful negotiations.

Remember, a bargaining table is often an emotional place. The ability to keep your emotions under control is vital to a successful negotiation. Emotional intelligence is the ability to be aware of, control, and express your emotions while having empathy with others, and an essential skill set to master as a negotiator.

When we become emotionally charged in negotiation, we stop listening. We cease being objective and start reacting to what others are saying or doing. When we become emotional, we stop listening to the other person and start reacting to what is being said. Rational thought is

replaced with emotional rhetoric, and communication breaks down.

A skilled negotiator is a student of human behavior and understands the dynamic role emotions play at the bargaining table. Assessment tools such as D.I.S.C. or Real Life Management can provide insights into human behavior, and taking a course in Emotional Intelligence further equips you for success in this area.

SECTION TWO

Success Strategies and Tactics of a Skilled Negotiator

Negotiation Best Practices

Now that you've learned the qualities of becoming a skilled negotiator, you need to learn the strategies and tactics successful negotiators use to get more of what they want when they are at the bargaining table.

Strategies are the broad actions and policies that are designed to create any desired outcome. It is the bigger picture planning to achieve a goal or objective. Strategy is how you mobilize the resources you have available to execute the plan to achieve what you want to happen.

Tactics are the specific action steps to achieve the overall strategy and accomplish the mission. In negotiation, tactics are the steps you take to get more of what you want and successfully conclude your time at the bargaining table.

What follows are some key strategies and tactics to help you hone your skills as an effective negotiator.

Acknowledge, Even If You Don't Agree

Acknowledge the other person's position, even if you don't agree. If they counter your offer or object to something you say, a simple statement such as "I understand what you are saying." Lets them know they are being heard. You can then add your own commentary or rebuttal to their argument.

You may not agree, but acknowledging their counter-offer or objection allows you to seem reasonable and at least willing to entertain their position. If you come across as unwilling to listen to an opposing point of view, you can put the other person on the defensive or appear to be unreasonable.

Appearing to play "hardball" with the other party can bring the negotiation to a screeching halt.

Collaboration Invites Consensus

Everyone has something to bring to the table in a good negotiation. You have your own ideas of

how to move the conversation forward, but so does the other person. The collective wisdom of all the parties can often identify opportunities or ideas you haven't considered.

Remember, negotiation is a give-and-take. Having an open mind to the ideas, options, or suggestions of the other party can sometimes lead you to an even stronger position.

The best idea doesn't have to come from you. If the other person has a solution that works, don't forget negotiation is the Art of the Mutual Win. The goal is consensus or agreement, so be open to other's ideas.

Keep the Main Thing the Main Thing

Your opinions are just that, your opinions. The other person has them too. The goal of negotiation is not to be right, it is to find a mutual agreement to solve a problem or move an opportunity forward.

It's about how you solve the problem together.

I've already highlighted the skills you need to stay focused on the objective, the goal, and not be distracted or allow your emotions to take over. Keep your attention on the process and stay focused on the important facts and details.

It's important to stay calm during negotiations, even when the other person is pushing your buttons. It is easy to lose your cool in a negotiation, as you are invested in the outcome. You are discussing something you care deeply about.

Remember, the goal is mutual understanding, consensus, an agreement – not an argument. You're there to solve a problem and if everyone can be calm, cool, and collective, you're more likely to get to a YES at the end of the conversation.

Know Who You're Talking To

It is important in any negotiation to be talking with the person who has the authority to make a decision and give you a YES. Negotiating with the

wrong person is time-consuming and doesn't allow the process to move forward.

You don't want to waste your time restating your position and debating options multiple times before you get to the decision-maker. You are less likely to be as effective in negotiations if you are having to continuously start and stop before you get to the person who can actually make a decision.

So one of the key questions you need to ask early on in the negotiations is whether or not the individual you're in conversation with has the authority to make decisions and agree to the terms and conditions around that. at the end of your bargaining time together. If not, you need to know what their role is and why they are at the table with you and not the decision-maker.

In some negotiations, an organization will appoint an individual to represent them in the initial phase of discussion to determine if there is enough common ground to move the conversation

forward before you are introduced to the final decision-maker.

It is important to know this as you enter a negotiation, as this can dictate what you are willing to agree to early in the process or hold back until you meet with the final decision-maker in the organization. Otherwise, you could give up too much too early in the process.

Identify the other person's role in the organization they are negotiating on behalf of and whether or not they are authorized to make a decision. Are there any other individuals, a committee, a board, or other governing body who will have to be consulted later in the process to reach a final agreement or consensus?

Build Rapport

Getting to know the other person, even if it is nothing more than exchanging pleasantries, sets the tone for a much more positive negotiation.

Don't' forget that a negotiation is a conversation between two or more people. Whether

negotiating in person, on the phone, or via video conference, the other person is a person. They have a life, feelings, and emotions just like you. Acknowledge that.

Whether you are negotiating a new position with a company, a pay raise with your employer, faster Internet service from a local provider, or a refund for something you bought online that isn't working, building rapport helps to set the stage for a more successful negotiation. Even a simple, "How are you today?" can engage them in a warm-up conversation that puts you in a better position to get what you want or need.

Know Your Desired Outcome and Your Non-Negotiables

You don't want to go into any negotiation without knowing your "end game" and what you're not willing to compromise on. These are things you must know going in.

If you want to go into a negotiation with the best chance of getting what you want or need, you've

got to have clarity as to what you want and need, what you are willing to compromise on, and what you are willing to say NO to.

Otherwise, you put yourself in a less powerful position to negotiate and may come out of the negotiations with less than you intended, or nothing at all. You may find yourself accepting a bad deal and walk away from the table wondering how that happened.

You should also take the time to make sure your wants and needs, your areas of compromise, and your non-negotiables are reasonable. What are you willing to accept? What are you willing to walk away from? Being clear puts you in a position of strength as a negotiator.

For example, if you know you want a 15% raise, that is your end game. If you are willing to accept a 10% raise, that's your compromise position. If you are willing to leave your position, that's your non-negotiable. As long as these positions are reasonable, you're now in a stronger bargaining position to get what you want.

Don't Rush the Process

This cannot be stressed enough. Negotiating is a deliberate process. It cannot be rushed if you want to get what you want.

Patience may not be easy, but it is vital if you want to reach a win-win. Go into a negotiation with an angry or defensive posture and you automatically put the other person on the defensive.

This is NOT a recipe for a good outcome. You may leave the bargaining table empty-handed.

If you enter the negotiation making “Or Else” demands, the “Or Else” is often the likely outcome. While it is okay to stand up for what you want or need, being arrogant, demanding, or berating another person in an attempt to bully your way into a successful negotiation seldom ends well. When you put the other person on the defensive, they are less likely to yield to your demands. Don't alienate the other person in the negotiation.

Focus on the Problem, Not the People

Negotiation is enlisting the aid of others to find a mutual solution to a common problem. The problem is the problem, not the people who are trying to help you solve it.

This is especially true when you are dealing with a customer service person who represents a company you have an issue with. Don't make the mistake of attacking the person. Focus instead on the desired outcome, resolving your problem so you can get what you want.

For example, you call a customer service department because something you purchased is not working. Rather than attacking the person, you solicit their help. Open with a statement like, "Thanks for taking my call. I'm hoping you can help me with this." Now you've set the tone for a more productive outcome.

Avoid personal attacks - stay focused on solving the problem, not the person.

Seek Unity, Not Division

In a negotiation, your goal is unity and not division. A mistake novice negotiators make is being too aggressive in the process, seeking to divide and conquer rather than seek mutual understanding.

A “Me vs. Them” attitude seldom leads to a good outcome in negotiating. Words matter. When you use words like “I” or “me,” you come across as self-serving. Remember, it is NOT just about you in a negotiation. It is also about the other person and their wants and needs being met as well.

Sure, you want to get more of what you want. We all do. Words like “reject” or “competitor” send a message to your negotiating partner you view them as an enemy rather than an ally. When you create a combative atmosphere in conversation, people get defensive and are unwilling to share.

That’s not a recipe for success.

Instead, use words and phrases that infer mutual cooperation. Use words like “we” or “us” in the conversation. Offering to “brainstorm” or “collaborate” rather than “debate” or “argue” fosters an attitude of mutual cooperation.

The words and phrases you use matter, so choose your words wisely. Cooperative, positive language sends a subtle yet powerful message to others at the negotiating table you are there for everyone’s benefit, with the goal of a WIN-WIN.

Identify Each Person’s Unique Style of Communication Early

People are unique individuals, and we all communicate in different ways. Recognizing this can be a valuable tool in a successful negotiation.

