

# EVERYONE CAN WIN audio script edition

## Skill 10: Negotiation

Mins: Secs	Topic
3:34	Preparation
6:31	Currencies
7:19	Lukas' sunglasses story
11:44	End Lukas' sunglasses story
15:21	Interaction
21:22	Ask good questions
32:34	Irene's story
36:37	CR Countertactics
41:37	Closing
44:11	Summary

Say it's time to negotiate. This is the moment when all our conflict resolution skills need to come together. Our win-win approach is sure to be challenged!

We may fall off this fine principled horse in the heat of the moment. Many do! They might grab a war horse and ride over the finishing line triumphant, but they've used their power to attack, they've indulged in tricks and ploys and barge their way through.

They leave their opponents as unconsidered casualties on the wayside. They might win today, but now they're the enemy. They can be cut down tomorrow.

There's a smarter way to negotiate. But if we really do want better relationships and agreements that stick, we'll need to balance many forces that are acting on these moments of change. We're working with:

- our commitment to our own needs,
- our commitment to the other person's needs too, and
- a commitment to finding a workable plan,
- and a commitment to what's fair for all of us.

This is skill number 10: Negotiation.

#



We're constantly negotiating. Did you do any of these recently?

- Ask your boss for a raise or some time off
- Deal with people asking you to do too many things at once
- Buy new equipment for the company
- Work out who will do the household chores
- Plan your living arrangements with someone else
- Organise some renovations
- Or perhaps, it's divorce!

We are constantly exchanging commitments and promises. If the terms are not yet clear we have to negotiate. Negotiation is what business is all about. And it's what relationships are about too – working or living in the same space, planning who does what and who decides what. It goes on between countries. Just imagine how many negotiations have taken place at all levels during this corona virus.

Where do you negotiate? Which aspect of negotiating is hardest for you? We never seem to get taught how to negotiate. We tend to be good at it or we're not, but it is a skill with many twists and turns, and it can be developed.

We can too easily drop into fight or flight mode or a win/lose competition. Where one person gets a bit aggressive, the other can dig in and the negotiation breaks down. In fight mode the hardest thing might be controlling your temper and not pushing for what you want at the expense of the other person. If flight mode kicks in, it's going to be very hard for you to stand your ground and not give in too easily.

The objective of a negotiation win/win style is not to come out on top, but to reach a balanced agreement that seems fair to both parties. That's the agreement most parties stick to.

#



When you know you need to negotiate try to give yourself a little time to

## **PREPARE**

It will pay off! What will help you to *flow*? Remember, conflict is an opportunity! ... for some creative problem solving! For bringing into the new something that is not in the old.

- Move into discovery mode. Let go of any demand for perfection, because we're probably not going to get it!
- Make a needs and fears map for everyone involved, not just yourself. It's best written down, but you can do a reasonable job in your head.

It's Skill number 8– Mapping the Conflict. Remember fears can include anxieties and concerns – those 'I wouldn't like it if ...' or 'I'm worried about ...'

- Look for ways to improve both parties' situation.
- But don't go into the negotiation with any fixed idea about the solution.
- Ask yourself, 'What kind of outcome do I want?'
- And make it broad.

Perhaps there's a range within which the tangible results all might work for you. Can you set yourself upper and lower limits? If answer is 'no,' you want something very specific, then ask yourself what needs, values and long-term issues you are taking into consideration? You'll want to be clear what these are, If you find yourself having to change course mid-stream. Don't forget the important intangibles such as recognition, security, or an improved relationship.

- Next, make sure you have your facts ready.

Do your homework. Like for an exam, you don't know what area you'll be tested on until you're faced with it.

Prepare your answers to these questions:

- **What do I want?** What's at the heart of what I need to say?
- What's **the best way of connecting** with this particular person? Consider how you can **adapt your personal style** for this negotiation so that it fits better with theirs. Would they prefer to have all the alternatives laid out or would they prefer to just have your final conclusions? How could you acknowledge



their core needs, such as being appreciated, having their status or important role respected or their desire to feel part of the team supported?

