



Journey On

Ready, Set Thrive!

Negotiate Like a CEO



10 Powerful Lessons on Master Negotiation

By Linda Swindling, JD, CSP

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Lesson #1: Looking Out for Number One



The first lesson in negotiations is rarely discussed. To be successful and negotiate like the masters, you must look out for number one... YOU. Whether you run a business, a team or a household, you must consider your needs and well-being first before you can negotiate at a high level. Psychology and Maslow's hierarchy of needs reveals you must ensure you and yours will be provided for before you have higher problem solving skills. Watch a CEO or chief decision maker. They are calm. They approach the bargaining table from a position of strength and personal stability. They know their needs are met and make sure potential deals won't threaten them, their families or their companies.

Here are 10 ways to address your needs before beginning to negotiate with others:

1. Clean up your own financial house first.

Personal financial health is as important as anything right now. If you are simply working to pay money you owe to someone else, it is hard to get motivated each morning. Pay off your credit cards and do everything you can to zero out the balances. Move to a lower interest rate. Downsize if needed. Simplify and live beneath your means.

2. Establish your “see you later” fund. We can learn a lot from the restaurant industry. Smart

waiters and waitresses have enough liquid cash that they can pay bills for the next three to six months. It's their “see you later” money. This is the money that can tie them over if they lose a job or if work or a manager gets too much to tolerate. Most of us refer to this as an emergency fund. If you don't have an emergency fund, do what you need to and get one. Delay purchases, work a second job, sell the things you don't need, eliminate luxury expenses and watch eating out. This “stash of cash” becomes especially important in a job loss and can be supplemented with a severance package, unemployment payments, consulting and part-time jobs.

Have you learned so much this year that you must update your resume to reflect your accomplishments?

3. Determine your net learning for the year. Yes, net *learning* not earnings. If you had to go get a job tomorrow would you be competitive and current? If you wonder about your competitiveness, it may be time to sign up for a course or ask for a project to expose you to those needed skill sets. Have you learned so much this year that you must update your resume to reflect your accomplishments and the responsibility you took? If not, figure out what you should be doing to advance your career. This competitive analysis of you will pay off not only if you have to find a job but also if your employer is looking at which employees to keep.

4. Compile your earning potential. This is not just an assessment on the income you could make in the working world, but also what you are earning for your company. Right now, could you put a dollar amount to the amount you earned for your employer? Did you save the company money? Where did you make money for your organization? It is critical to know how much your employer recovers from its investment in you. Look at your salary and your benefits and determine if you had to choose employees would you be one worth keeping? Maybe you know how to perform a skill no one else does. Perhaps you save the company money by not outsourcing your services. Maybe you are a natural leader and motivator. Defining those things which make you valuable to your company will aid you whether you are fighting for the job you have or interviewing for another.

5. Recognize yourself and others for contributions. Professionally and with tact, make sure people know what you do. Find a way to let your boss and company know the good things you've been up to. Recognize those team members who have gone the extra mile. A little celebration and communication about good results goes a long way when work is challenging.

6. Take good care of you. Times are stressful. This is an excellent opportunity to practice excellent self-care. Maybe you need to increase your exercise or vary the routine you have. Now may be the time to decrease alcohol consumption and make sure you are getting that good night's sleep the health experts encourage. Start taking vitamins. Check in with your dentist and doctor. If you smoke and don't want to, this may be the time to use the company employment assistance resources to conquer that habit. The same strategy holds true with your diet. If you are not happy with how you look or what you eat, use this time to change your habits. Eliminate what isn't working and start doing what you need to. Stress takes its toll on your body. Figure out what, if anything, needs to change and do it now.

7. Surround yourself with positive energy. Today could be the day to take a news holiday. Turn off the television and stop watching the



market go down on the internet. Instead watch and listen to positive messages that can uplift and support. Take a walk in nature. Read an encouraging book. Make good memories with your family and friends. Look for good. It's there.

