Multi-party Negotiations

Compiled by Dr. Renu Girotra

- more than two interested parties work together:
  - to achieve a collective objective
  - to discuss the options and make a collective decision

  *involves unique dynamics in a collective decision-making process
  *different agendas
  *varied interests/ involvements

What makes it different from 2-party negotiations

Number of Parties

1. Each party may be acting as a principal—representing its own interests

2. or an agent—representing the interests of at least one other party (the constituency

3. parties may also have different social roles outside the negotiation (e.g., president, vice president, director, board chairman) that may lead to either equal or unequal levels of power and status in the negotiation

Informational and Computational Complexity

Social Complexity (dynamics of groups- motivational cooperation, trust, social pressures)

What makes it different from 2-party negotiations

Procedural Complexity ((e.g., opening statements, presentation of viewpoints, moving toward agreement)? , negotiations will take longer,- more time to be allowed; the greater the number of parties- the more complex and out of control the process can become—particularly if some parties adopt a strategy of tough positional bargaining and dominate the conversation ; -------as a result of the first two elements, negotiators shall decide how to manage the process to arrive at the type of solution or agreement they want. Finally, the parties must decide how they want to approach multiple issues)
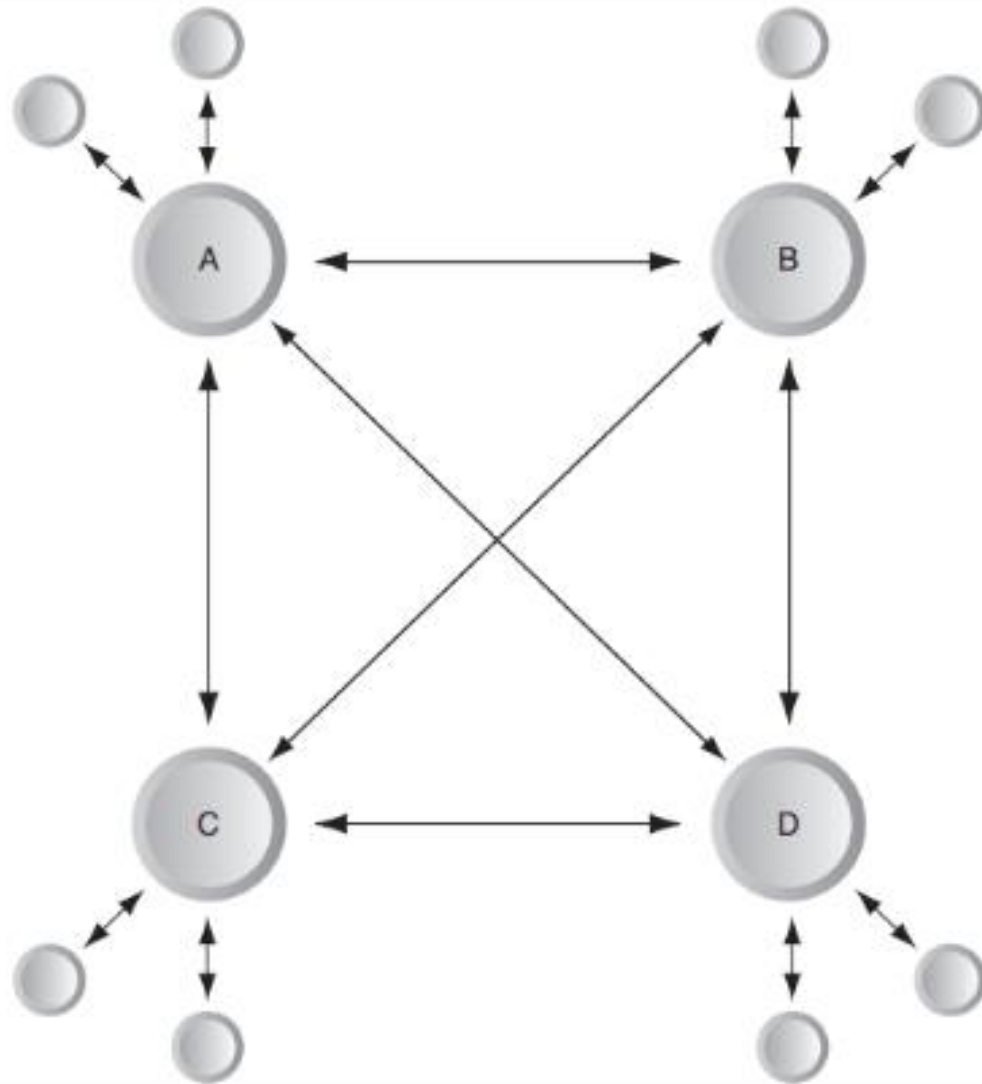
Logistical Complexity (physical and psychological distance)