Using an assessment tool like D.I.S.C. or Real Life Management can help identify how people think and process information can give you insights into how to best communicate with them.

Why?

Knowing how people want information presented to them can give you a strategic advantage in a negotiation, allowing you to prepare your presentation in advance.

For example, if a person is highly structured, they may prefer a checklist. If they are people or cause-focused, they may prefer to focus on the benefits of the intended outcome to the people involved. Some people are “all business” while others are okay with a more light-hearted, fun presentation style.

Present to them in a manner they prefer to receive information and you’re “speaking their language.” This puts you in a favorable negotiating position. People tend to be more receptive when you are speaking to them as they prefer to be spoken to. It’s a subtle nuance, but a powerful ally in negotiation.

When it comes to various means to communicate, people have preferences there as well. Whether a person prefers email, video conferencing, text messaging, or a face-to-face conversation is a

personal choice. We all have our favorites. There is no right or wrong here. It's a personal preference. Nothing more.

When possible, use their preferred means of communication to move things forward.

Taking the time to discover someone's preferred means of communication sends a powerful message you want to engage with them based on their preferences. Letting them know your preference when it comes to communication helps them best know how to engage with you as well.

Don't just think that everyone wants to be communicated with the same way you do. For example, if a person doesn't regularly check their email or voicemail, as that's not their preferred means of communication, you may both be wondering why the other party isn't responding.

Make it clear how you will communicate early on in the conversation. Determine the rules of follow-up so you can maintain an open line of

dialogue. The more you can communicate the way the other person prefers to be communicated with, the greater the odds the negotiation can continue to move forward successfully.

Take the Initiative

When asked, take the initiative to suggest the day and time when scheduling a negotiation. Taking charge is seen as a sign of strength.

While you may want to offer a time that is convenient for the other person as a kind gesture, this can also be seen as a sign of indecisiveness. It sends a subconscious message that you may not be a strong negotiator.

Being assertive in your planning also sends a message that you're taking the negotiation seriously and want to be available as much as your schedule permits. It demonstrates to the other party you want to value your time and theirs.

Offering a specific day and time, such as Thursday at 10 AM, positions you as a decisive person. If that time is not convenient for the other person,

they can always share an alternate date and time for negotiations to commence or continue.

Location Matters

Not only is picking the time beneficial, being proactive in choosing the actual meeting venue is advantageous as well. For example, meeting in your office allows you to control the environment and position yourself powerfully and confidently.

If you've ever played competitive sports, you know the power of playing on your home turf. Being in a place where you're comfortable puts you in a position of confidence. It gives you a subtle psychological advantage over the other party by putting them in unfamiliar surroundings.

Remember, when someone feels that they are at a disadvantage, there is a chemical shift in the body that alters how they think and act. This can give you an even more strategic, powerful advantage in a negotiation.

So be aware of this, as you may not always be negotiating on your home turf. If you can't meet at your place, try to pick a neutral space so one has the strategic advantage.

Bring Your BIG Ideas

Don't come to the bargaining table empty-handed. If you have done your homework, you have likely identified several ideas, options, and suggestions that can help move the negotiations to an intended outcome.

What is the WIN-WIN that helps everyone get what they want?

For example, you want to lower your monthly cost for your cell phone plan. You don't want to change carriers. The cell phone vendor wants to keep you as a customer.

This is mutual ground, the starting point for a negotiation.

Framing the negotiation around the preferred outcome sets the stage for a more engaging and

productive conversation. It also increases the likelihood you get what you want in the end, and they do too.

Connect With a Personal Story

Remember, negotiations are between two or more people. Making a personal connection at the beginning of a conversation helps personalize the dialogue so everyone feels more at ease.

Use a simple phrase, such as “Before we get down to business, tell me a little bit about yourself.”

Allowing them to share a personal story and spending a few minutes getting to know the other person opens them up psychologically to the conversation that will follow.

Remember, from our childhood we have been psychologically hard-wired for stories. Our minds see in pictures, and a personal story draws from images of our past to create a subconscious connection with the speaker.

Personal stories are a powerful connection tool to create trust and likability, which are key to helping you get more of what you want.

...But Don't Put Them to Sleep

Figuratively boring the other person to death is not a good start to a successful negotiation. This is NOT the place for you to share intimate details or your entire life story. You're not there to make a new best friend. You are there to negotiate with someone who has something you want or need.

Remember, we all love to talk about ourselves. In a negotiation, it is important to be selective in what you share, while giving the other person an opportunity to share as well. If you find common ground, that's great.

You want them to know that you're a real person, someone they can relate to and connect with in some way. A personal story can give them a frame of reference, and a glimpse into the person they will be negotiating with.

This can humanize the negotiation, making it a bit more casual and relatable in the process.

At a minimum, you understand a bit more about the person on the other side of the table. That may be beneficial as you negotiate.

So, offer them some relevant information about your life and then stop talking. Give the other person an opportunity to reciprocate. Find something you can build upon during the negotiations.

The initial conversation should relax everyone, lighten the mood, and put everyone in a good place to move forward.

Recognize The Negotiation Styles At the Bargaining Table

Just as people have different styles of communication, not everyone negotiates the same way either. Identifying how the other party negotiates and makes decisions can be a valuable asset to getting more of what you want.

Some people are very direct. Others are much more personable. Some people are very tactical and deliberate, while others are truly focused on the mutual win. Attitude and personality play pivotal roles in how people negotiate, and how they respond under stress. Learning to recognize the nuances of how people negotiate can put you in a position of strength as you navigate your course through the discussion.

If you don't take the time to identify the other person's negotiation style, you are at a strategic disadvantage and the outcome may be far different than what you hoped or anticipated.

Silence Can Be An Ally

Silence can be a powerful tool in negotiation. Most people hate silence, as it feels awkward. When silence occurs, in just about any situation, what is our first inclination? To talk. And talk and talk. Anything to break that awkward silence that makes us feel uncomfortable.

In negotiation, silence gives the other person an opportunity to think, to ponder what was just said

before responding. It gives the other person time to weigh their options, consider their fallback position, or give thought to an idea or suggestion they had not considered to this point.

When a powerful point is made, the person who speaks next often yields in agreement. When you've made a powerful point or presented an offer, stop talking and give the other person time to respond. They are silent for a reason. If you keep talking, you may surrender your position of strength or authority, giving the other person a reason not to respond favorably.

Consider the Weather

Sunlight triggers a chemical response in our bodies that improves our overall mood. Research shows people are more receptive and more open to consider options in a negotiation when the weather is favorable.

We tend to be less open and approachable when the weather is grey or gloomy. The weather impacts our mood and our emotions. Superman

isn't the only character to benefit from a good dose of sunshine.

Also, our circadian rhythm comes into play in thinking about when and where we negotiate. Our brain releases chemicals to stimulate us in the mornings, and a separate set of chemicals later in the day to prepare us for sleep.

When the sky is overcast, or it is raining, our brains may not fully stimulate us to be at our best, and this needs to be considered when you are going into (or continuing) a negotiation.

Consider the lighting where you'll be meeting to negotiate. Daylight fluorescent lamps, or LEDs that simulate daylight can be advantageous to triggering the brain to release the chemicals and enzymes that lead to more engagement.

Gloomy weather can also put people in a gloomy mood, so it is important to be alert and looking for these subtle cues when you're engaging with another person to negotiate. It can also affect their emotions, causing irritability.

Remember, you're looking for strategic and tactical advantages to get more of what you want in a negotiation. A simple matter, like checking the weather forecast before you recommend a date for an important negotiation can be an advantageous move.

Add Value Before Subtracting It

People are valuable; therefore, value people. Learning to value people, and finding ways to add value to them, is an impactful way to not only honor the person on the other side of the bargaining table but also gain a strategic advantage in negotiations.

Simple things, such as extending a kindness or courtesy early in the negotiating process, can make a huge impact on the other party. It is often unexpected, and it is appreciated.

The simple act of doing someone a favor, even a small one, triggers one of the most powerful laws of influence, the Law of Reciprocity.

When we do something nice for someone, there is a psychological urge to reciprocate in some way. And the reciprocation is often of greater value than your initial gesture of kindness. Sharing a favorite book, offering them a beverage, or buying their lunch can invoke the Law of Reciprocity in a big way.

Here's a couple of examples.

Offering your guests a hot beverage, such as coffee, hot tea, or hot chocolate, along with a cookie, can put them in a more friendly mood.

Seriously?

Neuroscience research has revealed the insular cortex of the brain controls both physical and psychological warmth, so when the person comes into contact with warmth, like holding a cup of coffee or hot tea while negotiating, they feel interpersonal warmth for the person they are talking with.