8. Network with the keepers. Reconnect with your friends and business associates. Find out what others are doing and how you can be of service. Avoid those energy drainers. Worriers, doomsayers and the negatively imbalanced are not only depressing, they can be contagious. Go to www.StopComplainers.com and find strategies for those draining your energy. Replace negative, confusing and/or emotionally challenged people with positive contributors. You need to surround yourself with people who want you to succeed.

9. Be grateful for what is going well. There are many things that are good in your life right now. Find 3 to 5 things every day that you are grateful for and write them down. Visit your church or your mosque or synagogue or place of worship regularly. Be thankful and appreciative for what is right, right now.

10. Give back. Seems inconsistent to tell you to help others in an article all about you, doesn't it? However, you receive more than you give by reaching out to others. Someone always has it worse. This is the time to determine what you can do to improve your community. Clean out your closet, garage, attic or storage unit and give what you don't need to others. Visit elderly. Help a scout. Volunteer at a shelter. Repair a house. Clean up a park. Read to school children. Collect food. You know what needs to be done or you know the person who does know. Give your time and attention where it is needed. The ability to give shows you just how much you have.

Lesson #2:

How to Prepare to Negotiate or Influence

CEOs know that persuading others is possible with effort and thought. Preparing to influence others and understanding the limits and strategies of others takes time. Every negotiation should start with you asking yourself these questions:

1. What do I want?
2. Why do I want it?
3. Do I want to invest my time and effort to get it?

Be crystal clear

Being crystal clear about the outcome you want to reach with any negotiation is crucial. Knowing what you want to achieve is the first step in achieving it. You need to know what constitutes a “win” or a stopping place for you. Once you achieve your goal, you can feel comfortable with quitting. Unfortunately, many people don’t do the simple act of writing out their desired outcome. Without clarity you can flounder and not realize whether you should quit or continue. If you don’t know what your goal is in a negotiation, how do you know if you’re getting close to reaching it?

Know your desired result and good reasons which support your position

If asked what you are trying to achieve, you should be able to list not only the desired end result

but good reasons supporting *why* you want that goal. You’ll be surprised how many people are willing to help you reach your goals if you tell them your rationale for wanting them. For instance, a boss that is aware of your desire to make more presentations and train others could help scout out opportunities or shift those responsibilities from a co-worker who doesn’t like that performance aspect. If you are a good employee, it is in the boss’s best interest to keep you happy, productive and doing work for which you are best suited.





The secret to good negotiation is to remain cool, calm and in control

Determine if what you want is available

Some people just don't know *what* they want when they begin. These people may not understand the elements of a deal or risk being vulnerable to one who knows what is at stake. As a former mediator and a recovering attorney, it still amazes me how many people can be in a lawsuit for years and not know *what* result they really want. Many times the result their desired outcome cannot be addressed by the court system. They waste hours, weeks, even months of time pursuing a process that doesn't get them what they want. Also, it is hard to evaluate how near you are to achieving an outcome if you haven't defined what constitutes a "win" for you. If you aren't aware of what you want, you won't know if an offer or option is inappropriate. You don't know when to stop or delay. Define where you are heading.

Don't waste your time

Be clear that where you are spending your time and effort is a good investment. Most of us don't have the time to chase down paths that are not fruitful. We don't have the time to waste on solutions that don't produce the required results.

Conquering the Fear of Negotiating

Most of us are afraid of the unknown. We are afraid of not being in control or being taken advantage of. Often, one of the biggest problems is having someone understand that by negotiating you are not trying to cheat others; you are simply trying to get the best deal you can. You frequently see the same concerns or reluctance when people are having difficulty in selling goods or services. The sales person doesn't want to appear greedy or undesirable or too manipulative.

The problem most people face is they plan on one approach and are flustered when a party takes a different stance than expected. Also, people are afraid of tricks and tactics. Very few tactics are effective. Most are amateurish and are structured to throw an opposing party emotionally. There may be flinching, sighing and yelling but if you stand your ground and know your position, you are going to be in much better shape than trying a counterattack.

Watch a chief decision maker in action. They know the secret to a good negotiation is to remain cool, calm and in control.



Lesson #3: What are the Biggest Mistakes in Influencing?