- Also, **who am I asking?** Am I approaching the right person for this decision? Is there someone pulling the strings in the background, whose needs and interests also have to be considered? How will I address and move them?
- And don't forget to develop your **currencies** and theirs – as we discussed in the episode on Designing Options. What can you do to meet the other person's needs and what can they do to meet yours? What is cheap for me to offer and valuable for them to receive? What is cheap for them to offer and valuable for me to receive? Good negotiating sets up reciprocal arrangements. A successful negotiation is about give and take.

If you want to become a better negotiator, consider a wider range of options.

Our family friend, Lukas, has a story that demonstrates many of the principles we're talking about here.

#



## LUKAS'S SUNGLASSES

Lukas outlined for us a recent negotiation he undertook. He runs a small wholesale company and he had just imported a delivery of a well-known brand of sunglasses. He emailed his usual customers and one replied saying he would take 100 pairs at \$15 a pair, but Lukas was asking \$25; Lukas knew he'd done his costings carefully. If conflict is opportunity, his challenge was how to do something very creative now.

Lukas phoned his customer. 'Phil I really need \$25 a pair for these, to make it work for me. What could we do about that?'

Phil said he didn't believe his small boutique could really afford to pay more than \$15. It could be an impasse. Phil, staying quite friendly but firm, said, 'Oh well, let's leave it. Next time you're over here come and show me your range. Maybe there's something else I'd be interested in.' Lukas wanted to take him up on that and started assembling what he would show Phil at that meeting.

Going through his stock Lukas found some sunglass-cases that hadn't moved last year and he'd just written off. He'd be happy to move them at almost any price. He threw a couple into his sample bag. He had a few more written off items like this with only small numbers left. **Freeing himself from any fixed outcome, he thought:** 'here's the germ of an idea'.

Lukas met Phil that Thursday and took him to the little café nearby. Putting his sample bag between them, Lukas, was mentally **mapping** while he chatted. He asked Phil: 'When you buy from me, Phil, what do you need?' he asked. And Phil replied: 'Well, I need to like the product. It has to be a fair price of course, so that I can get a reasonable mark-up. Sometimes I can use a really cheap item in an



advertising campaign or to draw people into the shop. I like having an account with you and I don't have to pay up front as I have to do with some of the fly-by-nighters who come in.'

Lukas offered Phil some his own needs. 'Phil, it's great that at the end of thirty days you really do pay your bill. I can rely on you for that because I've seen you trade here quite successfully for what is it, ten years now? I value that we've done successful business for so long. You're always interested in the latest stuff so I can test my market on you.' Lukas's major concern was losing Phil as a client, and he hated being seen as too expensive to deal with, but he didn't say that.

Lukas sensed that as Phil had twice stuck to his \$15 offer, he probably wouldn't budge now. Lukas suspected Phil's wife in the background often set limits on his purchasing budget. Maybe Phil would take some of these last season items. Lukas needed a deal that included the 100 pairs at \$15 because that would make it worthwhile. Lukas decided he'd make a conditional offer: 'Phil, I could give you a really good deal. I could let you have 200 of these, waving at the sale items, at \$6 each. And, if you do, I could let you have the 100 pairs of sunnies at your \$15. How's that?' Phil was interested, but was still hesitant.

Lukas sensed that he needed to sweeten the deal a little more. 'Phil, would it help if I gave you two months to pay for the extra items?' A glint came into Phil's eyes. Had Lukas found a way round the wife's budget? Now they had a deal that suited Phil as well as Lukas. They shook hands and finished their coffees, chatting about the weekend's big soccer match. Lucas knew it was also important to take the time to build the friendship as well as the deal.