Glucose levels impact the brain's ability to stay focused and engaged. When a person's glucose levels are higher, they are friendlier and less

aggressive. Glucose also affects the brain's center for self-control, which means the other person will demonstrate a greater level of self-control and be more open to considering your ideas, opinions, and suggestions to move the negotiation forward.

SECTION THREE

Next-Level Negotiation Strategies and Tactics

More Negotiation Best Practices

In the previous section, you learned several of the basic strategies and tactics used by successful negotiators to position themselves to get more of what they want morally and ethically.

In this last section, we are going to take a look at some advanced negotiation strategies and tactics that can uplevel your results. Some of these concepts may seem quite obvious, as you are now beginning to see how effective negotiators think and act. You're internalizing what you're learning.

Other strategies and tactics we'll examine in this section are nuances and subtleties that can position you powerfully to gain an advantage in the negotiation process. This is how you better serve your interests, getting more of what you want, while serving the other party at the bargaining table well.

This is how you get yourself closer to that mutual WIN-WIN when you conclude your negotiations.

Mirror Body Language

This is a nonverbal form of connecting that can help build rapport, supported by several studies. When you mirror another person's movements, they tend to feel a greater connection to you.

For example, if someone leans in as they are speaking, you mirror that movement. It shows engagement. When someone crosses their legs, you reciprocate sending a message you are both relaxed and comfortable.

If one party gets animated and excited, you too show excitement and become more animated in your expressions.

Scientific studies show that people feel a greater rapport with another individual when they mirror their movements. It is a nonverbal way we show empathy with another individual, demonstrating we are connecting in some way.

In the study of influence and neuroscience, we refer to mirroring as the Law of Attraction. It is

also referred to as the Gauchais Reaction (or mimicking). It is an indication to another person that you are fully engaged in the conversation or interaction.

For example, once one person in a room takes a cookie from a stack of cookies on a table, others will do likewise. If one person sips his or her coffee, others will do the same. This happens subconsciously, triggered by the mirroring neurons in our brain, seeking connection.

(HINT) This is just another reason to serve a drink and a snack in a meeting. It makes it easier to mimic the other person without being obvious gaining likeability and rapport in the process.

Find Common Ground

Everyone enters a negotiation with their own wants and needs in mind. Both parties want to win. But negotiation is about compromise, give and take.

Novice negotiators approach the bargaining table seeking to get as much as they can at the other person's expense.

Experienced negotiators take a different tact. They approach the bargaining table with an attitude of helping the other party get as much of what they want as possible while getting much or all of what they want in the process. That's why I refer to negotiation as the Art of the Mutual Win. It is NOT the Art of Divide and Conquer. That's the tactic of a tyrant or a bully, not a skilled negotiator.

It's easy to get stuck on one side of the debate, focusing on what divides you rather than what can bring you together. As we have already discussed, doing your homework, engaging in conversation with the other party to identify their end game positions you to find areas where you can agree – and that's a great place to start a negotiation.

When you start from a place of agreement, you know what each party wants for a WIN. This

makes the give-and-take conversation easier to have, and options to be more readily considered.

For example, in a call center, one employee is a single parent having to be home when her kids get off the school bus. Another employee in the same department is older, his children are grown and gone, and he prefers to come to work a bit later in the day and doesn't mind working later into the evening.

They both want to see their Team be successful, as their compensation is tied to results. So focusing on how they schedule their workday to support each other while helping assure the Team can deliver results is a great place to start.

This avoids the complaining and backbiting that can sow the seeds of division that end up harming the Team, with everyone suffering as a result.

Starting on common ground, finding ways to mutually benefit each other, allows everyone on the team to feel valued, appreciated, and willing to cooperate.

Finding commonalities before you start any negotiation can keep people focused on the bigger picture, the mutual win, all while keeping emotions in check. Both parties in the negotiation must know what a WIN looks like for the other person before you begin.

Once an agreement is reached, both parties can feel good they got something out of the deal that was on their WIN list.

This reinforces the importance of starting with a personal connection and asking great questions at the start of the negotiation process.

Look for the WIN-WIN

I will say once again, negotiation is the Art of the Mutual Win, so begin with the end in mind. Those who are unskilled in negotiation see it as a competition with only one winner. That is far from the truth.

Negotiation is for consensus building, finding what each party wants and needs for a WIN, and

working together to make that happen. It bears repeating the importance of understanding each person's end game in the negotiation before you start bargaining. More clarity on goals and objectives, and the desired outcome helps to avoid misunderstandings during the negotiation process.

The desired outcome is a WIN-WIN, so remember that in your negotiations.

Have a Plan B

A tactic used by professional negotiators is known as BATNA (Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement). I refer to this as the fallback plan or Plan B. They present their options, alternatives, and non-negotiables early in the conversation.

Negotiators who bring more alternatives to the table tend to get more agreement than those who come with few or no options. If those you are negotiating with understand there are options to consider, they are more compliant in the compromise process. They know there are more ways to find a WIN-WIN.

Determine early on what you will be willing to accept as a bare minimum in the negotiation, and what you will do if that doesn't happen. That becomes your BATNA.

Knowing your options in advance is a powerful negotiating tool.

Body Language Matters

Albert Mehrabian, a body language researcher, proposed that 55% of communication was nonverbal, 38% vocal, and only 7% the actual words used. Later research seems to indicate that 75% to 93% of all communication is nonverbal. One has only to watch the silent movies of the early 20th Century to see the power of nonverbal communication.

When our words don't align with the nonverbal message we are sending, we are not congruent in our communication. The problem with body language (and other nonverbals) is that these messages originate in our subconscious. Our subconscious mind is nonverbal, it sees in

pictures, and speaks through our body language, usually without conscious thought.

For example, if we cross our arms, we are sending a nonverbal signal that we feel threatened, disagree, or we are closing ourselves off to another person. If we lean in as someone is speaking, it is a nonverbal signal of interest, curiosity, and engagement. Lace your fingers behind your head as you're talking and you send a nonverbal signal that you are open, relaxed, and being transparent.

Become a student of body language. Learn what your body is saying beyond the words you speak. This will make you more conscious of messages you may be sending that may conflict with the words you are saying.

The more conscious you are aware of your own nonverbal communication, the more you can be sensitive to its message or use it to your advantage.

Learning about body language is also invaluable for reading the nonverbals others are sending in a negotiation.

You can more readily recognize nonverbal cues they are sending that may demonstrate they are not operating in good faith, they disagree with something you're saying, or they are buying into your suggestion. It is an integral part of learning to **MASTER Your Communication.**™

Stay Singularly Focused

It is easy to get distracted in a negotiation, especially when it is NOT an in-person, face-to-face meeting. Email, text messages, phone calls, or an unexpected visitor can cause you to lose focus or get distracted.

In that moment, you may miss an important part of the conversation that can allow you to move the negotiation forward, offer a suggestion, accept a compromise, or present an alternative for consideration.

Embracing the earlier training on becoming an intentional, effective listener can help you hone this skill set. When you are singularly focused on the other individual, being “in the moment” your mind is acutely in tune to the matter at hand.

Hit the DND button, silence the cell phone, and remove other distractions from the negotiating room and you can give your undivided attention to the other person and the negotiation.

Ask Great Questions

Good leaders ask great questions, and a good negotiator is there to lead the dialogue to a successful conclusion. Experienced negotiators understand the value of asking great questions at the start, as well as clarity-seeking questions throughout the negotiation process.

We’ve talked about doing your homework before approaching the bargaining table. Here’s a reminder that in that important research, start preparing a list of questions you will want to be answered during the negotiations. What

information do you need to know so you can make a more informed decision at the bargaining table?

Of course, you will get some of your questions answered in the normal course of discussion during your deliberations, but you want to be thorough in your research. You want to get your questions answered.

And don't forget that the other person will likely have questions of his or her own they will want to be answered, as your goal in negotiation is a WIN-WIN.

Great questioning makes that happen. The last thing you want to happen is to forget to ask a critical question while you're at the bargaining table that results in you not getting what you wanted at the end of the negotiations.

Know When to Walk Away

Knowing when it is time to walk away from the table is also a critical tactic in negotiating. We've talked about knowing your non-negotiables

throughout this book, and this is why it is important.

You don't want to settle for a bad deal.

If the other side isn't willing to compromise, make any concession to move the negotiation forward, sometimes it is better to quit than continue. If they are being obstinate and only want to play "hardball", it may be time to walk away from the table.

If what they are proposing violates your values or is a non-negotiable MUST-HAVE for you, then it is time to walk away. This is another reason why your BATNA, your Plan B, is so important. If you don't have a Plan B, your options have been rejected, and the negotiation is at a standstill, it is time to walk away.

