Collins

Negotiation Skills

LEARN FROM THE EXPERTS

Clare Dignall

Clare Dignall
Negotiation Skills in 7 simple steps

Аннотация

7 simple steps to flawless negotiations

A successful negotiation results in a win-win agreement for both parties. But where do you start if you're up against people or organisations with conflicting objectives? Or people who are just downright difficult? Getting what you want requires determination and tact. You need to be assertive but know when to compromise.

We'll help you refine your persuasive skills through verbal and non-verbal communication. We'll show you how to identify and understand the key issues, distinguish between needs and interests and come to an agreement that benefits everyone.

With our 7 simple steps you'll be a pro in no time.

Содержание

Contents 8
Step 1 9
Five ways to succeed 10
Five ways to fail 11
Resolving conflict 14
Making decisions 15
Buying 16
Selling 17
Do both (or more) parties have something to gain? 19
Do you want to stick around? 20
Do you and the other party (or parties) have time? 21
Set a primary ‘gut feeling’ objective 22
Make time to gather knowledge 23
Never assume what worked before will work again 24
What is a USP? 27
Recognize your USP 28
Get ready to sell your USP 29
Gather all possible information 31
Get to know each other 34
When is it best to use a team? 35

How to choose your team 36
Matching your team to negotiation roles 38
Know your authorities 40
Decide how you'll communicate 41
Key take-aways 42
Step 2 44
Five ways to succeed 45
Five ways to fail 46
Am I in the right ballpark? 48
Who has the most leverage? 49
How do I stick to my walk-away points? 51
How does a BATNA work? 52
Offer to draw up an agenda 53
Business writing: agendas 54
Make an educated guess about their strategy 55
Road test your strategy 57
Dress 60
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента. 61

Collins

Negotiation Skills

Contents

Cover
Title Page
Step 1 Understanding negotiation methods
Step 2 Prepare your strategy
Step 3 Take control in the early stages
Step 4 Propose, bargain and agree
Step 5 Find the win-win window
Step 6 Deal with difficult moments
Step 7 Close the deal
Keep Reading
About the Author
Copyright
About the Publisher

Step 1
UNDERSTANDING NEGOTIATION METHODS

'No question is ever settled until it's settled right.' — Ella Wheeler Wilcox (1850–1919), Poet

Five ways to succeed

Negotiate to invest in relationships, not to damage them.

Recognize how frequently you negotiate in everyday life.

Always ensure there is enough time for negotiations.

Identify what you can concede to help reach agreement.

Learn as much as you can about your opposite number.

Five ways to fail

Take up a fixed negotiating position, and don't give in.
Use the methods that have worked for you before.
Don't waste time planning; spontaneity gets results.
Never build relationships before negotiations.
Don't assign team roles; let everyone speak equally.

What is negotiation?

Hear the word 'negotiation' and you'll probably imagine sharp-suited executives haggling across a gleaming boardroom table, or millionaire footballers hammering out transfer deals with big-name clubs. Whatever comes to mind, it's unlikely that the images you come up with are of people just like you. Inexplicably, we associate the word 'negotiation' with people who are rich and powerful: that negotiating is something we'll never have to do. But that's just the thing; we negotiate all the time, every one of us, with varying success.

So, if it's not just boardroom stuff, what is it? At its core, negotiation is nothing more than a dialogue between two or more parties working towards making an agreement, resolving a conflict, or reaching mutually beneficial goals. Sound familiar? In fact, you've probably negotiated a couple of times before lunch today already. In its most common guise, negotiation is the simple process of explaining your needs, exploring options and reaching agreement in ways that make life more navigable. At its

most strategic, these basic tactics are formalized into standard procedures that can, for example, help businesses work together, help ambassadors improve international relations, and in the direst circumstances, save the lives of prisoners and hostages.

Why should we negotiate?