#

Lots of things can sweeten the deal. Choose which offers you might put into the negotiation arena if required. Be flexible and add more currencies as needed.

What you can offer is your bargaining power. Their power comes from what *you* need from them. Think about that and tell them – just as Lukas did when he told Phil that he could have the hundred sunglasses at \$15 if he took all of the sale items too.

It was a *conditional* offer. Let's unpack that a bit further. It means:

***If you give me something, then I'll give you something.***

You might plan to use the “If ..., then ...” format. If you give a benefit, you may need a benefit in exchange. Investigate and prepare to swap currencies.

You can be quite creative: ‘I need my plants watered whilst I am away. Could I offer you my car space for two months in exchange for watering the plants?’

“If ..., then ....” can be a useful format to discuss terms that you *might* be willing to give in appropriate circumstances. You don't want to commit yourself to them immediately. You might need to make that clear. You might signal that such a deal as possible. You might say: ‘Under the right circumstances I would be willing to ... What would you be willing to offer in exchange?’

While it's very helpful to know in advance what you have up your sleeve to sweeten a deal, introduce these trading elements slowly, rather than all at once. Work up how you will conduct the negotiation so that you can build a fair and balanced deal for everyone, including yourself.

***Remember: fair deals are the ones that stick.***

Here's another helpful tip when preparing for a negotiation.

Work on **the other person's case** before you engage. Put yourself in their shoes. Think as they think:

- How would they see their case?



- What are their options?
- What are their immediate difficulties?
- If they say ‘yes’, what are the implications for them? Are they acceptable? Prepare to spell out the positive implications. And also adapt your plan to minimise their negative repercussions if they do say ‘yes’. It can help if you’re seen to be really considering their cost or their inconvenience.
- What steps will you both have to take if the other person agrees? If you can, lighten their follow-up tasks. Perhaps you can prepare a list of names and contact details of people they’ll have to get in touch with. Or offer to do a draft of the email they’d need to write.
- Have ready any information that they would need to make a decision – such as a tentative itinerary for a holiday or the costing on some new equipment or a list of people available for a job.

*In other words, Make it easy for them to say ‘yes’.*

- It’s often a very good idea to work out your **opening statement**.  
It should be to the point and not too long. Think ‘clear and concise!’ as you compose it.  
It should engage their interest, state your objective and invite their response.

#

After this preparation phase, you’ll move into the actual  
**INTERACTION with the other party.**

All of the conflict resolution skills we’ve discussed in previous episodes will be very relevant. Let’s re-visit some of them:





You're about to start. Slow down for a moment and

### **Centre, flow, and make contact**

Centring is a great way to calm your anxiety. Breathe deeply into your belly. You may want to deliberately calm and deepen your breathing pattern. Use your favourite image of flow. Swaying branches? River currents? Remind yourself how you want your energy to move throughout this negotiation – focused on your direction, and flexible as you navigate the obstacles on the way. Don't contract away from the other person.

Consciously make a connection. Respond, rather than react. (*Refer to Skill 2. Creative Response.*)

### **Set up a climate of agreement**

You might start with some simple agreements about when and where you would both be free to meet and how much time is available or needed. Paint a picture of collaboration. You might say: 'Let's work toward something that will suit both of us.' Remember, in a truly successful negotiation everyone wins. Start to build trust. How does friendly connection with this person work best? Should you be getting right to the point with them or take a bit of time to reconnect first? Do you think they're more -focused or more people-focused? How would they like me to approach them? Are they more outgoing or more reserved? (*Refer to DISC model, Skill 3. Empathy Part II*)

### **Check that you are being culturally appropriate in the negotiation.**

Does the other person have a different cultural background to yours? You don't need jar with that. Be willing to adapt your negotiation style to suit theirs. In some cultures, the parties leave a lot of margin to bargain, and in others there is little or no room for movement. There are customs about the appropriate level of familiarity. Some cultures require far more formality than others. You may need to spend time in social ceremony before you begin. Even body language is interpreted differently in various cultures: touching or not touching; standing close or more distant; looking directly at the person or looking down; using a third party to speak on your behalf about a problem rather than confronting the person directly. Respect the other person's customs and try to adapt as well as you can. You don't need to let a cultural mistake get in the way.



