



Negotiation and influencing skills

asynchronous course material

Brief overview

Do you consider yourself a good influencer or negotiator? When is it appropriate to negotiate and what are some of the key principles and skills that can enhance your influencing skills?

This asynchronous course material will introduce you to key principles of influencing and negotiation that can be applied in day-to-day workplace situations and interactions and provide an opportunity to practice some of these skills in your own context.

By the end of this course material, you will:

- explore key principles of influence
- identify the difference between asking and negotiating
- gain practical techniques for communicating with influence
- identify the appropriate negotiating style for your context.

Negotiation skills

Self-reflective activity:

- Do you consider yourself a good negotiator? Make a list of what you think good negotiators:
 - o Do
 - o Think
 - o Feel
- What do you notice from this exercise in terms of what you define good negotiators to be?

Negotiation myths:

- Good negotiators are born: it is a skill that can be developed and situational factors exert strong influence
- Experience is a great teacher: it is difficult to get good feedback from those we negotiate with and we tend to seek confirmation fail to identify and learn from our mistakes;





Defining negotiation:

- “The negotiation situation is characterized by two or more interdependent parties who have a conflict of interest, and who choose to address that conflict by striving to reach an agreement through a process of mutual adjustment of each party’s demands and concessions”¹
- “The process where two or more parties decide what each will give and take in the context of their relationship”²

Seven steps to negotiation

Here are seven steps to negotiation adapted from Lisa Gates, *The Basics of Negotiations*, 2018.

Step 1: Connection

Factors to consider

- Context and timing
- Start with small talk
- Choose the appropriate style
- Focus on relationship importance versus outcome
- Aim for building a connection

Step 2: Ask diagnostic questions

Ask, open-ended diagnostic questions to understand the context and situation of the other person: who, what, when, where, how and why.

By doing so, you might also discover the potential ‘no’ to your request. Here are some of the benefits for identifying the reasons behind no:

- No allows the real issues to arise
- No protects people from making ineffective decisions
- No slows things down
- No is the beginning of the negotiation³

Step 3: Anchor

¹ Lewicki, R.J., Saunders, D.M. & Minton, J.W., 1999, *Negotiation*

² Roger Fisher and William L. Ury, 2011 *Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In*

³ *Never Split the Difference* by Chris Voss with Tahl Raz





Anchoring are initial points from which you will negotiate a deal. First offers tend to serve as powerful anchors, even for experienced professional negotiators

The anchoring effect was conceptualized as bias that affects decision making by Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky in 1970. The 'anchoring bias' happens because:

- Recipients use the first offer as an anchor, and don't adjust enough
- First offers account for more than 50% of variance in final outcomes
- The person who makes the first offer generally "wins" the negotiation

Step 4: Frame

Framing is about building a perspective and packaging a request. This is important as it takes into account the context of the other person and what is important for them. This process involves listening empathetically and ensuring that the other person feels heard in relation to their concerns or what might be important for them:

- *"It seems like you are really concerned about..."*
- *"It sounds like... is really important to you".*

Step 5: Brainstorm potential options

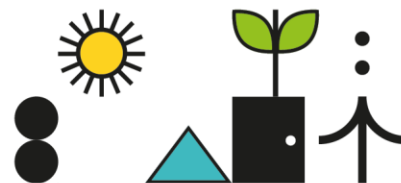
Identify what your goal is from the negotiation and what you want. If the other person was to say 'no', what would be your alternatives?

- What is the Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement (BATNA)?
- What would be your reservation value? A deal made at your reservation value represents the worst deal still acceptable to you. Beyond the reservation value, you prefer no agreement

Create a list of actions you might take if no agreement is reached and select the alternative that sounds best. ⁴

Step 6: Exchange things of value

⁴ Never Split the Difference by Chris Voss with Tahl Raz



This is about thinking about trading the things which cost you little but which the other person might value in exchange for those things which are valuable to you, but are of less value of them to concede. It is about moving towards a interest-based negotiation, rather than a competitive model; this relies on a process that attempts to meet the priorities, needs, and preferences of everyone involved in the negotiation.

Step 7: Agreement

The final step is reaching agreement. It is important here to remember to move away from positions to common interests and move away from competition to collaboration.

Two practical negotiation techniques:

a) How to say NO in negotiations:

How many times have you been in a situation when someone asked you to do something and although you were busy and knew you could not accommodate their request, you said yes and later regrated it.

Here are some techniques to help you say no, adapted from the book *Never Split the Difference* by Chris Voss with Tahl Raz:

- The curious NO – by asking the other person: “how am I supposed to do that?”; this question, if you ask it with curiosity, puts the burden of ‘how’ back on the asker;
- The helpful NO – refer them to someone else who you think might be able to help;
- The appreciative NO – appreciate the idea and that you are not able to participate this time;
- The NO with a possible future yes – not now, but maybe later;
- The NO with a specific future yes – you can ask them to ask you again at a future date;
- The NO when you don’t know the answer – you ask for some time to think about it or ask your boss about it;





- The NO with values – you need to honor your priorities to your team and your running projects
- The positive NO – a great idea but you simply need to decline.

b) Making a distinction between asking and negotiating

Asking is communicating a request related to a need or something that is important to you, e.g., asking for an office chair because you are having back pain.

Negotiating is about exploring possibilities and options about a situation until you're both happy with the outcome, e.g., if there were budgetary issues for getting new chairs in the team, you would need to start a negotiation process.

In order to become a better negotiator, you need to become better at asking for what is important to you.

Influencing skills

In this section, we will outline the six principles of influence and negotiation adapted from Robert Cialdini's book, *Influence: science and practice*⁵.

Principle 1: Scarcity

- Items are more valuable when availability is limited (e.g., items on sale)

Principle 2: Reciprocity

- If you give something to people, they feel compelled to return the favor (e.g., giving someone a small gift or doing them a favor)

Principle 3: Authority

- People are more likely to comply with someone who is (or resembles) authority (e.g., a qualified doctor)

Principle 4: Social proof

- People will do things they see other people doing (e.g., if your coworkers work late, you are likelier to do the same)

⁵ Cialdini, R.B., 2008. *Influence: Science and Practice*. 5th ed. Boston: Allyn and Bacon





Principle 5: Commitment and consistency

- People have a deep need to be seen as consistent and if they commit (verbally or in writing) they are more likely to follow through

Principle 6: Likeability

- People are far more easily persuaded by people they like (e.g., salespeople who are viewed as attractive by potential buyers are more successful than those who are viewed as neutral or not attractive)

Action taking:

- Which of the above negotiation steps and influencing principles do you already do and which of them would you like to start practicing and applying?

References:

- Ask for It by Linda Babcock and Sara Laschever
- Getting to Yes by Roger Fisher and William Ury
- Negotiation Genius by Deepak Malhotra and Max Bazerman
- Never Split the Difference by Chris Voss with Tahl Raz
- Negotiation, 3rd Ed., Lewicki, R.J., Saunders, D.M. & Minton, J.W.
- The Basics of Negotiations by Lisa Gates