In an effort to appear easy-going, we may often avoid speaking out for the things that we want or need from life, whether that be in personal relationships or in our working lives. This means we'll avoid negotiation, because it just doesn't feel natural. Many of us assume that negotiating will jeopardize ongoing relationships with a loved one, or with an employer. But in many cases, this assumption is wrong, and avoiding negotiation means everyone loses: the partner in a relationship who never voices their needs may be taken for granted and decide to leave; the single parent who won't ask for flexible working may end up quitting a good job for a dead-end one that better fits the school day. But by careful negotiation, such endings can be avoided. The key is identifying, and striving for, areas of mutual advantage that will allow everyone to benefit in some way (often called a win-win situation). If this happens, both relationships can emerge intact, or even improved. Negotiating needn't necessarily entail conflict; there may be tough moments on the way to resolution, but by negotiating the problem side by side, you're actually investing in the future relationship, rather than damaging it.

Different negotiation environments

Though we negotiate constantly in our daily lives, the prospect

of negotiating at work can still be terrifying. If you're feeling like this, it's worthwhile looking closer at everyday negotiation environments and noting how they use repeated and recognizable processes. Acknowledging these skills you've developed 'off-duty' can help you build a portfolio of negotiation experience to apply in the workplace.

Resolving conflict

To successfully resolve disputes we create a setting in which each party can air their grievances objectively. Both sides must try not to let anger cloud the issues, because 'getting personal' just doesn't help. Both may then explain the areas they find unreasonable. Exploring how the dispute has come about and developed is an important step in preventing recurrence. Having identified the problem, it's time to propose solutions for mutual benefit. Facing conflict promptly is central to resolution. This may sound like a complex set of procedures, but it's likely you've navigated them a thousand times, whether resolving an argument with your partner, or agreeing the line of a boundary fence with your neighbour. Next time you resolve conflict at home, note the actions you undertook, and consider how you might use them in the workplace.

Making decisions

A negotiated decision's central premise is that you are trying to reach a decision that's 'better' than would have been possible without negotiating. Say you have to agree with another team from your office on a new software package that you both need. To reach a decision, both sides must research options to understand the choice and availability, and agree the selection criteria they'll use, so it's clear the final choice will be a fair one. Then they need to identify constraints, as some packages may not have all the features each team needs. Both parties may need to make concessions – perhaps sacrificing a desirable software add-on to keep the purchase affordable for everyone. Sound complicated? You're more experienced in this than you think. These are the exact processes we undertake to make the simplest decisions – where to eat, when to take a holiday, what colour to paint our living rooms.

Buying

Buying in the workplace can take many forms, from purchasing contractor services to hiring staff. The buyer must identify the needs of all interested parties, agree available budget and sche-dule, and research the options that meet the majority of these needs most effectively. At the point of purchase, and if the time is right, the buyer may even haggle, on price perhaps, or try to get an ‘added extra’ that sweetens the deal. It’s worth remembering that these procedures are the very same we undertake when making a big personal purchase, such as buying a house, a car, or a holiday.

Selling

Successful selling depends on how well we know our product and our market. Whether punting vintage comics on eBay, or leftover lawn turf to a colleague for cash; the vendor must know what their product or service provides in terms of benefits, and what competitors charge, before they can arrive at a fair price. How does this apply to negotiation? Take this skill-set and apply it, for example, to negotiating for better pay, which is, in blunt terms, 'selling' the product of you at market value, and not a penny below it.

Many skills needed for successful negotiation are ones that we apply in our daily lives, probably without noticing. By taking this tool kit, extending and formalizing it a little, we can approach negotiation in our working lives too. Whether you seek to advance your career or get a good deal from suppliers, believe it or not, you're already surprisingly well-equipped.

Knowing when to negotiate

While developing your negotiation skills is invaluable, it's just as important to know when it's appropriate to negotiate and when it's not a good idea. Recognizing when negotiation isn't an option will save you time, effort, and credibility.

Do both (or more) parties have something to gain?

To negotiate, you and your opposite number must have some common ground to work from, and both must have something to gain.

Do you want to stick around?

Do you want to have a future relationship with the other party? If so, negotiation is the best option, because if you don't share your needs, one or both of you will walk away.

Do you and the other party (or parties) have time?

If time is short, and you can't postpone negotiation, you'll be unable to prepare effectively enough to achieve much. You wouldn't choose a holiday in 90 seconds, so it's unlikely you'll successfully negotiate better pay on finding yourself in the lift with your boss.

If you open negotiations while the other party is under pressure at work or home, you risk an abrupt response because they need to keep proceedings short.