### **Stay in discovery mode**

Be open to learning something new or seeing a different approach or angle. Be patient. Use active listening. Listen – for what’s missing, not only what’s said or implied. Look out for what makes you or them uncomfortable. Listen for the feelings behind the words and their tone of voice. Pay attention to your own, too. What might it be implying to the other person?

### **Use appropriate assertiveness.**

Talk about your needs and the outcome you hope for without arousing their defences. So no blaming or coercing! Use your “I” statements.

### **Avoid win/lose outcomes.**

For sport that’s fine. Competition is the challenge to accomplish something. But for personal and business relations win/lose is a poor tactic. If one party remains unsatisfied, you invite ongoing hostility and undermined agreements.

If you need to disagree, use phrases like: ‘I’m seeing it a bit differently...’ Your aim is to broaden the possibilities or perspectives. Things often look like a win/lose, ‘this’ or ‘that’, ‘your way’ or ‘my way’; or there is only so much available. Your previous preparation of possible currencies might help you sidestep that particular predicament. What’s low cost for you, and high value to them? And vice versa.

Draw in extra factors to build more wins all round.

For example, remember the story about Lukas and his sunglasses negotiation. He added other products that he was happy to include so that he could broaden the base of his discussions.

If only one person *can* win, for example only one person can be promoted, broaden the other person’s view. Are there alternative wins, other opportunities for them that could be built in?



### **Be brief and to the point.**

Many a good case has been spoiled by someone being long-winded and unclear. That's why you carefully consider your opening statement before you go into the negotiation. It will come into its own here. It helps you be clear and concise.

### **Don't be afraid to sell yourself.**

Have the courage of your convictions: good plans will work for both parties. People are often afraid to ask for what they really want. In truth, if other people knew what you wanted, they might at least meet you part of the way.

*Ask for 100 per cent of what you want, be willing to hear a 'no',  
and work towards a compromise.*

Like Lukas!

### **Ask lots of questions.**

Questions can steer a negotiation in the right direction. It's an art form. The right question can open up and redirect where you're both going. There's great power in the question: 'Is this plan going to get us where we want to go?'

If you are unsure of what you want to do or say next, you can use a question to buy some time. Ask: 'What else is important for us to consider?' Getting some more information will often move you forward.

- Specific 'how' or 'what' questions might uncover the information you need. When the other person is being too general – 'I want the best . . .' ask: 'What would be best for you?' or 'Can you tell me how that will happen?'

Don't assume they mean what you think they mean.

- You'll often want to question blanket statements that include 'always', 'never' or 'everyone' from the other person, too. Perhaps: 'Has there been a time when that was not so?'
- In the face of 'too expensive', 'too much' or 'too many', try a question that raises a comparison. For example, if you are told that air-conditioning is too expensive for the office, ask:



‘Expensive in what terms? Are we only talking money? Are there other benefits and costs?’ You could introduce the cost of sick days or low work output due to air quality.

- When faced with apparently rigid opposition, you might be able to challenge it by asking what might be possible in the right circumstances. You hear: ‘We couldn’t do that!’ You might ask: ‘What would it take to make it possible?’ or ‘We always do it that way’, reply with: ‘Can we think up a better way?’ Remember, questions lead the mind!
- If their statement includes can’t, won’t, must or must not, should or should not, first accept the difficulty and then ask a *leading* question. Lead them around the obstacle. Here are some examples of this:

You hear the statement: ‘I can’t get the report done in time.’

Ask: ‘What would you need to get it done on time?’

And you might receive the reply, ‘Well, if I had more help, or access to more information.’ You’ve opened a new door.