Walking away doesn't mean the negotiations cannot reconvene in the future. Sometimes a break in the action can allow both sides to go back to the drawing board and rethink both their end game and how they get there.

Some successful negotiators will use a strategic “Time Out” to purposely introduce an element of uncertainty into the negotiations. A statement such as, “I need a few minutes to think about what we just discussed,” can be a tactical step to pausing a negotiation, evaluate the progress, and weigh options and alternatives.

It also sends a subtle signal to the other party that you are willing to take a time out, and potentially put a hold on (or end) the negotiations, allowing them to see you’re serious about either moving the deal forward or moving on.

Don’t Get Intimidated

Some negotiation tactics can be quite harsh. Some negotiators can be overly aggressive or try to bully you into submission. Don’t fall for it.

The movies have glamorized negotiation as the art of bullying to get what you want. In real life that could be further from the truth. Anytime a person involved in a negotiation turns to threats or

abusive language to bully or intimidate the other party, that is not acceptable.

True negotiation isn't about intimidation, it is about helping each other achieve a WIN. It is about showing respect for each party at the bargaining table. If that is not happening, speak up. Let the person know this type of behavior is unacceptable and if it continues, the negotiations are over.

If you're feeling threatened, it is OK to walk away from the table. Don't allow yourself to be intimidated into any time of agreement

Ask Open-Ended Questions

A good negotiator asks questions that can't be answered with a simple one-word statement.

Open-ended questions seek to start a dialogue, gain insight, or solicit information from the other party with the goal of mutual understanding. Open-ended questions can also be used to put you in a strategic position by learning information you can use to your advantage.

By comparison, a closed-end question can be answered with a short, simple answer. Do you prefer red or blue? Does your company sell this or that?

If you can get the other person talking, and actively listen to what they are saying, most people will tell you exactly what they want or need to move the negotiation to a successful conclusion, allowing you to also get what you want in the process. And with good follow-up questions to seek clarity, perhaps more.

Create a Sense of Urgency

Another law of influence is the Law of Scarcity. Scarcity can take many forms, and time can be a valuable tool when you are negotiating.

If there is a problem that needs to be solved, it is often time-sensitive. The goal is to resolve the matter as quickly as possible. Establishing a timeline at the start of the negotiations can apply subtle pressure to the other party forcing them to move the conversation forward.

This can be a powerful tool when one of the parties at the bargaining table is procrastinating or is not willing to make any significant concessions. And if they are the party with a timeline to meet, that puts you in a superior position at the bargaining table.

Letting the negotiating party know you have other options if they can't or won't move forward can often stir them to take action.

Let Go of Your Ego

When you are negotiating, you may find your positions challenged or your outcomes questioned. That can quickly lead to a bruised ego. You may feel your ideas are not being valued, your opinions don't matter, or your accomplishments and experience are being ignored.

Negotiation is about the WIN, it's not an ego contest.

There is an old saying to not think too highly of yourself, lest someone comes and pulls the rug

out from beneath you, sending you crashing to the floor. Enter a negotiation with an inflated ego, and someone will likely stick a pin in it.

When you're negotiating, it is NOT a personality contest. It is about a discussion about cooperatively solving a problem or moving an opportunity forward so everyone WINS. A good negotiator checks his or her ego at the door.

Hide Your Desperation

You may find yourself in a desperate situation, life can be like that sometimes. But you don't want to bring a sense of desperation into a negotiation.

Even if you're at the end of the rope, out of time, out of money, out of options, don't let them see it at the bargaining table. You have something they want or need too, or you wouldn't be talking.

If you are negotiating from a sense of desperation, the other people in the negotiation can sense that. This makes them less likely to want to make concessions in your favor as they believe you have no other options available to you.

Can you see how this puts you in a bad position at the bargaining table?

This is when you put on your poker face, get control over your emotions, and come to the table with a sense of confidence you will negotiate a WIN-WIN.

Know What You Are Worth

Knowing your value, what you bring to the table, gives you a sense of confidence in negotiations. When you know your worth, and can articulate it to others, it raises your value and your stature before others.

Remember, the other party has something you offer they want or need. There is value in that. Use that to your advantage.

What does your track record say about our success? How have you contributed to the success of other organizations? What does your life experience, knowledge, and training offer to others who may be interested in you?

The more articulate you are at sharing your value proposition with others, the greater the likelihood others will see that as a positive in negotiations – increasing the odds that you get what you’re seeking.

Timing Matters

When you begin a negotiation is just as important as where. If there is insufficient time for the parties to work through the nuances to arrive at a successful conclusion, you simply add more stress to the process than necessary.

Without sufficient time to build rapport, establish a real relationship with the other party, it is going to be difficult to talk through the uncomfortable to get to where you both want to end up. Having to rush through the process de-humanizes the negotiation, and when you’re not considering how decisions impact the people involved, that can be problematic.

And don’t forget if you have to rush through a negotiation, important points may be ignored or overlooked for the sake of expediency. So, avoid

starting a negotiation when the timing is not right for all involved. Schedule the negotiations when there is enough time, and it is convenient for everyone.

Let Others Go First

Experienced negotiators will almost always allow the other party to make their presentation first. Not only is it an opportunity to practice the art of intentional listening and being singularly focused, but it also gives you a chance to learn what is important to the other party in the negotiation.

If given the opportunity, most people will tell you what you need to know to move any negotiation forward to a successful conclusion. They may also reveal motivations and intent behind what they want or need that put you in an advantageous position at the bargaining table.

This can also reveal early on whether or not there is an actual agreement that can be reached.

Lastly, it gives you time to evaluate the initial offer to see if it is worth taking, putting you at a tactical

advantage. If the offer gives you most or all of what you want, while also giving them a WIN, everyone walks away as a winner.

Be Assertive in Your Ask

We've already discussed the importance of not negotiating from weakness, but it bears repeating. It is important that you be assertive, confident, in your Ask of the other party.

If you are using phrases such as, "I don't know if you can do this or not, but..." you're sending a signal this Ask is not important and can be overlooked or ignored.

Questions leading with "Is there any way you could...?" again sends a signal this is not really an important aspect of the negotiation. You don't want a question to come off as wishful thinking rather than something you truly want or need from the other person.

Asking with a caveat like this is a sign of weakness, insecurity, or desperation. You're telling the other

person you aren't really serious about the Ask, and if they say NO then it is not a big deal.

This is NOT a recipe to get what you want.

An aggressive negotiator will see statements like this as inconsequential to the outcome, putting you at a strategic disadvantage to getting more of what you want. That's a place in a negotiation you don't want to find yourself.

When you ask with confidence, clearly stating what you want or need from the other person, sends a clear signal your Ask is relevant to the discussion and essential to the outcome. It says this is an expected "give" from the other person.

Successful negotiators avoid these limiting caveats, so their Asks are bolder and more direct, such as "If you can do this, then I will do that..." or "I would like you to do this for me..."

Being assertive in your Ask is a next-level tactic to helping you get more of what you want in any negotiation.

Wishy-washy has no place in effective negotiation.

Check All the Boxes

If you have done your homework on the front-end, asked all the pertinent questions you needed answers to, you are in pretty good shape.

Now it is important that before you conclude your negotiations, you don't leave any boxes unchecked. All of your Asks have been put forth and you've gotten most or all of what you want or need in the deal.

Now it is time to review to make sure nothing was missed, overlooked, or ignored in the discussion. You also want to understand any caveats, terms, or conditions that were not clearly outlined in the prior conversations.

As an example, if you are negotiating for an unlimited data plan for your smartphone, you want to know if there are any limitations if you are traveling or operating off of another cellular network. Does your unlimited plan work internationally, or only in your home country?

If you're purchasing a new or used vehicle, does it come with a factory or extended warranty? Who pays the sales tax on the transaction? If it is a lease, what are the limitations on mileage and surcharges if you exceed those limits?

In a salary negotiation, will there be added job responsibilities, changes to your hours, or other obligations or commitments?

Making sure everyone is on the same page, agreeing to the same things, is an essential but often overlooked step in a successful negotiation. Caveat emptor, let the buyer beware, is a phrase that has been with us since the early days of the Greek and Roman empires, and it is as true today as it was then. Take the time to summarize your points of agreement before you leave the table. Know what you're agreeing to, and all that this entails.

Know What Is Important

Know what is important to you before you enter into a negotiation. What is most important to you? Of all the things you want or need, what are

the most critical? Which are an absolute must-have and which are negotiable items, and to what degree?

