Never Split the Difference - Negotiating as If Your Life Depended on it

**Chriss Voss**

# Chapter 1 | The New Rules

…

# Chapter 2 | Be a Mirror

…

## Key Lessons

* A *good* negotiator prepares going in, to be ready for possible surprises. A *great* negotiator aims to use her skills to reveal the surprises she is sure to find
* Don’t commit to assumptions, instead treat them as hypotheses and use negotiation to test them rigorously
* People who use negotiation as a battle of arguments become overwhelmed by the voices in their head
  + Negotiation is not an act of battle, it’s a process of discovery. The goal is to uncover as much information as possible
  + To quiet the voices inside your head, make your sole and all-encompassing focus the other person and what they have to say
* **Slow. It. Down.**
  + If we’re too much in a hurry, people can feel like they’re not being heard. You risk undermining the rapport and trust you’ve built.
* Put a smile on your face
  + When people are in a more positive frame of mind, they think more quickly and are more likely to collaborate and problem solve, instead of fight and resist
  + Positivity creates mental agility in both you and your counterpart
* There are three voice tones available to negotiators
  + The Late-Night FM DJ Voice: Use it selectively to make a point. Inflect your voice downward keeping it calm and slow. When done properly, you creates an aura of trust and authority without triggering defensiveness.
  + The positive, playful voice: Should be your default voice. It’s the voice of an easy goinggood-natured person. Your attitude is light and encouraging. The tick is to relax and smile while you’re talking.
  + **The Direct/Assertive voice**: Use rarely. Will cause problems and create pushback.
* Mirrors: Repeat the last three words or critical last one-three words of what someone has just said
  + We fear what’s different and are drawn to what’s similar
  + Mirror is the art of insinuating similarity, which facilitates bonding
  + Use mirrors to encourage the other side to bond with you, keep people talking, by your side time to re-group, and encourage your counter-parts to reveal their strategy

# Chapter 3 | Don’t Feel Their Pain, Label It

* He describes the 1998 story of when he was in an apartment hallway where three heavily armed fugitives were holed up inside
* In tense situations like this, the traditional negotiating advice is to keep a poker face. Don’t get emotional
  + Most researchers ignored the role of emotion in … “separate the people from the problem” they said
  + But that doesn’t make sense,
  + Emotions are one of the main things that derail discussions, once people get emotional, rational thinking goes out the window
  + They are scared people with guns
* Good negotiators identify and identify emotions
  + They can precisely label emotions, those of other and their own
  + Then they can talk about it without getting wound up
  + They are the tools
  + Not the obstacles, they are the means

# Chapter 7 | Create the Illusion of Control

…

* When attacked, don’t counterattack, disarm your opponent, and then …
* …
* Every calibrated question and apology lowers heart-rate a little bit..

…

## Key Lessons

* Who has control in a conversation, the guy listening, or the guy talking?
  + The listener, because the talker is revealing information while the listener, if he’s trained well, is directing the conversation towards his own goals
  + He’s harnessing the talker’s energy for his own ends
  + Remember that the tools from this chapter are listener’s tools, they are not about strong-arming your opponent into submission
  + They’re about using your counterparts power to get to your objective (listener’s judo)
* Don’t try to get your opponent to admit that you are right, **aggressive confrontation is the enemy of constructive negotiation**
* Avoid questions that can be answered with yes or tiny pieces of information
  + These require little thought and inspire the human need for reciprocity, you’ll be expected to give something back
  + Ask calibrated questions that start with the words “how” or “what”
  + By implicitly asking the other party for help, these questions will give your counterpart the illusion of control and will invite them to speak at length, revealing important information
* Don’t ask questions that start with “why” unless you want your partner to defend a goal that serves you
  + “Why” is always an accusation, in any language
* Calibrate your questions to point your counterpart towards solving your problem
  + This will encourage them to expand their energy on devising a solution
* *Bite your tongue*, when you’re attacked in a negotiation, pause and avoid emotional reactions
  + Instead, ask your counterpart a calibrated question
* There is always a team on the other side, if you are not influencing those behind the table, you are vulnerable

# Chapter 8 | Guarantee Execution

…

…

## Key Lessons

* Superstar negotiators, real rain-makers, know that a **negotiation is a playing field beneath the words**, where really getting to a good deal involves *detecting and manipulating subtle, non-obvious signals beneath the surface*
  + It is only by visualizing and modifying these sub-surface issues that you can craft a great deal, and make sure that it is implemented
* As you put these tools to use remember this chapter’s most important concept: “**yes” is nothing without how**
  + Asking “how”, knowing “how”, and defining “how”, are all part of the effective negotiator’s arsenal
  + He would be unarmed without them
* **Ask calibrated “how questions”, and ask them again and again**
  + Asking how keeps your counterparts engaged but off balance
  + *Answering the questions will give them the illusion of control*
  + It will also lead them to contemplate your problems when making their demands
* Use “how” question to shape the negotiation environment
  + You do this by asking “**how can I do that?**” as a gentle version of no
  + This will subtly **push your counterparts to look for other solutions, *your* solution**
  + And *it often gets them to bid against themselves*
* Don’t just pay attention to the people you’re negotiating with directly, **always identify the motivations of the players *behind* the table**
  + You can do so by asking how a deal will affect everybody else, and how onboard they are
* **Follow the 7-38-55% rule by paying close attention to tone of voice and body language**
  + *Incongruence between the words and non-verbal signs will show when your counterpart is lying, or uncomfortable with the deal*
* Is the yes real, or counterfeit? **Test it with the rule of 3**
  + **Use calibrated questions, summaries, and labels to get your counterpart to reaffirm the agreement at least 3 times**
  + It’s really hard to repeatedly lie or fake convictions
* A person’s use of pronouns offers deep insight into his or her relative authority
  + If you here a lot of “my”, “me, and “I , the real power to decide probably lies elsewehere
  + Picking up a lot of “we”, “they” and “them”, it’s more likely you’re dealing directly with a savy decision maker, keeping his options open
* **Use your own name to make yourself a real person to the other side**, and even get your own personal discount
  + **Humour and humanity are the best ways to break the ice, and remove roadblocks**

# Chapter 9 | Bargain Hard