First steps

Perhaps the most pivotal aspect of negotiation beyond all others is preparation. By preparing for every negotiation on an individual basis, you'll boost your chances of reaching a satisfactory resolution, starting here:

Set a primary ‘gut feeling’ objective

Before you even start to research the market or set of circumstances in which you’re negotiating, write down what you would want to achieve in an ideal-world scenario. This will focus your research efforts and provide clarity for the road ahead. Look back at this objective any time that you feel your negotiation proceedings are getting lost in detail.

Make time to gather knowledge

Only by preparing properly will you be able to gather enough information about your opposite number, and the issue under discussion, to give your negotiations authority and credibility. In the next few pages we'll look at preparatory research in depth.

Never assume what worked before will work again

If you've negotiated before, and with success, it's forgivable to assume that you'll do the same again by applying the same tactics. But, every negotiation is unique – even one new face or a different deadline in the mix can hugely alter the objectives.

Know what you want

Once you've identified your ideal objective, which can be as simple as 'get myself a pay rise', you should examine what it is you *really* want – in detail. Here are a few examples to get you started:

What do I/we want to get as a result of the negotiations?

What would the perfect deal be?

What would an acceptable deal be?

When do I/we want or need negotiations to start and finish?

What are my/our financial limits/aspirations?

How important is the ongoing relationship with the other party?

How long can I/we wait for delivery of the agreed item/terms?

Asking yourself or your team these questions will help you identify acceptable alternatives to the 'perfect deal', or note some aspects that you'd be willing to trade off. What is key

in identifying what you want is not establishing a determined, immovable 'position', but what your specific interests really are. Knowing what these interests are will provide you with much more material to negotiate with than creating a fixed stance over which the only choice is to haggle aggressively. Noting these interests is also the first step in creating your negotiation strategy.

Know what you can give

After identifying what your specific interests are, ask yourself and/or your team some open questions to reveal just how little or how much you're prepared to bargain. Everyone must agree on these terms wholeheartedly, and stick to them. Here are just a few examples of the type of questions you may ask:

> Could I/we wait for a better sale price/a bigger payrise in the longer term?
>
> Could I accept home working in place of a car allowance?
>
> Could I accept more annual leave instead of a bonus this year?

But how can 'giving in' suit both parties? Surely you're losing out? Not necessarily, because the analysis process can reveal some unexpected interests you didn't know you had. You may, for example, realize that an immediate bonus rather than a later pay rise would suit you because you're getting married and don't want to take out a loan for the wedding. You're happy: your employer is delighted. Analysing what you *really* want and what you're willing to give are the first foundations of your

negotiation strategy, and will provide you with materials that can be discussed and traded off to reach a resolution that potentially benefits both (or more) parties.

Know your USP

One part of your preparatory jigsaw still needs to be slotted into place. This is your USP, your 'unique selling proposition'; the hook that will keep your opposite number interested in you and in reaching a good resolution, no matter how long the negotiation.

What is a USP?

The unique selling proposition is a marketing term which describes the qualities that only you can provide, or provide best, compared to all other competitors. The USP concept doesn't just apply to negotiations related to buying and selling; ever-increasingly you'll need to emphasize your USP in job interviews, and in negotiations for pay or promotion.

Recognize your USP

Whether negotiating as a team or one to one, you'll have to know your USP. What can you offer that no one else can? What is it that makes you unique and sought after? Crucially, it must be an attribute that's important to the other party, or your USP will be irrelevant. To identify your USP fully, you must consider it in terms of what your opposite party needs. When the time comes to research them, think carefully about what it is you could offer to respond uniquely to their requirements.

Get ready to sell your USP

Having a convincing selling proposition will help you counter most, if not all, challenges. For example, a proven ability to provide support across a number of office roles or, for suppliers, award-winning customer service will help counter statements such as 'Liz has been here longer than you and isn't asking for a raise' or 'we know another supplier who can undercut your costs'. When a USP offers an intangible but compelling concept of added value, it's difficult for your opposite number to dismiss it, even against tangible factors such as price.

When you've determined your USP, it's important that you're comfortable talking about it, even before you begin negotiations. Take a little time to craft your USP into a short statement of no more than 20 clear, credible words. If you're going into team negotiations, make sure every team member is comfortable with it, understands it, (believes it!) and can justify it if asked.