How might you respond to the following statement? ‘I won’t do what you’re asking – your plan is unacceptable.’ ...Don’t give up too easily!

It’s the perfect time for a good question, such as: ‘What would we need to include for you to accept it?’ Find out what would make them more willing, interested, or confident about the situation? The right question can take you out of an impasse and turn their resistance towards some new possibilities that hadn’t occurred to either of you before.

### **Sometimes however you just need to know when to shut up for a while**

You’d hoped to negotiate but it’s turning into a row! You’re tempted to shout over them to defend yourself, or to justify your position. DON’T! When you *feel* defensive, don’t defend! Take a side-step. Very consciously become an active listener. Wait until you have calmed down before you respond. In the meantime, really listen to what the other person is saying.



Listen for their needs and priorities. Find out what is really fuelling their heated emotions. Then, once you yourself are a bit calmer, ask a question to redirect the argument toward a constructive outcome:

- ‘What do you really want?’
- ‘How can we put it right?’ or
- ‘I didn’t handle that as well as I might have. Is there anything we could do now to help the situation?’

During the flair-up it might be important to you to state your own case too. First respectfully acknowledge their unaddressed needs, then you deliver your ‘I’ statement. You don’t want your statement about *your* needs to be misinterpreted as a denial of *theirs*. For example, ‘I can see that you are upset about me being late. I had problems with a sick child at home this morning’.

If you must argue, stick to the subject under discussion. Don’t drag in other issues! Stay with the problem you’re trying to negotiate. And watch out that you don’t take a superior stance that puts the other person down. Play it out if you must, but as equals, problem-solving together.

### **Separate the people from the problem.**

Be hard on the problem and stay kind to the people involved. In other words, be considerate. Keep focused on the issues rather than on personalities.

You might begin to use a board or piece of paper to make notes. It could be a needs and concerns map that you are starting. Offer them a pen to add things. Or move beside them so you both can read it together, side by side. It’s a less confrontational physical position. People can then point at what has been written down rather than attack each other.

### **Include their point of view.**

Highly skilled negotiators *include rather than oppose* the other person’s point of view. You needn’t agree with it, simply acknowledge it. For example: ‘I can really see your



point of view. From mine, it's like this . . .' Or try: 'What I like about that idea is this ... AND my concern is that . . .' Notice '*and* my concern'.

Consider the way doors close when you say 'but' .... try ...

### ***AND not BUT***

Treat opposing points of view as a *contribution* towards problem-solving, rather than rejecting them. They can become the substance of a fuller, more realistic perspective. *AND* includes, yours and theirs. *BUT* dismisses. 'Yes, we must include your point about factory safety. How can we work that into the new plan?'

There's another strategy that highly skilled negotiators use too. They

#### **Emphasise areas of agreement.**

They do it quite often. They pay particular attention to common ground – places where both parties' interests, priorities and concerns already match each other. So talk about what you do agree on often. If you get stuck, go back over common ground. Each time you take a step forward in the agreement, spell that out too.

From time to time, restate your joint objective: to reach agreement: 'Let's see how far we've gone with the agreement now.' Or, 'What we've achieved so far is...'

#### **How do you shift unrealistic expectations?**

Sometimes the other person doesn't know what is reasonable or feasible. You may need to set them right about dollars, resources, time or conditions. If they think that the service they want costs \$50, they are going to be shocked if you're asking for \$200.

Sometimes it's you who's unrealistic. Ask questions, take time out to collect more facts, stay flexible. Research objective yardsticks like standard overhead costs, workplace agreements, health and safety requirements, other parents practice. Give yourself the opportunity find out what's fair and adjust your and their expectations. Educate each other early, to save face later.



Before your child tells you that they want all the kids in their class to come to their party, tell them you think the house can only hold about 10.

