



Book Successful Negotiating

Letting the Other Person Have Your Way

Ginny Pearson Barnes, Ed.D.
Career Press, 1998

Recommendation

Ginny Pearson Barnes' book declares that negotiations should not be wars of attrition or clashes of egos. Instead, they should be mutually beneficial dialogues that involve an open exchange of ideas, mutual respect and a celebration of differences. Sound a little simplistic? Perhaps. But the book is crisply written and covers all the points that one would expect: determining which side of a negotiation holds the power, using body language to your advantage and crafting fall-back positions. While some of Barnes' advice, like finding satisfaction in defeat, will sound a bit trite to hardened negotiators, she does present some interesting bargaining-table techniques, including some innovative ways to derail a domineering opponent. Nevertheless, veterans of hard-fought deliberations likely will find *Successful Negotiating* a bit soft in detail, so *BooksInShort.com* recommends the book to rookie negotiators who want to know what to expect when they step into the smoke-filled room.

Take-Aways

- Negotiation means resolving a disagreement, using give-and-take within a relationship.
- The ideal outcome of any negotiation is 'win-win,' where both sides get what they want.
- Before negotiating, take time to understand yourself and the person you will negotiate with.
- Empower the other person in a negotiation and learn to celebrate differences.
- Be careful about body language; it carries far more meaning than the actual words you use.
- Avoid absolutes and accusations when choosing your words in a negotiation.
- Build your relationship through the negotiation by focusing on people's interests, not their negotiating positions.
- Choose your negotiating strategy based on who has Power, Authority and Knowledge (PAK) in the negotiation.
- Don't let difficult personalities gain control of the negotiation; stand up for yourself.
- Learn to find satisfaction in the outcome of each negotiation, whether you get what you want or not.

Summary

What Negotiation is Not

Negotiation does not mean confrontation. Negotiating means resolving a disagreement by means of trust, communication and a belief in a process of exchange. Here are some key facts you must understand about negotiating:

- Negotiating is not always neat or nice. Once you accept that, you can find the inner strength to push toward what you want.
- Negotiating is not a game or a war. Games have rules and you know in advance what you need to do to win. That may not be true in real life. Rules, risks and rewards change. Be flexible.
- Negotiating is not about egos. Cooperate. Work together. Your goal is to leave the negotiation with a better relationship.
- Negotiating is not about perceptions. The challenge is to understand the other person's thinking. Try to see things from the other person's point of view.

Understanding Motivations

Everyone has three important higher-order needs: to be loved and valued, to be in control and to have sound self-esteem. When these needs go unmet, emotional reactions are normal. When you respond emotionally, you may choose unproductive behaviors. You can respond to emotion in a negotiation by retaliating, dominating or isolating. These are usually unproductive. You could also respond with a more productive behavior: cooperation. When emotions run high, reframe - look at the problem in a new way.

“An essential part of being persuasive is to communicate how meeting your needs also helps the other party.”

When emotions block progress, try to define the problem, share your feelings, state what you want or prefer, and suggest an ideal outcome. Express your feelings objectively. Attack the problem, never the person. Use the negotiation to build a relationship. Always create a positive environment.

Celebrate Differences

Negotiating means asking for something in the context of a relationship. Relationships change throughout life. We go from dependence, to independence, to the most adult of all relationships, interdependence. Interdependent people in a negotiation empower the other side by showing honesty and openness.

Careful Communications

Keep logic and emotions in balance. Communicate openly. Remember the "4 C's" of communicating: Be Clear, Comprehensive, Calm and Caring.

“When you negotiate successfully, your ultimate goal is to come away knowing that both parties had their needs met as fully as possible.”

How you speak is as important as what you say. Body language is far more important than words. It includes your voice pitch, intonation, gestures, eye contact, proximity and facial expression. Body language communicates how much power you have in the situation, how much you like the other person and how responsive you are to the person.

“People who try to dominate fail to recognize that in a negotiation, control comes through creating options, maintaining good communication, and continually being able to define win-win outcomes that satisfy all parties.”

Remember the importance of body language with the SOFTEN technique:

- Smile.
- Open your body posture - Don't cross your arms or turn your back.
- Forward lean - This communicates interest and willingness to listen.

- Touch - A handshake is the appropriate touch in the workplace.
- Eye contact - Making eye contact says you are trustworthy.
- Nod frequently - But don't overdo it or you will look silly.

“Understanding others is more important than being understood by them.”

Certain specific words escalate conflict. Avoid "you," which points a finger of blame at the other person. "I prefer that we talk calmly," is better than "You have to calm down." "But" is negative, and sours the negotiation. Say something positive and use "and" rather than "but" to add criticism. "Can't" means you won't change. It makes negotiation appear hopeless. People dislike "always/never" accusations. When you say "Should have" and "Ought to have" you're being manipulative and bossy.

“To reap success at negotiation, you need to work on the relationship that exists between you and the other party as you negotiate and put aside the notion that disagreement automatically means confrontation.”

Listen actively. Listen more than you talk. Show that you are interested in what the other person is saying. Ask questions for clarification. Don't jump to conclusions; wait to respond. Listen for ideas, not just for words. Let go of your own worries. Notice the other person's body language.