*CEOs are strategic and maximize their negotiation opportunities. Three common mistakes others make are: **not preparing adequately, not taking calculated risks and not asking enough questions.***

There is a lack of adequate preparation.

It doesn't matter if you are a quick thinker and do well with little research. Not preparing usually means you leave something on the table or forget one of the key aspects of the negotiation. It's dangerous if you don't distinguish between your wants and needs. If you don't differentiate, you give the signal that everything requested has equal value. This approach can confuse or even frustrate other parties. It is not unusual for another party to walk away from the appearance of too many demands that can't be fulfilled. Second, you can get confused. You may miss something critical to the negotiation because some wants or unneeded requests were met. It is terrific to receive some items from your "wish" list but not at the expense of unmet essentials.

You may prepare in great detail but forget to consider the interests of the other party. This is equally as dangerous. When conducting a mediation session with two doctors, former partners, the failure to consider the other's position was clear. While in a session with one of the partners, the other doctor had decorated an entire conference room with neatly written flip charts that showed "why he should win." When asked about posters which reflected his former partner's interests or why the partner should agree to the position, there was silence. The doctor had methodically planned and thought about his position, but not that of his former partner. The doctor was told that the mediation would continue after he prepared some posters representing the partner's side. Fear and force are usually not good reasons to entice someone to negotiate with you. A good negotiator provides benefits which show the other side it makes sense to come to an agreement.

There is a fear of taking risks.

Sometimes, you just have to chance looking stupid or hearing no. If you are not hearing no, you probably aren't asking for enough. It also helps to remember that you are taking calculated risks that you have thought through. Luck does play a part in negotiating. However, negotiating rarely involves gambling your life savings on a roulette wheel or taking a chance that might endanger your life. The best outcomes come from minimizing the unknowns, identifying and

adding structure around the elements you can control and then taking risks by having the courage to act.

People don't ask enough questions.

Questions are one of the only ways you will discover a party's true interest. Asking questions will determine not only what someone wants, but also areas to avoid. Question every answer you receive. It will help you determine real needs and interests. When you doubt how you should act next, ask a question.

*Many bargains are struck
that suit the facts that are
present at the time.*

Make the best deal possible.

It is difficult not to examine and re-examine the deal you made. However, once you've looked at your outcomes and how you got to the result, you must move on. Paralysis by analysis does not serve someone who wants to improve their ability to influence. Here are five questions to help you review how you did, learn from those results and put the insight to use for your next deal.

1. Were you creative?

Here are the magic questions that will help you be creative. Ask yourself what others have done in the same circumstances. Ask peers, your boss, even the person you are attempting to influence what people have done in the past. Then, ask yourself, what you could offer that the other party would place great value which isn't expensive or time-consuming for you to provide. Ask yourself the same question about the other person's position. What could they offer you that you would value and doesn't cost them much in time or resources? You will be surprised at how much value can be created by these questions.

2. Did you beat your BATNA?

In the book *Getting to Yes*, by Roger Fisher and William Ury, the term BATNA is an acronym for the Best Alternative to The Negotiated Agreement. It is a scholarly way of saying, examine your back up plan or a Plan B. If the agreement you're facing

isn't better than your BATNA or your Plan B, choose your Plan B. If your current deal is better than your BATNA, proceed knowing you've done a good job.

3. Was it the best deal with the information you knew at the time?

Another question you should be able to answer is, "Was this the best deal you could achieve at the time with the people present and the information you knew?" While it is true that you can always find out more information later that could enhance your results, there is a lost opportunity cost while you delay reaching an agreement. Also, that new information could work against you and in favor of the other party.

4. What did you learn that will be useful next time?

Where did you have significant learning that will be useful next time? Determine where or what you are going to change the next time you attempt to persuade or influence. Many bargains are struck that suit the facts that are present at the time. This same fact scenario, stakeholders and limitations may not ever be present again.

5. Were you realistic?

You may have set your desires too high or too low. You may have given yourself a shorten deadline or expected a result that the other person could never agree to meet. Be realistic. Not every deal happens the way we anticipate. And not every deal should happen.