Strategic Complexity (surveillance and audience dynamics; negotiators who have some way to control the number of parties may begin to act strategically; chances of coalition

FIGURE 10.2 | A Multiparty Negotiation with Constituents

Managing Multiparty Negotiations

Pre-negotiation stage

Formal Negotiation Stage (managing the process and outcome)

Agreement Stage

Managing Multiparty Negotiations

- Pre-negotiation stage
  - Participants (roles, evaluate/ info about participants- supportive/ problem creators)
  - Coalitions (promoting or blocking the outcome/ agenda)
  - Defining Group Member roles
  - Understanding costs and consequences of no agreement (role of BATNA)
  - Learning the issues and constructing the agenda

TABLE 10.1 | Roles Commonly Played by Members of a Group

Task-Oriented Roles	Relationship-Oriented Roles	Self-Oriented Roles
Initiating/offering— offering new ideas	Encouraging—supporting others' comments, contributions	Blocking—act negatively, active and frequent disagreement with others
Information seeking— asking others for their views	Harmonizing—smoothing over conflict, reinforcing "we-ness" of the group	Recognition seeker—draw the group's attention to themselves, seek approval from others
Opinion seeking— asking others for their opinions, judgments	Compromising—shifting one's own position in order to find a middle ground of opinion between people	Dominator—speak frequently, dominate the conversation, manipulate the group toward their preferred outcome
Elaborating—clarifying, expanding on the topic	Gatekeeping—encouraging participation from those who do not speak often, discouraging participation from those who speak frequently	Avoider—remain quiet and disengaged, withhold contributions on either task or relationship issues
Evaluating—offering judgments about the topic	Standard setting—Asking for or offering standards for judging the team's effectiveness	
Coordinating—pulling together ideas proposed by others		
Energizing—creating excitement about the topic being discussed		

Managing Multiparty Negotiations

- Formal Negotiation Stage (managing the process and outcome)
  - Appoint an appropriate chair (amongst parties or neutral chair)
  - Use and restructure the agenda
  - Ensure diversity of information and perspectives (communication of disagreements, freedom to express, divide responsibilities- scouts, coordinators etc; understanding other person/ party's position)
  - Ensure consideration of all available information (be prepared, side conversations, means for defusing an emotionally charged discussion, tolerate conflicting points of view and perspectives)
  - Exchange of ideas/ decision making- Delphi technique, Brainstorming, Nominal Group technique)
  - Manage conflict
  - Review and Manage the decision rules (consensus rules, discourage- maximising individual gain, entering coalition, goal orientation, decision rules, tactics, decision aids etc.)
  - Strive for a first agreement (revised, upgraded, improved)
  - Manage problem team members

Managing Multiparty Negotiations

- Agreement Stage
  - Select the best solution
  - Develop an action plan
  - Implement the action plan
  - Evaluate outcomes and the process

Interteam Negotiation

- Features:

  - Integrative agreements are more likely when teams are involved
  - teams are sometimes more competitive than individuals and may claim more value
  - Accountability pressures are different for teams compared to individuals
 - Relationship among team members affects negotiation process and outcome

COALITIONS

Collection of two or more parties within a larger social setting who work together to pursue mutually desirable goals

- Types:
  - Potential (latent or dormant)
  - Operating (established or temporary)
  - Recurring