Do Your Homework

Prepare yourself mentally and emotionally to understand the other person and yourself. Avoid assumptions, know the subject of the negotiation, and focus on each person's main interests. You can learn about the other party by asking other people and checking with sources like publications and speeches. When you sit down to learn the other person's needs, you can ask two kinds of questions. Open-ended questions produce open-ended information. You can also ask "yes" or "no" questions. Use these to pin down the other party and to find points of agreement. Get as many "yeses" as you can.

“Negotiating can be dangerous, or it can be an opportunity for developing and enhancing relationships and yourself.”

Focus on people's interests, not their positions. To understand interests, ask for objections, listen to them, acknowledge them, and classify them. The main categories of objections are smoke-screen objections, which are phony and hide real issues, knee-jerk objections, which some people give because they think they need to have lots of objections when they negotiate, emotional objections, which arise if people feel threatened or disliked, and real objections, which will form the heart of your collaboration.

Negotiate Actively, Honestly and Fairly

In any negotiation, there are seven strategies that you can choose from. You can use them in combinations, just like you can use layers of clothing or sweaters. The seven "sweaters" of negotiation are:

1. Ignore/deny. Use this to avoid issues that don't pertain to whatever you're negotiating. But don't ignore feelings, including your own.
2. Suppress. Biting your tongue. Only do this for short periods of time.
3. Leave. You can leave for a short time and then return, leave for a long time and then return, or just leave.

“Recognizing that you have choices about your beliefs, standards and lifestyle reduces conflict.”

The next four "sweaters" involve PAK - Power, Authority and Knowledge. Power is influence and your effect on others. It is not status or title. Sometimes people with lowly titles have great power and influence because they can affect others. Authority comes from your company. Knowledge is what you have learned.

4. Placate. Use this when you recognize the other person's PAK.
5. Dominate. Use this when you have control of the outcome. You can dominate when you have PAK. Dominance is good in a crisis. Don't dominate when others have PAK or when you don't have it.
6. Compromise. This is essential when you both have PAK.
7. Collaborate. Use a team effort at every level. Everyone involved must have PAK.

“Ultimately, when you embrace a winning attitude, assumptions, and behaviors, you have winning outcomes. The reverse is also true.”

To decide which strategy works for you, ask yourself whether you or others have PAK. How much do you trust each other? How well do you communicate?

Negotiating Stages

Once you’ve decided which sweater to wear, keep in mind that negotiations go through seven stages:

1. Define the problem. Focus on the other person’s interest, not his/her position.
2. Look for common ground. Focus on mutual interests; this reinforces your relationship.
3. Realize that multiple interests are at work.
4. Look for solutions, not the problem.
5. Focus on the benefits for both sides.
6. Decide on a time to evaluate and make decisions.
7. Reinforce commitments after you’ve agreed.

“Commitment is a step beyond agreement. It puts everyone in motion to act out the agreement they made.”

Remember to stay principled. By focusing on the interests of both parties, you help to build your relationship through the negotiation. Be honest. Don’t give in just to be liked. Be reliable and trustworthy. Don’t radically change your position to throw the other person off guard. Don’t expect others to compromise just because you are willing to compromise.

Negotiating with Naysayers

Negotiations are not always easy or nice. Sometimes the answer is no. Never take a ‘no’ personally. Have backup plans and options ready at all times. Suggest a postponement if need be. When negotiations are going against you, remember to thank the other person for his/her effort. Three "magic phrases" that help do that are "I respect," "I appreciate," and "I agree."

“Understand what the other person wants before trying to persuade her to accept what you want.”

Some people are simply difficult, obnoxious personalities. They often set you up to fail so they can build their own self-esteem. It is often useful to interrupt a difficult person’s harassment to change the subject or start a new discussion. You can detour, which means leaving the subject for a short time and then coming back. You can make a joke or step out for coffee. This will divert attention from the obstacles you face. You can interrupt by doing something to stop the other person in his tracks. Used at the wrong time, though, this can weaken your position. You can also use the broken record technique. Repeat what behavior you have a problem with and what you want in place of it.

“In negotiating, as in life, you’re more likely to get an immediate reward when you’ve prepared well for the outcome.”

Keep careful records of your negotiations with difficult personalities. If all else fails, go to mediation or arbitration.

Satisfaction

Satisfaction is a continuum. There is short-term and long-term satisfaction. It is your job to enjoy successes, learn from failures and cope with outcomes in the middle. Sometimes not ‘winning’ leads to a better outcome in the long run.

“Creating acceptance and satisfaction when you don’t win is the ultimate growth process in negotiation.”

There are four stages of satisfaction:

1. Immediate reward, or instant satisfaction. It’s rare to get what you want right away, so when you do, treat it as a gift.
2. Delayed reward or delayed satisfaction. Sometimes you get what you want after you keep asking for it. This takes patience.

This is how most of us experience satisfaction.

3. Different reward, or adjusted satisfaction. The outcome often isn't what you wanted. It could be better or worse than you expected. Even if it's worse, you need to find satisfaction in the outcome.
4. Rejected reward, or acceptance satisfaction. You 'lose' in the negotiation, but you find satisfaction in your ability to accept the outcome and live with disappointment. You move on to find satisfaction elsewhere in life.

About the Author

Ginny Pearson Barnes originally published *Successful Negotiating* under the title *8 Steps for Highly Effective Negotiation* in 1995.