### **Be flexible and know your bottom line.**

‘Bottom line’ is a very useful negotiation term to have in your vocabulary. It’s the place below which you’ll need to say: “No deal!” If you’ve ever participated in an auction, you’ll know how easy it is to get bidding fever and pay far too much. Set your limit, your bottom line, before you start!

But watch out. Negotiation is a bargaining process. You are not negotiating if all you can offer is, ‘Take it or leave it.’ So, consider what flexibility you have, your **range** – from what you’d like, to what you would be willing to settle for. Privately you might have set your bottom line, but generally you’ll aim for something above that while you’re negotiating.

Make a reasonable offer, or ask for a reasonable offer to be made, and then be prepared to negotiate further. You might signal that there’s room for some movement. For example, to a young teenager who’s just got Instagram, you might say: ‘I think 20 minutes a day for a quick check in on social media after school is about enough.’ You’re not really expecting your child to agree instantly, especially if they were thinking more along the lines of 3 hours to unlimited! You’ll probably end up settling on a time somewhere between half an hour and one hour. Your bottom line might have been one hour. But they need to feel they are winning something too.

Listen for clues that the other person can consider another offer. Your electronics salesman might give you a **signal**. For instance he might say something like: “Well, our normal price for this is x amount of dollars.” Behind the statement you can hear there’s probably some room to move.

There are many times as the meeting progresses that you’ll be helped by:

### **Taking notes.**

And you’ll get into negotiations that, by their nature, require a number of meetings. Some negotiations may extend over years, and then accurate notetaking becomes crucial to reopening negotiations where you left off last time. Even if someone else is formally



taking minutes or writing up the proposal, your own notes will help you check on the accuracy of what you receive. You don't want any misinterpretations or distortions. Listen for how Irene did this in her story.

#





## IRENE'S STORY

Irene's a single mum with two boys. She'd recently moved back home to live with her mother. Her Mum was a wonderful support while she juggled work and motherhood at the same time. She finally felt like she was getting life back on track. And then the COVID-19 pandemic struck!

It was quite early in the whole dreadful saga but Irene was already really fearful that she'd bring home the virus to her mum. Being elderly she was a high-risk person. And Irene had to travel to and from work by train. She decided that her best answer was to home school the boys and go to her boss and re-negotiate her employment situation.

She began to prepare her case. Firstly, what were her needs here? Here's what she told us: "My prime one was that I needed leave and I needed it to be officially sanctioned so that I could return once the crisis was over".

"I thought about my boss's position too. He needed staff he could call on at short notice. He was bound by workplace agreements and other regulations, so I found the relevant clauses, printed them out and highlighted them for him. I wanted to make it easy for him to say 'yes.' I prepared an opening statement: "*I need not to come into the office while this crisis is on. I live with my elderly mother and I can't afford to risk taking the virus home to her. I'm not sure how best to do this. I'd really like to keep this job. Can we possibly work out something that would work OK for you too?*"

Her boss reacted surprisingly well, saying that there was the possibility of compassionate leave. She took this as a signal that she did have some room to move,



so she went on to her discuss holiday pay and her long service leave due. It began to look like she might be able continue to draw her pay at least for a while.

However, when she thought about it, the whole plan didn't sit right with her yet. She told us: "The money I was due would run out. And like everyone else, I had no idea how long the crisis was going to last and how long we'd have to have social distancing go on for. My savings weren't going to last long without a paycheck, and I told him all this. That's when negotiations got rather sticky. My boss started on about his greatly reduced sales while the crisis continued."

It looked like Irene's negotiations were floundering, so she laid her last card on the table. She didn't know how he'd take it or how well she could manage it, but she suggested there was a considerable amount of her usual work that she could do from home. He was more open to the idea than she'd expected. And so they brainstormed some ways and means. They began to see that in fact she could do pretty well everything she'd always done. She took notes as they progressed, privately wondering how that would go with the boys at home. "I could only hope my mum could help there too," she told us and went on to say how it had all ended up.