COALITIONS

- Attributes

  - Coalitions are interacting groups of individuals
  - Coalitions are deliberately constructed and issue oriented
  - Exist independent of formal structure
  - Lacks formal structure
  - Focus on goals external to the coalition
  - require concerted member action
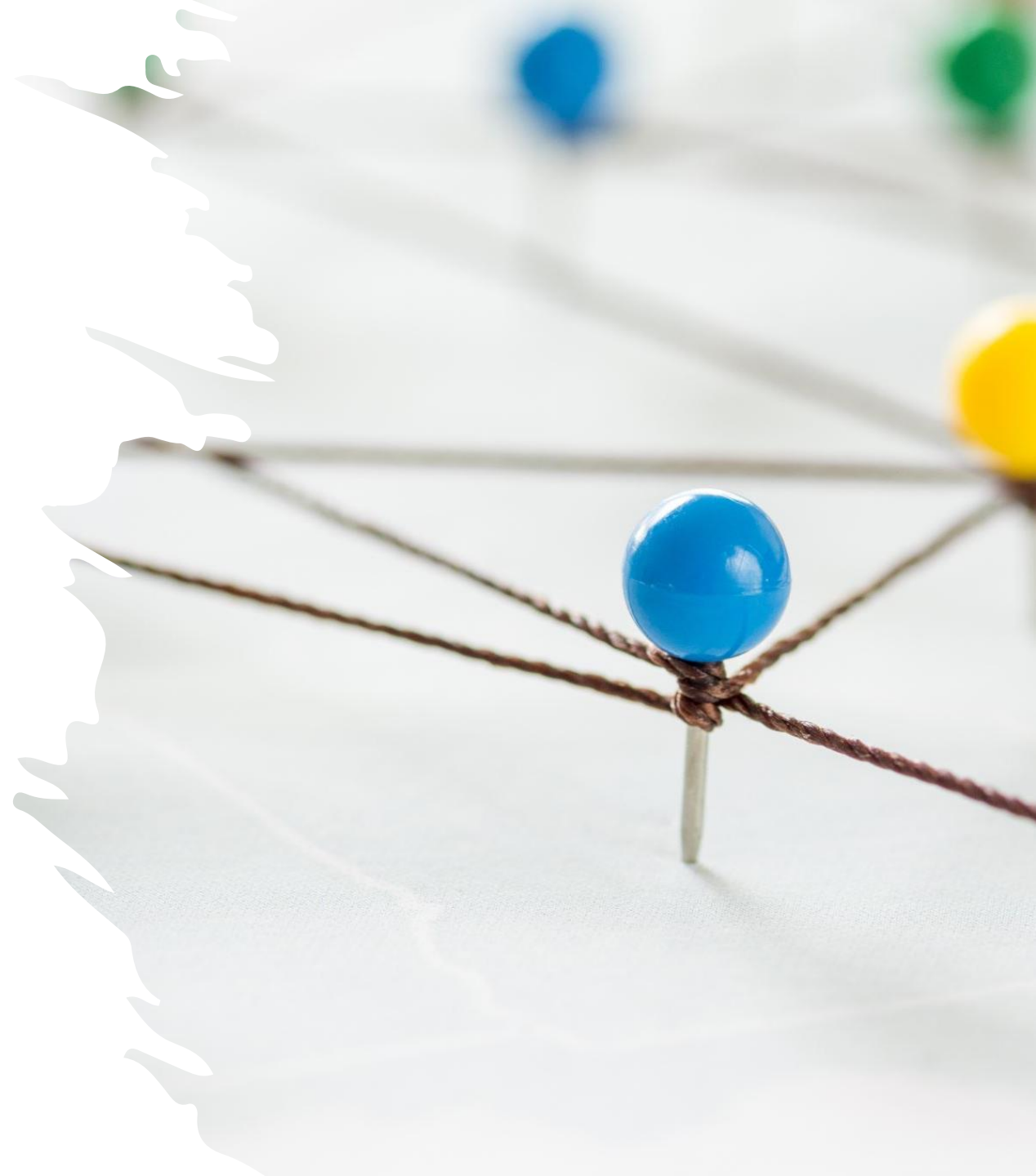
How are Coalitions developed

- Starts with the founder

- Builds by adding one member at a time

- Need to achieve critical mass

- Excludes some members

- Weak ties can be strong

- Sometimes coalitions form quietly and disband quickly (Revenge, turmoil within, desire for anonymity)

Power and leverage in coalitions

Identifying the source of strength (Strength in strength, strength in weakness)

Role of power (Strategic, normative, relationship based)

How to build coalitions

Pursue activities have meaning to themselves and to others
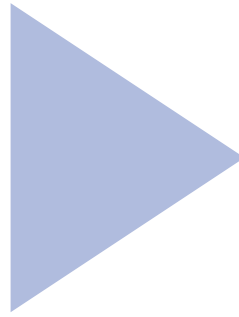
Are needed