CEOs are prepared to make the best deal possible. They ask questions and take calculated risks. They also are prepared to walk away if the negotiated agreement is not agreeable to them.



Lesson #4:

Win/Win Negotiations Have Become a Must



Formerly, win/win negotiations were a desirable goal. Now, considering other parties' interests is a necessity. CEO's and smart negotiators rely on a win/win approach to reach durable agreements.

Offerings have expanded not retracted.

You have more and more parties to choose to partner with. If one party doesn't worry about your interests, you usually have the ability to choose another who does. Choices have expanded on so many levels. Now, if an agreement doesn't meet the needs and wants of each of the parties, you need just pick up a phone or surf the internet for someone else to fill the requirement.

The market is demanding customized solutions.

Look at sales training. Scripts are out. Formulaic procedures to show benefits and push standardized offerings have been replaced by consultative selling.

Consultative selling focuses on customized requirements and meeting individual needs.

Forcing agreements doesn't work long-term.

Many people say they understand the need for win/win but then diligently fight against it. They don't share information. They compete instead of attempting to problem solve. They don't make the first offer and they posture a position that is unrealistic. This attempt to conquer or a win/lose approach no longer works if you want to build long-term relationships. Applying force, going to someone's superior and attempting to just deal with decision makers does not fit in the current professional environment.

Win/win agreements are more durable.

Remember what win/win stands for: it is an attempt for all the parties involved to get a better agreement for all by collaborating to meet each party's interests. If the

other party determines its interests are not well-represented or they made a bad deal, they may try to sabotage it or look for your non-compliance. People are far more likely to support something they created with people they trust.

While win/win is an easy concept to intellectualize, it can be difficult to actually implement. It may be up to you to remind everyone involved about the shared reasons you have to participate in the agreement or venture. You may need to help the others achieve their results before ensuring you receive yours. In the end, you want an agreement people will support, have loyalty around and encourage.

There is a difference between influence and traditional negotiations.

Many professionals have to influence others internally to receive data, supporting materials, accounting information and implementation help. These internal departments or teams have many people who are requesting the same type of information or support. For example, a benefit plan representative may rely on a partner outside the company like a financial advisor or insurance broker to sell the plan to a client's human resources professional. This same benefit plan representative may need marketing materials from the marketing department to support the sales arm and then different information to inform the client's employees once the plan is selected. The representative may need to co-ordinate the efforts of the IT department and the client company's technology department to ensure the technical requirements are met. There may be a training arm for implementing the plan, customer service functions and, of course, billing to ensure payment. Most likely, that benefits representative is under a strict time frame and can only rely on good graces, past dealings, wit and an ability to influence to get those resources aligned correctly.



Like the benefit representative, your success can depend on whether you can influence those people to process your requests first or at a high enough level of quality. You have no power over them and do not want to go around them if possible because you must continue to work with them in the future.

Another common need for influencing is when your company has a partner or partners who are part of your supply chain. Perhaps they are distributors or take your orders or provide your customer support or service the equipment you manufacture. Once again, you do not have control over these other organizations' performance and they may have competing pulls on their time. It's imperative that you persuade and partner well to do your job. Influence may be the only way to enhance your relationship with these partners.

If you're working together to promote each other or need to access shared resources, you'll see a need to influence. With the amount of people who are outsourcing services to other companies, locations and even countries, the need to improve persuasion and influence skills has never been greater. Chief decision makers and great negotiators know that influence trumps power-based deal making.

Lesson #5:

When to Walk Away from the Bargaining Table

One of the biggest questions is when do you stay, walk or run away from the bargaining table. Some people aren't willing to stay the course in what might result in a really good deal. Others are so tied to the process or deal making that they are willing to give up too much. Here is what decision makers consider in making the decision whether to stick or not.

Some deals don't serve your purposes.

It may be too time intensive or costly to compete effectively. For instance, participating in a structured bid process negotiation may not suit your business needs. When government or large organizations ask for bids, there is usually a lower profit margin, a heightened expectation of service, tighter delivery times, stricter quality issues and required safety systems.

It isn't worth it.