"We agreed on a plan and I wrote it all into an email and I sent it to him. I had to pester him a bit to reply. But I needed an acknowledgement of what we'd agreed on". She managed to get it by the end of the day. She wrote him a thank you note and left it on his desk with a bottle of good quality brandy that she'd ducked out and bought. She thought he was going to need it!

#



People don't always negotiate as fairly as Irene's boss did. At times you'll need some skilful:

## **COUNTERTACTICS**

For example, they might talk for all the available time, be rude, ignore you, throw in red herrings or come up with unreasonable demands. Your position of long-term strength needs to remain 'partners, not opponents.' When it looks like your negotiation is heading towards win/lose, you might want to steer it back to a win/win approach, and you could use one of these counter tactics that are conflict-resolving:

- Ask a question or positively reframe their negative comment.
- Let some hostile remarks pass you by. Sometimes a little humour will help in this.
- If it seems they're misinterpreting you, you might ask them to repeat back to you what they think you just said. Then clarify any errors in the communication.

Sometimes you'll spot a ploy – a bit of a trick to throw you off the scent. Name it: 'We seem to have taken a bit of a diversion here. Can we get back to the question I was asking?' A recognised ploy is no longer a ploy.

- If their position seems biased, you could ask: 'Show me how that's fair.'
- Perhaps they'll agree to discuss a side-issue later, particularly if there are other people in the room.
- You might need to breathe deeply, speak calmly and change tack.

Give yourself permission to call for some time out if necessary.

### **Know when to stop.**

- If emotions run too high, call a break.
- If the situation reaches an impasse, leave it alone for a day or so.
- If someone uses an unfair tactic that throws you off balance, give yourself a breather. Go to the bathroom or make a cup of tea. Centre yourself before responding.



- You might choose to deflect the conversation to a less controversial topic if a particular issue becomes too hot.
- If you think information is being withheld, you can take a break and use it to gather the information you need.
- Sometimes the negotiation just stays stuck, even though you've tried all your best conflict resolving counter tactics. It might be best to shut it down for the time being. Break it off in a way that makes it possible to return at some other time: 'I think we've gone as far as we can for now. At least we've looked at what's involved. Let's give ourselves some time to think about all this.'
- But if you really tried and your best attempts at negotiating have failed, it might be the smartest thing to walk away. Some negotiations just fall through. Decide what's worth fighting for and weigh up the physical, emotional and relationships costs very carefully. You may be better diverting that frustrated energy for change towards other things where's it's going to be easier for you to make a positive difference in your life.

**Maintain your goal, not necessarily your route.**

Keep your long-term purpose in sight and be flexible about how you get there. Here's an example: Bill was an advertising account executive. He devised an excellent advertising campaign and outlined it to his client. However, the client wasn't convinced, so Bill tried even harder to sell his plan, but that was getting him nowhere. In fact, pushing his point was causing the relationship with his client to become tense.

While you're negotiating:

*feed off the feedback*

Bill did a quick back pedal and asked himself: 'What's my long-term purpose here really?' It was a satisfied client who'd keep working with his agency. Bill decided that if one good campaign had to be sacrificed for this long-term goal, then so be it. He stopped pushing for the campaign as it stood and quickly switched his focus onto the client's



needs. The relationship warmed again, the client became less tense and a bit more trusting. In fact, within a few weeks the client quite enthusiastically accepted the original plan – with a few minor alterations to save face.

Be willing to change tack if a particular approach doesn't appear to be working. There is more than one way to the mountain top.

#

You seem to have reached an agreement. You're heading into the last stage of the negotiation:

### **THE CLOSE**

You'll want to seal the deal! You believe your agreement can actually work, and work well. So, as you start to close:

- Tune in for a moment to your emotions. Perhaps it's a moment for a pause and a deep breath. Do you have any remaining **disquiet**? Is there something you still need to cover? Have both parties really chosen this contract?
- Will the agreement **fix**, or at least manage, the problem?
- Can both parties actually **fulfil** their promises?
- You might want to discuss if the agreement you have so far is **specific** enough. Consider how, when, where, who and how much?
- Is it **balanced** – do both sides share some responsibility for making it work?

