Stage 1:

Adversarial party: At the beginning of the conversation, the adversarial party may present a strong or aggressive statement of their demands after greeting. The adversarial party may use strong emotional expressions.

Negotiator Strategy: Paraphrase the adversarial party’s concern in your own words. Show you have heard and understood them. Show empathy.

Stage 2:

Adversarial party: The adversarial party is not satisfied with empty words and further escalates the situation, emphasizing that their demands are clear, urgent, and non-negotiable.

Negotiator Strategy:  Bring the conversation forward by responding to the adversarial party’s demands. Use a neutral tone but with empathy. Focus on shared objectives. Identify actionable issues.

Stage 3:

Adversarial party: At this point, the adversarial party is relating their own demands to the negotiator’s concerns. In this way, the counterparty may either try to arouse empathy from the negotiator or threaten the negotiator with the aftermath of not satisfying the adversarial party’s demands.

Negotiator Strategy: Recognize and validate the adversarial party’s emotions and try to calm them down. Shift the focus away from the emotional statement to constructive solutions.

Stage 4:

Adversarial party: The adversarial party refuses to set aside emotions and emphasizes their strong demands. They may express anger, blame, or frustration.

Negotiator Strategy: Respond to the adversarial party’s words and continue to calm the adversarial party down. Clearly state the will to collaborate with the adversarial party. Propose concrete next steps.

Stage 5:

Adversarial party: The adversarial party starts to acknowledge that conditional cooperation is possible. The adversarial party gradually calms down and shows a tendency to work together. The adversarial party may also propose their solutions.

Negotiator Strategy: Respond and start to agree with the adversarial party’s demands if reasonable. Also propose more detailed, practical, and creative solutions to the issue. Ask for the adversarial party’s opinion on how to collaboratively solve the problem. Use diverse language by asking questions, providing options, or making suggestions.

Stage 6:

Adversarial party: The adversarial party responds to the negotiator’s questions by either proposing their solutions or choosing from the options provided by the negotiator.

Negotiator Strategy: Discuss practical solutions in more detail. Try to bring the dialogue to an agreement by agreeing to one or several of the discussed solutions.