For example, if a promotion requires relocation or extended travel, is this acceptable? If you want to purchase a car and you can't get the color you want, is that a deal-killer?

What is acceptable and what is unacceptable if you can't get exactly what you want?

What you are negotiating doesn't matter. It could be a raise, shopping for an automobile or a vacation home, or looking for a new vendor for your business. Knowing your priorities before you go into a negotiation improves the odds that you won't walk away with anything.

Be an Effective Listener

We touched earlier on this topic, but it bears repeating. My mom taught me early on that I was given two ears and one mouth for a reason – to listen twice as much as I talk.

Being intentional, focusing not only on the words that are said, but seeking the meaning and intent behind the words is invaluable in negotiating. Making the person talking feel as if they are the most important person in the room at that moment goes a long way to making that person feel valued, respected, and understood.

Asking clarifying questions to make sure you fully understood what was said can position you to help get what you want while helping the other party do the same. Understanding is valuable.

And don't forget to listen with your body. Maintain an open posture, nod when you agree with what they are saying, smile, and look them in the eye. Listen intently with your body, as well as your ears.

SECTION Four

More Winning Strategies and Tactics

Advanced Best Practices

In this last section, we will focus on a few more advanced strategies and tactics used by effective negotiators. We will focus on some of the interpersonal skills needed to successfully WIN at the bargaining table.

Understanding human behavior is critical to being an effective negotiator. Learning how the brain thinks, processes information, and reaches a decision is important, and good negotiators are perpetual students of behavioral intelligence.

Emotional intelligence, which we touched on earlier in this book, is another important area of study that can benefit the negotiator. Our five senses (taste, touch, hear, see, and smell) all pass through the subconscious regions of our brain, the seat of our emotions, before reaching the conscious, logical part of our brain.

Understanding this behavioral dynamic can give added insight into how to effectively negotiate to get more of what you want.

Don't Interrupt

One of the fastest ways to cause a negotiation to go sideways is to interrupt the other person when they are speaking. This is not only disrespectful, it causes the other person to feel unvalued.

An interruption is anything you may say (or do) that disrupts the flow of the conversation or distracts the other person, causing them to lose focus or their train of thought.

We don't always think of nonverbals as real interruptions, but such things as looking away, staring at your watch, drumming your fingers, or staring at the ceiling can serve as interrupters. If it disrupts or distracts, it is an interruption.

Not only does this interrupt, but it also devalues what is being said, at least in the eyes of the presenter. No one wants to have to repeat themselves in a negotiation simply because they were ignored or interrupted through your words or your actions.

Don't forget that some people will perceive an interruption as a personal attack, causing them to get defensive or simply shut down and refuse to negotiate further. If one party gets offended in a negotiation, it is difficult to regain trust and get the discussion back on track.

Even if you strongly disagree with what is being said, do not interrupt. You can follow up with clarifying questions and comments after they have finished speaking.

It's more important to let the other person be heard, even if you disagree. In the course of their discussion, they may share other information to put what they have said into context and bring clarity.

Jumping in and interrupting because you may not agree without having the full context can make you appear impetuous or close-minded.

Don't interrupt. Your turn to speak will come.

Don't Be Disagreeable

We talked previously about emotional control, and it is worth revisiting. We are emotional creatures, and once angered our bodies go through a chemical change and our ability to think rationally is disrupted.

Think the Incredible Hulk, but without the green. Overcharged emotions override rational thought, clouding our judgment and logical thinking, causing us to become myopic in our views. This can lead to a “circular firing squad” approach to decision-making that ultimately benefits no one.

Negotiating can be a stressful situation, and under stress, our negative character qualities tend to find their way to the surface more often than not. And certain personality types tend to be more prone to going negative when they get overly emotional, manifesting themselves in sullenness, anger, pouting, or at times, acts of aggression.

Don't go there.

Trying to negotiate when you or the other party is angry is a date with disaster. At best, you will injure someone's feelings and at worst you can sabotage the opportunity for a successful conclusion to the negotiation.

It is okay to disagree, just don't be disagreeable.

Good negotiators understand that if tempers start to flare, you don't throw fuel on the fire. This is when you want to AVOID mirroring the other person, even tho your brain may be prompting you to do so.

It is supposed to be a negotiation, not a fight. When things start to turn argumentative, take a deep breath, take a break, and calm down.

Negotiate Early When Possible

One of the best times to start negotiating is in the morning. People tend to be more alert, have clear thinking, and have more energy after a good night's rest. They tend to be more eager to make things happen.

As previously shared, our body's circadian rhythm releases chemicals that prompt our brains to awaken. Early morning is a time our brains are more fully engaged, rested from a good night's sleep, and not yet distracted or distressed by the busyness of the day.

Even those who tend to be night owls are much more alert and function better after getting some rest. Afternoon or evening negotiations can be more stressful, as they bring all of the day's stressors into the conversation and the mind is likely more distracted.

The stressors of the morning, compounded by an often rushed lunch, can negatively impact our blood sugar levels, making us more lethargic and less focused. Earlier in the morning, after a good breakfast or first cup of coffee, our minds are alert, ready to focus and go to work.

So why not take advantage of nature's alarm clock, when our minds are primed for success, and use this time to start negotiating to get more of what we want?

Many people tend to be more generous and open to collaboration earlier in the day than later in the day, so take advantage of that when you're considering a good time to negotiate. If there is an opportunity to get more done, reach a deal, achieve consensus, and move an opportunity forward, why wait?

Start negotiating early when possible.

Don't Keep Score

Many people are competitive. They like to keep score, so they can brag about their wins and bemoan their losses. This might work with friends and family, and maybe your coworkers, but it is a surefire way to abruptly derail a negotiation.

Remember, negotiation is the Art of the Mutual Win. You have to see yourself on the same team as those you are negotiating with. You are there to WIN together.

Once you start keeping score of "your wins" vs. "their wins" you have now turned a negotiation

into a competition. Now everyone is out for themselves and their own interests.

You can't have a WIN-WIN if you're not playing for a mutual win. When the negotiation becomes all about you, you put the other person on the defensive and are less likely to walk away with all that you could have gained if your focus was more on the mutual win than solely your own.

Build Value, Then Talk Money

While money is an important part of many negotiations, bringing money into the conversation too soon can be detrimental to the discussion.

For example, you're presenting a proposal to a business to train their staff. If you bring up the subject of money before you cover what you're going to offer in the way of training and the benefits the business owner and his staff will experience as a result of training with you, they may balk at your pricing.

People need to see the value in what you offer, and that makes the money conversation easier. If a business owner is going to spend “X” number of dollars to hire you, he or she is expecting to receive a financial return greater than their investment in you.

Studies have shown that people want to see about \$2.50 in real or perceived value for each \$1.00 they are willing to spend. If you’ve not built enough value into what you’re offering the other party in a negotiation, they may not be willing to give as much in return.

This is a common mistake I see in novice negotiators, who are so anxious to make the sale they fail to build the value of their offer in the minds of the person writing the check.

On a personal note, if you’re applying for a job and you bring up the salary and benefits before selling them on the value you bring to the organization, you may come across as someone who is ill-qualified and only interested in the money.

If you jump to the money conversation too early in any negotiation conversation, not having built the value or benefit associated with your Ask or offer, you may walk away with little or nothing.

Avoid Personal Attacks

Negotiation is about mutually solving a problem or moving an opportunity forward. If you are in the midst of negotiation and things start to get stressful, don't make the conversation personal.

Yet far too many negotiations go south when one (or both) of the parties in the process starts to use hateful, hurtful language to gain a strategic advantage or turn on the person on the other side of the bargaining table.

It is easy to turn on or attack the people who are negotiating, but they are there (like you) to get the best deal possible. Once you go down the path of questioning a negotiator's motives or intent, you've made it personal.

Even if you don't like the person, don't make the negotiation a personal vendetta or go on the

attack. This serves no purpose other than to alienate you from the other person and destroy any opportunity of achieving a WIN-WIN.

Ask Clarifying Questions

Good negotiators ask questions to seek clarity, gather more information, and avoid confusion or misunderstanding. A good question can open the door to a greater understanding of the WHY, the intent, and the motives behind what is being said.

Inexperienced negotiators often fail to ask the all-important clarifying questions that empower them to gain added insight that can help them get more of what they want while also serving those on the other side of the bargaining table.

One of the tactics you can employ to gain clarity over something you don't understand, or if you find yourself disagreeing with something the other party said, ask a clarifying question like this, "Obviously you have a reason for saying that. Do you mind if I ask that that is?"

After you've asked this question, stop talking, and engage in **effective listening**.