If the answer is 'no' to any of these, you're not quite at the finish line yet. Keep going to get these remaining matters tidied up.

- If you possibly can, build a **follow-up** session into the plan to review your progress together and make any adjustments needed a bit down the track.

Then confirm your agreement. Even in informal negotiations, it's worth summarising what's been agreed to in case the other person has understood it differently. You might jot down the terms. It's amazing how bad memories can be down the track!



In business it pays to create some sort of **document** of the agreement where both parties have a copy. It could be a memo, an invoice, an exchange of emails. Sometimes it will be a formal contract. At home, you might stick a note on the refrigerator or family noticeboard with significant agreements. This is great for the division of household chores!

The purpose of a clear contract is to prevent misunderstandings, reinterpretations and bad memories – because all of these might lead to future conflict.

When you've really nailed it down, seal the deal! Stop, acknowledge – and find a way to celebrate!

#

## **SUMMARY**

First do

### ***Your Preparation***

- What are the needs? And concerns? What outcome do you want?
- Collect the facts.
- Work on the other person's case as well as your own.
- Consider what currencies, what you might trade in, during the give and take of the negotiation?
- Make it easy for them to say 'yes'.
- Prepare a clear and concise opener, which states your objective and invites a response.

### ***Then, During the Interaction***

Set up a climate of agreement.

- Listen to how it is for the other side. Tell them how it is for you. The elements of 'I' statements may be useful.



- Build in wins for everyone.
- Avoid win/lose outcomes.
- Ask questions to steer the negotiation in a positive and collaborative direction.
- Be hard on the problem and considerate of the person.
- Include opposing points of view, rather than rejecting them. Use ‘AND’ not ‘BUT’ to incorporate them.
- Be flexible. Know your bottom line. Maintain your goal, but not necessarily your route. If something’s not working, try a different approach.

When you’re ready to

*Close:*

Make clear contracts so that nothing’s ambiguous. Summarise the agreement, write it down.

Take these suggestions onboard and you’ll be a skilful negotiator!

If you’d like more details on all of this, have a look at our website, at Conflict Resolution Network. Our headquarters are at [crnhq.org](http://crnhq.org). You can download a transcript and explore our study notes on Negotiation. There’s a free [manual for trainers](#) there too. And for ongoing reference, you might want to purchase the book, *Everyone Can Win*. It’s the inspiration for this series.

In this episode, we’ve discussed negotiation skills and strategies that produce positive results for all. Negotiation is the heart of conflict resolution, the place where you bring it all together. But what if the tension is too high for face-to-face negotiation? What if you’re seeing others stuck in such a bad place that attempts at negotiation would only make it all worse?

That’s where mediation is needed. The mediator is an impartial third party who helps people in conflict situations negotiate. It’s the fine art of steering the process of



conflict resolution when the going is tough. It's a whole additional skill set, so we've given it two episodes. We can't make you a professional mediator, that's a specialist qualification. But we can ensure that if you ever need the skills, you will know what it takes. That can make you a very helpful person to have around.

So do press your 'Play' button for that one, sometime soon. Why not subscribe to this series wherever you listen to podcasts? And if you like what you're listening to, you could really help us spread the word if you leave us a review there. And let your friends know about it too. Some better conflict resolution skills might be just what they need right now.

*Copyright notice:*

This transcript in whole or in part may be reproduced if this notice appears:

© The Conflict Resolution Network

Web: [www.crnhq.org](http://www.crnhq.org)

Podcasts, transcripts, extra study materials: [www.crnhq.org/podcasts](http://www.crnhq.org/podcasts)