If the deal you are presently considering has a low return on your time, effort or resource investment or a low likelihood of possibility, you don't need it.

In the scenario above, the benefit of a large contract is the possibility of big quantities over a long term, even years. However, the large investment in effort and time with no guarantee of business might not meet your business model. Choosing to lower your price might set a precedent you don't want to continue in the future. You should spend your time on things that have a greater return.

It doesn't feel right

Remember to trust your gut. If the deal doesn't feel right or you think it might be unethical, run don't walk. Your credibility and reputation is what will distinguish you over the long term. Don't proceed with an opportunity that will hurt you in the long run.

Use your experience.

Make sure the deal fits your needs. Feel good about the possible return on your investment of time, effort and resources. Know that where you are headed is in alignment with who you are. CEOs know there will always be deals. They know there will always be opportunities. Follow their lead and determine what makes sense for you and your company.



Lesson #6:

How to Deal with the Unexpected in Influencing and Negotiating

Surprises can be both pleasant and unpleasant. Chief decision makers are ready for surprises in negotiations. Here are three you might encounter.

The Gift. Occasionally you are thrown a gift, a very pleasant surprise. A gift occurs when the other party gives you a much better opening position than you anticipate. Before accepting, make sure that you have analyzed the bargain properly. For instance, if the initial offer of the other party is much higher or lower than you first anticipated, review your position before making your counter offer. An unexpected response may signal you have not realized exactly what the deal entails or even that you and the other party are talking about different expectations.

The Shock. If someone throws out an unattractive offer, don't immediately dismiss it or get aggravated. Instead start asking questions in a courteous and inquisitive manner. "Just so I understand, what were you including when you came up with that offer? How did you get to that number? What is that amount based on?" Good negotiators remember to discuss any offer that is made. They determine the reasoning behind an offer they didn't expect. Remember it is rare to ask too many questions.

The Deadline. Always remember to leave yourself an out or an escape. Some of the biggest negotiation nightmares occur when there isn't enough time to reflect or you are forced to make an uninformed decision. Negotiate the deadline before you negotiate a deal. Ask for a break. Get back to them if necessary but collect yourself first.

Whether you're surprised by the Gift, the Shock or the Deadline, you can always respond with the words, "That isn't what I expected." I'll need to get back with you. It's the truth. It gives you time (even thirty minutes) to think and you can regroup. Surprises, good and bad, can actually enhance an opportunity and give you time to improve your results.

Accept going in that you will be surprised during some time of the negotiation process.

Anticipating the unknown puts you far ahead of most negotiators. It helps you avoid being diverted and makes you look like a pro.

Go ahead...surprise me.





Lesson #7: Tough Negotiations or Persuasions

During tough negotiations or difficult areas of persuasion, CEOs and great negotiators remember to stay calm and uncover positions before reacting. You may encounter these difficult situations.

The unpopular position. Some negotiations have less to do with the products or services offered and more to do with overcoming a public perception. Consider selling an expensive manufactured item like an aircraft or a piece of military equipment that is made in a country that is unpopular in your own. The governments of these countries may oppose military action or a political stance. The public opinion may be that jobs are being taken away from countrymen and women. Perhaps competitors produce their equipment in the home country with local workers. Competing with a politically unpopular product is a challenge. Potential buyers don't want to support an unpopular cause or, in some cases, unpatriotic.

Whether it is public opinion, politics or overcoming bad press, first attempt to separate others' emotional feelings from your offering. In this circumstance,

you might acknowledge that governments are taking action but stress that the company is neutral in the affairs of politics. Your product or service has a superior history and special attention has always been given to their country's clients or distributors. Many businesses will overlook politics if the offering is superior. Some won't. Find the purchasers who will.

Increasing price or taking something away from a customer.

Negotiating with clients can be very challenging. It isn't easy to offer your clients less services or fewer gratis items while increasing the cost of the base product. Yet, this type of situation occurs all the time. The position becomes even more difficult if your competitors continue offering the same level of service. It's also hard to address customer needs that weren't met or explaining to a client why the order they placed will never be filled.