This is a non-threatening way to seek clarity, probe deeper, and get additional details to move the conversation forward. Your objective is to discover the details that can give you an advantage or gain a better understanding of how you can help the other person gain a win.

Asking probing, diagnostic questions, such as who, what, when, how, and what can help you uncover what you need to know so everyone can get what they want from the negotiation.

Asking clarifying questions is a **MUST-DO** if you want to learn all you need to know to get more of what you want in a negotiation.

Help Others Get Their Win

Of course, you want to get the best deal for yourself, but good negotiators help the other party get their win, too.

It is OK for you to present your wants and needs to those at the table with you, but it is equally as important that you listen to their wants and needs and find a way to make that happen for them.

Remember, negotiation is a give-and-take process where the goal is a WIN-WIN. When you are as excited about helping those across the table from you gain a win, you once again engage the Law of Reciprocity in the negotiation and they want to help you gain a win, too.

You may not get everything you want, but a good negotiation typically ends with both parties getting enough to walk away feeling good about the negotiation.

Don't Show Your Hand Too Soon

The fastest way to lose in a negotiation is to give them your bottom line upfront. Once you have put your cards on the table, you took away your ability to negotiate further.

Now the other party can either lowball you or walk away from the bargaining table if they can't meet your demands. A better strategy is to start with your highest offer, asking for everything. From there, you have room to negotiate until you reach your bottom line.

Revealing your bottom line can be a useful strategy if negotiations have stalled or the other party is reluctant to give in to any of your demands.

At this point in the process, revealing your bottom line gives them a chance to say NO or for you to walk away if they are unwilling to meet you at your bare minimum for a WIN.

Let Them Sweeten the Pot

As with the previous negotiation strategy, don't be too eager to accept the first offer from the other party. They are likely going to give you their lowest bid upfront, hoping you will simply say YES.

Most companies expect people to try and negotiate, so their first number is usually not their

best number. If you're too eager to close the deal, you may walk away with less than you could have received if you were patient a bit longer and had the courage and boldness to ask for more.

For example, if you walk into an auto dealership, their first number is going to be their highest number. Auto dealerships expect the buyer to negotiate, usually with a lowball offer, so they start with a high number giving them room to barter down until they get to a price they (and you) can agree upon.

Don't give in too early, and don't be afraid to ask for some extras to make the deal more attractive.

Focus on Your Top Two

Don't go into a negotiation with a long list of demands upfront. You may well find yourself going home early, and empty.

As we have previously discussed, prioritize your WINs and focus on getting your Top Two first. If you can get concessions there, you can always

negotiate further to get more of your WINS, but it is important to get your BIG WINS upfront.

The less important stuff can be discussed later on, but if you can't score your Top Two early in the negotiations, you may need to re-evaluate whether or not this is a good use of your time.

If both parties can gain an early WIN with their Top Two, the stage is set for greater opportunities to find commonality among the remaining items as the negotiation continues.

Start with your Top Two and get the must-have WINS first, and then you can feel confident to get more of what you want.

Take A Time-Out

Let's revisit our discussion of silence, which can be powerful in negotiating. It's a great strategy to use when you're at the bargaining table.

How do you use this to your advantage?

Silence is uncomfortable. Human nature wants to fill the silence with conversation. After the other party shares their offer to you, intentionally pause. Let the silence build. The normal reaction to a prolonged silence is for the other party to up their offer, sweetening the pot in some way, to move the conversation forward.

In that moment of silence, they will assume you were not excited about their offer and will either seek to justify it or add something to it.

Either way, this can put you in a better negotiating position as you know their reason “why” or they have made another concession in your favor.

Be Confident, Not Arrogant

To be assertive is to demonstrate a sense of confidence. To be aggressive is to be forceful, ready to attack or confront. Good negotiators are the former, not the latter.

To be assertive means that you are confident in your abilities and you are looking out for yourself in the negotiation process.

While you are acknowledging the other party at the bargaining table has their own wants and needs, which you respect and want to honor, you intend to negotiate for as much as possible. Good negotiators admire this trait and enjoy collaborating with confident people.

On the other hand, arrogance is self-serving, demanding, and creates a climate of distrust that leads to you actually getting less than you desired. Arrogance can also drive the other party to walk away from the bargaining table, leaving you with nothing but your bad attitude. Not a WIN-WIN.

Start With a Positive Outlook

Having a good attitude as you enter into a negotiation can be a major contributor to getting what you want.

Good negotiators look forward to the journey they will go through as they go through the give and take at the bargaining table.

A successful negotiator enjoys the negotiation process as much as the WINS earned along the way. As such, they enter into the conversation with vibrant energy, high expectations, and a willingness to find a commonality that creates those WINable moments for both parties at the bargaining table.

Mindset is SO important in negotiating, as your thoughts precede action.

If you enter a negotiation with an expectation of a WIN-WIN, a belief that each party will get more than they believe is possible, the odds of that happening greatly increase.

And when both parties approach the bargaining table with a positive attitude and great confidence, they tend to walk away pleased with the results.

Attitudes are contagious, and entering into any negotiation with a positive, affirming attitude will trigger the mirroring response in the other party,

lightening the mood and improving the odds of a WIN-WIN for everyone at the bargaining table.

Your outlook determines your outcome, so go into the negotiation expecting the best. It's another way to not only show your own confidence and worth, but to you're adding value to the other person by believing the best in him or her.

Focus on What Matters

Good negotiation is a WIN-WIN, so the other party has to also walk away pleased with the results.

It is easy to get so focused on our own needs, we overlook the fact that others want or need what we offer so they can be successful. Good negotiators, as I've previously stated, focus on helping the other party in the negotiations experience a WIN, and join in the celebration when it happens.

Perhaps your training program helps their sales team increase their closing ratio by 30%, or your

software solution is a significant improvement over what they were previously using. Perhaps you promoting their product to your customers helps their manufacturing company gain national attention.

The goal is always the Mutual Win and celebrating the successes along the way.

Understand Their WIIFM

We all approach the bargaining table looking for our WIIFM (What's In It For Me). When you know the other party's WIIFM (their WHY), you can help them see how what you are bringing them to the table can benefit them and the customers they serve.

As I've previously shared, if you can help them see how what you are offering benefits them, giving them a WIN, they are much more likely to reciprocate, allowing you the WIN you are seeking.

And when both parties see the WIFM of working together, they see what they specifically get out of the deal you're creating, everyone is more inclined to find ways to work together for the mutual benefit of all concerned.

That's why I call negotiation the Art of the Mutual Win.

Celebrate the WINs & the Winners

Just as great athletes cheer each other's success, good negotiators complement their fellow negotiators for a job well done. Studies have shown that how a person perceives their performance is one of the most powerful aspects of the negotiation process.

Celebrating their skill as a competent, confident negotiator is just as important as celebrating the WINs each party has gained during the negotiation process.

Praise from a cohort can mean more than the actual WIN itself in the eyes of the negotiator.

When they can walk away from the bargaining table feeling they performed well, achieved (or exceeded) their goals and objectives, they get a powerful boost to their self-esteem.

Complementing their shrewdness, diplomacy, candor, patience, and confidence and letting them know you appreciated having them at the table is not only personally rewarding to your fellow negotiator, it sets the stage for another great negotiation opportunity in the future.

The confidence gained by a negotiator at the end of a successful negotiation prepares them to gain even more WINS for their employer in the future.

It is a huge psychological boost to their ego and belief in themselves.

Make It Legal & Binding

The last negotiating tip, and one that is pretty obvious, is to be sure to get everything you have negotiated on paper.

Having everything codified in writing assures there is no misunderstanding of the facts, each person's responsibilities, obligations and commitments, timelines, financial compensation, and other pertinent details.

Anything not in writing is subject to interpretation, so it is best to leave nothing out of the agreement that is important.

Make sure you have reviewed the agreement in its entirety before signing. Once the deal is inked, it is much more difficult to get things added or removed. Taking the time on the back end to assure the document spells everything out in black and white will be the pinnacle moment in the negotiation, and another reason to celebrate the WIN-WIN.

Without a signed agreement, you have no recourse if the other party fails to perform or doesn't fulfill their commitments. Not everyone bargains in good faith, and having the agreement codified provides the legal framework to hold everyone accountable, with accountability.

Gone are the days of the handshake agreement, which is unfortunate. But parties who are negotiating in good faith, seeking an ethical and moral way to work together for the mutual win have no issues with putting everything in writing so there are no questions and everyone is in agreement with the outcome.

SECTION Five

Final Thoughts & Next Steps

Final Thoughts

We all negotiate, more often than we perhaps realize. Hollywood has given negotiation a bad rap, inaccurately showing it as a hostile environment where everyone gets taken advantage of and only the “Big Guy” wins through crooked or illicit means. This is NOT the Art of Negotiation. It’s piracy.

