



## NEGOTIATION - QUICK TIPS

How often do you find yourself negotiating? More often than you might realize. Whether you're deciding where to go to lunch with colleagues or working on a major policy discussion, you are in a kind of negotiation. Here are five quick tips to aid you in recognizing, understanding, and navigating negotiations at work, and elsewhere.

### *Different Kinds of Negotiations*

- Knowing what form various negotiations will take can help you in preparing for them and understanding what outcomes you can expect. In general, negotiations typically fall into one of two categories:
  - ◆ Distributive negotiations (sometimes called Win-Lose negotiations)
    - \* Usually one time, not involving an on-going relationship
    - \* Usually focused on one issue, typically money
    - \* No side deals
  - ◆ Integrative negotiations (called Win-Win, or interest-based negotiations)
    - \* Often involve long-term relationships
    - \* Usually have multiple issues at stake
    - \* Because there are multiple issues at stake there is a greater possibility for trade-offs by focusing on the differing interests of each party and seeking to leave each party with something of value
- If you think about life in an academic institution, what kind of negotiations are you most likely to be conducting? Commonplace negotiations include things like salary requests, securing and allocating space; teaching assignments; hiring and working out joint appointment parameters; etc.
- Some of the less-commonly recognized negotiations include equipment usage, timing, or placement; meeting protocols; unit service obligations; research support; delegation and asking for help within work groups; etc.

### *Cultivate Curiosity!*

- Asking questions is generally the single most effective way to add value to the negotiation table and potentially increase the size of the pie for everyone. More information allows you to understand when there might be multiple issues at stake — allowing for trade-offs rather than zero-sum negotiations.
- The central element in developing outcomes that leave you with solid relationships and a strong professional reputation is to consider your own interests—can you name what you really seek?—and then spend at least as much time trying to consider or understand those of your colleagues.
- It is common in negotiations for valuable information to go undisclosed at the table, simply because the questions that might have raised them were never asked. It often turns out that the key to a reasonable outcome for all involves elements you have not considered, that may be of little value to you (but of great



value to others), or that are simple for you to provide. Asking questions is often the only way to find out about them.

- Remember that your relationship with most of those you deal with in academic settings are people you will deal with over and over, and so the relationship you cultivate will affect future interactions, not just the one in the current moment. They will affect your reputation and your effectiveness. The more curious you are about what drives other's interests in each interaction, the more successful your negotiations will be.

## *Stages of Negotiation*

- Negotiations generally go through several distinct stages. Knowing this and recognizing the function of each can make you more effective in your own negotiations.
- Negotiation experts have their own take on how many stages there are, and what each encompasses. We have found this particular conceptualization to be helpful\*:
  - ◆ Stage One: Establishing rapport; to know each other and setting the tone
  - ◆ Stage Two: Information gathering; listening & asking questions to understand issues and interests
  - ◆ Stage Three: Creating value; trying to make the deal better for both parties
  - ◆ Stage Four: Claiming value; dividing the pie
  - ◆ Stage Five: Consolidating the deal; repeating each important element of the agreement to confirm understanding from both parties. This may lead to circling back to a previous stage.
- The stages of negotiations are not necessarily linear. As you move from one to another, misunderstandings may be exposed. When that happens, it can be helpful to loop back to an earlier stage in the process.
  - For example, if an interaction is becoming contentious, working to re-build rapport or asking more questions about the point of disagreement can help establish a more constructive tone.

## *Preventing Escalation*

- Some negotiations get emotional. This can cause the focus of the negotiation to shift from interests, to rights, and eventually power\*\*.
  - ◆ Interests – the things people care about. At the heart of every difference or dispute lie people's interests
  - ◆ Rights – independent standards that have perceived legitimacy: e.g., seniority, reciprocity, fairness
  - ◆ Power – the ability to coerce people to do things they otherwise wouldn't: e.g., ridicule, threats, insults
- When negotiations escalate from interests to rights and eventually power, the satisfaction level with the outcome decreases. The likelihood of recurrence goes up, and ultimately the relationship between the parties erodes.



- Asking questions to seek information on the interests of the other party and managing your own conduct to be able to keep a professional tone are key

## *Cognitive Biases are the Bane of Successful Negotiations*

- We are all susceptible to various forms of cognitive bias - learning about the most common types of bias that infect negotiations is an effective means of inoculating yourself from their negative effects.
- This understanding can help you to identify and sidestep them, to keep the focus of discussions on the interests of all involved. Here are a few of the more common kinds of cognitive biases or irrational lines of thought to watch out for in negotiations:
  - ◆ Overconfidence: don't assume you know more than you do.
  - ◆ Unrealistic expectations: don't set yourself up for failure by seeking the impossible.
  - ◆ Framing: being overly affected by the way something is presented - is the glass half empty or half full? (It's the same quantity either way, but how it's framed affects perceptions.)
  - ◆ Engaging in non-rational escalation: allowing your ego to drive the negotiation more than your interests. (Have you ever seen someone pay more at an auction than an item was worth by focusing on "winning" over someone else more than the actual item on sale? That's non-rational escalation.)
  - ◆ Assuming the other party's gains must come at your expense: are you missing opportunities for mutually beneficial tradeoffs? Are there things you care about more, and other parties less? Vice versa?
  - ◆ Fixating on irrelevant information: i.e., the past, the other party's starting place, etc. Many people start by asking for far more than they seek, thinking that's an effective technique. Ask questions to understand true interests, and stay focused on what you really seek as well.