

# Fulcrum Search Science Inc.

## Negotiating: Win-Win Tactics



The outcome of a negotiation can be win-win, win-lose, or lose-lose. Sometimes you strive for a win-lose, such as when you buy a car or a home (it is hoped that you win and the seller loses). But as work, a win-lose attitude with your boss or peers will come back to haunt you. You might win the first round, but sooner or later the loser will get even!

Here's how to produce a mutually beneficial result:

### **1. Before you being formal negotiations**

Develop a list of alternative outcomes. Evaluate them all. Select the best plus some acceptable fall-back positions that could still meet your needs.

Prepare yourself thoroughly. This will reduce your stress level and give you an ability to display confidence.

### **2. At the start of your negotiations**

Establish a joint goal. Even if the parameters are broad, you and your colleague will both focus on the objective instead of beating each other up.

Establish ground rules for the negotiations. This is particularly useful if the negotiation has typically created conflict and emotional outbursts. You might both agree to:

- listen to each other without interruption;
- respect each other, even though you may disagree on issues;
- be flexible on the less important issues.

State your needs clearly and firmly. Make sure that the other party understands them by getting verbal confirmation.

Determine the other person's needs. If you can meet his needs, chances are he will meet yours. If you frustrate him, he will do the same to you. Find out what his needs are by listening. Focus on what he is telling you instead of on formulating rebuttals. If you are not sure, ask him to repeat himself, or paraphrase his words to confirm understanding.

### **3. During the negotiations**

Find common ground and build on it to solve other problems.

Prioritise issues. Determine what is negotiable and what is not.

Try to understand what people think and feel. Read their non-verbal language. What are their facial expressions telling you? What are their eyes doing when you ask for commitment? What are their postures and hand gestures telling you?

Avoid arguing, especially on minor issues. Train yourself to agree to the small things so that you establish a collaborative environment focused on solving the more important items.

Avoid aggressive behaviour. Such behaviour will result in a win-lost outcome. The behaviour is typified by:

- Talking louder than the other person;
- Dominating the discussion;
- Using the sarcasm;
- Using authority (if you have it) to force the other party into acquiescence.

Avoid passive behaviour. This behaviour is characterized by:

- An unwillingness to deal with issues;
- Failing to make others aware of your concerns.

Behave assertively. Be hard on issues, but soft on people.

Avoid blaming others. Otherwise you poison the atmosphere and cloud the focus.

Always give your reason for declining a proposal.

Realize that the past can't be undone, and dwelling on it will cause hostility and defensiveness.

Look to the future. Visualize how much better things will be if both parties are able to get satisfaction.

Probe. Ask questions. Listen carefully. In this way, you will uncover the needs of other person. By finding those needs and then meeting them, you will set the stage for having your needs met.

Show positive language. Don't:

- Fold your arms or legs;
- Roll your eyes;
- Tense your body;
- Wear a scowl;
- Raise your voice.

Seek creative solutions that satisfy both parties. This happens more often when you:

Avoid "either/or" solutions. Limiting yourself to two alternatives reduces the possibility of creative new solutions.

Use the words "what if" more often.

Focus on common interests rather than opinions.

The party with the shortest deadlines will tend to concede more as the deadline approaches. If you have a deadline, don't reveal it.

Deal with issues as they arise so that they don't accumulate and overwhelm your discussion.

If your negotiations are going off on a tangent, get back on track with a comment such as "Yes, I can relate to that, but could we get back to the central issue?"

Be creative. There is more than one way to reach your goal. Have alternative ideas that will still provide benefits for all. Rigidity reduces creative problem-solving and increases conflict.

Stop negotiations from time to time to share your feelings. Find out how others are feeling. If they are negative, find ways to overcome the hostility so that you can continue to solve problems in a constructive manner.

Whenever the discussion becomes vague, clarify your understanding with a summary. For example, say "Do I understand the problem right? IN my mind, it is..."

In a unionized environment, be aware of items affected by the collective agreement. These should not be negotiated on a one-on-one basis.

#### **4. At the conclusion of the negotiation**

Avoid making extra concessions during the euphoria of reaching an agreement with the associate.

Summarize everyone's understanding so that everyone is absolutely clear as to what has been agreed upon. Commit it to paper so that no one will have to rely on memory for the details.

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