Negotiation is the Art of the Mutual Win. It is the coming together of like-minded individuals in seek of a solution to a common problem or the assistance of someone else to achieve a goal or objective.

From negotiating with our partner and our children to collaborating and bargaining with coworkers and vendors, We negotiate all the time, whether we realize it or not, so we might as well learn how to improve in this area.

The good news is that ANYONE can become a more accomplished, successful negotiator. It is a skillset that can be learned, honed, and mastered.

And for anyone who is on the relentless pursuit of Black Belt Excellence as a Black Belt Leader in Life, learning to MASTER the Art of Negotiation™ is an essential skill to be honed to a razor's edge.

Negotiation requires you also learn to **MASTER Your Communication.**™ As you improve your speaking and listening skills, you're also improving your negotiation skills. Mastering your mindset and your emotions are also key to becoming an effective negotiator, and Black Belt Leadership offers training in these developmental areas as well.

Good leadership skills are also important, as these help you develop the problem-solving skills needed to be an effective negotiator. As you raise your leadership lid, you increase your overall awareness of effective leadership and the core elements of success.

How well do you negotiate right now? Take time to inventory your top negotiating skills? What are you really good at? What element of negotiation do you need to improve upon? How is your confidence? Communication skills? Listening

skills? Problem-solving skills? What are your top negotiating skills? An honest evaluation of your strengths and weaknesses serves as the starting point for developing yourself as a skilled negotiator.

How many more YESes could you get as a result of honing your negotiating skills and becoming a more effective negotiator?

And don't forget the power of a positive attitude, both as a negotiator and as a Black Belt Leader in Life.

For more training resources, visit my website:



www.beablackbeltleader.com

And while you're there, don't forget to follow me on Social Media (links are on my Contact Us page) where I'm sharing tips, tools, and motivational insights, and subscribe to my FREE weekly leadership newsletter. My passion is to help you continue to grow yourself as a Black Belt Leader in Life and teach others to do likewise.

After all...

**WHY JUST BE A LEADER
WHEN YOU CAN BE A
BLACK BELT LEADER?**

Next Steps

MASTER the Art of Negotiation™ is also available as a Video Master Class. Part of the **MASTER Your Communication**™ training library, this course includes an On-Demand Video Course, a digital copy of this book, as well as supplemental training resources to continue to hone your negotiation and bargaining skills.

BONUS #1: Get More of What You Want

In this bonus eBook, you'll learn why we don't negotiate, how to overcome your fear of negotiating, and tips to get what you're worth on the job. You'll also learn some success tips to help you get more without spending more.

BONUS #2: Get Even More of What You Want

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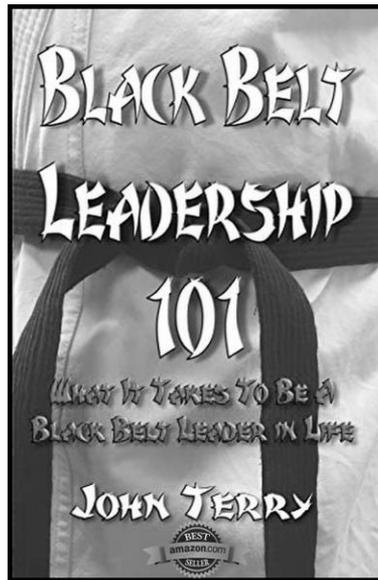


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BONUS SECTION

Advance Preparation Questions

Advance Preparation

1. What is the Negotiation intended to accomplish? What is the problem you're going to solve or the opportunity you're going to move forward?

2. What constitutes a WIN for You?

9. What is your Plan B? The minimum MUST-HAVEs to call the negotiation a WIN-WIN?

10. What information, facts, or details do you need from the Other Party to make a great decision?

11. If given the choice, when and where are you going to hold the negotiation? Why?

12. What research do you need to do in advance on the Other Party before you start to negotiate?

13. What options, alternative, recommendations, or suggestions can you bring to the negotiation that will serve both parties well?

Are you clear on how you articulate your Ask and desired outcome in the negotiation?

Yes No

Have you determined what questions you need to make sure you ask?

Yes No

Are you negotiating with a primary decision-maker who can say YES to your offer?

Yes No

Will you be meeting or pre-planning prior to the negotiation with the Other Party?

Yes No

Specific things you need to bring to the table?

Yes No

Have you identified when it is OK to take a time-out or walk away?

Yes No

Have you rehearsed what you will be presenting?

Yes No

Have you thought into the objections or questions the other party may raise in advance?

Yes No

Have you considered how you will respond if the negotiation goes sideways?

Yes No

Are you entering the negotiation with a positive outlook?

Yes No

BONUS SECTION

How NOT to Negotiate



How NOT to Negotiate

15 Common Negotiation Mistakes

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Introduction

When you hear the word “negotiation” what comes to mind? Often those thoughts are less than pleasant, as negotiation conjures up images of stress, pressure, debate, arguing, or being taken advantage of. If you’re like me, you’ve probably been involved in a negotiation that didn’t go the way you wanted.

It doesn’t have to be that way. Many people have a fear about negotiating that is often rooted in a misconception around what true negotiation is. Negotiation is a skill set that can be learned, but like any skill it requires practice and patience.

If you’ve made mistakes in past negotiations, it likely cost you. If you failed to learn the lessons of a bad negotiation, you’re likely to repeat these same mistakes in the future. That is what this guide is all about. Learning to recognize the common mistakes in a negotiation and how to avoid them.

In the martial arts, we practice the art of Bunkai. This is the art of analyzing and extracting what works (and what doesn't) from what you're learning. In this guide, we're going to go through a Bunkai of the 15 common mistakes people make in negotiating and how to avoid them.

But first, we need to understand what negotiation actually is and isn't.

What is negotiation?

Negotiation, by definition, is a discussion between two or more people to reach a consensus or agreement. It is a conversation designed to help each party find common ground and create a situation where everyone wins in some way. Negotiation requires some bargaining, what my grandfather referred to as "give and take" so you can find a way to get some or all of what you want while allowing the other person to get some or all of what they want.

True negotiation is NOT an aggressive tit-for-tat. It is NOT about bullying or intimidating the other person. Negotiation is finding the common

ground upon which a mutually beneficial arrangement can be achieved, a problem can be solved, or an opportunity seized upon. It does NOT have to be confrontational.

I like to refer to negotiation as the Art of the Mutual Win.

In negotiation, people may have the same goal, but different ideas of how to get there. Approaching negotiation as the Art of the Mutual Win shifts the thinking from focusing solely on your own wants and needs to the mutual interests of everyone at the proverbial table.

This shift in mindset is powerful, as it allows everyone to win. Changing how we view negotiation (and its desired outcome) can help us be more successful at it.

Negotiation is a problem-solving conversation that is mutually beneficial when it is done correctly. But when we negotiate poorly, we are not as successful as we could be – and that's when others can take advantage of us.

So what are some of the common mistakes that people make in negotiation?

In this guide, I want to identify 15 common negotiation mistakes people make that put them in a position of weakness or vulnerability, leaving them powerless to defend their position or gain any meaningful wins. Learning what not to do is just as important as learning what to do for a successful negotiation to take place.

So, let's do a bunkai of the Art of the Mutual Win and analyze what doesn't work so you can be better prepared to be a better negotiator. It's an important skill set to master, as you negotiate more often than you realize, as you will learn in the rest of this guide.

15 Common Negotiation Mistakes

1. Lack of Preparation - Whether you are negotiating the price of a household appliance or the terms of a new job, you want to go in prepared with the facts. Do your research before you go into the negotiation. Find the hard numbers for the price of the item at competitors' stores.

Learn about what others in your field with similar experience and education are getting for doing the same job. Also, make sure you know your own priorities.

If you don't know exactly what you want, it's going to be impossible to get it. Educate yourself about what's available and decide what you most desire so that you can make the most advantageous deal.

Prepare what you're going to say in an interview so you can properly articulate your strength, experience, and skillset.

2. Lack of Confidence – A lack of confidence in negotiation is often due to either a misunderstanding of what the negotiation is all about and entering into the negotiation unprepared or underprepared. Many people have the wrong idea about negotiations, believing that it's all about trying to win at all costs. If you believe you have to be aggressive or intimidating to be an effective negotiator, you're going to come off as a bully.

Secondly, going in unprepared or underprepared for the bargaining makes you feel like the other person has the upper hand, which is true. It's important to always go into a negotiation knowing as much as you can about what you want, what the other person wants and the facts that can persuade the other party to give you what you want.

