

# Never Split The Difference Summary

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**1-Sentence-Summary:** *Never Split The Difference* teaches why you should never compromise and how to negotiate like a pro in your everyday life.

**Read in:** 4 minutes

**Favorite quote from the author:**



When I talk about “negotiating,” what comes to mind? Maybe someone in a corporate board room or the police trying to negotiate a hostage situation. But did you know each one of us negotiates on a daily basis? It happens at home, with friends, with kids, or out shopping. This is because negotiation is any interaction that you have with a specific outcome in mind.

Negotiating probably looks like asking your boss for a raise and he doesn’t want to give it. Or when your spouse wants to go to the usual restaurant and you want to try something new. If you’re a parent, it can be getting your kids to eat their broccoli before they can have their dessert. Now that you understand what it is, it’s time to learn how to actually become successful at it. Like most people, you probably fail to convince the people around you on a regular basis.

This is where former FBI international kidnapping negotiator Chris Voss comes in with his book *Never Split the Difference: Negotiating As If Your Life Depended On It*. He has all the secrets of successful negotiation, whether it’s a high-stakes situation or an every day one. You’ll learn everything from how to listen in a way that creates trust to start a real conversation to getting the other side to how to settle things without compromising.

Here are the 3 most useful lessons I’ve learned from this book:

1. Build trust through mirroring and using the right tone of voice.
2. Label the emotions of the other person to position yourself well in a negotiation.
3. Take things slowly, don't accept demands, and do not compromise.

Are you ready to learn how to get what you really want in any situation? Let's go!

## Lesson 1: Mirroring the other person and using a good tone of voice will help you build trust.

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A great way to earn somebody's trust and to get them to open up to you is the active listening method. Active listening is listening to people in a way that makes the other person feel like you understand them.

One of the best ways to do this is by mirroring, or repeating what the person says but with a question. When they do this you can tease more tidbits of information from the other party. **The other person is more likely to talk because mirroring makes them feel like you're similar to them.** This feeling will help them trust you, which in turn makes them more likely to talk and find a solution.

The tone of your voice is also an important aspect of garnering trust. Have you ever been offended not because of something someone said, but because of the way they said it? If you worry about the other person getting nervous or upset, try using a deep and soft voice that is reassuring and slow. This will comfort them and make it more likely they'll share information.

Most situations, however, will call for your more positive or playful voice. This one makes it seem you are empathetic and easygoing. A way to help you do this is by smiling while you speak. It comes through in the way you talk and puts others at ease.

## Lesson 2: State the other party's feelings to gain tactical empathy.

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When you want to negotiate with someone, don't ignore their emotions, but rather show empathy for your advantage. This doesn't mean you have to agree with them, it just means that you are trying to see things from their perspective. By understanding their feelings, and stating them, you can position yourself better in the negotiation.

This is done by labeling or stating and acknowledging the other person's feelings. Doing this will calm the other person down, and in turn, they will act in a more rational manner. **When someone labels our emotions or we label someone else's, studies show it activates the rational part of our brain on brain scans.**

This worked for the author when he was negotiating with four fugitives that they believed had automatic weapons hiding in an apartment. He talked to them to find how they were feeling and labeled those feelings. He acknowledged that they were scared to leave because they were scared of being shot or going back to prison. After six hours, the fugitives surrendered. They told the author that his talking to them had calmed them down.

## Lesson 3: Slow down and don't compromise with the other side.

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Taking things slow and not compromising during a dispute helps you end with a better solution. The author teaches that compromising or "splitting the difference" is *always* a bad idea and should be avoided at all costs. Everyone has thoughts they won't share or maybe aren't aware of, so if they ask for something, you can't be sure that's what they actually want. Because of this, giving someone what they ask for doesn't always solve the real problem.

This is why it's so important to not rush, even when there are deadlines. You need to make sure you can learn as much as possible about the other party. If you rush, chances are higher that you'll have clouded judgment. **The truth is that most deadlines set by people are random and flexible, so take your time so you can create the best solution.**

An example of this was when the author was involved in negotiations with a kidnapper who had the wife of a Haitian police officer for a ransom of \$150,000. The author noticed that every week as Friday approached they would get more serious about the ransom before becoming quieter for the weekend. He realized what they really wanted was to party and they needed money. Once he realized the deadlines weren't that serious, he knew could negotiate a price much lower because partying in Haiti wasn't that expensive.

## Never Split The Difference Review

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*Never Split the Difference* had me hooked while I was reading it! The stories about real negotiation situations are fascinating and informative. I'm glad for what I've gained to help me get a better deal the next time that I have to bargain with someone to get what I want!

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## Who would I recommend the Never Split The Difference summary to?

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The 32-year-old who wants to learn to negotiate for a better salary in the workplace, the 38-year-old parent who wants her kids to be more obedient, anyone ready to have everyday exchanges work for their advantage.