Having an interest-based foundation for your relationship at the beginning is your best defense in this situation. Clients who believe you are honest and looking out for their best interest are much more



likely to work with you when things don't go as planned.

You've got bad feelings or bad history.

Persuading others who have a history of mistrust or another agenda is another difficult situation. Union leaders and management issues usually comes to mind. However, it might be military personnel working with civilian suppliers, volunteers working to persuade a government agency or representatives from various civil groups competing for restricted funds. Anytime people feel that one side may not understand or respect their perspective or position, influence becomes more difficult.

To resolve bad feelings or history issues, attempt to find the common ground. There are usually joint benefits to co-operating, even if both parties are simply committed to understanding a different viewpoint. Respect for another's point of view, even if you strongly disagree, is the start to a solution. Disagree without being disagreeable and watch relations improve.



It affects your personal wallet.

Probably the toughest business decisions are ones which present a risk of personal economic impact for you or a team. For instance, influencing a team decision, especially an unpopular one which could lead to job reduction, is very difficult. Likewise, negotiating with your boss for more authority, recognition, face time, less responsibility and more communication deals directly with your earning ability. It can be difficult when you are negotiating for others, for instance, improved working conditions, better recognition of peers or more control over the use of resources.

In these instances, it helps to admit the truth or real condition. Yes, you understand that these changes could affect jobs in the future. Yes, you know your boss is extremely busy. Once awareness has been stated, present your request. Focus on why the change or request is merited and the ways you want to improve the relationship, condition or me to the extent possible. Make sure you point out any benefits that the other party gains by adopting this course of action.



Lesson #8: Behaviors to Avoid in Negotiations

Chief decision makers know which negotiation behaviors work and those to avoid. Here are 10 behaviors you should avoid.

1. Not putting your agreement in writing.

People's memories fade. Disagreements occur regarding exact points of the negotiation. As soon as possible, preferably while all parties are still together, put the basics in writing. Clear up any misunderstandings before they can become deal breakers later.

2. Making assumptions about others' motivators, wants or needs.

Remember this...you don't know why people do what they do or exactly what they want. The same things that motivate you do not motivate other people. Their needs, wants and desires will differ from yours. (Reflect on your personal relationships if you need proof.) Ask the people you are negotiating with what they want or need and ask about their motivation.

3. Accepting the first offer.

Rarely is the first offer the best. Accepting the first offer says two things about you. First, you are overeager to reach a conclusion. Second, you are not confident in your position. By not bartering, you also send a message to the other side that they have made a bad offer at the very beginning which they may try to retract. If a first offer is better than you anticipated, one of two things has happened.

Either you are missing something of value in your evaluation of your position or the other party has not evaluated his/her position accurately. While there are exceptions, always pause and think before reacting.

4. Becoming emotionally involved.

Emotions can register as excitement, anger or even frustration. The saying “never let them see you sweat” is appropriate. Once a negotiation becomes personal instead of a business deal, you are in danger of finding yourself on the worst part of the agreement. Instead, take a break. Get your emotions under control or send in someone else to negotiate for you.

5. Not questioning.

The more the other side talks the better your deal can be. Ask for explanations. Question the way values were arrived at. You can only determine the other side’s motivations and true interests through their responses to your questions. Ask, ask, ask.

6. Not asking for more or less.

Shoot for the moon. Know what is reasonable and ask for a little bit more. No, it isn’t greedy to ask for more. You never know when you might get a little extra. Also, if you don’t, you have nothing left to barter with to get you to what you consider a reasonable position.

7. Not holding something back for barter chip.

Don’t be surprised when the other party asks for “a little something extra” at the end. Know what you have that you can barter with and that is not essential to your position. If you don’t have to use that concession, you have a bonus. If you do, it is not unexpected.

8. Believing everything you are told

Yes, it is true. Not everything you hear in this world is the truth and not everyone’s version of the truth is accurate. Just because information is written or produced in a graph, does not make it valid.

If what you are told “smells funny”, is illogical or does not follow what you have been informed before, ask for independent support. Back to the basics: Ask, ask, ask.