Doing your homework in advance puts you in a position to better articulate what you want and how it benefits the negotiation.

3. Trying to Get it All - Negotiations are a give and take, allowing everyone to win in some way. When you are unwilling to give the other person anything they want, you are likely to go away empty-handed.

Remember, negotiation is the Art of the Mutual Win. It is not the Art of Divide and Conquer.

This is one reason why it's so important to know exactly what your list of priorities is before going into negotiations. What are your nonnegotiables? Where are you willing to yield?

Finding common ground for the mutual win puts you in a position to get the most important things on your list. You must be willing to participate in the exchange and concede some points to gain others that are more important to you.

4. Caving to the High-Pressure Sale - We've all experienced this type of salesperson. Pushy and intimidating, they won't take "NO" for an answer. They are agenda-focused individuals who

want to win at all costs. And their agenda is not helping you win in the negotiation.

They will play on emotions, claim scarcity or a high level of interest in their product or service, or offer a “limited time” bonus to entice you to take action now.

Their goal is to AVOID negotiation and get you to buy whatever they are selling and buy it now, at the highest profit margin possible. This is NOT a mutual win; it is a form of bullying.

Don't cave to high-pressure selling tactics used by individuals who want to stress you into making a decision that may not be in your best interest.

5. Not Being an Effective Listener – We have been given two ears and one mouth, but most of us are guilty of talking a lot more than we listen.

We are all guilty of thinking about what we want to say next or the argument we want to make against what the other person said, instead of really listening.

But this can be the kiss of death in negotiations.

You want to listen carefully so that you know you fully understand what the other party is offering you. When you listen attentively, you can also learn important things “between the lines.”

Things like the party’s timeline, motivation, requirements, and expectations can all be learned by listening to everything being said.

For more on learning the Art of effective listening, [Master the Art of Listening](#) (A video masterclass)

6. Interrupting the Other Person - Even if negotiations are going well when you interrupt someone to make a point or argument, you are showing disrespect. You’re telling them what you have to say is more important than what they have to say.

You should be listening for understanding to find that WIN-WIN, not waiting for your opportunity to speak.

When you interrupt, people get defensive. This can self-destruct the entire process of negotiating, leaving you with nothing.

And once someone is offended (or feels disrespected), they are much less likely to be open and amenable to you, as trust has been broken.

Interruption is a quick way to abruptly end a negotiation, and not in a good way.

7. Focusing on the Unimportant – In a negotiation, it is important to keep the main thing the main thing. While it may feel safer or less intimidating to stay focused on the less important aspects of a negotiation, you're putting time and energy into details that likely don't matter right now.

For example, if you're negotiating to purchase an item debating over how it will be delivered may be a moot point. If you don't agree on the initial purchase, how it is delivered doesn't matter, does it?

Once the highest priority items are on the table, the smaller ones will naturally arise.

8. Being Unclear in Your Ask - How can you get what you want when you don't ask for it? The answer? You can't. Spend some time deciding what parts of the negotiation are the most important to you, do your research on those points, and then ask for them.

You've got to be clear in your Ask so there is no question as to what it is that you actually want, and what is most important to you in the negotiation.

If you are not clear in your Ask, how can you articulate it to someone else?

If the other party says NO and isn't willing to entertain what you want, this is where the give-and-take of negotiation comes in. Remember, negotiation is often a trade-off to arrive at a mutual win. Offer the other party a WIN by agreeing to meet one of their important demands in exchange for one of yours.

If negotiations have stalled, and one or more of the parties is being inflexible or their demands are unreasonable, you can always walk away. The one sure way you won't end up getting what you want is by not asking for it.

9. Talking Too Much – In negotiations, silence is uncomfortable. As a result, we often try to fill it by talking. But in negotiations, silence is golden. It doesn't mean the negotiation has stalled. It means the other party is thinking.

Clearly articulate your Ask, outlining what you want or need, then stop talking. Give the other person an opportunity to process what you've said, weigh their options, and respond. It may feel uncomfortable, but that is okay.

If you keep talking to fill the uncomfortable silence, you may end up giving away too much or start backing away from what you are asking for. This can put you in a powerless position to regain a WIN once you've yielded to the other person.

10. Procrastination – Putting things off to the last minute is nearly always an invitation to be taken advantage of. For example, when we wait until the last minute to buy a car, even though we knew ours was on its last legs, we are likely to rush the process.

We end up paying more than we want and not getting everything we want.

It's easy to give in to high-pressure sales tactics when we urgently need something we're bargaining for. Under stress, we don't think as clearly and we often justify a poor decision as expedient or necessary. And if we vocalize our desperation, we have once again put ourselves in a powerless position to negotiate successfully.

11. Not Having a "Plan B" – Otto Von Bismark was Chancellor of Germany in the late 1800s. He was known as a military genius who always incorporated a contingency plan in preparing his troops for battle. This strategy became known as Bismark's "Plan B", a common term used today as an alternative plan of action.

Professional negotiators often refer to this as your BATNA (Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement). It is a predetermined fallback position in the event negotiations stall or comes to an impasse, also referred to as your “deal-breaker”.

Without a fallback position, how do you respond if the best-case scenario you envisioned doesn't materialize in the negotiations? For example, if you can't even get close to the salary you want, will you turn down the job? Are you willing to take their offered salary if they throw in two extra weeks' vacation?

What if your cell phone provider won't offer you the deal you want, are you willing to switch providers? Knowing the answers to these questions make you a formidable negotiator. When you don't know the answers, you may leave the negotiation feeling taken advantage of.

12. Focusing Only on Price - Since most negotiations center around money in some form, when we hear the word “negotiate” we

immediately think price. Of course, the price is important and shouldn't be ignored, but sometimes the other party can't or won't meet your price point. So then what do you do?

Your bargaining is dead in the water at that point because there's nowhere else to go. Think outside of money in negotiations. You might get additional services, warranties, or other benefits instead of a lower price. Or a higher salary that can be just as valuable, if not more so, than having the extra cash in your pocket.

13. Showing Desperation – We touched on this earlier, but it is worth revisiting. Desperation can, and often does, show up in our communication with others, verbally and nonverbally. People can see it, sense it, and will often use this to their advantage (and your detriment).

Even if you are desperate, you must do your best not to show it.

If you have ever watched professional poker players on television, they remain emotionless even when thousands of dollars are on the line. Practice putting on your poker face and use it when negotiating. Try to take the emotion out of the negotiation and avoid limiting your options as much as possible.

One way to decrease the amount of desperation you may be feeling is to do your homework in advance. Research your options, create your BATNA, and don't put yourself in a position of desperation by being more proactive in your planning.

Taking action earlier instead of waiting until the last minute, helps avoid a desperate situation in the first place.

14. Avoid Making Personal Connections – A common tactic used by negotiators is to befriend the other person. Asking questions about your family, your pet, or your hobbies is a means to find something you share in common, a place to build rapport.

Hostage negotiators, sales professionals, and phone solicitors are masters at this subtle form of psychology.

Studies show that when a person feels a connection with the person on the other side of the bargaining table, they are less aggressive in their demands and demeanor. For example, an auto dealer doesn't want you to haggle over price with them, so they cozy up to you.

This is an effective strategy you can employ as well. In most situations, you can chit-chat before the negotiations begin so that the person feels more at ease with you so that you are more likely to persuade them or find common ground.

15. Giving Away Too Much Personal Information – The more you talk, the more you potentially give the other person an advantage in the negotiation. A good negotiator asks great questions, listens intently, and shares only pertinent information to move the conversation forward.

Remember, this is a negotiation. While building rapport is important, you don't need to tell your entire life story. Exchange a few pleasantries and get to the business at hand, negotiating a Mutual WIN-WIN for all parties.

The more questions you ask, the more you learn about the other person. If you ask good questions, listen intently, and pay attention to what they are telling you, they will often tell you what you need to know so you can get what you want and they can get what they want.

Summary

In this guide, you've learned how to identify and overcome 15 of the common mistakes made when negotiating. The Art of Negotiation is a skill set you can learn, but it requires that you be purposeful and intentional. As you continue to review this guide, you'll internalize how to recognize and avoid these mistakes and improve your negotiation skills in the process.

If you'd like to learn more, let me invite you to my website where you can access my training course, **MASTER THE ART OF NEGOTIATION** (How to Get What You Want in Life). This course includes an On-Demand video class and the accompanying eBook will help you further improve your negotiation skills so you can become an even more successful negotiator.

It's one of several of the many training courses you can access from my website. Click on the image (or link) below to access this and other training resources.



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