Know your opposite number

No matter what the circumstance, whether a neighbourhood campaign against a new road or negotiating for better working conditions in a factory, research will help you shape your negotiation strategy and help you make an educated guess about what the other party's strategy will be too.

Gather all possible information

Ask the other party who they plan to field: Providing your opposite number knows you're about to enter into negotiations with them, they should expect to be asked for such information. Ask who will be present, what their job titles are, and brief background information about them. Ask who'll be leading, what roles the others will fulfil, and offer the same in return.

Search LinkedIn® and other social media: Now you've got names, explore their career profiles on LinkedIn® to discover their special interests and skills. Finding their profile page on Facebook or Twitter may uncover nuggets about likes and dislikes, hobbies and aspirations. This could give you common ground from which to build a relationship, or provide a talking point to ease a tense coffee break. And simply knowing what the other team looks like will help you fit names to faces quickly on the day, making you appear confident and attentive.

Check their company website: If you're negotiating with representatives of a company, you should check the company website for information such as claimed service standards and company ethos. Being able to point out a mismatch between what they say during negotiations and what they claim on their site may give you some leverage.

Read their publications: Most company websites will hold

newsletters, annual reports, and staff magazines in pdf form. Annual reports provide financial information that can reveal, for example, any debts, expansion plans, and the company's financial targets for the year. If you know they're in debt, for example, this could put you into the driving seat of negotiations, as you know they'll be keen to work quickly to save money. If, on the other hand, you're being interviewed for a job and plan to negotiate your starting salary upwards, then quoting their staff magazine on how crucial recruitment is to the health of the company may also make them sit up and take notice.

Talk to their customers: Whether a big corporate or a one-man band, most companies are proud to list important clients on their website. Do you know anyone listed there? Can they tell you about their experiences of working with the person or company you're interested in? Take some time to catch up with these contacts. If it feels appropriate, they might be willing to provide insights into their own negotiations with the company you're dealing with, or mention any customer service shortfalls they've experienced.

Profile the people: Whether it's one person or a whole team, you now have an idea of their career path, likes, dislikes, common contacts, and any shared interests. By digesting their LinkedIn® profile (especially their recommendations) you may also build up a picture of their workplace strengths and style. Facebook and others may reveal glimpses of temperament and person-ality. It's good to know in advance if you're coming to table with a tough

negotiator, and equally useful to know if your opposite number is inexperienced, which can make for both easy, or unpredictable, negotiations.

Profile the company: Look for common company objectives that could provide potential for joint gains. Perhaps they aspire to becoming more 'green' and your cleaning service uses eco-detergents and recycling as standard? Perhaps they plan to gain more local clients to cut back on travel costs, and you're slap bang in their neighbourhood. What are their published service standards compared to what customers tell you? Explaining that you're aware of a shortfall could give you valuable negotiation leverage.

Get to know each other

Establishing a preliminary relationship before negotiating may instil a glimmer of mutual trust. Email to arrange negotiations dates, venues and teams. Vary your contact – if they're coming to you, email to confirm arrangements, then make a friendly call later to check if they've additional needs on the day, like a flipchart or veggie sandwiches. Keeping contact regular and approachable makes the prospect of meeting at the negotiation table much less daunting.

Know your team

While many of your negotiating experiences will be one to one, there may be times when you feel it's better to bring helpers to the table with you. But when?

When is it best to use a team?

To represent the interests of many: Where the welfare of many is at stake, e.g. in neighbourhoods, local councils, retail, construction, call-centres and factories, a team of individuals who each represent a constituent group can better reflect their diverse needs.

When you need to think differently: Where negotiations are complex, where there seems no way of reaching a mutually beneficial result, or if a one-to-one negotiation has already broken down, it's time to bring in the collective imagination of a team.

To show that this is important: Turning up in number is a concise way of saying this is important to you. For example, a team would underline the depth of community feeling if fielded against a construction company surveying parkland. However, turning up mob-handed on your neighbour's doorstep to discuss his hedge, or arriving to talk pay with your boss flanked by colleagues, will look aggressive. If it's important *only to you,* then it's usual that only you should turn up.

How to choose your team

If you plan to field a team in negotiations, it's crucial that your own people don't throw you any curve balls – there will be enough surprises coming from your opposite party. Consider the following steps when selecting your negotiating team.