9. Over-committing or over-attaching to process.

This attachment to the process is why some people make bad deals when purchasing a car. It takes a lot of emotional energy to trade in an existing car, pick the color and model of a new car, and determine a price that they can afford. Many buyers find themselves so entrenched in the purchase process that they will agree to pay more or purchase undesired options rather than starting the buying hassle all over again.

10. Not willing to walk away.

This behavior relates to attachment and commitment. Once you lose your ability to walk away from a deal, you have greatly decreased your power in any negotiation. CEOs always leave themselves an out and know what their options are if the current negotiation does not work.



Lesson #9:

How to Improve Your Results FAST

Most of us communicate through technology that focuses on short, quick responses. We deal with different people on each transaction. Much of the rapport-building opportunities have been eliminated. Great decision makers look for those opportunities to persuade on a personal level. CEOs find ways to talk to human beings instead of wasting their time pressing buttons and filling in forms. They create opportunities for the other party to put a face with their voice or a voice with their email message. The best practices of those high stakes influencers can improve your negotiation results fast.

Watch your manners.

Most people are starved for respect. Many of us will go the extra mile for people who are simply considerate to us. Just showing common courtesy and listening to others will increase your results.

Start asking. Make outrageous requests. See what happens. So many of us stop ourselves by thinking “this person will never do that” or “I’d never give someone that” and this self-monitoring keeps us from getting the deals we could. Ask and wait for the response.

Involve the other party. Ask the other party what is important to them. Stop trying to be a mind reader and making decisions in a vacuum. Tell the other party your concerns and ask them for help solving them. Find out what other people have asked for or done.

The old adage “people will support what they help build” works in negotiations as well. Let others help build or participate in the solution.

Stop looking in the rear view mirror.

Stop limiting yourself because of a past mistake or a response you didn’t like. We keep living in the past. If you made a mistake or someone didn’t give you a request, let it go. Today is a new day, with new people who don’t know that you made a mistake five years ago.

Don’t be lazy. As pressed as everyone is for time, it is tempting to stop once a solution is found. Don’t. There are many options in most negotiations. Once you find a possible solution, document it, put it aside and continue to brainstorm.

Determine the worst case scenario. Figure out what is the worst result that can happen.



“*Stop limiting yourself
because of a past mistake or
a response you didn't like.*”



If you can live with the outcome, go negotiate. If not, go back to the drawing board and create some options.

Have a sense of humor. We can turn a negotiation into something as fearful as a firing squad. Lighten up. Most of our negotiations are not rocket science, thank goodness. Decision makers keep their sense of humor.

Practice, practice, practice. Your first goal should be to practice where you are “safe” and the consequences are minimal if you don’t succeed. Practice on strangers. Go to flea markets, garage sales and yard sales. Ask for an outrageous bargain or for a item you stand no chance of receiving and then observe the outcome. Practice with hotel front desk clerks, restaurant wait staff and service providers and practice. Practice on your family. If you can persuade your own family to help you out on chores or do something extra, you can persuade practically anyone.



Lesson #10:

How Do I Influence Good Results in Tough Times?

How do you get your employees to focus on work in tough times? How do you encourage people to be productive and creative, when the economy is alarming or a negative event has affected them? CEOs and decision makers influence others to seek more business and promote stability even when their people are experiencing emotions like rage, dismay, helplessness and worry. The secret is controlling your reactions and how you communicate. As a leader, you can negotiate peace and influence good results even in tough times.



Give people time. Change and unfortunate circumstances can be shocking. Tough times cover an assortment of personal issues including illness, a death in the family and financial problems. They can involve work situations like the loss of a co-worker, layoffs, a location change or a negative environment. Tough times can be natural disasters or terrorist acts. No matter the reason for the tough times, the result is a lull in productivity. Decisions are stalled. Deadlines are missed. More sick time is used. People need more frequent breaks. Expect it.

Encourage employees to get help. If you have an Employee's Assistance Program (EAP) or counseling services, encourage people to use them. Some employees may suffer from stress or depression. Others need help dealing with family members or other personal matters. Refer your employees to professionals who are trained to help them get through these types of situations. Ask for help yourself in addressing the issues you identify and communicating correctly.