Generally contribute to the organisation and its purpose

Act with integrity and tell the truth about what they see happening

Strive to be as good and productive

Prospective coalition partners usually along two dimensions

- Are the members in high or low agreement with your objectives
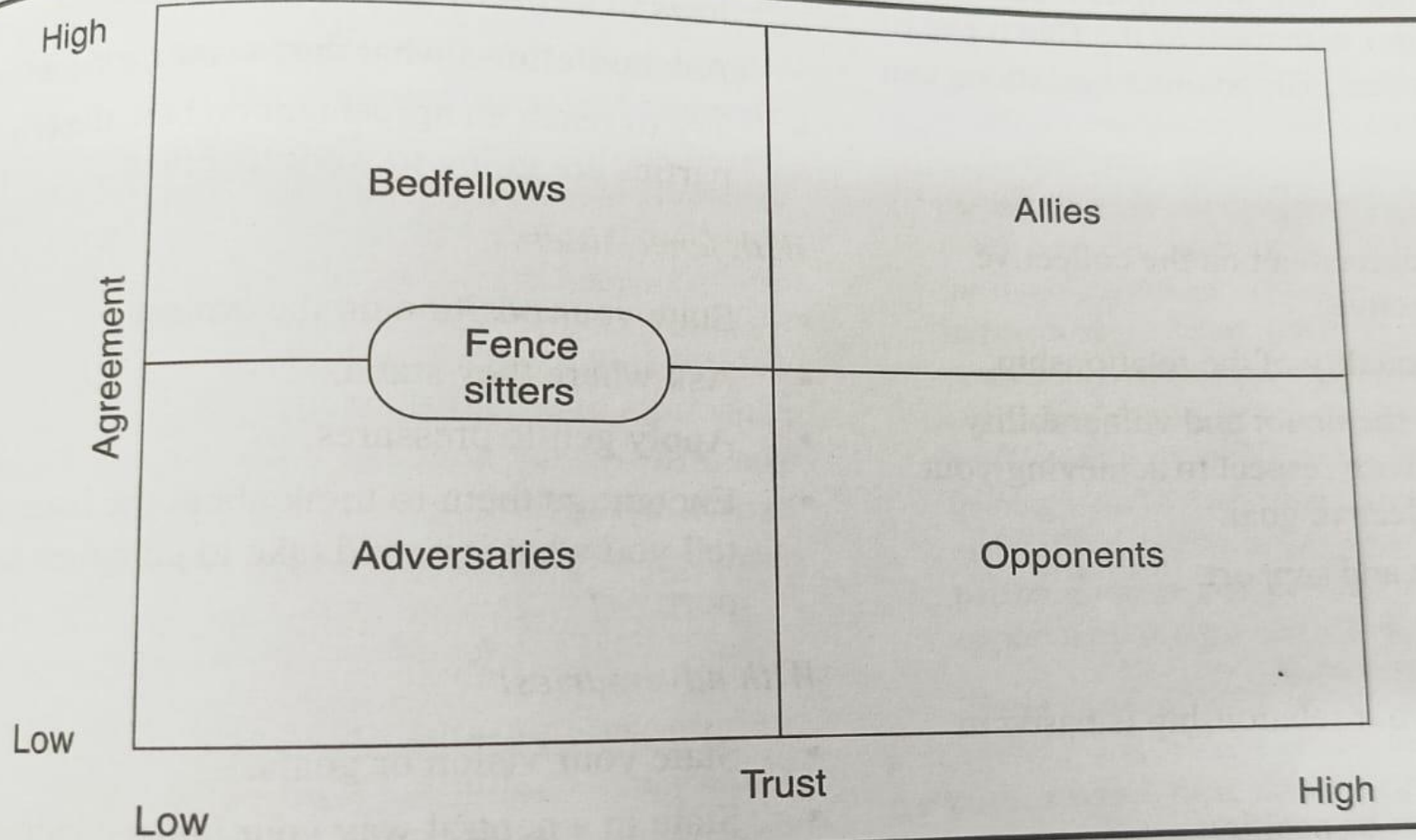- Do the members generate from you high or low levels of interest

Categories based on these 2 dimensions

- Allies
- Opponents
- Bedfellows
- Fence Sitters
- Adversaries

FIGURE 12.2 | Trust/Agreement Matrix

has conflicting goals and ob-

References

- Negotiation by Roy J Lewicki, Bruce Barry & David M Saunders , 6th edition

- Conflict Management: A practical guide to developing Negotiation Strategies by Budjac Corvette, Barbara A , first edition

THANK YOU