1 Choose members wisely: If you're negotiating in a particular field, you may want a specialist in that topic on your team to advise. If you have to talk money and pricing, you'll want someone who's good – and fast – with numbers. If possible, don't include anyone, no matter how close you are, who you suspect may be a weak link. If they're being pressed upon you by your boss, ensure that person understands that, during the negotiation, it's the lead negotiator who's in charge, not the boss.

2 Ensure they understand the issues, and each other: Before going into negotiations as a team, it's imperative that your team know why you want to negotiate, that they understand how you came to this decision (and support it), and that they know each other really well. You don't want an unpredictable member of your team suddenly asking you, in front of the opposite party, to clarify why negotiations are needed.

3 Have a proper discussion: Make time with your fledgling team to brainstorm the issues you want to air during negotiations, including the 'what we want' and 'what we can give' options. Agree both on what information you are willing to share with the

opposing party, and what you must not mention in front of them.

Matching your team to negotiation roles

The next step in creating an effective team is to assign its members with discrete roles. Although specialisms are important, you're not just looking for professional or technical skills, but personality traits too. Maybe you know someone who is unflappable in a crisis, or a people-person who makes others feel at ease. Experience is crucial too; a tough-nut negotiator who has been through this before is a great asset – if you know of one!

Your team may include as few as two of the following roles, or it may include all of them and more.

Lead negotiator: This spokesperson for the team makes the tough decisions and does most of the talking, as well as organizing and motivating the team.

A note-taker: Someone needs to impartially record the key agreements being made. There need only be one 'scribe' in a negotiation, so it's good to agree early which party will provide one.

An observer: For big negotiations, there can be merit in having someone who can watch for signs of anxiety or resentment in the other party, and can share these insights in breaks or between meetings.

A numbers person: If you're negotiating about buying, selling, or pay, for example, you may need someone who has a head for numbers, spreadsheets and forecasting.

An expert adviser: If you're negotiating about one

aspect in a specialist field, e.g. conservation, you may want someone who can bring expert insight to your strategy and who can answer complex questions with authority.

Know your authorities

Ensure that your people know that they can't make proposals or counter offers over the lead negotiator, unless it's been discussed in advance. Also, if the lead doesn't have the power of 'sign-off', then you should make it clear from the outset that any agreements reached will have to be passed by the person who does have the authority. Being vague about this could irritate the other party and cause delay.

Decide how you'll communicate

Consider whether to agree a set of discreet signals to communicate important things you may be unable to say out loud e.g.: 'I disagree'; 'stop talking'; 'change the topic'; or 'we need a break to talk'. Once you've got your signals, practise using them together until you can decipher them with confidence. If you need to say something specific, writing a note and pushing it under the eyes of a team member is acceptable too.

Key take-aways

Write down the things you will take away from Step 1 and how you will implement them.

Topic	**Take-away**	**Implementation**
Understanding that negotiation is a part of everyday life	I negotiate every day both at home and in the office.	Bring some of the skills I use at home into the office environment.
Understanding why we should negotiate		
Identifying negotiation skills already gained in everyday negotiating environments		
How to recognize when it's a good time to negotiate		
How to prepare effectively for a negotiation		

How to identify what you want from negotiation		
How to identify what you can give to achieve results		
How to recognize your USP and use it effectively in negotiation		
How to recognize when a team might work well		
How to choose the right team		
How to assign roles to your team		

Step 2
PREPARE YOUR STRATEGY

'By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail.' — Benjamin Franklin, (1704–1790), Politician, Inventor and Scientist

Five ways to succeed

Create a flexible and researched negotiation strategy.
Be clear about what you want to gain.
Make an educated guess about the other party's strategy.
Dress appropriately and comfortably.
Be positive and friendly when you arrive.

Five ways to fail

Allow your walk-away points to change during a negotiation.

Always assume you have the least leverage.

Don't rehearse your strategy – be spontaneous.

Insist on negotiating at your chosen venue.

Speak very loudly to appear more confident.

Create your negotiation strategy

You've spent valuable time preparing for negotiations: gathering information and identifying what you want and what you can concede to reach a satisfactory agreement. Now it's time to distil your efforts into a negotiation strategy: not a fixed plan, but a flexible guideline of what you hope to achieve and how you aim to act along the way.