To the extent possible stop the gossip and speculation. While people need to talk, too much time spent talking about uncertainty, dwelling on the past or discussing uncontrollable situations is not productive. Remind employees that there are top people in charge of making difficult decisions.

Consider bringing in outside help. If your work environment seems to be suffering, you may want to bring in a stress management counselor.



If productivity is low, hire a facilitator to focus on a strategy to work through the change or challenge. Concentrate on over communicating. When the tough times involve work, help people focus on what the change means to your business right now and, to the extent you are able, what you understand will happen in the future. If people are concerned about retirement and meeting daily expenses, it may be time to bring in a financial counselor.

Have a cause that people can rally behind.

Consider sponsoring a clothing drive, donating blood, raising money, writing encouraging cards to people in the armed forces or bringing holiday gifts for the less fortunate.

There is good news. You just may have to listen and look harder for it. Offer prizes for stories which discuss the good going on the community.

Sing the praises of your organization's heroes.

There are people who are doing amazing things around you to support both the community and to keep your business going as usual. Some are helping the homeless, others have offered services around recent hurricanes and others are making this world a better place. Notice and appreciate those folks. Employees who continue doing a good job and remain positive, especially during chaotic times, deserve to be recognized.

Turn attention to the good work being done.

When possible, consider ways to remind people of the good work that is also occurring. There are significant discoveries in medical, technical and scientific fields. Global communications and partnering now offer amazing possibilities. Look internally to the good work of your organization. Get your team more involved by delegating this “good news” research and reporting. Some of your people may resist. Do it anyway. Seeking the positive increases their ability to stay focused, healthy and engaged.

Watch your attitude and response to situations.

As a leader, all eyes are on you. People are watching your body language and listening to everything you say with scrutiny. You set the example and the attitude for the office. In challenging work situations, communication is critical. Remind everyone to pull together and focus their efforts on obtaining additional business and maintaining the business you have. Influence people to make smart decisions, spend time wisely, monitor expenses and solve problems.

Business recovery like business growth rests on people's contributions and attitudes. Help them stay positive, find creative solutions and work with determination until times improve.

Negotiating and influencing in tough times reveals just how good a leader you are. OK - You're ready. **Now, go and Negotiate Like a CEO!**



About

Linda Swindling:

Linda Swindling, JD, CSP

From the courtroom to the boardroom, Linda knows firsthand about high stakes communications and influencing decision makers. Her specialty is helping you communicate in a way people will hear what you are saying and help you get what you want.

Linda left ten years of employment and corporate law and her firm Withrow, Fiscus and Swindling when her first book *The Consultant's Legal Guide* was released in 2000. She left to give her full-time efforts to Journey On®, a Dallas-based, woman-owned business which offers speaking, training, consulting and executive coaching services.

In addition to running her professional development company, Linda spent five years with Vistage®, the world's largest CEO development organization. As a chair, she facilitated three groups of decision makers and coached CEOs and the members of the C-suite to be better leaders who made better decisions and got better results.

A Certified Speaking Professional and author, Linda's latest books are *The Manager's Handbook to High Performance* (to be released the summer of 2015) and *Stop Complainers and Energy Drainers: How to Negotiate Work Drama to Get More Done*. She is also the creator of the popular *Passports to Success* book series whose 13 titles include: *Get What You Want*, *Say It Right* and *Set the Standard*.

Linda is a certified CORE® coach and a facilitator in the ToPS® facilitation method. She became a mediator through the Attorney/Mediator Institute, received trainer instruction through the Harvard/MIT Program on Negotiation, and attended the Coach Academy International program and is a certified ICF coach. Linda served as a national officer of the National Speakers Association and is past-president of the National Speakers Association/North Texas. Her clients include the Fortune 100 as well as many international associations.

A recognized authority on negotiations, workplace issues, and persuasive communication, Linda Byars Swindling, is an author, a keynote speaker, an executive coach and a "recovering" attorney. She works with decision makers and high potential leaders to help them communicate, influence and negotiate with power. For more information on Linda's services:

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