



# Negotiation Skills

Although everyone negotiates informally all the time without even being aware of it, formal negotiation is a skill that can be learned through experience and practice. People who negotiate a lot tend to be much more skilled at it than people who have not participated in any formal negotiation. Negotiation means dealing with differences between two or more individuals or groups. As an ASHA you will have to deal with differences. You have to resolve these differences to achieve the larger goals of village health programmes. Let us build an understanding of the process of negotiation.

Negotiating is the process by which two or more people/parties with different needs and goals work to find a mutually acceptable solution to an issue. Because negotiating is an inter-personal process, each negotiating situation is different, and is influenced by each party's skills, attitudes and style. We often look at negotiating as unpleasant because it implies conflict, but negotiating need not be characterised by bad feelings or angry behavior. Understanding more about the negotiation process allows us to manage our negotiations with confidence and increases the chance that the outcomes will be positive for both parties.

Negotiations need not be confrontational by being offensive, insulting and challenging. In fact, effective negotiation is characterised by groups working together to find a solution, rather than each group trying to WIN at any cost.