Your strategy should consider the following, many of which you'll have identified already from your preparation in Step 1:

What you want to have: These should include your 'must-haves' and a few 'give-aways' that you can offer if necessary.

What you must have: These are your minimum requirements. You need these for the negotiation to be successful.

Your BATNA: This is your Best Alternative To a Negotiated Agreement. If you simply can't get what you want, your BATNA is your second-best option.

Your ‘walk-away’ point: This is the point where you have to stop negotiating, before you come away with less than your minimum requirements.

Your proposed approach: This is the manner in which you aim to reach a deal. In most cases, bargaining will be the mainstay of your negotiations, but you may find that haggling gets results for specific elements.

Make your strategy watertight

For your strategy to be in with a fighting chance it must be both realistic and informed. To knock it into shape, you can’t think about your negotiation strategy in isolation, but must understand the context in which you’ll use it.

Am I in the right ballpark?

To create a realistic negotiation proposal, find out as much as you can about the goal that you seek. Say, for example, you're applying for a new job with prospects, but whose salary is just too low for you to start on, and you plan to negotiate it up if you get it. To create a workable strategy, first find out what your own 'market value' is, to avoid setting your sights too low or too high. You might check comparable positions on recruitment websites or in newspaper jobs pages, or speak to an adviser (at a job centre or a recruitment agency) for indicative salaries. Talk to (trusted) contacts who've negotiated pay to understand how their negotiated rise compared against what they'd hoped. If you're representing a supplier company, the same applies; you must find out about your competitors' prices before you set down your own in a negotiation strategy.

Who has the most leverage?

In negotiations 'leverage' is the term used to describe how much weight one party has in influencing how negotiations will turn out. Identifying how much leverage each party has will help you use your negotiation strategy effectively, and this discovery can be surprising. If you're negotiating with a superior e.g. your boss, or a big corporate like your broadband provider, it's easy to assume that they'll have the most leverage, because they're 'higher up' or 'bigger' than you, but this isn't always the case.

Say you've interviewed for a new job and been offered it, though you still enjoy your present job. You could, at this point, meet with your current boss to negotiate better pay, and be the party with the most leverage. Why? You can go into negotiations knowing that you've nothing to lose and everything to gain. If your boss cannot meet your 'must-have' requirements, then you're in the lucky position of your 'walk-away' scenario being exactly that – you can walk into another job. Pulling this information out of the bag when negotiations reach an impasse wields great leverage. Your boss knows that if he/she cannot meet at least your 'must-have' requirements he/she's likely to lose you, and recruitment costs both time and money. Negotiate costs with a big broadband provider that loudly advertises affordability and you, as a paying customer, have some leverage because you've identified better deals, are willing to move elsewhere to get them,

and are happy to tell your friends to do so too.

How do I stick to my walk-away points?

The safety-net that lies under your entire strategy is your ability to walk away at any point, before you're drawn by momentum into agreeing on less than your 'must-haves'. Your walk-away points needn't be financially-driven. They can include anything that is unacceptable to you: signing a long contract when you need a shorter one; negotiations that last longer than a specified period; or having to move house if offered a promotion. Be careful to note all your walk-away points. There may be several, and they may be unrelated. They mustn't be decided whilst you're negotiating, but identified in advance, written down in a calm moment, and fixed in stone. They are non-negotiable. Give in on these and you risk everything, including your credibility: in plain terms, you've been walked over – publicly.

How does a BATNA work?

Not every negotiation can arrive at an agreement. Your Best Alternative To a Negotiated Agreement (BATNA) can provide an alternative to walking away and damaging relationships with those you have to work with afterwards. Say you're negotiating with your manager for extra training, but she says 'I simply have no budget for training'. Rather than walk away from the prospect of career progression, your BATNA may provide alternatives to satisfy *some* of your interests. Extra holiday entitlement, or half-day Fridays, would give you some capacity to pursue training under your own steam. The BATNA creatively acknowledges the fact that negotiations have failed to provide agreement now, but that you value the ongoing relationship.

