



Negotiation Tips For Business

By Wendy Alexander

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We all negotiate daily. We might not see it that way, but we negotiate with our children, our husbands and wives, our employers and employees and even when we book a holiday.

It's my passion to help others create better value in the deals they make every day.

I aim to break down these tips and tricks in simple and useful tools for everyone to use in their lives everyday.

In October 2019, I completed advanced training in Mediation at a Program on Negotiation at Harvard Law School in Boston, USA. I am also an "Associate Member of the Arbitrators and Mediators Institute of New Zealand (AMINZ) and AMINZ trained in mediation.

This training can be applied easily in our everyday lives!

I am excited to assist others to navigate around conflict and learn to negotiate in a better way so they can get on with doing what they do best – running their business!

Prepare, Prepare, Prepare!

The best outcomes in negotiation come from evaluating the following questions beforehand.

Identify the issues and think about interests (theirs AND yours) - think broadly and be as creative as you can!

What is really important to them?

Create options and solutions that might be attractive to them. This way, you invite them to play your negotiation game and are more likely to solve the problem.

I have set out a *quick fire list* of best questions to ask yourself before you get to the negotiating table.

A woodsman was once asked, "What would you do if you had just five minutes to chop down a tree?" he answered, "I would spend the first two and a half minutes sharpening my axe."

Jaccard, *Increasing Understanding of Public Problems and Policies: A group study of four topics in the field of extension education*, Farm Foundation, 1956,12.

A 12 point checklist to help you prepare!

1. Write down who needs to be there and who has authority to do the deal.
2. What you want to achieve.
Write down your best and worst outcomes.
3. Write down your position.
NB: this is mainly focussed on the amount of money you want to negotiate.
4. What are your interests?
NB: understand an interest is different to your position!
 - These are things of importance to your business (now and in the future – e.g. preserving your reputation, avoiding the cost and stress of litigation, marketing opportunities, joint venture proposals/ideas);
 - Something of value you can exchange
 - do I want to preserve this business relationship?
 - are there business contacts/introductions I could use?
 - is there something they may need from us?
 - is there something we want from them?
 - which are the most important to us?
 - which are the most important to them?
5. Write down their position.
NB: this is mainly focussed on the amount of money they want to negotiate.

Tip One

When negotiating, we often think we need to find common ground right?

Not always!

Sometimes looking for the differences is more useful to get a deal.

Put simply...

A vegetarian with a chicken and a carnivore with a large vegetable garden could easily do a deal. Therefore, search for differences that could solve the problem.

*"Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In" by Roger Fisher & William Ury **

Tip Two

You need to share information to discover differences. A story demonstrates this beautifully!

Two siblings were fighting over an orange.

They both wanted the entire orange.

After much haggling they decided to compromise and cut the orange into two.

Each went his separate way with half an orange.

One sibling ate the fruit of their half of the orange and threw the peel in the rubbish bin.

*The other went home to the kitchen, peeled her half of the orange, used the peel to make a cake, and tossed the juicy pulp in the rubbish bin. **

The point of the story is that when people focus on their position without sharing information they may not achieve the best deal.



Conclusion

First, we explored the way to prepare for negotiation and provided you with a checklist that is easy to read and understand.

We suggest printing our checklist out and hanging it close to your phone. Use it regularly when faced with those tricky customer calls.

Then, we put simply some helpful examples to demonstrate that often the common ground lies in the differences between the parties. Exploring the differences can open up opportunities for trade in order to reach an agreement.

Next, we explained the role of empathy and how it plays a role in effective negotiation. Using the magical tool of "empathy" is an extremely effective way to establish a "connection" with the parties.

Displaying empathy can not only reduce the tension in the room and de-escalate conflict but can also assist with generating better solutions. Properly expressed, empathy contributes to the process of negotiation by creating a relaxed atmosphere.

We then explored some practical negotiation tips you could use every day to expand the pie. Who wouldn't want to receive more out of the deal than they first could envisage? Here, we provide you with handy tips to make this possible!

Finally, we provided you with enormously helpful tips to navigate around those tricky or stubborn negotiators. Again, print out these tips so they are handy to your phone. They are extremely useful when negotiating that better deal!

If you have any questions or I can assist you in any way, please feel free to write a quick email to Wendy Alexander
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I look forward to hearing from you soon!



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