Offer to draw up an agenda

Contact your opposite number, and ask what they'd like on the agenda for discussion. This will reveal the issues that are important to them, possible areas for mutual agreement, and will also highlight those questions that you've not yet considered in your research. Distributing this agenda will tell the opposite party what's important to you, and oblige them to talk about it; they can't wriggle out of an agenda point if they've agreed the document. An agenda saves time and minimizes surprises: no properly structured meeting should wander much from its original format. An advance agenda also removes the fear of the unknown, and gives you a chance to rehearse what you want to say.

Business writing: agendas

This simple but invaluable written document should include the date, time and venue, followed by a list of the people attending. Items for discussion are listed in the order you propose they be discussed, numbered accordingly. If anyone has a specific role, that's worthwhile recording.

Date/Time: 01 February 2014 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Venue: Meeting Room C, Taylor Building

Attendees: Marc Fisher, Sarah Tait, Jim Morton

Items for discussion

1 Marc Fisher's current roles and responsibilities

2 Office changes: next 12 months

3 Changes to office administration roles

4 Possible extra responsibilities for key staff

5 Training requirements

RESPONSIBILITIES

Record meeting decisions: Jim Morton

Make an educated guess about their strategy

By undertaking preparatory research about your opposite number, you may have an idea about what their negotiation strategy will be. An advance agenda will definitely clarify things further. But if, despite having done your homework, you still feel you don't know what to expect, it's still worthwhile making an educated guess, or guesses. Asking yourself the following questions will help you explore possible scenarios in your head. It may help you form an idea of the opposite party's likely strategy and also whip your own into shape:

Are they likely to open with a proposal?
What might their proposals be?
What arguments do I have to counter them?
Do I think they will be 'tough' or accommodating?
How are they going to respond to my must-haves?
What counters will they have to my proposals?
Do I think they will give me a 'take it or leave it' ultimatum?
How will they rate the importance of my USP?

Asking yourself such simple, open questions will start you thinking creatively about how to respond to any number of scenarios. 'Dealing with' something in your head in advance of the meeting will make the real thing less surprising, and much

less daunting.

Road test your strategy

If you're feeling nervous about negotiating, be assured that you're not alone. Like learning any difficult new skill, practice can both minimize anxiety and improve your performance.

Ask a friend to play a tough-nut negotiator over coffee one weekend, and try out your negotiation strategy against your educated guess at your opponent's. Roleplay will not only help you practise speaking persuasively about your 'must-haves', but will sharpen your ability to think on your feet – vital in negotiations. Note those moments that you found particularly hard to get through: do you tend to lose your train of thought if someone interrupts you? Do you get upset if someone dismisses your argument? Identifying pressure points and finding ways to deal with them before you really have to is invaluable. Ask your friend for feedback – were your arguments compelling? Did you sell yourself? How confident was your body language? Their answers could be revealing.

Choose your venue

Just like in football, it's usually preferable to negotiate on 'home turf', where you feel most secure. However, the importance of this can get over-emphasized, so don't fret if you fail to persuade the other party to yours. Negotiating on their patch may not be your first choice but there are perks: because you're an invited guest, you don't need to deal with the details of providing hospitality, and can concentrate on the negotiations, and nothing else.

Meeting in a neutral location such as a hired meeting room or over coffee is just as good, potentially better. Not only are

you both on an equal footing, but finding your feet somewhere new can offer opportunities for breaking the ice before you start: finding power points and water coolers becomes a group activity, gets both sides talking and helps you relax.

If talks are on home turf, avoid out-dated power games like sitting in an upholstered chair while the opposite party squirms on plastic ones. Try sitting round a table or side by side, rather than across it, to make both sides feel this is a shared problem rather than a head-to-head. Provide breaks, good refreshments, and make sure everyone knows where the restrooms are.

Your self-preparation

You've spent valuable time gathering information ahead of your negotiations, now it's time to gather yourself too. Sparing a thought for your physical presentation is not a wasted effort; going into negotiation feeling good about yourself not only improves your own confidence; it will send out strong positive messages to those you are about to negotiate with too.

Dress

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

Текст предоставлен ООО «ЛитРес».

Прочитайте эту книгу целиком, купив полную легальную версию на ЛитРес.

Безопасно оплатить книгу можно банковской картой Visa, MasterCard, Maestro, со счета мобильного телефона, с платежного терминала, в салоне МТС или Связной, через PayPal, WebMoney, Яндекс.Деньги, QIWI Кошелек, бонусными картами или другим удобным Вам способом.